

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

TO:

Office of Planning and Research
PO Box 3044
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

Siskiyou County Clerk
510 N. Main St.
Yreka, CA 96097

FROM:

City of Dunsmuir
5915 Dunsmuir Avenue
Dunsmuir, CA 96025

Project Title: Mossbrae Springs Ultraviolet (UV) Disinfection Project

Project Location:

The proposed project is located within the City of Dunsmuir in Section 13, Township 39N, Range 4W, of the U.S. Geological Survey's Dunsmuir 7.5-minute quadrangle. As shown in **Figure 1**, proposed improvements would occur adjacent to the Dunsmuir Avenue/Interstate 5 interchange, on City-owned property (Siskiyou County Assessor's Parcel Number 059-010-190) currently supporting the Castle Rock water bottling facility.

City: Dunsmuir

County: Siskiyou

Project Description:

The City of Dunsmuir's (City's) water supply is provided through the diversion of water from Mossbrae Springs, located about 0.4 miles north-northeast of the current project site. Under current conditions, water from the springs is chlorinated on an infrequent, as-needed basis at the spring headworks. The proposed project would provide a permanent facility for disinfection of the City's water source to ensure a safe and reliable drinking water supply.

The proposed project includes construction of a ±384 square foot building to house ultraviolet (UV) disinfection equipment (i.e. two UV disinfection modules, piping, turbidimeter, magnetic flowmeter, electrical/telemetry, and controls). Two parallel pipelines would be installed between the UV building and the existing 18-inch water main located ±50 feet north of the UV building (one pipe for raw water and the other for treated water). Three control valves would be installed on the new/existing pipes. A propane powered emergency backup generator and propane tank would be installed adjacent to the UV building. Electrical service may be extended to the UV building from the City's existing booster pump station located on the west side of the Castle Rock water bottling facility.

The UV building, generator, and propane tank would be located in a relatively flat area and only minor grading would be required to accommodate the improvements. Installation of the new water lines and the electrical line would require the use of open-cut trenching. The water lines would traverse a steep hill for a short distance. Two mature trees would be removed to accommodate the proposed improvements.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: City of Dunsmuir

Name of Agency Carrying out the Project: City of Dunsmuir

Local Agency Contact Person: Blake Michaelsen, Acting City Manager

Exempt Status: Categorical Exemption:

California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3 (CEQA Guidelines):

Class 1, §15301(f) (Existing Facilities)

Class 3, §15303 (New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures)

Reason Why Project Is Exempt:

Class 1 authorizes minor alterations of public facilities including the addition of safety or health protection devices for use in conjunction with existing facilities. Class 3 includes construction and location of limited numbers of new, small facilities or structures; installation of small new equipment and facilities in small structures; and the conversion of existing small structures from one use to another where only minor modifications are made in the exterior of the structure.

The project is consistent with the categorical exemptions noted above because work would consist of the construction of a small structure and installation of health/safety protection devices (UV disinfection). Only minor earth disturbance would be required to accommodate the proposed improvements, and the ground surface would be restored following construction. Additionally, no expansion of the City's water system would occur. No wetlands or other waters are present on the project site.

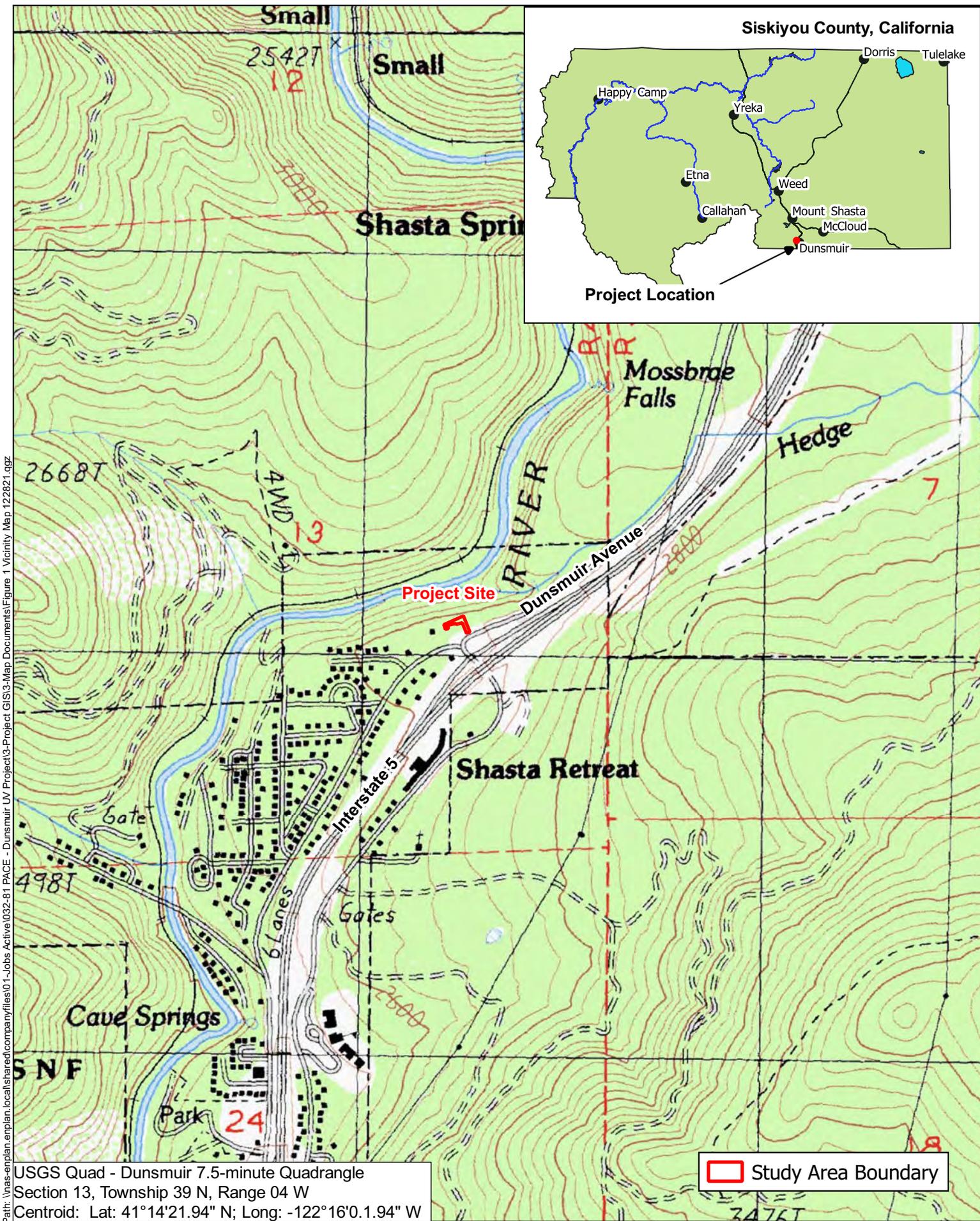
As documented in Attachment A, the proposed project would not have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances; would not result in damage to scenic resources within a Scenic Highway; is not located on a hazardous waste site pursuant to §65962.5 of the Government Code; would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource; and would not result in cumulative impacts.

Signature: Blake Michaelson Date: 8/2/22
Blake Michaelson
Acting City Manager

Date Received for Filing at OPR: _____

Attachments:

- Figure 1: Vicinity Map
- Figure 2: Project Site
- Attachment A: Documentation in Support of a Categorical Exemption



Path: \\nas-enplan.local\shared\companyfiles\01-Jobs Active\032-81_PACE - Dunsmuir UV Project\3-Map Documents\Figure 1 Vicinity Map 122821.ggz

All depictions are approximate. Not a survey product. 01.26.22



Figure 1
Project Location and Vicinity



Dunsmuir Avenue

Study Area Boundary

0 25 50 ft

Figure 2
Project Site

ATTACHMENT A
Documentation in Support of a Notice of Exemption
Mossbrae Springs Ultraviolet Disinfection Project

As described in the Notice of Exemption (NOE), the proposed project is categorically exempt from CEQA pursuant to §15301 (Class 1-Existing Facilities) and §15303 (Class 3-New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures) of the CEQA Guidelines. CEQA Guidelines §15300.2 identifies exceptions that override a lead agency's ability to use a categorical exemption. These exceptions are listed below, followed by documentation of why each exception does not apply to the proposed project.

1. Location. *Classes 3, 4, 5, 6, and 11 are qualified by consideration of where the project is to be located -- a project that is ordinarily insignificant in its impact on the environment may in a particularly sensitive environment be significant. Therefore, these classes are considered to apply in all instances, except where the project may impact an environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern where designated, precisely mapped, and officially adopted pursuant to law by federal, state, or local agencies.*

The proposed project is supported in part by a Class 3 exemption. As documented below, no evidence has been found to suggest that the project location is particularly sensitive. Likewise, the project is not expected to affect an environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern. Therefore, the Class 3 exemption is applicable to the proposed project.

2. Cumulative Impact. *All exemptions are inapplicable when the cumulative impact of successive projects of the same type in the same place, over time, is significant.*

The project involves improvements to existing components of the City of Dunsmuir's water system that are required in order to ensure a safe drinking water supply for the City's customers. The City is currently planning to construct an emergency chlorination facility on the same property and it is possible that both projects could be constructed in the same time frame. However, cumulative construction impacts for these projects would be minor, temporary, and cease at completion of the projects. In addition, neither project represents an increase in capacity, and no long-term cumulative impacts would occur. Therefore, the proposed project's impacts would not be cumulatively considerable.

3. Significant Effect. *A categorical exemption shall not be used for an activity where there is a reasonable possibility that the activity will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances.*

An "unusual circumstance" exists if the project's circumstances differ from the general circumstances of projects covered by the applicable exemption, and, if so, whether there is a reasonable possibility of a significant effect on the environment *due to* the unusual circumstances. As documented below, there are no unusual circumstances that would preclude a categorical exemption for the proposed project.

Aesthetics:

The project site is visible from the adjacent Hedge Creek Falls trailhead and picnic area/park. Although two mature trees would be removed to accommodate the proposed improvements, a significant number of trees and shrubs would remain, and a privacy fence would be installed to screen the proposed improvements from view. Additionally, proposed facilities would be in keeping with the aesthetic character of the existing water bottling plant. Temporary visual impacts due to construction and staging activities would cease upon completion of the improvements. There are no unusual circumstances associated with aesthetics that would preclude a categorical exemption for the proposed project.

Agriculture and Forestry Resources:

According to the California Department of Conservation, the project site was not surveyed for inclusion in the Farmland Monitoring and Mapping Program. A review of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) records identified one soil type in the project site: Ponto sandy loam, 2 to 15 percent slopes. NRCS shows that Ponto sandy loam is not designated as prime farmland. In addition, the land capability classification, which identifies the suitability of soils for most field crops, is 3 for Ponto sandy loam, indicating that the soil has severe limitations that reduce the choice of plants or require special conservation practice, or both.

The project area is not zoned forest land or timberland; however, a portion of the project site meets the definition of forest land pursuant to Public Resources Code section 12220(g). Project implementation would result in the removal of two trees, a black oak and an incense-cedar, to facilitate construction of the proposed improvements. Due to the abundance of trees that would remain, tree removal would not result in a significant impact on forest land.

Air Quality/Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions:

The proposed project would result in the temporary generation of ROG, NOx, PM₁₀, and other regulated pollutants during construction. ROG and NOx emissions are associated with employee vehicle trips, delivery of materials, and construction equipment exhaust. PM₁₀ is generated during site preparation, excavation, paving, and from exhaust associated with construction equipment. GHG emissions would also be generated during construction, primarily from combustion of diesel fuel in heavy equipment. Following construction, emissions would occur only during operation of the emergency backup generator. The project does not include any other components that would result in a long-term increase in emissions. There are no unusual circumstances associated with air quality or GHG emissions that would preclude a categorical exemption for the proposed project.

Biological Resources:

Special-Status Plant Species

Review of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) species list for the project area did not identify any federally listed plant species as potentially occurring in the project area. The USFWS species list does not identify designated critical habitat in the study area for any federally listed plant species. Review of the California Natural Diversity Data Base (CNDDDB) records identified the following 15 special-status plant species within a five-mile radius of the project site: broad-nerved hump moss, Siskiyou clover, marsh skullcap, woodnymph, Shasta chaenactis, Oregon fireweed, woolly balsamroot, Waldo daisy, Aleppo avens, Castle Crags harebell, Castle Crags ivesia, Cascade grass-of-Parnassus, northern adder's-tongue, rattlesnake fern, and Klamath fawn lily. The following non-special status plant species have also been reported within the search radius: three-ranked hump moss, Pacific fuzzwort, and thread-leaved beardtongue.

ENPLAN staff recently completed biological evaluations for two projects in the immediate area, and inspected the current project site on January 28, 2022. Based on the negative results of the prior surveys and in consideration of the habitat types present in the current project area, there is no potential for special-status plant species to be present.

Special-Status Wildlife Species

Review of the USFWS species list for the project area identified the following federally listed animal species as potentially being affected by the proposed project: northern spotted owl, yellow-billed cuckoo, California red-legged frog, Oregon spotted frog, Delta smelt, longfin smelt, monarch butterfly, conservancy fairy shrimp, vernal pool fairy shrimp, and vernal pool tadpole shrimp. The USFWS species list does not identify designated critical habitat in the study area for any federally listed animal species.

CNDDDB records showed one special-status wildlife species, the American peregrine falcon, as having been broadly mapped as occurring within the project area (the mapped occurrence covers the whole of the Dunsmuir quadrangle). In addition, ten other special-status wildlife species have been

reported within a five-mile radius of the project site: foothill yellow-legged frog, Cascades frog, Pacific tailed frog, bank swallow, western yellow-billed cuckoo, northern goshawk, black swift, spotted bat, fisher, and western mastiff bat. The following non-status animals have also been reported within the search radius: osprey, Castle Crags rhyacophilan caddisfly, confusion caddisfly, bilobed rhyacophilan caddisfly, obscure bumble bee, Suckley's cuckoo bumble bee, western bumble bee, Pacific marten, North American porcupine, and Natural Bridge megophix.

Although some of the special-status animals noted above could forage in the general project area, there is a negligible or no potential for these or other special-status wildlife to rely on the project site for breeding or other critical life-cycle events.

Natural Communities

There are no sensitive natural communities in or adjacent to the project site that would be affected by the proposed improvements. Field inspection on January 28, 2022, confirmed the absence of wetlands or other waters of the state or United States in the study area.

Nesting Migratory Birds

The USFWS identified one Bird of Conservation Concern, the olive-sided flycatcher, as potentially being affected by the proposed project. Project implementation would result in the removal of two trees to facilitate construction of the proposed improvements. The potential for adversely affecting nesting birds will be minimized by conducting construction activities outside of the nesting season (between September 1 and January 31), or conducting pre-construction nesting surveys in accordance with existing standard construction measures if work is conducted during the nesting season.

In summary, there are no unusual circumstances associated with biological resources that would preclude a categorical exemption for the proposed project.

Energy:

The proposed project does not include any components that would result in environmental impacts due to the wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources. There are no unique circumstances related to energy use during construction or operation of the proposed project that would result in more significant impacts than other similar projects in the area.

Geology and Soils:

According to the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map, the nearest Alquist-Priolo Special Study Zone to the project area is the Rocky Ledge Fault Zone, approximately 37 miles to the southeast in the USGS Burney Falls quadrangle. No active or potentially active faults are identified in the study area. The nearest potentially active fault is an unnamed fault, approximately six miles northeast of the project area; however, the presence of such a fault is not unique to the project site.

The pipelines would traverse a steep hill for a short distance and would be installed via open-cut trenching. Improvement plans for the project would be prepared by a qualified engineer to ensure that slope stability and other geotechnical issues are addressed during final project design.

According to the USDA NRCS, one soil type, Ponto sandy loam, 2 to 15 percent slopes, is mapped on the project site. This soil type is found throughout the Dunsmuir area and is not unique to the project site. There are no unusual circumstances associated with geology or soils that would preclude a categorical exemption for the proposed project.

Hydrology and Water Quality:

The UV building would be located in a relatively flat area and only minor grading would be required to accommodate the improvements. Grading and trenching could result in exposure of disturbed soils to potential storm events, which could generate accelerated runoff, localized erosion, and sedimentation. However, this is a temporary impact during construction activities, and no long-term impacts would occur.

In addition, Best Management Practices for spill prevention and erosion/sediment control would be implemented to prevent indirect impacts to streams, watercourses, and aquatic habitats. There is nothing unique about the project site that would result in significant impacts to water quality.

According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rate Map (Panel 06093C3432D), effective January 19, 2021, the project site is not located within a designated flood hazard zone.

Land Use and Planning:

The proposed project would not conflict with the City's General Plan, zoning, or applicable federal, State, or local regulations, and does not include any components that would physically divide an established community.

Mineral Resources:

The California Geological Survey has not designated any Mineral Resource Zones in the project area and the project site is not zoned for mining activities.

Noise:

Construction of the project would result in a temporary increase in ambient noise levels. However, the project does not involve pile driving, use of vibratory hammers, or other similar activities that would create excessive noise or vibration. Further, there is nothing unique to the project that would result in more significant impacts than other similar construction projects.

The project includes installation of a propane generator that would be used only in the event of an emergency. The closest sensitive receptor is a single-family residence about 235 feet west of the generator location. Due to intervening structures, trees, and topography, noise levels from the generator would not be significant at the exterior of the residence. The project does not include any other components that would result in a permanent increase in noise levels.

Population and Housing:

The purpose of the proposed project is to ensure a safe and reliable drinking water supply by providing for disinfection of the City's water supply. Because the project would not increase the capacity of the City's water distribution system, the project would not induce population growth in the area beyond that currently projected in the City's General Plan.

Public Services/Recreation:

Because the project would not induce unplanned population growth, the project would not generate a demand for additional fire protection, police protection, schools, parks/recreational facilities, or other public services. The proposed new fencing would extend up to about five feet into the Hedge Creek Falls Trailhead site; however, this would not preclude any existing uses or affect recreational facilities.

Transportation:

During project construction, there would be a short-term increase in local traffic volume associated with movement of construction workers, supplies, and equipment; however, existing regulations require safety measures to be employed to safeguard travel by the general public during construction. Because the project would not induce population growth, the project would not directly or indirectly result in a permanent increase in traffic.

Utilities and Service Systems:

Electrical conduit may be extended from the City's existing booster pump station to the UV building using open-cut trenching. The project would not require wastewater service, nor would the project generate solid waste following construction. The project would not increase capacity of the City's water system and would not induce population growth in the area beyond that currently projected in the City's General

Plan. Other than increased demand for electrical service, there would be no direct or indirect impacts to utilities or service systems. There are no unique circumstances associated with the proposed project that would result in more significant impacts than other projects in the area.

Wildfire:

The proposed project does not include any development or improvements that would increase the long-term risk of wildland fires or expose people or structures to wildland fires. There are no unique circumstances associated with the proposed project that would result in more significant impacts than other projects in the area.

4. Scenic Highways. *A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may result in damage to scenic resources, including but not limited to, trees, historic buildings, rock outcroppings, or similar resources, within a highway officially designated as a State Scenic Highway.*

According to the California Scenic Highway Mapping System, there are no officially designated State Scenic Highways in the project area; therefore, there would be no impact.

5. Hazardous Waste Sites. *A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project located on a site which is included on any list compiled pursuant to §65962.5 of the Government Code.*

The following databases were reviewed to locate "Cortese List" sites.

- List of Hazardous Waste and Substances sites from the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) EnviroStor database.
- SWRCB GeoTracker Database.
- List of solid waste disposal sites identified by SWRCB with waste constituents above hazardous waste levels outside the waste management unit.
- List of active Cease and Desist Orders and Clean-Up and Abatement Orders from the SWRCB.

Review of Cortese List records revealed that the nearest active clean-up site is approximately one mile southwest of the project site. Due to the distance from the project site, the project would not affect or be affected by the clean-up site.

6. Historical Resources. *A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.*

Record searches were conducted for the Mossbrae Springs Improvement Project by an ENPLAN archaeologist in 2018. The record search radius encompassed the project site for the Mossbrae Springs Ultraviolet Disinfection Project and did not identify any historical resources in the project site or surrounding area.

According to the NRCS, one soil type, Ponto sandy loam, 2 to 15 percent slopes, is found in the project site. Ponto sandy loam dates to the Early Holocene (11,500 – 7,000 B.P.). Early Holocene-aged soils generally have a low potential for buried cultural resources (Meyer, 2013). In addition, a portion of the project site has been subject to prior disturbance from grading activity associated within the installation of structures. Based on the geomorphological characteristics of the project site, the results of the records and literature search, the age of the soils mapped in the area, and the level of contemporary disturbance, the project site is considered to have a very low potential for both buried historic and prehistoric resources.

However, there is always some potential for previously unknown cultural resources to be encountered during excavation activities. Therefore, the following standard construction measures will be included in bid/contract documents to address the inadvertent discovery of cultural resources and human remains.

1. In the event of any inadvertent discovery of cultural resources (i.e., burnt animal bone, midden soils, projectile points or other humanly modified lithics, historic artifacts, etc.), all work within 50 feet of the find shall be halted until a professional archaeologist can evaluate the significance of the find in accordance with PRC §21083.2(g) and §21084.1, and CEQA Guidelines §15064.5(a). If any find is

determined to be significant by the archaeologist, City of Dunsmuir staff shall meet with the archaeologist to determine the appropriate course of action. If necessary, a Treatment Plan prepared by an archeologist outlining recovery of the resource, analysis, and reporting of the find shall be prepared. The Treatment Plan shall be reviewed and approved by the City prior to resuming construction.

2. In the event that human remains are encountered during construction activities, the City of Dunsmuir shall comply with §15064.5 (e) (1) of the CEQA Guidelines and PRC §7050.5. All project-related ground disturbance within 100 feet of the find shall be halted until the County coroner has been notified. If the coroner determines that the remains are Native American, the coroner will request the NAHC to identify the most likely descendants of the deceased Native Americans. Project-related ground disturbance in the vicinity of the find shall not resume until the process detailed in §15064.5 (e) has been completed.
3. In the event that project plans change to include areas not surveyed, additional archaeological reconnaissance may be required. If cultural resources are encountered, the archaeologist shall recommend/implement additional measures as necessary, which may include subsequent monitoring by an archaeologist or Native American representative.

DOCUMENTATION:

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<https://caltrans.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=465dfd3d807c46cc8e8057116f1aaca>. Accessed December 2021.

California Environmental Protection Agency. 2021. Cortese List Data Resources.

<http://www.calepa.ca.gov/sitecleanup/corteselist/>. Accessed December 2021.

California Natural Diversity Database. <https://wildlife.ca.gov/Data/CNDDDB/Maps-and-Data>. Accessed December 2021.

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Meyer, Jack. 2013. A Geoarchaeological Overview and Assessment of Northeast California: Cultural Resources Inventory of Caltrans District 2 Rural Conventional Highways: Lassen, Modoc, Plumas, Shasta, Siskiyou, Tehama, and Trinity Counties, Vols. 1-2. Far Western Anthropological Research Group, Inc. Report on file at Caltrans District 2 Office, Redding.

U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resource Conservation Service. 2021. Web Soil Survey. <http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/WebSoilSurvey.aspx>. Accessed December 2021.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. List of Threatened and Endangered Species. December 2021.