Initial Study / Mitigated Negative Declaration for the City of Coalinga Trails Master Plan Segments 1, 2, 13, and 14, Coalinga, Fresno County, California

OCTOBER 2022

PREPARED FOR

City of Coalinga
Planning Department

PREPARED BY

SWCA Environmental Consultants

INITIAL STUDY / MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION FOR THE CITY OF COALINGA TRAILS MASTER PLAN SEGMENTS 1, 2, 13, AND 14, COALINGA, FRESNO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

Prepared for

City of Coalinga
Planning Division
155 West Durian Avenue
Coalinga, California 93210
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Prepared by

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SWCA Project No. 69516

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

2016 Ozone Plan	*2016 Ozone Plan for 2008 8-Hour Ozone Standard*
2018 Plan	*2018 Plan for the 1997, 2006, and 2012 PM2.5 Standards*
AB	Assembly Bill
ATP	Active Transportation Plan
ATV	all-terrain vehicle
BMPs	best management practices
BPS	Best Performance Standards
CAAQS	California Ambient Air Quality Standards
CalEEMod	California Emissions Estimator Model
Cal/EPA	California Environmental Protection Agency
CAL FIRE	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
Caltrans	California Department of Transportation
CARB	California Air Resources Board
CBC	California Building Code
CCR	California Code of Regulations
CDFW	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
CDOC	California Department of Conservation
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CHUSD	Coalinga-Huron Unified School District
City	City of Coalinga
CMAQ	Congestion Mitigation Air Quality
CNDDB	California Natural Diversity Database
CNEL	Community Noise Equivalent Level
CO	carbon monoxide
CO_2	carbon dioxide
CRHR	California Register of Historical Resources
dB	decibel(s)
dBA	A-weighted decibel(s)
DTSC	California Department of Toxic Substance Control
EPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FHSZ	Fire Hazard Severity Zone

FIRM	Flood Insurance Rate Map
FMMP	Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program
General Plan FEIR	*Final Master Environmental Impact Report for the City of Coalinga 2025 General Plan Update*
GHG	greenhouse gas
IPaC	Information for Planning and Consultation
IS/MND	Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration
Ldn	Day-Night Average Level
MBTA	Migratory Bird Treaty Act
mph	miles per hour
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NOA	naturally occurring asbestos
NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
NWI	National Wetlands Inventory
OSHA	Occupational Safety and Health Administration
PG&E	Pacific Gas and Electric Company
PM_{10}	particulate matter 10 micrometers and smaller in diameter
$PM_{2.5}$	particulate matter 2.5 micrometers and smaller in diameter
PRC	Public Resources Code
ROW	right-of-way
RWQCB	Regional Water Quality Control Board
SB	Senate Bill
SJVAB	San Joaquin Valley Air Basin
SJVAPCD	San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District
SR	State Route
SSC	species of special concern
SSJVIC	Southern San Joaquin Valley Information Center
SWCA	SWCA Environmental Consultants
SWPPP	Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan
SWRCB	State Water Resources Control Board
TMP	Trails Master Plan
tpy	tons per year

USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
USGS	U.S. Geological Survey
VMT	vehicle miles traveled

1 ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION FORM

1. Project Title:

City of Coalinga Trails Master Plan Segments 1, 2, 13, and 14

2. Lead Agency Name and Address:

City of Coalinga
Planning Division
155 West Durian Avenue
Coalinga, CA 93210

3. Contact Person and Phone Number

Sean Brewer
Assistant City Manager
City of Coalinga
(559) 935-1533 Ext. 143

4. Project Location:

The project includes four proposed trail segments located in the city of Coalinga, Fresno County, California.

5. Project Sponsor's Name and Address:

City of Coalinga
Planning Division
155 West Durian Avenue
Coalinga, CA 93210

6. General Plan Land Use/Zoning Designations:

Public Facilities, Recreation, Light Manufacturing/Business, Open Space, Residential Single Family, Residential Estate, and General Commercial

7. Project Description Summary:

The City of Coalinga (City) is proposing the design, construction, and operation of portions of four segments (Segments 1 [portion], 2, 13, and 14) of the City's planned 8.8-mile perimeter trail and spur system identified in the City's Trails Master Plan using Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) funding (proposed project). The proposed project would develop approximately 10,520 linear feet (1.97 miles) of a multi-use (vehicle separated) loop-and-spur Class I bicycle/pedestrian trail in the city of Coalinga, Fresno County, California. Segment 1 (portion) would run along the north side of Phelps Avenue between the Coalinga Regional Medical Center and Posa Chanet Boulevard. Segment 2 would parallel Segment 1 in northeastern Coalinga along the south side of Los Gatos Creek. Segment 13 would run along an existing City maintenance road located on top of a berm north of Cambridge Avenue. Segment 14 would run along an existing maintenance road and behind a City park, connecting Segments 2 and 13 adjacent to the Coalinga Sports Complex in northern Coalinga. The proposed staging area would be within a

vacant, undeveloped, disturbed lot located southeast of the intersection of Elm Avenue and Phelps Avenue (Figure 1).

The trails would consist of 10-foot-wide paved asphalt pathways bordered by 2 to 4 feet of decomposed granite shoulders. The proposed project would connect residents in Coalinga (and a disadvantaged census tract) to activity centers such as schools, parks, a college, shopping, neighborhoods, and jobs. The project would provide a safe option to enable increased bicycle/pedestrian transportation use. Increased active transportation would address health disparities in a community that faces higher-than-average California city rates of asthma, obesity, and heart disease.

8. Surrounding Land Uses and Setting

Segment 1 would be surrounded by Residential Single-Family land uses to the north, and Residential Medium Density and Open Space land uses to the south. Segment 2 would be surrounded by Open Space land uses to the north and Residential Medium Density, Residential Single Family, and Mixed-Use land uses to the south. Segment 13 would be surrounded by Agriculture and Public Facilities land uses to the north and Residential Single-Family and Public Facilities to the south. Segment 14 would be surrounded by Agricultural, Light Manufacturing/ Business, and General Commercial uses to the north, and Agriculture, Mixed Use, and Light Manufacturing/Business to the south. The staging area is located in an area designated for General Commercial land use. Land use designations are shown in Figure 2.

9. Discretionary Actions:

Implementation of the proposed project would require the following discretionary action by the City:

- Approval of the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) prepared for this project.

10. Have California Native American tribes traditionally and culturally affiliated with the project area requested consultation pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21080.3.1? If so, has consultation begun?

Only one tribe—the Santa Rosa Rancheria Tachi Yokut Tribe—has requested consultation notification from the City pursuant to Assembly Bill (AB) 52. The City sent notification of a consultation opportunity to the Santa Rosa Rancheria Tachi Yokut Tribe regarding this project on November 15, 2021. Pursuant to AB 52, the Santa Rosa Rancheria Tachi Yokut Tribe had 30 days to respond in writing to request consultation. The City received a request for consultation pursuant to AB 52 for this project from Samantha McCarty of the Santa Rosa Rancheria Tachi Yokut Tribe on November 22, 2021. The City incorporated additional information and mitigation requirements in this document following that response to address comments received.

Figure 1. Project location map.

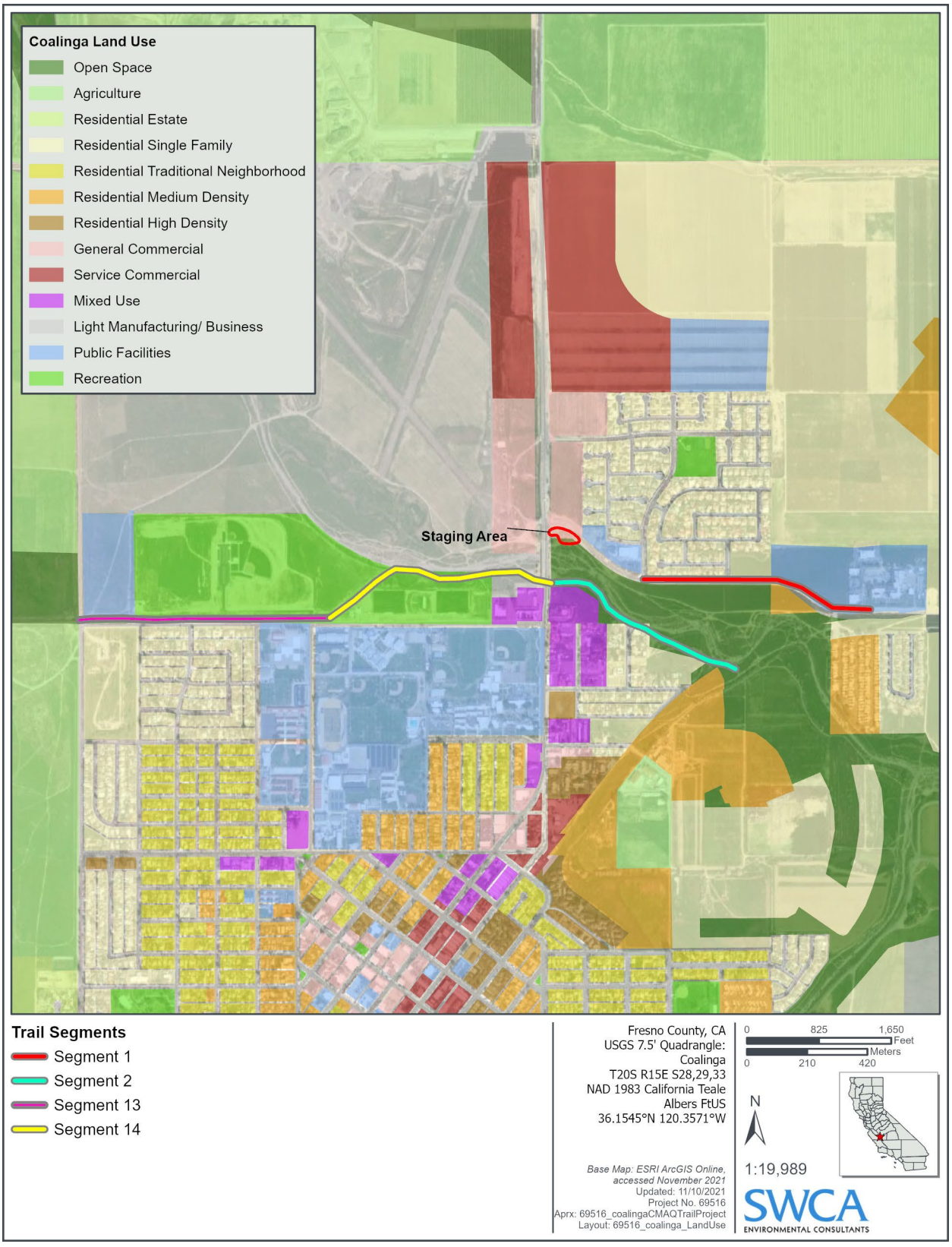

Figure 2. General Plan land use designation map.

1.1 Background and Introduction

The city of Coalinga lacks a cohesive network of trails for off-street walking, jogging, bicycling, and nature viewing. During community-based planning efforts, residents envisioned a connected-loop trail system along the city's perimeter to create a viable, sustainable Active Transportation Plan (ATP) option for all ages and abilities to safely recreate or transport themselves to various destinations.

The City of Coalinga (City) previously received funding to prepare an ATP and accompanying Trails Master Plan (TMP), completed in March 2017, which identifies existing trail facilities in the city and presents a detailed feasibility analysis of proposed trail facilities. The ATP defines four classes of path facilities: Class I/Shared Use Paths, Class II/Bike Lanes, Class III/Bike Routes, and Class IV/Separated Bikeways, as defined below:

- **Class I/Shared Use Paths:** Class I trails are off-street facilities dedicated exclusively to use by bicyclists, pedestrians, and in some cases, equestrians and other non-motorized travel such as roller skating and skateboarding. Trails can be paved or treated with a natural surface. They must be at least 8 feet wide (10–12 feet preferred).
- **Class II/Bike Lanes:** Class II bike lanes delineate a portion of the street for bicyclists through the use of pavement markings and signage. The bike lane is located directly adjacent to motor vehicle travel lanes and is used in the same direction as motor vehicle traffic. Bike lanes are typically on the right side of the street, between the adjacent travel lane and curb, road edge, or parking lane. Bike lanes should be at least 5 feet wide, but 6 feet is preferred if adjacent to on-street parking. For wider streets or streets with higher volumes or speed limits, or with truck traffic, buffered bike lanes can be installed. Buffered bike lanes are conventional bicycle lanes paired with a designated buffer space, separating the bicycle lane from the adjacent motor vehicle travel lane and/or parking lane. Buffers should be at least 2 feet wide. If the buffer area is 4 feet or wider, white chevron or diagonal markings should be used. For clarity at driveways or minor street crossings, a dotted line should be considered.
- **Class III/Bike Routes:** Class III bike routes are routes where the travel lane is shared by drivers and bicyclists. Class III routes are generally designated on roadways with low levels of motor vehicle traffic where bicyclists may share the travel lane. Class III bike boulevards are also routes where the travel lane is shared but have low motorized traffic volumes and speeds, designated to provide a high level of comfort for all ages and bicycle abilities. Bicycle boulevards use signs, pavement markings, and speed and volume management measures. Bike boulevard markings or shared lane markings should be placed frequently along the route to identify the bicycle boulevard.
- **Class IV/Separated Bikeways:** Class IV separated bikeways are a new class of bicycle facility. Generally, Class IV bikeways are on-street bicycle facilities that are separated from vehicle traffic by some kind of physical protection—including a curb, on-street parking, flexible bollards, or concrete planters. They may provide for one-way or two-way travel on each side of the roadway.

Existing trail facilities present in the city of Coalinga are limited to 4.4 miles of Class II Bike Lanes and 0.7 mile of Class III Bike Routes; there are no Class I or Class IV facilities in the city. The TMP identifies 8.8 miles of a proposed Class I perimeter trail system that would connect to points of interest like the Coalinga Sports Park/Complex and interlace with other proposed bicycle facilities, providing users with access to services and destinations in the heart of the city. Residents who walk or bike can connect with nature, lead healthier lives through exercise, meet and socialize with neighbors, and have a safe and comfortable choice for getting to school or running errands without driving throughout the city of Coalinga.

The City of Coalinga's 2005-2025 General Plan (City of Coalinga 2009a) calls for "a network of multi-use recreational trails along Los Gatos and Warthan Creeks with inner City and regional connections for use by local residents and visitors" (Goal C2). The TMP implements General Plan Measure C2-1.1 to "develop a Multi-Use Off-Street Trails Master Plan" and provides data, mapping, and analysis needed to help realize the following General Plan implementation measures:

> **Implementation Measure C2-1.2:** Establish development standards requiring new development provide the necessary funding, easements, dedications and improvements needed to establish a network of recreational trails.
>
> **Implementation Measure C2-1.3:** Pursue grant opportunities and other financing programs to fund the construction and maintenance of recreational trails including taxes, fees, bonds, assessments, and/or donations.

Further, the TMP identifies 14 potential Class I trail segments in Coalinga and provides an overview of the design standards and guidelines for proposed Class I facilities. Class I facilities, also known as trails or shared-use paths, are separated from motor vehicle traffic and provide recreation and active transportation opportunities for residents of all ages and abilities.

The City recently conducted environmental review of Segments 3, 4, and 9 of the City's planned 8.8-mile perimeter trail and spur system identified in the City's TMP using ATP funding; the project was approved by City Council on December 2, 2021.

1.2 Project Description

The City is proposing the design, construction, and operation of portions of four segments of the City's planned 8.8-mile perimeter trail and spur system identified in the City's TMP using CMAQ funding. The proposed project would develop portions of Segments 1, 2, 13, and 14, totaling approximately 10,520 linear feet (1.97 miles) of a multi-use (vehicle separated) loop-and-spur Class I bicycle/pedestrian trail system in the city of Coalinga, Fresno County, California (see Figure 1). Each of the proposed segments are described in detail below.

- **Segment 1 (portion):** Consists of approximately 2,520 linear feet (0.47 mile) identified in the City's TMP in the northeastern portion of the city. This segment runs along the north side of Phelps Avenue between Posa Chanet and the Coalinga Regional Medical Center. A Class I shared-use trail would be constructed within the City right-of-way (ROW) and would connect the funded portion, Segment 1 west, from Posa Chanet to Elm Avenue and would provide connections to the Coalinga Regional Medical Center, and Posa Chanet Boulevard to Centennial Park (see Figure 1). The shared-use path would be 10 feet wide, bordered by a 4-foot shoulder and walking path on the Phelps Avenue side and a 2-foot shoulder on the opposite site.
- **Segment 2:** Consists of approximately 2,500 linear feet (0.47 mile) in northeastern Coalinga (the complete segment identified in the City's TMP), paralleling Segment 1 along the south side of Los Gatos Creek. The trail would be aligned along the top of the creek bank and would provide a more scenic alternative to Segment 1 but would be a less direct route to the medical center and would provide connections to Segment 3 west and Segment 4 (both funded) which provide a direct connection to downtown Coalinga, including the Department of Motor Vehicles, City Hall, library, retail, restaurants, the pharmacy, residential neighborhoods, and medium- and high-density apartments (see Figure 1). A Class I shared-use trail would be constructed within the City ROW and would be 10 feet wide, bordered by a 4-foot shoulder and walking path on one side and a 2-foot shoulder on the opposite site.

- **Segment 13:** Consists of approximately 2,800 linear feet (0.53 mile) in northwestern Coalinga (the complete segment identified in the City's TMP). Segment 13 runs along an existing City maintenance road located on top of a berm north of Cambridge Avenue (see Figure 1). The trail would still provide access for maintenance vehicles. Users of this segment would have scenic views of the surrounding hills and landscape to the north and west. This segment would provide connections to the Coalinga Sports Park/Complex, schools, residential neighborhoods, and miles of funded Coalinga multi-use trails (Segments 14, 2, 3, and 4). A Class I shared-use trail would be constructed within the City ROW and would be 10 feet wide, bordered by a 4-foot shoulder and walking path on one side and a 2-foot shoulder on the opposite site.
- **Segment 14:** Consists of approximately 2,700 linear feet (0.50 mile) in northern Coalinga (the complete segment identified in the City's TMP), connecting Segments 2 and 13 adjacent to the Coalinga Sports Complex. Segment 14 runs along an existing maintenance road and behind the City park. It would create an improved connection between the nearby schools and the park, as well as Los Gatos Creek. This segment is primarily located on City property; however, a small portion at the far eastern edge is located on Chevron property. This segment would provide connections to Coalinga Sports Park/Complex, West Hills College, East Elm Avenue, local motels, residential neighborhoods, and miles of funded Coalinga multi-use trails (Segments 13, 2, 3, and 4). A Class I shared-use trail would be constructed within the City ROW and would be 10 feet wide, bordered by a 4-foot shoulder and walking path on one side adjacent to the existing maintenance road, and a 2-foot shoulder on the opposite site.

Each trail segment would include a 14-foot-wide shared-use bicycle and pedestrian trail. The proposed trails would be 10-foot-wide, paved asphalt pathways between 2- and 4-foot-wide decomposed granite shoulders, consistent with the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) preferred specifications for a Class 1 Bikeway. The paths would be positioned away from the nearest roadways but with connectivity at key intersections to existing sidewalks and Class II and III bicycle routes on existing roads near the perimeter trail. The project would connect residents in Coalinga (and a disadvantaged census tract) to activity centers such as schools, parks, a college, shopping, neighborhoods, and jobs. The project would provide a safe option to enable increased bicycle/pedestrian transportation use. Increased active transportation would address health disparities in a community that faces higher-than-average California city rates of asthma, obesity, and heart disease.

1.2.1 *Construction*

Construction of the proposed trail segments is expected to require rough grading and excavation to create the paths. The anticipated excavation depth would be 1 to 3 feet, ranging from 6 to 12 inches for multi-trail grading and construction, and ranging up to 3 feet for various traffic signage and barrier foundations. After the trail segments are excavated, finish grading of the path would occur, followed by path surfacing, consisting of decomposed granite and/or paved asphalt. The project would also include the installation of bike and pedestrian counters (EcoCounters) to tally actual use on the new trail system.

The final major stage would include landscaping and erosion protection. Landscaping is expected to primarily include hydroseeding of a native, drought-tolerant seed mix. Other final details include fencing, signage, and striping. Signage would be installed to alert trail users to places where the trail will interface with existing roads and destinations. Trash receptacles would be placed along the trail and maintained by the City.

Construction of the proposed project is estimated to require 3 months and is expected to occur between January and April 2023. Construction activities would not require any road closures, detours, or

temporary access roads. All work would be located outside of existing roadways, with the exception of the proposed crossing of State Route (SR) 33, which would require some shoulder work.

1.2.2 *Drainage*

Portions of trail Segments 2, 13, and 14 are located within the 100-year flood hazard area. Segments 2 and 14 are located within Zone AE, and Segment 13 is located within Zone AE and Zone AO. Zone AE delineates areas subject to inundation by the 1%-annual-chance flood event and Zone AO delineates areas subject to inundation by 1%-annual-chance shallow flooding (usually sheet flow on sloping terrain) where average depths are between 1 and 3 feet.

To minimize maintenance and to protect the project, the proposed trails would be cradled by a 4-foot-wide crushed stone walking/jogging path on one side and a 2-foot-wide drainage section on the opposite side. This design would enable safe passage, provide a variety of trail surfaces that appeal to the greatest variety of users, and hold up in wet and dry conditions.

1.2.3 *Existing Utilities*

The proposed project is not expected to require any utility relocations or result in other modifications to existing utilities.

1.2.4 *Right-of-Way*

The project would require right-of-way and/or partial acquisition from parcels not owned by the City.

2 ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST AND ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED

The proposed project could have a "potentially significant impact" for environmental factors checked below. Please refer to the attached pages for discussion on mitigation measures or project revisions to either reduce these impacts to less than significant levels or require further study.

☐ Aesthetics	☐ Greenhouse Gas Emissions	☐ Public Services
☐ Agriculture and Forestry Resources	☒ Hazards and Hazardous Materials	☒ Recreation
☒ Air Quality	☒ Hydrology and Water Quality	☐ Transportation
☒ Biological Resources	☒ Land Use and Planning	☒ Tribal Cultural Resources
☒ Cultural Resources	☐ Mineral Resources	☐ Utilities and Service Systems
☐ Energy	☒ Noise	☐ Wildfire
☐ Geology and Soils	☐ Population and Housing	☒ Mandatory Findings of Significance

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

☐ I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

☒ I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

☐ I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.

☐ I find that the proposed project MAY have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measure based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.

☐ I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

Date: 10/18/2022 **Signed:** 

2 ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST AND ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED

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☒ Cultural Resources	☐ Mineral Resources	☐ Utilities and Service Systems
☐ Energy	☒ Noise	☐ Wildfire
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ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION

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Date: _____ **Signed:** _____

I. Aesthetics

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the project:				
(a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(c) In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage points.) If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Setting

The city of Coalinga is located on the eastern side of the coastal mountain range, along the western edge of California's Central Valley. The *City of Coalinga General Plan 2005-2025* characterizes the visual setting of the city as being a wide, flat valley floor bounded by rolling foothills to the west and south (City of Coalinga 2009a). The city is generally surrounded by rural open space with agriculture, oil production, scattered ranches, and residences making up the visual landscape. The landscape surrounding the city generally consists of tilled or grazed grassland, agricultural crops, sparse trees, and scattered riparian corridors. As viewed from most parts of the city, the rolling hills to the west provide scenic and topographic features in the visual backdrop (City of Coalinga 2009a).

The *City of Coalinga Community-Wide Design Guidelines* serve as a discretionary tool to guide a range of development types and projects within the city and are intended to reduce a project's impact on the community (City of Coalinga 2015a). The objective of these guidelines is to preserve the small-town character of Coalinga in future single-family residential, multi-family residential, commercial, and mixed-use development through implementation of applicable implementation measures of the City's General Plan (City of Coalinga 2009a), detailed below:

- **LU1-1.3:** New infill development shall demonstrate consistency with the density, scale, appearance, and rural community character of Coalinga's existing neighborhoods during project review.
- **LU1-1.5:** Establish city-wide architectural design guidelines that preserve the small-town, rural character of Coalinga. These guidelines should promote urban design features that provide artful integration of building sites with the environment emphasizing earth-tone colors, desert architecture, historic building façades, exterior building materials, monumental signs, large building setbacks, appropriate landscaping, berms, and other features that hide or reduce the visibility of negative urban features such as parking lots.
- **LU1-1.6:** Adopt specific design standards for entry signs, landscaping, and other appropriate amenities in the Gateway Overlay areas.

- **LU1-1.10:** New development proposals shall be located within or adjacent to the City limits in accordance with the proposed phases to provide for orderly expansion of the city.
- **LU1-1.11:** The City shall develop guidelines for the preparation of lighting plans. In order to minimize light trespass and greater overall light levels in the city, new development and projects making significant parking lot improvements or proposing new lighting shall be required to prepare a lighting plan for review by City planning staff.

The project site is composed of four segments: Segments 1 (partial), 2, 13, and 14 are located along residential and commercial land uses in the northern portion of the city. Segments 2, 13, and 14 are located adjacent to Los Gatos Creek. All trail segments are located on relatively flat topography and support limited vegetation. Land cover types in the project area include wild oats and annual brome grasslands, scale broom scrub, developed land, disturbed land, and a non-vegetated channel.

Environmental Evaluation

(a) Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?

According to the City's General Plan, Los Gatos Creek, which is located adjacent to Segments 2, 13, and 14, provides a vegetated riparian corridor that is visible through town and the adjacent countryside (City of Coalinga 2009a). The project includes the construction of a multi-use bicycle and pedestrian path with associated fencing, signage, and striping. The project would not result in the construction of any new structures that would result in a substantial visible change in the project area or surrounding areas. The proposed project would not have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista, including the Los Gatos Creek corridor; therefore, impacts would be *less than significant*.

(b) Would the project substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?

The City's General Plan identifies the SR 198/SR 33 route as a major public viewing corridor for the nearby rolling hills, natural landscape, and agricultural areas surrounding the city. Caltrans has designated the portion of SR 198 between Interstate (I-) 5 and the western Fresno County line as an Eligible State Scenic Highway (Caltrans 2021). Proposed Segments 2 and 14 would be located east and west of SR 198/SR 33 and would be visible by travelers along the route. The project would not result in the removal or modification of any trees, rock outcroppings, historic building, or other scenic resources. The project includes the construction of a multi-use bicycle and pedestrian path with associated fencing, signage, and striping, and would not result in the construction of any new structures that would result in a substantial visible change of the project site or surrounding area as seen by viewers traveling along SR 198/SR 33. The project would not substantially damage scenic resources within a state scenic highway; therefore, impacts would be *less than significant.*

(c) In non-urbanized areas, would the project substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage points.) If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?

Construction of the new multi-use path would result in temporary visual impacts associated with the operation of construction equipment and vehicles. However, these visual impacts would be typical of general construction activities and would be short-term in nature and limited to localized, temporary impacts during the construction period. Upon completion of project construction activities, the project

would result in the establishment of a multi-use bicycle and pedestrian path with associated fencing, signage, and striping and would not result in any new structures that would substantially change the visual character of the project site or surrounding area. The project would include landscaping along the new multi-use path that would primarily include hydroseeding of a native seed mix, which would contribute to the new pathway's visual appeal. The project would be consistent with the city's rural character and would not conflict with any policies or guidelines established in the City-Wide Design Guidelines or General Plan. The project would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site or its surroundings; therefore, impacts would be *less than significant*.

(d) Would the project create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?

The project does not propose the use or installation of permanent lighting fixtures or highly reflective materials that would create a substantial source of glare. Therefore, the proposed project would not create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area and potential impacts would be *less than significant.*

Conclusion

The project is not located within view of a scenic vista and would not result in a substantial change to scenic resources in the area. The project would be consistent with existing policies and standards in the Coalinga City-Wide Design Guidelines and General Plan related to the protection of scenic resources and community visual character. Potential impacts to aesthetic resources would be less than significant and mitigation measures are not necessary.

Mitigation Measures

Mitigation is not necessary.

II. Agriculture and Forestry Resources

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. Would the project:				
(a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	☐	☐	☐	☒

	Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(c)	Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code Section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code Section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code Section 51104(g))?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(d)	Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(e)	Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Setting

The California Department of Conservation (CDOC) Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) produces maps and statistical data used for analyzing impacts on California's agricultural resources. Agricultural land is rated according to soil quality and current land use. For environmental review purposes under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the FMMP categories of Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, Unique Farmland, Farmland of Local Importance, and Grazing Land are considered "agricultural land." Other non-agricultural designations include Urban and Built-up Land, Other Land, and Water. Based on the FMMP, soils at the project site are within the following FMMP designations (Figure 3; CDOC 2016):

- Urban and Built-Up Land;
- Grazing Land;
- Farmland of Local Importance; and
- Vacant or Disturbed Land.

Farmland of Local Importance is land of importance to the local economy, as defined by each County's local advisory committee and adopted by its Board of Supervisors. In Fresno County, Farmland of Local Importance is defined as all farmable lands within Fresno County that do not meet the definitions of Prime, Statewide, or Unique. This includes land that is or has been used for irrigated pasture, dryland farming, confined livestock and dairy, poultry facilities, aquaculture, and grazing land (CDOC 2016).

The project site is underlain by six soil types (Figure 4; Natural Resources Conservation Service [NRCS] 2021):

- **412 – Yribarren clay loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes.** This level to nearly level soil is well drained, has a medium runoff class, and slow permeability. This soils type is typically used for irrigated crops and homesite development. This soil is designated as prime farmland if irrigated.
- **445 – Excelsior sandy loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes**. This level to nearly level soil is well drained, has a negligible runoff class, and a moderate permeability. This soil is typically used for irrigated crops and homesite development. This soil is designated prime farmland if irrigated.

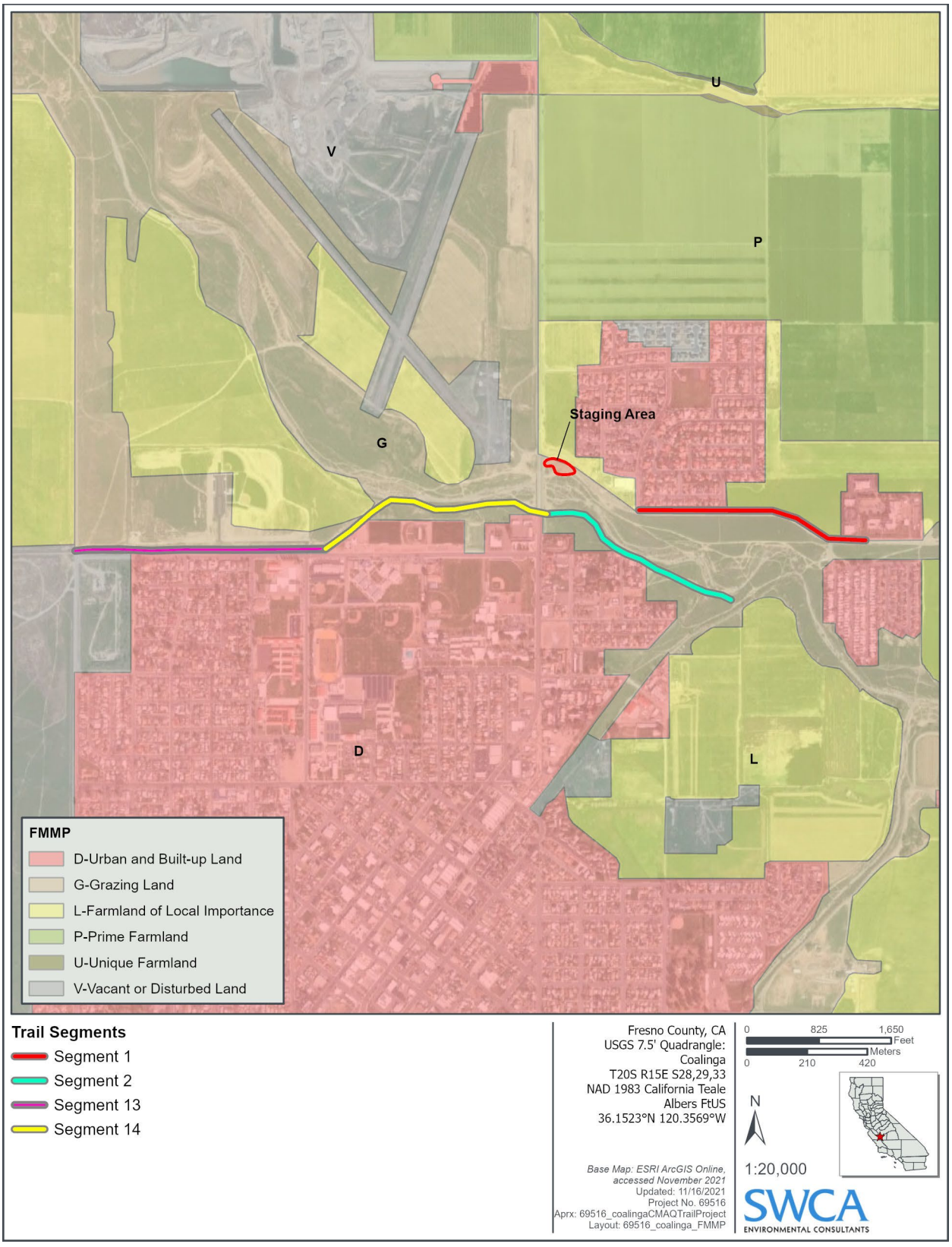

Figure 3. California Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program map.

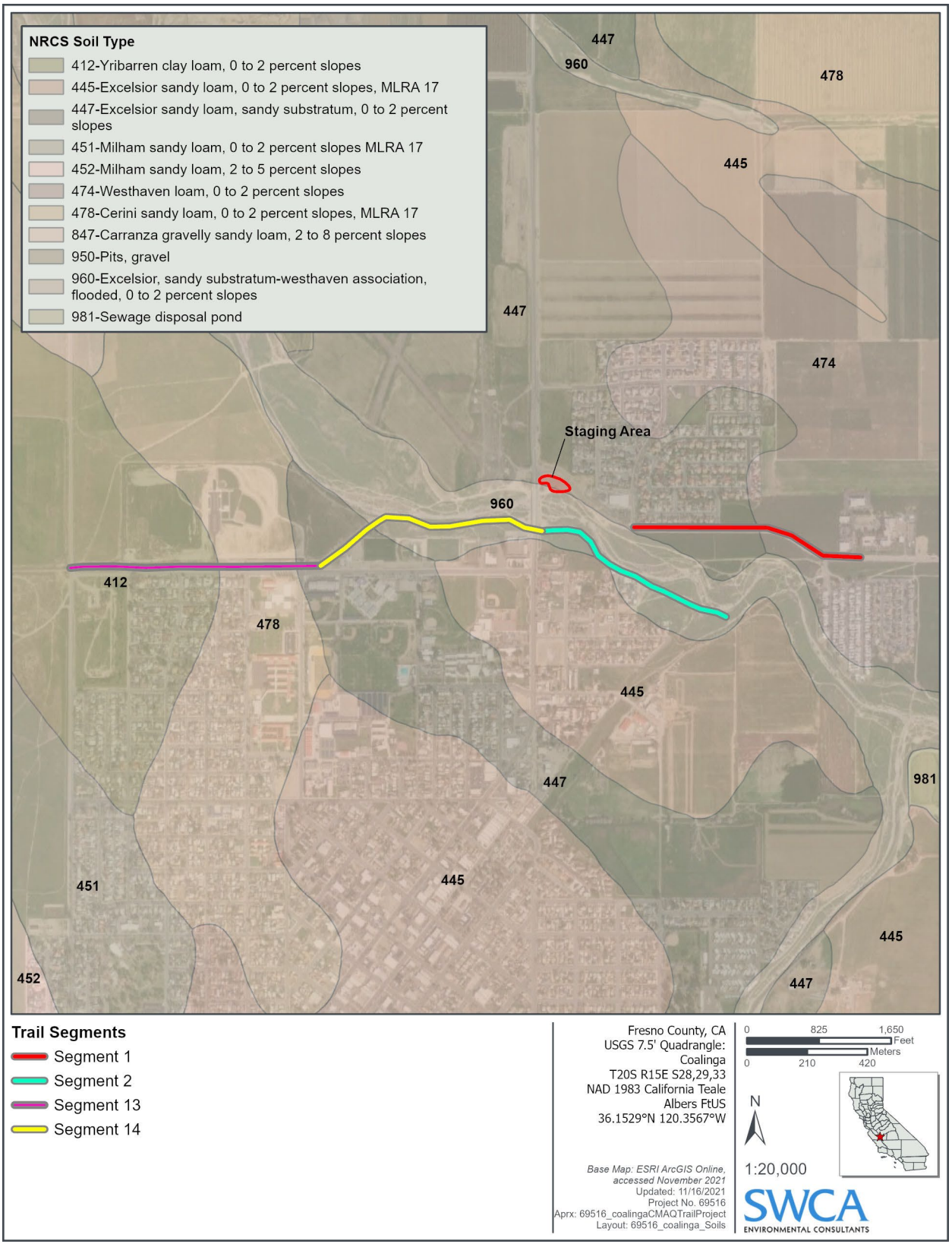

Figure 4. NRCS soils map.

- **447. Excelsior sandy loam, sandy substratum, 0 to 2 percent slopes.** This level to nearly level soil is well drained and has moderate permeability. This soil has negligible surface runoff and is typically used for irrigated crops and homesite development. This soil is designated as prime farmland if irrigated.
- **474 – Westhaven loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes.** This level to nearly level soil is well drained, has a low runoff class, and a moderately slow permeability. This soil has negligible surface runoff and is typically used for irrigated crops and homesite development. This soil is designated as prime farmland if irrigated.
- **478 – Cerini sandy loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes, MLRA 17.** This level to nearly level soil is well drained and has moderately slow permeability. This soil has low surface runoff and is typically used for irrigated crops and homesite development. This soil is designated as prime farmland if irrigated.
- **960 – Excelsior, sandy substratum-westhaven association, flooded, 0 to 2 percent slopes.** This level to nearly level soil is well drained, has a low runoff class, and moderate permeability. This soil is typically used for wildlife habitat and irrigated crops. This soil is not prime farmland.

The Land Conservation Act of 1965, commonly referred to as the Williamson Act, enables local governments to enter into contracts with private landowners for the purpose of restricting specific parcels of land to agriculture or related open space use. In return, landowners receive property tax assessments that are much lower than normal because they are based on farming and open space uses as opposed to full market value. Based on the *Final Master Environmental Impact Report for the City of Coalinga 2025 General Plan Update* (General Plan FEIR), the project site is not located on or directly adjacent to lands subject to a Williamson Act contract (City of Coalinga 2009b).

According to California Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 12220(g), forest land is defined as land that can support 10% native tree cover of any species, including hardwoods, under natural conditions, and that allows for management of one or more forest resources, including timber, aesthetics, fish and wildlife, biodiversity, water quality, recreation, and other public benefits. Timberland is defined as land, other than land owned by the federal government and land designated by the State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection as experimental forest land, which is available for, and capable of, growing a crop of trees of a commercial species used to produce lumber and other forest products, including Christmas trees. The project site does not support any land that meets the definition of forest land or timberland.

Environmental Evaluation

(a) Would the project convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?

As shown in Figure 3, the proposed project segments are located on land designated as Vacant or Disturbed Land, Grazing Land, Urban and Built-up Land, and Farmland of Local Importance. Farmland of Local Importance does not meet the definitions of prime, statewide, or unique farmland. The portion of the project site that would be located on Farmland of Local Importance is associated with Segment 1 and would result in conversion of a relatively small portion of the overall area of Farmland of Local Importance along the edge of the area. No current active agricultural activities occur at this location of the project site, and conversion of this area to a multi-use pathway would not preclude agricultural activities from occurring on the remaining areas of the property. The proposed project would not convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance; therefore, potential impacts would be *less than significant.*

(b) Would the project conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?

The project and proposed staging area are located on land with the following zoning designations: Public Facilities, Recreation, Light Manufacturing/Business, Open Space, Residential Single Family, Residential Estate, and General Commercial (City of Coalinga 2015b). No zoning for agricultural use or land under a Williamson Act contract is located within or directly adjacent to the project site; therefore, *no impacts* would occur.

(c) Would the project conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code Section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code Section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code Section 51104(g))?

The project and proposed staging area are located on land with the following zoning designations: Public Facilities, Recreation, Light Manufacturing/Business, Open Space, Residential Single Family, Residential Estate, and General Commercial (City of Coalinga 2015b). No zoning for forest land, timberland, or timberland production is located within or directly to the project site; therefore, *no impacts* would occur.

(d) Would the project result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

The project area comprises vacant, undeveloped, relatively flat, ruderal (disturbed) areas, developed areas, ornamental landscaping, and non-native annual grassland. The project would not result in the removal of any existing trees and the project site does not meet the criteria to be considered forest land. The project would not result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use; therefore, *no impacts* would occur.

(e) Would the project involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

As discussed above, the project area does not include active agriculture; Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as designated by the FMMP; land under active Williamson Act contract; or land designated or zoned for agricultural use, forest land, or timberland. The project area does not support agricultural uses in the surrounding area and would not directly or indirectly adversely affect agricultural support services in the vicinity; therefore, *no impacts* would occur.

Conclusion

The project would not result in potentially significant impacts related to agriculture and forestry resources and mitigation measures are not required.

Mitigation Measures

Mitigation is not necessary.

III. Air Quality

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management district or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:				
(a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(b) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?	☐	☒	☐	☐

Setting

The federal Clean Air Act required the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to establish National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for pollutants considered harmful to public health and the environment, and also set deadlines for their attainment. The EPA has established NAAQS for six criteria pollutants: carbon monoxide (CO), lead, nitrogen dioxide, ozone, particulate matter 10 micrometers and smaller in diameter (PM_{10}), particulate matter 2.5 micrometers and smaller in diameter ($PM_{2.5}$), and sulfur dioxide.

The California Department of Public Health established California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS) in 1962 to define the maximum amount of a pollutant (averaged over a specified period of time) that can be present without any harmful effects on people or the environment. The California Air Resources Board (CARB) adopted the CAAQS developed by the Department of Public Health in 1969, which had established CAAQS for 10 criteria pollutants: particulate matter (PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$), ozone, nitrogen dioxide, sulfate, CO, sulfur dioxide, visibility reducing particles, lead, hydrogen sulfide, and vinyl chloride.

The city of Coalinga is located in the San Joaquin Valley Air Basin (SJVAB). The SJVAB is under the jurisdiction of the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD), which regulates air quality in the southern portion of the Central Valley. The SJVAB area is currently designated as a non-attainment area for federal (8-hour) and state (1-hour and 8-hour) ozone standards, federal and state $PM_{2.5}$ standards, and state PM_{10} standards (EPA 2021).

On July 18, 2016, the EPA published in the *Federal Register* a final action determining that the San Joaquin Valley has attained the 1-hour ozone national ambient air quality standard. On October 1, 2015, the EPA revised the NAAQS for ground-level ozone, lowering the primary and secondary ozone 8-hour standard levels to 70 parts per billion. The SJVAB is classified as an "extreme" nonattainment area for the 2015 ozone standard (SJVAPCD 2020).

In compliance with regulations, due to the non-attainment designations of the area, the SJVAPCD periodically prepares and updates air quality plans that provide emission reduction strategies to achieve attainment of the NAAQS, including control strategies to reduce air pollutant emissions through

regulations, incentive programs, public education, and partnerships with other agencies. The most recent ozone plan is the *2016 Ozone Plan for 2008 8-Hour Ozone Standard* (2016 Ozone Plan) (SJVAPCD 2016). The 2016 Ozone Plan was adopted by the SJVAPCD on June 16, 2016, and CARB subsequently conducted a public meeting to consider approval of the plan and approved the plan on July 21, 2016. The most recent federal attainment plan for particulate matter is the *2018 Plan for the 1997, 2006, and 2012 PM2.5 Standards* (2018 Plan) (SJVAPCD 2018).

The SJVAPCD has established thresholds of significance for criteria pollutant emissions, which are based on New Source Review offset requirements for stationary sources. The SJVAPCD's current adopted thresholds of significance for criteria pollutant emissions are provided in Table 1, below.

Table 1. SJVAPCD Criteria Pollutants Thresholds of Significance

Pollutant/Precursor	Construction Emissions (tons per year [tpy])	Operational Permitted Equipment and Activities Emissions (tpy)
Carbon monoxide (CO)	100	100
Nitrogen oxides (NO_x)	10	10
Reactive organic gases (ROG)	10	10
Sulfur oxides (SO_x)	27	27
Particulate matter 10 microns in diameter or less (PM_{10})	15	15
Particulate matter 2.5 microns in diameter or less ($PM_{2.5}$)	15	15

Source: SJVAPCD (2015)

Asbestos is surface mined in large quantities approximately 20 miles northwest of Coalinga. The serpentine host rock in which it is found covers approximately 2,000 square miles, and as much as 50% of this rock could be asbestos. Total reserves are not known, but the deposit has been estimated to contain more than 100 million tons of ore. This area is one of the nation's principal producers of asbestos and contains one of the world's largest deposits of short-fiber asbestos (City of Coalinga 2009a). The CARB has identified naturally occurring asbestos (NOA) as a toxic air contaminant. Any ground disturbance proposed in an area identified as having the potential to contain NOA must comply with the CARB Airborne Toxics Control Measure for Construction, Grading, Quarrying, and Surface Mining Operations (17 California Code of Regulations [CCR] Section 93105).

The *City of Coalinga General Plan 2005-2025 Safety, Air Quality and Noise Element* (General Plan Chapter 5; City of Coalinga 2009a) identifies several goals, policies, and implementation measures associated with new development projects and air quality, including, but not limited to, the following:

> **Goal AQ1:** Effective communication, cooperation and coordination in developing and operating community and regional air quality programs.
>
> > **Policy AQ1-1:** Air quality impacts associated with new development projects must be considered during the development review process.
>
> **Goal AQ2:** Reduction of motor vehicle trips and vehicle miles traveled.
>
> > **Policy AQ2-1:** Encourage and support development projects that propose alternatives to standard vehicle trips.
> >
> > **Policy AQ2-2:** Support upgrades and improvements to the transportation system that benefit bicycle, pedestrian, and other non-vehicular forms of circulation.

Goal AQ3: Minimize exposure of the public to toxic air pollutant emissions and noxious odors from industrial, manufacturing and processing facilities.

Policy AQ3-1: Mitigate impacts from toxic air pollutant emissions and noxious odors from industrial, manufacturing, and processing facilities.

Goal AQ4: A reduction in particulate, fugitive dust, and other emissions.

Policy AQ4-1: Implement measures that effectively reduce particulate, dust and other emissions.

Implementation Measure AQ4-1.1: Require new development to reduce short-term emissions during construction by implementing conditions on major new development projects in accordance with Table 5-8 of the General Plan.

Environmental Evaluation

(a) Would the project conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?

The project includes the design, construction, and operation of portions of four segments of the City's planned 8.8-mile perimeter trail and spur system identified in the City's ATP. The project would not result in a significant amount of criteria air pollutants (see Impact III(b), below, for further analysis) and would not conflict with the attainment strategies set forth in the SJVAPCD's 2016 Ozone Plan, 2018 Plan, or the *2007 PM10 Maintenance Plan and Request for Redesignation* (SJVAPCD 2007).

The City's Safety, Air Quality and Noise Element sets forth policies to reduce air quality pollutant emissions. Implementation Measure AQ4-1.1 states that the City shall require new development to reduce short-term emissions during construction by implementing conditions on major new development projects in accordance with Table 5-8 of the General Plan. Mitigation Measure AQ-1 has been identified to minimize construction-generated emissions. Therefore, potential impacts associated with a conflict with an applicable air quality plan would be *less than significant with mitigation.*

(b) Would the project result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?

The SJVAB region is currently designated as a non-attainment area for federal (8-hour) and state (1-hour and 8-hour) ozone standards, federal and state $PM_{2.5}$ standards, and state PM_{10} standards.

Project construction and operational air pollutant emissions were estimated using the most recent version of the California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod 2020.4.0). Based on estimated construction phase length, grading volumes, and other factors, estimated construction-related emissions and operational emissions that would result from the project were calculated and compared to applicable SJVAPCD thresholds in Tables 2 and 3. The CalEEMod results are included in Appendix A.

Table 2. Proposed Project Estimated Construction Emissions

Pollutant/Precursor	Maximum Project Construction Emissions (tpy)	SJVAPCD Emissions Threshold (tpy)	Exceeds Threshold?
Carbon monoxide (CO)	0.59	100	No
Nitrogen oxides (NO_x)	0.54	10	No
Reactive organic gases (ROG)	0.06	10	No
Sulfur oxides (SO_x)	0.001	27	No
Particulate matter 10 microns in diameter or less (PM_{10})	0.12	15	No
Particulate matter 2.5 microns in diameter or less ($PM_{2.5}$)	0.07	15	No

Table 3. Proposed Project Operational Emissions

Pollutant/Precursor	Total Project Operational Emissions (tpy)	SJVAPCD Emissions Threshold (tpy)	Exceeds Threshold?
Carbon monoxide (CO)	0.001	100	No
Nitrogen oxides (NO_x)	0.00	10	No
Reactive organic gases (ROG)	0.66	10	No
Sulfur oxides (SO_x)	0.00	27	No
Particulate matter 10 microns in diameter or less (PM_{10})	0.00	15	No
Particulate matter 2.5 microns in diameter or less ($PM_{2.5}$)	0.00	15	No

Based on the analysis provided above, the project would not result in emissions of criteria pollutants that would exceed construction-related or operational thresholds established by the SJVAPCD. Therefore, the project would not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the region is in non-attainment, and impacts would be *less than significant.*

(c) Would the project expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?

The project site is located in close proximity to existing residential uses. Segment 13 is located approximately 95 feet north of single-family residences and an existing elementary school. Segment 14 is located approximately 130 feet north of existing commercial land uses. The eastern portion of Segment 2 is located approximately 50 feet north of existing single-family residences. The western portion of Segment 1 is located a minimum of 35 feet south of single-family residences.

Because project construction equipment would not operate for long periods of time and would be used at varying locations within the site, construction equipment and fugitive dust emissions would not occur at the same location for long periods of time. Due to the temporary nature of proposed construction activities and the relatively short duration of potential exposure to associated emissions, sensitive receptors in the area would not be exposed to pollutants for a permanent or extended period of time. In addition, Mitigation Measures AQ-1 and AQ-2 would further reduce construction-related emissions in the vicinity of sensitive receptors. Therefore, construction of the proposed project would not be expected to expose nearby sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations and potential impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation*.

(d) Would the project result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?

Construction activities have the potential to emit odors from diesel equipment, paints, solvents, fugitive dust, and adhesives. Odors from construction activities would be intermittent and temporary, and generally would not extend beyond the construction area. Upon completion of the construction phase, the proposed project would not include any components or operational activities expected to generate substantial odor. Therefore, odors generated by the project would be short-term, intermittent, and undetectable.

The project segments would be located in an area that has been identified as having a potential for NOA (Van Gosen and Clinkenbeard 2011). Mitigation Measure AQ-3 has been identified to require a geologic evaluation to be conducted prior to project ground disturbance to determine whether NOA is present on-site and to implement an Asbestos Dust Mitigation Plan per the City's and SJVAPCD's review and approval, if necessary. Therefore, with implementation of Mitigation Measure AQ-3, potential impacts associated with other air pollutant emissions would be *less than significant with mitigation.*

Conclusion

The project would not result in a conflict with current regional clean air plans and, with implementation of mitigation, the project would not conflict with the City's Safety, Air Quality and Noise Element. The project would not result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to criteria pollutant emissions or expose nearby sensitive receptors to substantial air pollutant emissions. With implementation of Mitigation Measures AQ-1 through AQ-3, residual impacts associated with air quality would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

AQ-1 The following measures shall be implemented and shown on grading and building plans to minimize construction-generated fugitive dust emissions:

a. All disturbed areas, including storage piles, which are not being actively utilized for construction purposes, shall be effectively stabilized of dust emissions using water, using a chemical stabilizer/suppressant, or covered with a tarp or other suitable cover or vegetative ground cover;

b. All on-site unpaved roads and off-site unpaved access roads shall be effectively stabilized of dust emissions using water or SJVAPCD-approved chemical stabilizer/suppressant;

c. All land clearing, grubbing, scraping, excavation, land leveling, grading, cut and fill, and demolition activities shall be effectively controlled of fugitive dust emissions utilizing application of water or by presoaking;

d. When materials are transported off-site, all material shall be covered, or effectively wetted to limit visible dust emissions, and at least 6 inches of freeboard space from the tip of the container shall be maintained;

e. All operations shall limit or expeditiously remove the accumulation of mud or dirt from adjacent public streets at the end of each workday. The use of dry rotary brushes is expressly prohibited except where preceded or accompanied by sufficient wetting to limit the visible dust emissions. Use of blower devices is expressly forbidden;

f. Following the addition of materials to, or the removal of materials from, the surface of outdoor storage piles, said piles shall be effectively stabilized of fugitive dust emissions utilizing sufficient water or chemical stabilizer/suppressant;

g. Within urban areas, track out shall be immediately removed when it extends 50 or more feet from the site and at the end of each workday;

h. Any site with 150 or more vehicle trips per day shall prevent carryout and track out;

i. Limit traffic speeds on unpaved roads to 15 miles per hour (mph);

j. Install sandbags or other erosion control measures to prevent silt runoff to public roadways from sites with a slope greater than 1 percent;

k. Install wheel washers for all exiting trucks, or wash off all trucks and equipment leaving the site;

l. Install wind breaks at windward side(s) of construction areas;

m. Suspend excavation and grading activity when winds exceed 20 mph; and

n. Limit area subject to excavation, grading, and other construction activity at any one time.

AQ-2 The following measures shall be implemented and shown on grading and building plans to minimize construction equipment-generated emissions:

a. Substitute alternative fueled or catalyst equipped diesel construction equipment, when available;

b. Minimize idling time to not exceed 10 minutes;

c. Minimize the hours of operation of heavy-duty equipment and/or the amount of equipment in use to the greatest extent feasible;

d. Replace fossil-fueled equipment with electrically driven equivalents (provided they are not run through a portable generator set) when available;

e. Curtail construction during periods of high ambient pollutant concentrations if feasible; this may include ceasing construction activity during the peak-hour of vehicular traffic on adjacent roadways; and

f. Implement activity management (e.g., reschedule activities to reduce short-term impacts).

AQ-3 Prior to any grading activities, a geologic evaluation shall be conducted to determine if naturally occurring asbestos (NOA) is present within the area that will be disturbed. If NOA is not present, an exemption request must be filed with the SJVAPCD. If NOA is found at the site, the applicant must comply with all requirements outlined in the Asbestos Airborne Toxics Control Measure. These requirements may include, but are not limited to:

a. Development of an Asbestos Dust Mitigation Plan, which must be approved by the SJVAPCD before operations begin; and

b. Development and approval of an Asbestos Health and Safety Program (required for some projects).

If NOA is not present, an exemption request must be filed with the SJVAPCD.

IV. Biological Resources

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
(a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(c) Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Setting

The information in this section is based on the *Natural Environment Study (Minimal Impacts) for the City of Coalinga Trails Master Plan Segments 1, 2, 13, and 14* (SWCA Environmental Consultants [SWCA] 2022a).

Based on botanical and biological reconnaissance surveys conducted by Aardvark Biological Services Senior Biologist Stephanie Hines on March 28, 2022, and on May 31, 2022, the project area consists of five different land cover types, including 49.24 acres of wild oats and annual brome grasslands (*Avena* spp.–*Bromus* spp. Herbaceous Semi-Natural Alliance), 0.23 acre of scale broom scrub (*Lepidospartum squamatum* Shrubland Alliance), 3.61 acres of developed land, 0.75 acre of disturbed land, and 0.02 acre of non-vegetated channel (Figure 5). There is no critical habitat located within the project area.

Desktop-level review conducted for the project included queries of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) system, California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB), and California Native Plant Society (SWCA 2022a). The queries identified 31

special-status plant species and 39 special-status wildlife species that have the potential to occur in the project area. Appropriately timed botanical and reconnaissance-level biological surveys were conducted by Aardvark Biological Services Senior Biologist Stephanie Hines on March 28 and on May 31, 2022. Based on conditions observed during field surveys, no special-status plant species are considered to have the potential to occur within the project area due to the absence of suitable habitat, extent of invasive species, and lack of observation during botanical surveys conducted during the appropriate blooming period. The following special-status wildlife species are considered to have the potential to occur within the project area based on observed site conditions and/or documented occurrences of these species in the project vicinity: Crotch bumble bee (*Bombus crotchii*), Hopping's blister beetle (*Lytta hoppingi*), Morrison's blister beetle (*Lytta morrisoni*), coast horned lizard (*Phrynosoma blainvillii*), California glossy snake (*Arizona elegans occidentalis*), San Joaquin coachwhip (*Masticophis flagellum ruddocki*), burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*), Swainson's hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*), nesting migratory birds, San Joaquin kit fox (*Vulpes macrotis mutica*), and American badger (*Taxidea taxus*).

Environmental Evaluation

(a) Would the project have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

Impacts to natural communities/habitats within the project area have been quantified based on ground disturbance and vegetation disturbance/removal associated with the proposed project. Estimated impacts to natural communities/habitats are quantified in Table 4.

Table 4. Impacts to Habitats/Natural Communities

Habitats/Natural Communities	Permanent Impacts (acres)	Temporary Impacts (acres)
Scale broom scrub	0.00	0.23
Wild oats and brome grassland	3.91	49.24
Non-vegetated channel	0.00	0.02
Disturbed	2.78	0.75
Developed	2.14	3.61

Source: SWCA (2022a)

SPECIAL-STATUS PLANTS

Appropriately timed botanical surveys conducted on March 28 and May 31, 2022, did not result in observations of any special-status plant species within the project area (SWCA 2022a). Based on the existing site conditions (the extent of previous disturbance and lack of native vegetation), absence of suitable habitat, and lack of observations during appropriately timed botanical surveys within the project area, special-status plant species are not considered to have potential to occur within the project area. Therefore, impacts related to special-status plants would be *less than significant*.

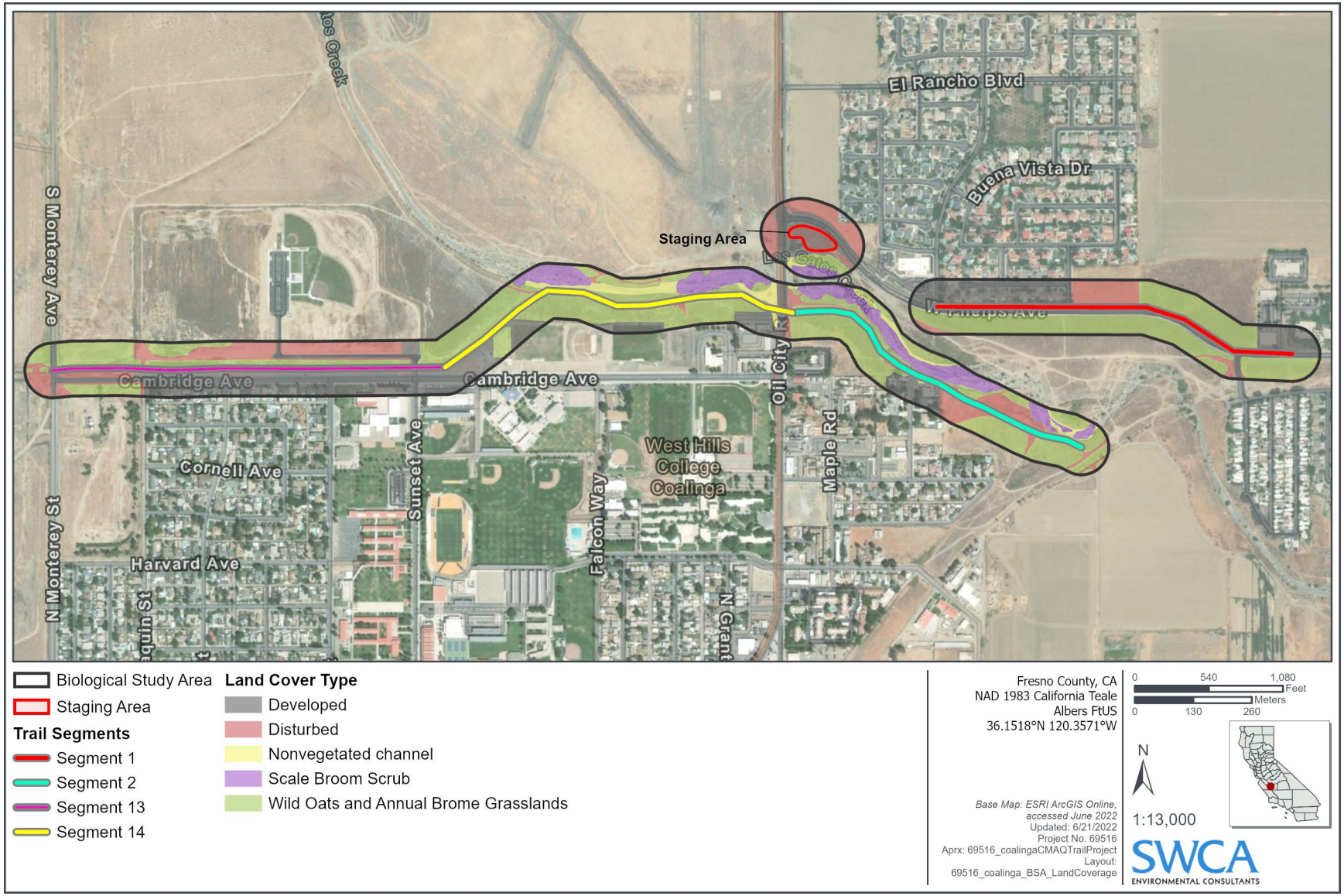

Figure 5. Trails Master Plan Segments 1, 2, 13, and 14 land cover map.

SPECIAL-STATUS WILDLIFE

Based on the reconnaissance-level biological surveys, suitable habitat is considered to be present within the project area for the following special-status wildlife species: Crotch bumble bee, Hopping's blister beetle, Morrison's blister beetle, coast horned lizard, California glossy snake, San Joaquin coachwhip, burrowing owl, other nesting migratory birds, San Joaquin kit fox, and American badger. The following species descriptions are included in the *Natural Environment Study (Minimal Impacts) for the City of Coalinga Trails Master Plan Segments 1, 2, 13, and 14* (SWCA 2022a).

Insects

Crotch bumble bee is a State Candidate Endangered species. This species inhabits open grassland and scrub habitats and nests underground. Nests are often located underground in abandoned rodent nests or aboveground in tufts of grass, old bird nests, rock piles, or cavities in dead trees. Bumble bees collect both nectar and pollen of the plants that they pollinate. In general, bumble bees forage from a diversity of plants, although individual species can vary greatly in their plant preferences, largely due to differences in tongue length. This species is classified as a short-tongued species whose food plants include species the genera *Asclepias, Chaenactis, Lupinus, Medicago, Phacelia,* and *Salvia* (Hatfield et al. 2015). This species was historically common in the Central Valley but now appears to be absent from much of its historic range, especially in the central part of its range (Hatfield et al. 2015). There are several documented CNDDB occurrences (Occs. 16, 58, 59) of this species within 5 miles of the project area. However, there is limited suitable habitat within the project area due to the absence of food plants and the extent of disturbance. This species was not observed during field surveys but is considered to have the potential to occur.

Hopping's blister beetle is considered a special animal by California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW 2022). California Hopping's blister beetle inhabits the foothills at the southern end of the Central Valley. There is no published information on habitat or floral visitation records for Hopping's blister beetle, but they have been observed on alfalfa (*Medicago sativa*). There is a documented CNDDB occurrence of this species that overlaps the project area (Occ. 1). This occurrence is not dated and presumed extant. Given the lack of knowledge of habitat requirements for this species and the documented occurrence overlapping the project area, this species is considered to have the potential to occur. This species was not observed during field surveys.

Morrison's blister beetle is considered a special animal by CDFW (CDFW 2022). Morrison's blister beetle inhabits the southern Central Valley of California. This species is typically found on flowering plants near nesting sites of bees. There is one documented CNDDB occurrence of this species that overlaps the project area (Occ. 1). There is suitable habitat within the project area based on the presence of flowering plants. This species was not observed during field surveys; however, there is moderate potential for this species to occur within the project area.

The reconnaissance-level wildlife surveys conducted on March 28 and May 31, 2022, did not identify any Crotch bumble bee, Hopping's blister beetle, or Morrison's blister beetle and did not identify their preferred host plants. The project area supports marginally suitable habitat for these species within scale broom scrub, non-native grassland, and ornamental landscaping within the project area. Potential project impacts to these species could include direct impacts associated with the destruction of buried nests, if present, from the use, movement, and staging of construction equipment. Indirect project impacts may include modification of potentially suitable habitat through the movement of soil and minor vegetation removal activities. Additionally, noise and dust generated by construction activities have the potential to indirectly affect these species if present. The proposed project is expected to have no adverse effect on these species with implementation of mitigation measures identified below.

Reptiles

Coast horned lizard is recognized by CDFW as a species of special concern (SSC). This flat-bodied lizard has a wide, oval-shaped body, scattered enlarged pointed scales on the upper body and tail, and a large crown of horns or spines on the head. Coast horned lizards were historically distributed along the Pacific coast extending from the border of Baja California west of the deserts and the Sierra Nevada, north to the Bay Area, and inland as far north as Shasta Reservoir, and south into Baja California. This historical range has been severely fragmented due to land alteration and loss of habitat. Coast horned lizards inhabit open areas of sandy soil and low vegetation in a variety of habitat types, including valleys, foothills, semiarid mountains, grasslands, coniferous forests, woodlands, and chaparral with open areas and patches of loose soil. They are frequently found in lowlands along sandy washes with scattered shrubs and long dirt roads. Coast horned lizards are generally active aboveground when weather conditions are appropriate, i.e., when they are not exposed to extreme heat or cold temperatures. They primarily prey upon ants but can also consume other small insects, such as spiders, beetles, termites, flies, honeybees, moth larvae, and grasshoppers. There is suitable sandy wash habitat adjacent to the project area; however, there are no documented occurrences of this species within 10 miles of the project area, and the habitat is moderately disturbed by off-highway vehicles and pedestrians. This species was not observed during field surveys; however, this species has potential to occur due to the proximity of potentially suitable habitat.

California glossy snake is recognized by CDFW as an SSC. California glossy snake is patchily distributed from the eastern portion of San Francisco Bay, southern San Joaquin Valley, and the Coast, Transverse, and Peninsular Ranges, south to Baja California. The species generally inhabits a range of scrub and grassland habitats, often with loose or sandy soils. There are four documented CNDDB occurrences within 1 to 4 miles north, east, and southeast of the project area (Occs. 32, 33, 34, 35). The project area may provide moderately suitable habitat for this species in sparsely vegetated grassland areas; however, due to the extent of disturbance within the project area, this species has a low potential for occurrence. This species was not observed during field surveys.

San Joaquin coachwhip is recognized by CDFW as an SSC. Whipsnakes are a common to uncommon species found in arid regions below 6,000 feet elevation in California. The known range of this California endemic species extends from 8 miles west of the community of Arbuckle in Colusa County in the Sacramento Valley, southward to the Grapevine in the Kern County portion of the San Joaquin Valley, and westward into the inner South Coast Ranges. They occur in open, dry, vegetative associations with little or no tree cover. In the western San Joaquin Valley, the San Joaquin whipsnake occurs in valley grassland and saltbush scrub associations and is known to climb bushes such as *Atriplex* spp. for viewing prey and potential predators. They use mammal burrows for refuge and possibly for oviposition sites. Whipsnakes occur in open terrain and are most abundant in grass, desert scrub, chaparral, and pasture habitats. Whipsnakes seek cover in rodent burrows, bushes, trees, and rock piles. They hibernate in soil or sand approximately 1 foot below the surface, sometimes at the bases of plants. Their diet consists of rodents, lizards and eggs, snakes (including rattlesnakes), birds and eggs, young turtles, insects, and carrion. Whipsnakes actively search for prey with their heads elevated. They poke their heads in burrows, or climb trees, using both vision and olfaction to detect prey, which is consumed alive and whole. San Joaquin whipsnakes mate in April and May, lay their eggs in June and July, and the first young appear in late August or early September. Their clutch size ranges from four to 16 eggs, with a mean of eight to 10. There are two documented CNDDB occurrences approximately 1.5 miles southwest and 2 miles northwest of the project area. There is moderately suitable grassland habitat within the project area; however, based on the extent of existing disturbance, there is low potential for occurrence. This species was not observed during field surveys.

The reconnaissance-level wildlife surveys conducted on March 28 and May 31, 2022, did not identify coast horned lizard, California glossy snake, or San Joaquin coachwhip; however, potentially suitable burrows for their use were observed within the project area. The project area supports potentially suitable grassland habitat for the California glossy snake and San Joaquin coachwhip and is in close proximity to potentially suitable sandy wash habitat for coast horned lizards. Potential impacts to these species include direct impacts associated with the use and movement of construction equipment, construction debris, vegetation removal, and worker foot traffic within the non-native grassland habitat within the project area. Indirect impacts of construction activities, including noise and vibration, may cause these species, if present, to temporarily abandon habitat adjacent to work areas. This disturbance may increase the potential for predation if these species abandon burrow shelter sites. Indirect impacts of erosion could also impact these species through destruction of burrow sites and degradation of suitable habitat. The project is expected to have no adverse effect on these species with implementation of mitigation measures identified below.

Birds

Burrowing owls are recognized by CDFW as an SSC. Burrowing owls prefer annual and perennial grasslands, typically with sparse or nonexistent tree or shrub canopies. In California, they are found in close association with California ground squirrel (*Otospermophilus beecheyi*) burrows, which provide them with year-round shelter and seasonal nesting habitat. Burrowing owls also use human-made structures, such as culverts, debris piles, or openings beneath pavement, as shelter and nesting habitat (CDFW 2012). Burrowing owl populations have been on the decline due to diminishing habitat (CDFW 2012) and burrowing mammal control (Zarn 1974). Burrowing owls exhibit a high degree of nest site fidelity and as habitat becomes increasingly fragmented and isolated by development, these sites become increasingly inhospitable for breeding burrowing owls. There is marginally suitable grassland habitat within the project area, and there are three documented CNDDB occurrences within 5 miles of the project area (Occs. 1242, 2046, and 829). This species was not observed during field surveys.

The reconnaissance-level wildlife surveys conducted on March 28 and May 31, 2022, did not identify any burrowing owls or sign; however, abundant California ground squirrel burrows were observed within the project area. The project area supports marginally suitable grassland habitat for the burrowing owl.

Potential impacts to burrowing owl include direct impacts associated with the use and movement of construction equipment, construction debris, vegetation removal, and worker foot traffic within the non-native grassland habitat within the project area. Indirect impacts of construction activities, including noise and vibration, may cause burrowing owls, if present, to temporarily abandon burrows adjacent to work areas. This disturbance may increase the potential for direct impacts such as injury or mortality associated with the movement of construction equipment if they abandon burrow shelter sites. Indirect impacts of erosion could also impact these species through destruction of burrow sites and degradation of suitable habitat. The project is expected to have no adverse effect on this species with implementation of mitigation measures identified below.

Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA)-protected bird species have the potential to nest within the project area and are protected during their nesting period under the provisions of the federal MBTA and California Fish and Game Code Section 3503. Birds may nest on utility poles, scrub areas, and ruderal habitats.

The reconnaissance-level wildlife surveys conducted on March 28 and May 31, 2022, identified one active nest. The following 13 MBTA-protected bird species were observed flying in the vicinity of the project area during wildlife reconnaissance surveys: Anna's hummingbird (*Calypte anna*), Brewer's blackbird (*Euphagus cyanocephalus*), common raven (*Corvus corax*), house finch (*Haemorhous mexicanus*), killdeer (*Charadrius vociferus*), mourning dove (*Zenaida macroura*), northern mockingbird

(*Mimus polyglottos*), red-tailed hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*), Say's phoebe (*Sayornis saya*), Swainson's hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*), tree swallow (*Tachycineta bicolor*), white-crowned sparrow (*Zonotrichia leucophrys*), and yellow-rumped warbler (*Setophaga coronata*). One mourning dove nest was observed within the project area. The project area supports suitable foraging and nesting habitat for other MBTA-protected species within non-native grassland, ornamental landscaping, and on nearby structures within developed areas.

Potential impacts to other MBTA-protected birds include direct impacts associated with the use and movement of construction equipment, construction debris, and vegetation removal within the project area if MBTA-protected birds are nesting or foraging on the ground within work areas. Indirect impacts of construction activities, including noise and vibration, may cause temporary disturbance to these species if present. Indirect impacts of erosion could also affect these species through degradation of potentially suitable habitat within non-native grassland. The project is expected to have no adverse effect on nesting migratory birds with implementation of mitigation measures identified below.

Mammals

San Joaquin kit fox is federally listed as endangered and state listed as threatened. Development of suitable kit fox habitat for intensive agricultural, oil production, and urban land uses has contributed to the decline of this species. San Joaquin kit fox occurs primarily in the San Joaquin Valley, with satellite populations occurring in the southern Salinas Valley and possibly the eastern Pajaro River Valley. It inhabits valley and foothill grasslands, sparsely vegetated shrubby habitats (O'Farrell 1983), and some agricultural and urban areas (Jensen 1972; Morrell 1972). Adult foxes are usually solitary during the late summer and fall. By September and October, adult females have begun to excavate and enlarge natal dens (Morrell 1972). Adult males join the vixens in October or November (Morrell 1972) and mating probably occurs near the first of the year (Egoscue 1962). Pups typically are born in late February or early March (Egoscue 1962; Morrell 1972), begin foraging for themselves at about 4 to 5 months, and disperse shortly thereafter (Morrell 1972).

San Joaquin kit fox uses complex dens for shelter and protection (Morrell 1972). Most dens are located in flat terrain or on the lower slopes of hills. Common locations for dens include washes, drainages, and roadside berms. San Joaquin kit fox are reputed to be poor diggers and are usually found in areas with loose-textured, friable soils (Morrell 1972; O'Farrell 1983). Some studies have suggested that where hardpan layers predominate, kit foxes create dens by enlarging the burrows of California ground squirrel or American badger (Morrell 1972; Jensen 1972; Orloff et al. 1986). They also commonly den in human-made structures, such as small-diameter culverts. A diet of small rodents, such as kangaroo rats (*Dipodomys* spp.) and California ground squirrels, is common for San Joaquin kit fox (Jameson and Peeters 1988).

The reconnaissance-level wildlife surveys conducted on March 28 and May 31, 2022, did not identify any San Joaquin kit fox or evidence of the species within the project area. There is marginally suitable grassland habitat for this species present within the project area. Additionally, there are several documented CNDDB occurrences within 5 miles of the project area (Occs. 51, 437, 443, 81, 859, 858, 519). This species was not observed during field surveys and no dens were observed, but this species is considered to have the potential to occur within the project area.

Although San Joaquin kit fox was not observed during reconnaissance surveys of the project area, it still has the potential to occur due to the presence of potentially suitable habitat within the project area. If present, construction activities within the project area have the potential to impact this species.

Potential project impacts to San Joaquin kit fox include direct effects associated with the use and movement of construction equipment, construction debris, vegetation removal, and worker foot traffic.

Indirect effects of construction activities, including noise and vibration, may cause disturbance to this species and may cause it to leave burrows and migrate to adjacent work areas. This disturbance may increase the potential for direct effects associated with construction activities if they abandon shelter sites. The indirect effects of erosion and sedimentation could also impact San Joaquin kit foxes through destruction of burrows. The project is expected to have no adverse effect on this species with implementation of mitigation measures identified below.

American badger is a California SSC. This mammal has a flat body with short legs and a triangular face with a long, pointed, tipped-up nose. It has long brown or black fur with white stripes on its cheeks and one stripe running from its nose to the back of its head. The American badger lives in open areas with friable soils, such as plains and prairies, farmland, and the edges of woods. Small burrowing mammals, including ground squirrel, rats, gophers, and mice, comprise the majority of the badger's diet. American badger digs prey out of the ground with its strong, sharp claws. The American badger is fossorial. An individual badger typically uses a variety of different dens and burrows for shelter, hunting, food storage, and giving birth. The American badger is solitary, except during the breeding season. The adult American badger mates in summer to early fall, with young born March to April.

The reconnaissance-level wildlife surveys conducted on March 28 and May 31, 2022, did not identify American badger or evidence of the species within the project area. There is suitable grassland habitat present within the project area. Additionally, there are several documented CNDDB occurrences within 5 miles of the project area (Occs. 345, 274, 123, 261). This species was not observed during field surveys and no dens were observed, but this species is considered to have the potential to occur within the project area.

Although American badger was not observed during reconnaissance surveys of the project area, it still has the potential to occur due to the presence of potentially suitable grassland habitat within the project area. If present, construction activities within the project area have the potential to impact this species. Potential project impacts to American badger include direct effects associated with the use and movement of construction equipment, construction debris, vegetation removal, and worker foot traffic. Indirect effects of construction activities, including noise and vibration, may cause disturbance to this species and may cause it to leave burrows and migrate to adjacent work areas. This disturbance may increase the potential for direct effects associated with construction activities if they abandon shelter sites. The indirect effects of erosion and sedimentation could also impact American badger through destruction of burrows. The project is expected to have no adverse effect on this species with implementation of mitigation measures identified below.

SUMMARY

Based on the literature review, seasonally timed botanical surveys, and the reconnaissance-level biological surveys, no special-status plants are considered to have the potential to occur and the following special-status animal species are considered to have the potential to occur in the project area: Crotch bumble bee, Hopping's blister beetle, Morrison's blister beetle, coast horned lizard, California glossy snake, San Joaquin coachwhip, burrowing owl, other nesting migratory birds, San Joaquin kit fox, and American badger. Mitigation has been included to require pre-construction surveys, employee awareness training, avoidance measures, and other measures intended to avoid indirect and direct impacts to these species. Therefore, potential impacts to these species would be *less than significant with mitigation*.

(b) Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

The project area consists of 0.23 acre of scale broom scrub (*Lepidospartum squamatum* Shrubland Alliance). This vegetation community is a California Sensitive Natural Community, ranked S3 (communities ranked S1–S3 are considered sensitive) (CDFW 2022). This community consists of an open to continuous shrub canopy with scale broom as dominant, co-dominant, or conspicuous, accompanied by an herbaceous understory, and that typically occurs in intermittently or rarely flooded alluvial soils associated with streams, washes, and fans (Sawyer et al. 2009). Commonly occurring species in this community in the project area include scale broom, tamarisk (*Tamarix ramosissima*), red-stemmed filaree (*Erodium cicutarium*), salt heliotrope (*Heliotropium curassavicum* var. *oculatum*), foxtail barley (*Hordeum murinum*), red brome (*Bromus madritensis*), and allscale saltbush (*Atriplex polycarpa*),. The vegetation community occurs within Los Gatos Creek and is moderately disturbed by off-road vehicles. It occurs intermittently in the creek bed and is interspersed with portions of the non-vegetated channel. Potential project impacts to the vegetation community could include direct impacts associated with the destruction of the plants. Indirect project impacts may include alteration of soil and typography within and around the community. Permanent impacts to this community would be avoided by construction activities. Temporary impacts would be minimized with the implementation of mitigation. Implementation of the proposed project would result in no adverse impacts on habitats or natural communities of concern; therefore, impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation*.

(c) Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?

Coalinga is located within the Arroyo Pasajero watershed, which encompasses a drainage area of approximately 530 square miles that extends from the Diablo Range to the west into the San Joaquin Valley to the east. Warthan, Los Gatos, Jacalitos, Coalmine Canyon, and Arroyo Pasajero Creeks are located within the City's Sphere of Influence, flowing past the city in a northeasterly direction. Los Gatos and Warthan Creeks flow easterly out of the southern hills of the Diablo Range and converge at the eastern edge of the Coalinga city limits, then form the Arroyo Pasajero. Jacalitos Creek converges with Los Gatos Creek approximately 5 miles east outside of the city limits. In the far southeast corner of the project area, Zapato Chino Creek flows through the Palvarado Gap into the San Joaquin Valley. These creeks all flow northeast within the Arroyo Pasajero watershed (City of Coalinga 2009a). Segments 2, 13, and 14 are located adjacent to Los Gatos Creek. Based on desktop-level review of the USFWS National Wetlands Inventory (NWI), drainages associated with Los Gatos Creek and a potential freshwater pond feature are located adjacent to Segments 13 and 14 (USFWS 2021). The field survey conducted on March 28, 2022, identified one feature in Segments 13 and 14 that potentially drains into Los Gatos Creek. This feature was dry at the time of the survey but appears to be artificially constructed to carry runoff or irrigation water and was mapped during the survey as grasslands due to the vegetation present. The freshwater pond mapped by the NWI adjacent to Segments 13 and 14 was not observed and occurs within an upland grassland area. The field survey conducted on March 28, 2022, did not identify any features that confirm the presence of a drainage within the project area other than Los Gatos Creek. The project requires minor vegetation removal and grading for site preparation activities. A Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) would be required for the project to ensure that potential impacts to off-site water resources resulting from construction activities do not occur. Based on the absence of wetland and surface water resources within the project impact area, minimal earthwork required for the project, and compliance with a SWPPP, the project is not anticipated to result in direct or indirect adverse effects on

any wetland or other aquatic features within the vicinity of the project; therefore, impacts would be *less than significant*.

(d) Would the project interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?

The project area does not support migratory fish habitat and the project would not result in adverse impacts to nearby aquatic resources, including Los Gatos Creek. There is potential for migratory birds to use the project area for nesting or foraging. Mitigation Measure BIO-15 has been identified to require nesting bird surveys prior to the commencement of construction activities in order to protect any migratory bird species that may be present within the project area. Therefore, the project would not interfere with the movement of migratory wildlife species and impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation*.

(e) Would the project conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?

The *City of Coalinga General Plan 2005-2025 Open Space and Conservation Element* (General Plan Chapter 3; City of Coalinga 2009a) identifies goals and policies for the protection of biological resources within the city, including special-status wildlife species, special-status plant species, riparian corridors, and other sensitive habitats. As previously mentioned, the project would not result in adverse impacts to biological resources protected in the City's Open Space and Conservation Element. Implementation of identified mitigation measures would protect migratory bird species within the project area. Therefore, the project would be consistent with the local policies and impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation*.

(f) Would the project conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?

The City authorized the preparation of the Coalinga Habitat Conservation Plan on March 20, 1997, which has yet to be adopted. The project would not conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan; therefore, impacts would be *less than significant*.

Conclusion

The project area does not support special-status plant species. The project site supports marginally suitable habitat for special-status wildlife species; however, implementation of identified mitigation would avoid or reduce impacts to special-status wildlife. The project would be required to prepare and implement a SWPPP with best management practices (BMPs) to ensure that proposed construction activities do not result in erosion or other runoff that could adversely affect nearby riparian or aquatic habitats. Further, protection of special-status wildlife and other biological resources would be consistent with the City's Open Space and Conservation Element and 2005 Draft Coalinga Habitat Conservation Plan. Implementation of the mitigation measures identified below would ensure the proposed project would not result in adverse impacts to biological resources and impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

BIO-1 The proposed project design shall avoid impacts to the Sensitive Natural Community.

BIO-2 Construction equipment shall be operated and staged in upland areas outside of the Sensitive Natural Community.

BIO-3 Foot traffic from construction activities shall avoid entering the Sensitive Natural Community.

BIO-4 Silt fencing shall be erected at a 10-foot distance from the creek bank in areas where the Sensitive Natural Community occurs to avoid sediment deposition.

BIO-5 Construction fencing shall be erected around the Sensitive Natural Community to avoid any impacts from foot or vehicle traffic.

BIO-6 During construction, the project contractor will make all reasonable efforts to limit the use of imported soils for fill. Soils currently existing on-site shall be used for fill material. If the use of imported fill material is necessary, the imported material must be obtained from a source that is known to be free of invasive plant species, or the material must consist of purchased clean material, such as crushed aggregate, sorted rock, or similar. To avoid the spread of invasive species, the contractor shall:

a. Stockpile topsoil and redeposit the stockpiled soil on-site at a sufficient depth to preclude germination or spread of those species after construction is complete; or

b. Transport the topsoil to a permitted landfill for disposal.

BIO-7 Prior to construction, project plans will clearly identify the type of species, location, and method of removal and disposal of invasive species found within the project site.

BIO-8 Removal and disposal of invasive plants and wildlife must be in accordance with state law and/or project authorizations from resource agencies (e.g., USFWS Programmatic Biological Opinion).

BIO-9 During construction, the biological monitor(s) will ensure that the spread or introduction of invasive plant and wildlife species is avoided to the maximum extent possible.

BIO-10 All erosion control materials, including straw bales, straw wattles, or mulch, used on-site must be free of invasive species seed. Removal of invasive species would provide opportunities for planting native trees and shrubs to enhance the existing native plant communities.

BIO-11 Within 30 days prior to any ground disturbance, a pre-construction survey shall be conducted by the qualified biologist for special-status species that have the potential to occur within the project area. A letter report documenting the results of the pre-construction surveys shall be prepared and submitted to the City of Coalinga Planning Department for review and approval. If special-status species are identified during preconstruction surveys, project activities shall be modified (if necessary) and implemented in a manner that avoids all direct and indirect effects on these species. The City of Coalinga may coordinate with the California Department of Transportation and California Department of Fish and Wildlife, if necessary, to identify appropriate methods for avoiding all direct and indirect effects on special-status species within the project area.

BIO-12 Prior to initiation of any site preparation/construction activities, the City of Coalinga will prepare and supply a PowerPoint presentation and sign-up sheets for all construction

personnel. All individuals who will be involved in site preparation or construction activities will be required to review the PowerPoint presentation and acknowledge they reviewed the materials via the sign-up sheets. At a minimum, the presentation will include a description of the natural history of the species with the potential to be affected by the proposed project and their habitats, the general measures that are being implemented to conserve these species as they relate to the proposed project, the penalties for non-compliance, and the boundaries of the work area within which the project must be accomplished. To ensure that employees and contractors understand their roles and responsibilities, training may have to be conducted in languages other than English. The sign-up sheets will be returned to the City of Coalinga Planning Department.

BIO-13 Prior to initiation of any site preparation and/or construction activities, the City of Coalinga will retain a qualified on-call biological monitor to provide oversight over ground-disturbing construction activities and implementation of avoidance and minimization efforts. The monitor will coordinate with the City of Coalinga Resident Engineer and the California Department of Transportation Local Assistance regarding any special-status species detections or requests to stop construction activities.

BIO-14 Prior to any site preparation and/or construction activities associated with the proposed project, the City of Coalinga will implement the following measures to prevent impacts to burrowing owl:

a. A preconstruction survey will be conducted by a qualified biologist to determine the presence of burrowing owl nesting sites within the Biological Study Area. The survey shall be conducted no more than 30 days prior to any construction activities for each construction area. This will ensure that burrowing owl has not moved onto, and is not inhabiting, the project site. All potential burrows located within the construction and work areas will be monitored for 3 consecutive nights using tracking medium at the burrow entrance to determine the current use. If no owl activity is observed during this period, the burrow will be destroyed immediately to preclude subsequent use.

b. If active burrowing owl nest sites are found within the project area, the City of Coalinga shall comply with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's 2012 Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation.

BIO-15 If construction activities are conducted during the typical nesting bird season (February 15 through September 15), preconstruction surveys will be conducted by a qualified biologist prior to any construction activity to identify potential nesting bird activity. The survey area will include a 0.5-mile buffer surrounding the project area. If no active nests are found within the study area, no further mitigation is required. If nesting activity is identified during the preconstruction survey process, the following measures will be implemented:

a. If active nest sites of bird species protected under the MBTA and California Fish and Game Code are observed within the project area, then the project will be modified and/or delayed as necessary to avoid direct take of the identified nests, eggs, and/or young;

b. If active nest sites of raptors and/or bird species of special concern are observed within the vicinity of the project site, then the appropriate buffer around the nest site (typically 250 feet for passerines and 300 feet for raptors, not including Swainson's hawk) will be established. Construction activities in the buffer zone

will be prohibited until the qualified biological monitor has determined that the young have fledged the nest and achieved independence; and

c. Active nests should be documented by a qualified biologist, and a letter report will be submitted to the City of Coalinga documenting project compliance with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and California Fish and Game Code.

BIO-16 Within 30 days prior to initiation of site disturbance and/or construction, a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service-approved biologist will conduct a preconstruction survey for known or potential sensitive species, including San Joaquin kit fox dens, and submit a letter to the City of Coalinga Planning Department reporting the date the survey was conducted, the survey methodology, survey results, and what measures were necessary (and completed), as applicable, to address any San Joaquin kit fox activity within the project limits.

BIO-17 Prior to and during any site preparation and/or construction activities associated with the proposed project, the City of Coalinga and/or the project contractor will implement the following conservation measures:

a. Project employees will be directed to exercise caution when commuting within unpaved project areas. A 20-mile-per-hour speed limit will be enforced on unpaved roads.

b. Project employees will be provided with written guidance governing vehicle use, speed limits on unpaved roads, fire prevention, and other hazards.

c. A litter control program shall be instituted at the project site. All workers shall ensure their food scraps, paper wrappers, food containers, cans, bottles, and other trash from the project area are deposited in covered or closed trash containers. The trash containers shall be removed from the project area at the end of each working day.

d. No canine or feline pets or firearms (except for federal, state, or local law enforcement officers and security personnel) shall be permitted on construction sites to avoid harassment, killing, or injuring of listed species.

    i. At the end of each working day, maintenance and construction excavations greater than 2 feet deep shall be covered, filled-in, or equipped with earthen escape ramps no greater than 200 feet apart to prevent entrapment of listed species.

e. All construction activities shall be confined within the project construction area, which may include temporary access roads, haul roads, and staging areas specifically designated and marked for these purposes. At no time shall equipment or personnel be allowed outside the project construction area without authorization from the City of Coalinga and/or biological monitor.

f. Environmentally Sensitive Areas within the Project Impact Area, such as active burrows and trees to be preserved, shall be delineated with high visibility temporary fencing at least 4 feet in height, flagging, or other barrier to prevent encroachment of construction personnel and equipment onto any sensitive areas during project work activities. Such fencing shall be inspected and maintained daily until completion of the project. The fencing will be removed only when all construction equipment is removed from the site.

g. If necessary, tightly woven fiber netting or similar material shall be used for erosion control or other purposes at the project site to ensure that special-status

species do not get trapped. This limitation will be communicated to the contractor through use of Special Provisions included in the bid solicitation package.

h. Use of rodenticides and herbicides at the project site shall be avoided to the maximum extent feasible to prevent primary or secondary poisoning of special-status species and depletion of prey populations on which they depend. In the event that the use of herbicides is necessary for invasive species control, all uses of such compounds shall observe labels and other restrictions mandated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, California Department of Pesticide Regulation, and other appropriate federal and state regulations, as well as additional project-related restrictions deemed necessary by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service or the California Department of Fish and Wildlife.

BIO-18 Prior to or during project activities, if any observations are made of San Joaquin kit fox, or any known or potential San Joaquin kit fox dens are discovered within the project limits, the qualified biologist will notify the City of Coalinga, and the City of Coalinga will contact the California Department of Transportation who, in turn, will contact the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to discuss ways to proceed with the project and avoid take. All work will stop until such time that the California Department of Transportation determines that it is appropriate to resume work.

V. Cultural Resources

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
(a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to § 15064.5?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to § 15064.5?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?	☐	☒	☐	☐

Setting

The city of Coalinga and surrounding areas are located within the ethnographic territory of the Southern Yokuts people. The city of Coalinga is a traditional Tachi village. The Tachi were one of the largest of the Yokut Tribes. The Tachi lived along the northern and western shores of Tulare Lake, the west side of the Central Valley, and throughout the Diablo Mountain Range. Coalinga is the village of Chah'kiu, the place of asphaltum. After invasions by the Spanish and Euro-Americans, the Tachi hid around Coalinga until oil was found, and they were forced to move to the current Rancheria.

The Southern Yokuts' homeland was centered near water sources including the Tulare, Buena Vista, and Kern Lakes and connecting sloughs and rivers. Archaeological investigations and surveys in the immediate Coalinga area have identified archaeological sites to the west and southwest along Los Gatos

and Warthan Creeks. In areas where extensive agriculture has occurred, the potential for finding significant archaeological resources is considered very remote.

In 1983, an earthquake caused severe damages and destroyed most of the city's historically significant buildings. However, the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) lists two sites of historical significance in the Coalinga area: the Birdwell Rock Petroglyph Site and the Coalinga Polk Street School. Resources considered to be of local significance include the RC Baker Memorial Museum and the Wooden Walking Beam (City of Coalinga 2009b).

The *Archaeological Survey Report for the City of Coalinga CMAQ Trail Project, Segments 1,2, 13, and 14, City of Coalinga, Fresno County, California* (SWCA 2022b) was prepared based on desktop-level review and intensive field surveys of the project area. Desktop-level review consisted of a California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS) records search at the Southern San Joaquin Valley Information Center (SSJVIC). The records search includes coordination with the NRHP, California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR), California Inventory of Historic Resources, California State Historical Landmarks, California Points of Historical Interest, and California Office of Historic Preservation's Historic Property Directory and Determinations of Eligibility. The SSJVIC records search identified 12 previously conducted cultural resource studies within a 0.25-mile radius of the project area and five studies within the project area. One historic resource was identified within the project area but does not overlap the proposed work or staging areas. SWCA conducted an intensive field survey on December 15, 2021. The field survey did not identify any additional resources within the project area.

Environmental Evaluation

(a) Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to § 15064.5?

The project includes construction of Segments 1 (portion), 2, 13, and 14 of the City's planned 8.8-mile perimeter trail. Segment 1 (portion) would run along the north side of Phelps Avenue between the Coalinga Regional Medical Center and Posa Chanet Boulevard; Segment 2 would run along the south side of Los Gatos Creek; Segment 13 would run along an existing City maintenance road located on top of a berm north of Cambridge Avenue; and Segment 14 would run along an existing maintenance road and behind a City park. Additionally, the proposed staging area would be located within a vacant, undeveloped, disturbed lot located southeast of the intersection of Elm Avenue and Phelps Avenue.

Based on the SSJVIC records search, multiple segments of the former Southern Pacific Railroad are located within 0.25 mile of the project area (SWCA 2022b). The proposed trail segments do not overlap any of these former rail segments; however, proposed trail Segment 2 is located approximately 0.1 mile north of the former rail corridor. The former rail corridor is associated with the defunct branch line that ran from Goshen Junction in Tulare County southwest across the San Joaquin Valley into the foothills of the Coast Range as far as Alcalde Station, approximately 3 miles west of Coalinga. By 1937, Southern Pacific Railroad's Goshen line extended no farther than Coalinga, where the company continued to benefit from freight shipments associated with local oil production, stock raising, and agricultural crops. Though the operation of the line was initially important to the local communities it served, the rise of alternative modes of transport, aging rail infrastructure, and declines in certain sectors of the local economy made the Coalinga line increasingly obsolete. The City eventually acquired the rail corridor right-of-way after the Southern Pacific Railroad abandoned the line within city limits (U.S. Congress 1985); tracks were pulled up along the entire branch by the 1990s. Portions of the former railyards were abandoned, altered, or repurposed. The loss of integrity of the remaining historic-period resources in the project area renders them ineligible for the NRHP. Similarly, they do not appear to meet the eligibility criteria for listing in the CRHR or otherwise constitute historical resources for the purposes of CEQA.

There are no other identified historical buildings or structures located within or adjacent to the proposed trail segments. Additionally, the project does not include the removal of any existing buildings or structures and does not include high-impact construction activities (i.e., pile driving) that could result in indirect structural damage to historical resources. Since the former railroad corridor is ineligible for the NRHP and the CRHR, the project would not be located near any identified historical resources. Additionally, the project does not include activities that would otherwise damage historical resources; therefore, the project would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource and *no impacts* would occur.

(b) Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to § 15064.5?

The project includes construction of Segments 1 (portion), 2, 13, and 14 of the City's planned 8.8-mile perimeter trail. The project would result in approximately 10,520 linear feet (1.97 miles) of a multi-use bicycle/pedestrian trail in the northeastern portion of the city and would be developed within previously disturbed or otherwise developed areas. However, all segments would be developed in the vicinity of Los Gatos Creek and Segments 2 and 14 would be located along the Los Gatos Creek bank, which increases the potential for unknown cultural resources to be present within the project area.

The SSJVIC records search indicates that one previously recorded cultural resource (P-10-003930) is located within a 0.25-mile radius of the project area (Table 5).

Table 5. Previously Recorded Cultural Resources within 0.25-Mile of the Project Area

Primary Number	Trinomial	Resource Description	NRHP Eligibility Status	Recorded by and Year	Proximity to Project Area
P-10-003930	CA-FRE-3109H	Historic: Road / trail / railroad grade	Unknown/ Not Evaluated	W.L. Norton (1998)	Outside project area (within 0.25-mile buffer)

Source: SWCA (2022b)

Historic archaeological resource P-10-003930 consists of multiple segments of the Southern Pacific Railroad. As previously identified, the proposed trail segments do not overlap any portion of P-10-003930; however, Segment 2 is located approximately 0.1 mile north of the former rail corridor. When SWCA surveyed the project area, no evidence of P-10-003930 was identified on the surface. In addition, the field survey identified that the project area has been subject to extensive disturbance from foot and vehicle traffic as well as previous residential and commercial development (SWCA 2022b). This resource has not been identified by the City's General Plan as a site of historical significance and does not appear to meet the eligibility criteria for listing in the CRHR or otherwise a constitute historical resource for the purposes of CEQA. No additional resources were identified within the project area and surrounding 0.25-mile buffer as a result of the records search, literature review, tribal consultation, or the intensive pedestrian survey.

Although no previously unrecorded cultural resources were identified within the project area and the project area is characterized by extensive surface disturbance, there is potential for unknown buried cultural resources to be located within the project area due to the project's location near Los Gatos Creek. Therefore, it is possible that ground-disturbing construction activities have the potential to result in inadvertent impacts to buried archaeological resources if present within the proposed work areas. The uppermost 2 to 3 feet of soil within the project area have largely been disturbed; however, it is possible that intact native soils remain capped at greater depth or within undeveloped areas. Where excavations for the proposed improvements occur in unpaved areas or exceed 2 to 3 feet in paved areas, there is increased

potential to encounter buried archaeological deposits. Mitigation Measures CR-1 through CR-4 are provided to ensure impacts to any unknown resources that may be encountered during project development would be minimized. Therefore, potential impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation*.

(c) Would the project disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?

No human remains are known to exist within the project site; however, the discovery of previously undocumented human remains is possible during ground-disturbing activities. Protocol for properly responding to the inadvertent uncovering of human remains is identified in California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 and would be required to be printed on all building and grading plans per Mitigation Measure CR-5. Potential impacts related to disturbance of human remains would be less than significant with incorporation of Mitigation Measure CR-5. Therefore, impacts related to disturbance of human remains would be *less than significant with mitigation*.

Conclusion

The project would not result in impacts to any buildings or structures that could be listed as or eligible for listing as a historical resource. There are no known previously unrecorded historic or prehistoric archaeological resources within the project area. Implementation of Mitigation Measures CR-1 through CR-5 would ensure the project does not result in inadvertent impacts to unknown cultural resources or human remains. Therefore, the project would not result in substantial adverse change to historical or archaeological resources and would not disturb any human remains. With implementation of the identified mitigation measures, impacts related to cultural resources would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

CR-1 Prior to construction activities, a representative(s) from the Santa Rosa Rancheria Tachi Yokut Tribe shall be retained to conduct cultural resource awareness training for all construction personnel including the following:

a. Review the types of archaeological artifacts that may be uncovered;

c. Provide examples of common archaeological artifacts to examine;

d. Review what makes an archaeological resource significant to archaeologists and local Native Americans;

e. Describe procedures for notifying involved or interested parties in case of a new discovery;

f. Describe reporting requirements and responsibilities of construction personnel;

g. Review procedures that shall be used to record, evaluate, and mitigate new discoveries; and

h. Describe procedures that would be followed in the case of discovery of disturbed as well as intact human burials and burial-associated artifacts.

CR-2 Due to input received from the Santa Rosa Rancheria, an archaeological monitoring program will be implemented through the development of an Archaeological Monitoring Plan. The Plan should include, but not be limited to:

a. List of personnel involved in the monitoring activities;

b. Description of Native American involvement;

c. Description of how the monitoring shall occur;

d. Description of frequency of monitoring (e.g., full time, part time, spot checking);

e. Description of what resources are expected to be encountered;

f. Description of circumstances that would result in the halting of work at the project site;

g. Description of procedures for halting work on the site and notification procedures;

h. Description of monitoring reporting procedures; and

i. Specific, detailed protocols for what to do in the event of the discovery of human remains.

j. Provide thresholds for reducing and or discontinuing monitoring in the event that resources are not present and/or the potential to encounter resources is negligible.

CR-3 At the time of permitting, a Curation Agreement, in coordination with the Santa Rosa Rancheria Tachi Yokut Tribe, shall be established between a City-qualified repository and the City for the permanent curation of potentially recovered materials. The Curation Agreement shall include a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the qualified repository and the City to identify the ownership of the materials in perpetuity; responsibilities of the repository and City; use of the collections; special procedures or restrictions; procedures for response to requests for study, analysis, casting, loan, exhibition and consumptive uses. The MOU shall also include an agreement that the repository shall not transfer, repatriate, sell, trade or discard a collection (or portion thereof); and the repository shall provide curatorial services in accordance with state standards.

CR-4 If cultural resources are encountered during subsurface earthwork activities, all ground-disturbing activities within a 25-foot radius of the find shall cease and the City shall be notified immediately. Work shall not continue until a City-qualified archaeologist assesses the find and determines the need for further study. If the find includes Native American-affiliated materials, a local Native American tribal representative will be contacted to work in conjunction with the City-approved archaeologist to determine the need for further study. A standard inadvertent discovery clause shall be included in every grading and construction contract to inform contractors of this requirement. Any previously unidentified resources found during construction shall be recorded on appropriate California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) forms and evaluated for significance in terms of CEQA criteria by a qualified archaeologist.

If the resource is determined significant under CEQA, the qualified archaeologist shall prepare and implement a research design and archaeological data recovery plan, in conjunction with locally affiliated Native American representative(s) as necessary, that will capture those categories of data for which the site is significant. The archaeologist shall also perform appropriate technical analysis, prepare a comprehensive report, and

file it with the SSJVIC, located at the California State University, Bakersfield, and provide for the permanent curation of the recovered materials.

CR-5 In the event that human remains are exposed during ground-disturbing activities associated with the project, an immediate halt work order shall be issued, and the City Assistant Manager and locally affiliated Native American representative(s) (as necessary) shall be notified. California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 requires that no further disturbance of the site or any nearby area reasonably suspected to overlie adjacent human remains shall occur until the County Coroner has made the necessary findings as to origin and disposition pursuant to PRC Section 5097.98. If the remains are determined to be of Native American descent, the coroner shall notify the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) within 24 hours. These requirements shall be printed on all building and grading plans.

VI. Energy

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
(a) Result in a potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Setting

Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) is the primary electricity provider for the city. Of PG&E's electricity mix, 100% is sourced from greenhouse gas (GHG)-free sources, with 29% being sourced from renewable sources (PG&E 2019). The City is one of only three local jurisdictions in California that owns and operates a natural gas distribution system. The City purchases natural gas from PG&E at a large meter station and it is then distributed to households through the City's distribution infrastructure.

The California Building Code (CBC) contains standards that regulate the method of use, properties, performance, or types of materials used in the construction, alteration, improvement, repair, or rehabilitation of a building or other improvement to real property. The CBC includes mandatory green building standards for residential and nonresidential structures, the most recent versions of which are referred to as the *2019 Building Energy Efficiency Standards*. These standards focus on four key areas: smart residential photovoltaic systems, updated thermal envelope standards (preventing heat transfer from the interior to the exterior and vice versa), residential and nonresidential ventilation requirements, and non-residential lighting requirements.

The *City of Coalinga General Plan 2005-2025* identifies several policies and implementation measures related to fuel use, energy conservation, and energy efficiency, including, but not limited to, the following:

> **Policy AQ2-2:** Support upgrades and improvements to the transportation systems that benefit bicycle, pedestrian, and other non-vehicular forms of circulation.

Implementation Measure AQ2.2-4: Within two years of adoption of the General Plan, prepare a Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan to provide a comprehensive system of bikeways and pedestrian paths.

Policy AQ5-1: Actively seek to reduce greenhouse gas emissions within the Planning Area.

Implementation Measure AQ5-1.4: All City-funded projects that involve the disturbance of more than one acre shall use construction equipment that utilizes fuels, such as biodiesel, which reduce GHG emissions by 10% compared to typical fuels.

Policy AQ5-2: Identify opportunities for creating energy conservation and efficiency programs for application in all City facilities, schools, and local businesses.

Implementation Measure AQ5-2.1: City buildings and facilities will be operated in the most energy-efficient manner without endangering public health and safety and without reducing public safety or service levels.

Policy C1-6: Encourage the use of transportation alternatives that reduce the use of personal vehicles.

Policy C2-1: Promote non-motorized bike and pedestrian circulation facilities to serve all areas of the City and link regional systems, with priority coordination with school, park, transit, and other major facilities.

Environmental Evaluation

(a) Would the project result in a potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?

Project implementation would require minimal consumption of energy resources. During construction, fossil fuels and electricity would be used by construction vehicles and equipment. The energy consumed during construction would be temporary and would not represent a significant or wasteful demand on available resources.

Upon completion of construction activities, energy consumption of the project would be negligible. The proposed multi-use pathway would be used primarily by local residents and would not result in significant new vehicle miles traveled (VMT) based on the size and nature of the amenity. The project does not include the installation of any new light fixtures, and the only component of the project that would require any energy would be the installation of three bike and pedestrian counters (EcoCounters) to tally actual use on the new trail system. There are no unique project characteristics that would result in a significant increase in energy usage, or an inefficient, wasteful use, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources. In addition, the provision of a new pedestrian and bicycle path may replace a portion of current vehicle trips and lead to an overall decrease in vehicle trips made within the city. Therefore, potential impacts would be *less than significant*.

(b) Would the project conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?

Implementation of the project would not result in a significant new energy demand and there are no project components or operations that would conflict with the City's General Plan goals, policies, or

implementation measures, or any other state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency. Construction of the project would be required to comply with state laws and regulations, including the most recent CBC requirements and construction vehicle queuing restrictions. Upon completion of the construction phase of the project, the new multi-use pathway and associated features would use a marginal amount of energy and would not conflict with applicable state or local regulations associated with renewable energy or energy efficiency. Therefore, *no impacts* would occur.

Conclusion

The project would not result in a significant energy demand during short-term construction or long-term operations and would not conflict with state or local renewable energy or energy efficiency plans. Therefore, potential impacts related to energy would be less than significant and mitigation measures are not necessary.

Mitigation Measures

Mitigation is not necessary.

VII. Geology and Soils

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
(a) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
(i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.	☐	☐	☐	☒
(ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(iv) Landslides?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?	☐	☐	☐	☒

	Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(f)	Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Setting

The Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act (Alquist-Priolo Act) is a California state law that was developed to regulate development near active faults and mitigate the surface fault rupture potential and other hazards. The Alquist-Priolo Act identifies active earthquake fault zones and restricts the construction of habitable structures over known active or potentially active faults. An active fault, as defined by state law, is a fault that has been proven by direct geologic evidence to indicate movement within the last 11,000 years.

The city of Coalinga is located in a region of California that is historically and currently seismically active. Numerous mapped faults in the area could produce significant ground shaking, including the San Andreas, Pond-Poso Creek, and White Wolf faults located west and south of the city. Active faults surrounding the San Andreas Fault produced large earthquakes in the twentieth century and are expected to produce similar large earthquakes in the future (City of Coalinga 2009b).

The two principal seismic hazards to property in the Coalinga area are: 1) damage to structures and foundations due to strong ground shaking, and 2) surface rupture of earth materials along fault traces. To protect structures from the hazards of surface ground rupture, the CDOC Division of Mines and Geology, under the State-mandated Alquist-Priolo Special Studies Zone Act of 1972, delineated special study zones along active or potentially active faults. The Alquist-Priolo Special Studies Zone Act zoned the area located along the Nunez Fault for special studies. The Nunez Fault is located approximately 6 miles northwest of Coalinga (City of Coalinga 2009b).

Ground shaking refers to the motion that occurs in response to local and regional earthquakes. Seismic ground shaking is influenced by the proximity of the site to an earthquake fault, the intensity of the seismic event, and the underlying soil composition. Ground shaking can endanger life and safety due to damage or collapse of structures or lifeline facilities. The CBC includes requirements that structures be designed to resist a certain minimum seismic force resulting from ground motion.

Liquefaction is the sudden loss of soil strength due to a rapid increase in soil pore water pressures resulting from ground shaking during an earthquake. Liquefaction potential increases with earthquake magnitude and ground shaking duration. Low-lying areas adjacent to creeks, rivers, beaches, and estuaries underlain by unconsolidated alluvial soil are most likely to be vulnerable to liquefaction. The CBC requires the assessment of liquefaction in the design of all structures.

Paleontological resources are fossilized remains of ancient environments, including fossilized bone, shell, and plant parts; impressions of plant, insect, or animal parts preserved in stone; and preserved tracks of insects and animals. Paleontological resources are considered nonrenewable resources under federal and state law. Paleontological sensitivity is defined as the potential for a geologic unit to produce scientifically significant fossils, as determined by rock type, past history of the rock unit in producing fossil materials, and fossil sites that have been recorded in the unit.

Environmental Evaluation

(a) Would the project directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:

(a-i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.

Fault rupture refers to the displacement of ground surface along a fault trace that typically occurs during earthquakes of a magnitude 5 or higher. Based on the CDOC Fault Activity Map of California, the city of Coalinga is not located within a mapped Alquist-Priolo earthquake hazard zone (CDOC 2015). In addition, there are no mapped faults within the city of Coalinga. The nearest mapped Alquist-Priolo fault is the Nunez Fault, located approximately 6 miles northwest of the city. In addition, the San Andreas Fault, which is an Alquist-Priolo fault, is located approximately 15 miles west of the city (CDOC 2015). There are no mapped Alquist-Priolo faults or other faults within the city of Coalinga; therefore, fault rupture would not occur in any portion of the project site and *no impact* would occur.

(a-ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?

Based on the presence of active fault zones surrounding the city, the project site is located in a historically and currently seismically active area. The project includes construction of new segments of a multi-use bicycle and pedestrian path with fencing, signage, and landscaping. The project does not include new structures, such as bridges, or other unique components, that would be particularly sensitive to seismic ground shaking or result in an increased risk of injury or damage as a result of ground shaking. Implementation of the project would not expose people or structures to significant increased risks associated with seismic ground shaking; therefore, impacts would be *less than significant.*

(a-iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?

Liquefaction occurs in an earthquake-prone area underlain by alluvium and where the groundwater table is less than 50 feet below the surface. Given the depth of the groundwater table in the Coalinga area (300–400 feet) the potential for liquefaction is considered very low (City of Coalinga 2009a). The project includes construction of new segments of a multi-use bicycle and pedestrian path with fencing, signage, and landscaping. The project does not include new structures or other unique components that would be particularly sensitive to seismic-related ground failure or result in an increased risk of injury for damage as a result from seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction; therefore, potential impacts would be *less than significant*.

(a-iv) Landslides?

Landslides and slope instability can occur as a result of wet weather, weak soils, improper grading, improper drainage, steep slopes, adverse geologic structure, earthquakes, or a combination of these factors. Based on aerial imagery, each of the proposed trail segments would be located on nearly level to gently sloping land and would not be located on or adjacent to steep slopes with the potential for landslides. Further, the project would not result in new structures or other components that would be particularly sensitive to ground-failure, including landslides. Therefore, the project would not directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects involving landslides, and potential impacts would be *less than significant.*

(b) Would the project result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?

The project would include minor grading and vegetation removal activities to prepare each of the trail segment locations for construction of the proposed multi-use bicycle and pedestrian path. Ground-disturbing construction activities may result in wind- and water-driven soil erosion and loss of topsoil if soil is stockpiled or exposed. Project construction activities would be required to comply with a SWPPP and associated BMPs to ensure that potential water quality impacts during construction from soil erosion would be reduced to less-than-significant levels. In the long term, pavement and new landscaping, including tree installation, would reinforce soil stability. Compliance with all applicable state and local regulations related to erosion control, as well as preparation and compliance with the BMPs included in the project SWPPP, would ensure potential impacts related to soil erosion and the loss of topsoil would be reduced to *less than significant.*

(c) Would the project be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse?

All proposed trail segments would be located on nearly level to gently sloping land and would not be located on or adjacent to steep slopes with the potential for landslides. Based on mapping by the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), the project is not located in an area with known current or historical subsidence (USGS 2021). The project does not include substantial amounts of grading, new structures, or other unique components that would result in unstable earth conditions or increased risk of landslides, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse. Therefore, potential impacts would be *less than significant.*

(d) Would the project be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?

Shrink/swell potential is the extent to which the soil shrinks as it dries out or swells when it gets wet. The extent of shrinking and swelling is influenced by the amount and type of clay in the soil. Shrinking and swelling of soils can cause damage to building foundations, roads, and other structures. A high shrink/swell potential indicates a hazard to maintenance of structures built in, on, or with material having this rating. Moderate and low ratings lessen the hazard accordingly. Based on NRCS data, soils located within the project site have very low shrink/swell potential (NRCS 2021). Therefore, potential impacts would be *less than significant*.

(e) Would the project have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?

The project does not include construction of new restroom facilities or other structures that would require installation of a sewer system or septic tank. Therefore, *no impacts* would occur.

(f) Would the project directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?

The project would include excavation and grading ranging from 1 to 3 feet in depth, including 6 to 12 inches for multi-trail grading and construction and up to 3 feet for various traffic signage and barrier foundations. According to the General Plan FEIR, the city's soil and bedrock conditions are not likely to contain paleontological resources (City of Coalinga 2009b). The project site is underlain by Holocene-age surficial sediments composed of alluvial gravel, sand, and clay of valley areas (Dibblee and Minch 2007).

This unit is commonly found alongside stream channels and, due to its young age, is unlikely to preserve fossils (SWCA 2017). In addition, the project would not result in deep cuts into a hillside or deep excavations on-site that could disturb the underlying geologic unit. Therefore, potential impacts to paleontological resources would be *less than significant.*

Conclusion

The project would not be located in an area with high potential for fault rupture, liquefaction, landslides, or subsidence, and would not result in an increased risk of life or property from these geologic hazards. While the project is located in a seismically active area and may be subject to ground shaking during the life of the project, the project would not directly or indirectly cause substantial adverse effects from strong seismic ground shaking. Potential impacts associated with expansive soils, soil septic tank capability, and paleontological resources would be less than significant. Therefore, potential impacts associated with geology and soils would be less than significant and mitigation measures are not necessary.

Mitigation Measures

Mitigation is not necessary.

VIII. Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
(a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Setting

GHGs are any gases that absorb infrared radiation in the atmosphere, and are different from the criteria pollutants discussed in Section III, Air Quality, above. The primary GHGs that are emitted into the atmosphere as a result of human activities are carbon dioxide (CO_2), methane, nitrous oxide, and fluorinated gases. These are most commonly emitted through the burning of fossil fuels (oil, natural gas, and coal), agricultural practices, decay of organic waste in landfills, and a variety of other chemical reactions and industrial processes (e.g., the manufacturing of cement).

Carbon dioxide is the most abundant GHG and is estimated to represent approximately 80%–90% of the principal GHGs that are currently affecting the earth's climate. According to the CARB, transportation (vehicle exhaust) and electricity generation are the main sources of GHGs in the state.

Statewide legislation, rules, and regulations have been adopted to reduce GHG emissions from significant sources. Senate Bill (SB) 32 and Executive Order S-3-05 extended the state's GHG reduction goals and required the CARB to regulate sources of GHGs to meet a state goal of reducing GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020, 40% below 1990 levels by 2030, and 80% below 1990 levels by 2050. Other statewide

policies adopted to reduce GHG emissions include AB 32, SB 375, SB 97, Clean Car Standards, Low Carbon Fuel Standard, Renewable Portfolio Standard, CBC, and the California Solar Initiative.

Plans, policies, and guidelines have also been established at the regional and local levels to address GHG emissions and climate change effects within the city. On December 17, 2009, the SJVAPCD adopted *District Policy: Addressing GHG Emission Impacts for Stationary Source Projects Under CEQA When Serving as the Lead Agency* (SJVAPCD 2009a) and *Guidance for Valley Land-use Agencies in Addressing GHG Emission Impacts for New Projects under CEQA* (SJVAPCD 2009b). The guidance and policy rely on the use of performance-based standards, otherwise known as Best Performance Standards (BPS), to assess significance of project-specific GHG emissions on global climate change during the environmental review process, as required by CEQA. Projects implementing BPS would be determined to have a less-than-cumulatively-significant impact. Alternatively, demonstration of a 29% reduction in GHG emissions, from business-as-usual, is required to determine that a project would have a less-than-cumulatively-significant impact.

The *City of Coalinga General Plan 2005-2025 Safety, Air Quality and Noise Element* (General Plan Chapter 5; City of Coalinga 2009a) includes a policy and two implementation measures that address GHG emissions:

> **Policy AQ5-1:** Actively seek to reduce greenhouse gas emissions within the Planning Area.
>
> > **Implementation Measure AQ5-1.1:** The City shall implement regulations issued by the California Air Resources Board to reduce the amount of GHG emissions that could potentially occur as a result of implementation of the proposed General Plan. The City may alter implementation of these regulations as new information becomes available from the State regarding GHG emissions and thresholds to determine the significance of these emissions. This implementation program shall not be construed as to prohibit the City of Coalinga from adopting more stringent regulations to reduce GHG emissions, should the City deem them appropriate.
> >
> > **Implementation Measure AQ5-1.2:** The City should support the development and implementation of a Community Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan. At a minimum, this Plan should incorporate and implement feasible GHG mitigation measures to achieve the following:
> >
> > (a) Reduce net emissions of GHG emissions from Coalinga
> > (b) Reduce the net impacts of energy production
> > (c) Reduce the costs of energy to the City and its residents and reduce the City's vulnerability to changes in energy availability and price
> > (d) Increase public awareness of energy issues and potential impacts
> > (e) Monitor the cost and effectiveness of the City's methods to reduce GHG emissions so that the City may learn by and improve on them
> > (f) Any additional impacts identified as relevant and current by the City of Coalinga.

Environmental Evaluation

(a) Would the project generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?

Based on the SJVAPCD's *Guidance for Valley Land-use Agencies in Addressing GHG Emission Impacts for New Projects under CEQA* (SJVAPCD 2009b), GHG emissions from development projects primarily occur through energy consumption and VMT. Projects implementing BPS would be determined to have a less-than-cumulatively-significant impact. Alternatively, demonstration of a 29% reduction in GHG emissions, from business-as-usual, is required to determine that a project would have a less-than-cumulatively-significant impact (SJVAPCD 2009b). BPS are defined as the most effective achieved-in-practice means of reducing or limiting GHG emissions from a GHG emissions source. For traditional stationary source projects, BPS include equipment type, equipment design, and operational and maintenance practices for the identified service, operation, or emissions unit class and category. For development projects, BPS focus on measures that improve energy efficiency and those that reduce VMT.

During construction, fossil fuels, electricity, and natural gas would be used by construction equipment and would result in approximately 102.5 metric tons of CO_2 equivalent emissions per year of construction activities. The GHG emissions produced during construction would be temporary in nature and would be typical of other similar construction activities in the city. Federal and state regulations in place require fuel-efficient equipment and vehicles and prohibit wasteful activities, such as diesel idling. Construction contractors, in an effort to ensure cost efficiency, would not be expected to engage in wasteful or unnecessary energy and fuel practices.

The project includes the design, construction, and operation of portions of four segments of the City's planned 8.8-mile perimeter trail and spur system identified in the City's ATP. Based on the CalEEMod emissions, the project would not result in any operational CO_2 emissions. The project would connect residents in Coalinga (and a disadvantaged census tract) to activity centers, such as schools, parks, a college, shopping, neighborhoods, and jobs, and would provide a safe option to enable increased bicycle/pedestrian transportation use. The project as a whole would serve to reduce VMT within the city. Therefore, potential impacts associated with GHG emissions or conflicts with a GHG emission reduction plan would be *less than significant.*

(b) Would the project conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?

See discussion under Impact VIII(a), above.

Conclusion

The project would not generate significant GHG emissions above existing levels and would not exceed any applicable GHG thresholds, contribute considerably to cumulatively significant GHG emissions, or conflict with plans adopted to reduce GHG emissions. Therefore, potential impacts related to GHG emissions would be less than significant and mitigation measures are not necessary.

Mitigation Measures

Mitigation is not necessary.

IX. Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
(a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within 0.25 mile of an existing or proposed school?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Setting

The Hazardous Waste and Substances Site (Cortese) List is a planning document used by the state, local agencies, and developers to comply with CEQA requirements related to the disclosure of information about the location of hazardous materials release sites. California Government Code Section 65962.5 requires the California Environmental Protection Agency (Cal/EPA) to develop at least annually an updated Cortese List. Various state and local government agencies are required to track and document hazardous material release information for the Cortese List. The California Department of Toxic Substance Control (DTSC) EnviroStor database tracks DTSC cleanup, permitting, enforcement, and investigation efforts at hazardous waste facilities and sites with known contamination, such as federal superfund sites, state response sites, voluntary cleanup sites, school cleanup sites, school investigation sites, and military evaluation sites (DTSC 2021). The State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) GeoTracker database contains records for sites that impact, or have the potential to impact, water in California, such as Leaking Underground Storage Tank sites, Department of Defense sites, and Cleanup Program Sites (SWRCB 2021). The remaining data regarding facilities or sites identified as meeting the "Cortese List" requirements can be located on the Cal/EPA website (Cal/EPA 2021).

Based on a query of the SWRCB GeoTracker database, DTSC EnviroStor database, and the Cal/EPA website, there are no known hazardous materials sites within the project site (DTSC 2021; SWRCB

2021). The nearest known hazardous materials site is a cleanup program site located at the old Coalinga Airport approximately 0.35 mile northwest of proposed Segment 1 (SWRCB 2021).

The City of Coalinga Asbestos site is an operable unit on the Atlas Asbestos and Coalinga Asbestos Mine (aka Johns-Manville Coalinga Asbestos Mill) National Priorities List. Historically, asbestos was transported from various milling sources to Coalinga for eventual shipment out of the city by rail or truck. The site is located on a parcel of land in the southwestern corner of Coalinga in a mixed-use residential/industrial area. The asbestos waste contained chrysotile asbestos ranging up to 50% by weight. In July 1989, the EPA signed a Consent Decree with Southern Pacific Transportation Company for response activities leading through to remedy for the City. Contaminated soils above 1% asbestos were excavated, consolidated, and encapsulated in an engineered cap on-site. The Southern Pacific Transportation Company recorded an environmental restriction in June 1990. Operation and Maintenance of the remedy is ongoing (DTSC 2021).

The Coalinga Municipal Airport is located approximately 2.7 miles northeast of proposed Segment 1. Coalinga Middle School, Bishop School, and Nell Dawson Elementary are located within 0.25 mile of the proposed trail segments.

Environmental Evaluation

(a) Would the project create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?

The proposed project is anticipated to require limited quantities of hazardous substances, including gasoline, diesel fuel, hydraulic fluid, solvents, oils, paints, etc., during construction. Use of these materials has the potential to result in an accidental release. Construction contractors would be required to comply with applicable federal and state environmental and workplace safety laws for the handling, transport, and storage of hazardous materials, including Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Process Safety Management Standard (CCR 29.1910.119) and CCR Title 22.

Following completion of construction activities, the project would not require the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous substances. Any commonly used hazardous substances (e.g., fuel, oils, paints, etc.) during construction would be transported, stored, and used according to regulatory requirements and existing procedures for the handling of hazardous materials. Therefore, potential impacts associated with routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials would be *less than significant.*

(b) Would the project create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?

The project does not propose the handling or use of hazardous materials or volatile substances that would result in a significant risk of upset or accidental release conditions. As described above, construction of the proposed project is anticipated to require use of limited quantities of hazardous substances, including gasoline, diesel fuel, hydraulic fluid, solvents, oils, paints, etc. Construction contractors would be required to comply with applicable federal and state environmental and workplace safety laws for the handling of hazardous materials, including response and clean-up requirements for any minor spills.

As described in Section III, Air Quality, the project is located near an area with potential for NOA to occur. The project would require minor grading and could result in the release of asbestos that could result in adverse effects on human health. Mitigation Measure AQ-3 has been identified to require a geologic evaluation to determine if NOA is present within the area that would be disturbed. If NOA levels that could pose a threat to human health are detected, an Asbestos Dust Mitigation Plan shall be prepared

and implemented to ensure all applicable CARB protocols are followed to the satisfaction of the SJVAPCD. Therefore, potential impacts associated with hazards to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions would be *less than significant with mitigation.*

(c) Would the project emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within 0.25 mile of an existing or proposed school?

The purpose of the proposed project is to develop multi-use trails to connect residents on the periphery of the city to downtown areas and to provide a safe method for walking, bicycling, and other alternative modes of transportation. The proposed trail segments would connect residential areas to mixed-use areas, including schools. There are several schools within the project area, including Coalinga Middle School, Bishop School, and Nell Dawson Elementary School, located within 0.25 mile of the proposed trail segments. As previously described, proposed construction activities would result in the use of limited quantities of hazardous materials. However, the use of any commonly used hazardous substances within the project site (e.g., fuel, oils, paints, etc.) would be temporary in nature and those substances would be transported, stored, and used according to regulatory requirements and existing procedures to avoid accidental spill. Based on the nature of the project, implementation is not anticipated to generate long-term use of hazardous materials or substances that could emit hazardous emissions near an existing or proposed school. In the event any commonly used hazardous materials or substances are used during operation of the project for maintenance or other similar activities, those materials would be used according to existing regulatory requirements. Therefore, potential impacts would be *less than significant*.

(d) Would the project be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?

Based on a query of the SWRCB GeoTracker database, DTSC EnviroStor database, and the Cal/EPA website, there are no known hazardous materials sites within the project site (DTSC 2021; SWRCB 2021). The nearest hazardous materials site is located approximately 0.35 mile northwest of the proposed Segment 1 (SWRCB 2021). Therefore, the project would not be located in a hazardous materials site and *no impacts* would occur.

(e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?

The project is located a minimum of 2.7 miles southwest of the Coalinga Municipal Airport. The project includes construction of new segments of a multi-use bicycle and pedestrian path with fencing, signage, and landscaping. No new lighting, tall structures, or other components that could result in increased airport-related hazards are proposed as a part of the project. Future bicyclists and pedestrians using the proposed trail segments would not be subject to excessive airport-related noise due to the distance from the site to the airport. Therefore, potential impacts associated with safety hazards from nearby airport facilities would be *less than significant.*

(f) Would the project impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

Implementation of the proposed project would not result in a significant temporary or permanent impact on any adopted emergency response plans or emergency evacuation plans. No breaks in utility service or

road closures would occur as a result of project implementation. Therefore, potential impacts would be *less than significant.*

(g) Would the project expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires?

Based on the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) Fire Hazard Severity Zone Map, Coalinga is located in a local responsibility area in a Moderate Fire Hazard Severity Zone (FHSZ) (CAL FIRE 2007, 2021). Project construction activities would be required to comply with the California Fire Code and would not expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires. The project does not include any new structures for human occupation and does not include any new components that would be particularly vulnerable to wildfire or exacerbate the risk for wildfire. Therefore, potential impacts would be *less than significant.*

Conclusion

Potential impacts associated with disturbance of NOA would be mitigated to less than significant through implementation of Mitigation Measure AQ-3.

Mitigation Measures

Implement Mitigation Measure AQ-3.

X. Hydrology and Water Quality

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
(a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface water or groundwater quality?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:				
(i) Result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site;	☐	☐	☒	☐
(ii) Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site;	☐	☐	☒	☐
(iii) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or	☐	☐	☒	☐

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(iv) Impede or redirect flood flows?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Setting

Coalinga is located within the Arroyo Pasajero watershed, which encompasses a drainage area of approximately 530 square miles extending from the Diablo Range to the west into the San Joaquin Valley to the east. Warthan, Los Gatos, Jacalitos, Coalmine Canyon, and Arroyo Pasajero Creeks are located within the City's Sphere of Influence, flowing past the city in a northeasterly direction. Los Gatos and Warthan Creeks flow easterly out of the southern hills of the Diablo Range and converge at the eastern edge of the Coalinga city limits, then form the Arroyo Pasajero. Jacalitos Creek converges with Los Gatos Creek approximately 5 miles east outside of the city limits. In the far southeast corner of the project area, Zapato Chino Creek flows through the Palvarado Gap into the San Joaquin Valley. These creeks all flow northeast within the Arroyo Pasajero watershed (City of Coalinga 2009b). Segments 2, 13, and 14 are located adjacent to Los Gatos Creek. Additionally, the NWI identifies drainages associated with Los Gatos Creek and a potential freshwater pond feature located adjacent to Segments 13 and 14 (Figure 6; USFWS 2021).

Construction activities that disturb 1 acre or more must obtain coverage under the SWRCB Construction General Permit. The Construction General Permit requires the preparation of a SWPPP to minimize on-site sedimentation and erosion. There are several types of projects that are exempt from preparing a SWPPP, including routine maintenance to existing developments, emergency construction activities, and projects exempted by the SWRCB or Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB).

For planning purposes, the flood event most often used to delineate areas subject to flooding is the 100-year flood, which is a flood event of a magnitude that would be equal to or exceeded at an average of once during a 100-year period. Floodways are defined as stream channels plus adjacent floodplains that must be kept free of encroachment as much as possible so that 100-year floods can be carried without substantial increases (no more than 1 foot) in flood elevations. Based on the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) 06019C3213H (effective date 2/18/2009), proposed Segments 2, 13, and 14 are located within Zone AE and the western portion of Segment 13 is located within Zone AO (Figure 7). Zone AE is defined as an area with 1% annual flooding and Zone AO is defined as an area with 1% annual flooding with depths determined.

Environmental Evaluation

(a) Would the project violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface water or groundwater quality?

The project would result in the construction of four multi-use trail segments that would result in 3.86 acres of ground disturbance. In addition, proposed Segments 2, 13, and 14 would be located adjacent to Los Gatos Creek (see Figure 6). Construction of the proposed trail segments have the potential to result in

an increase in erosion or construction-related pollutants that could enter runoff and degrade water quality of Los Gatos Creek. The project site is generally flat and would not require substantial vegetation removal, which would reduce some potential for excessive erosion at the project site.

The project would be required to prepare and implement a SWPPP, which would be administered throughout project construction. The SWPPP would be required to incorporate BMPs to ensure that potential water quality impacts during construction from soil erosion would be sufficiently reduced. Typical construction BMPs may include, but are not limited to, silt fences, straw wattles, and prohibiting equipment and vehicle maintenance within 50 feet of Los Gatos Creek. Mitigation Measures BIO-1 through BIO-5 have been included to ensure direct and indirect impacts to these features are avoided. The project would not substantially affect surface water or groundwater quality; therefore, potential impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation*.

(b) Would the project substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?

The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation provides domestic water service to Coalinga. The major source of water is the Central Valley Project via the Coalinga Canal. The General Plan FEIR concluded that groundwater in the area is unsuitable for domestic water use and is only marginally suitable for agricultural uses given the elevated concentrations of total dissolved solids. The proposed project would not use groundwater for construction or operation; therefore, the proposed project would not increase the use of groundwater.

Figure 6. Water resources map.

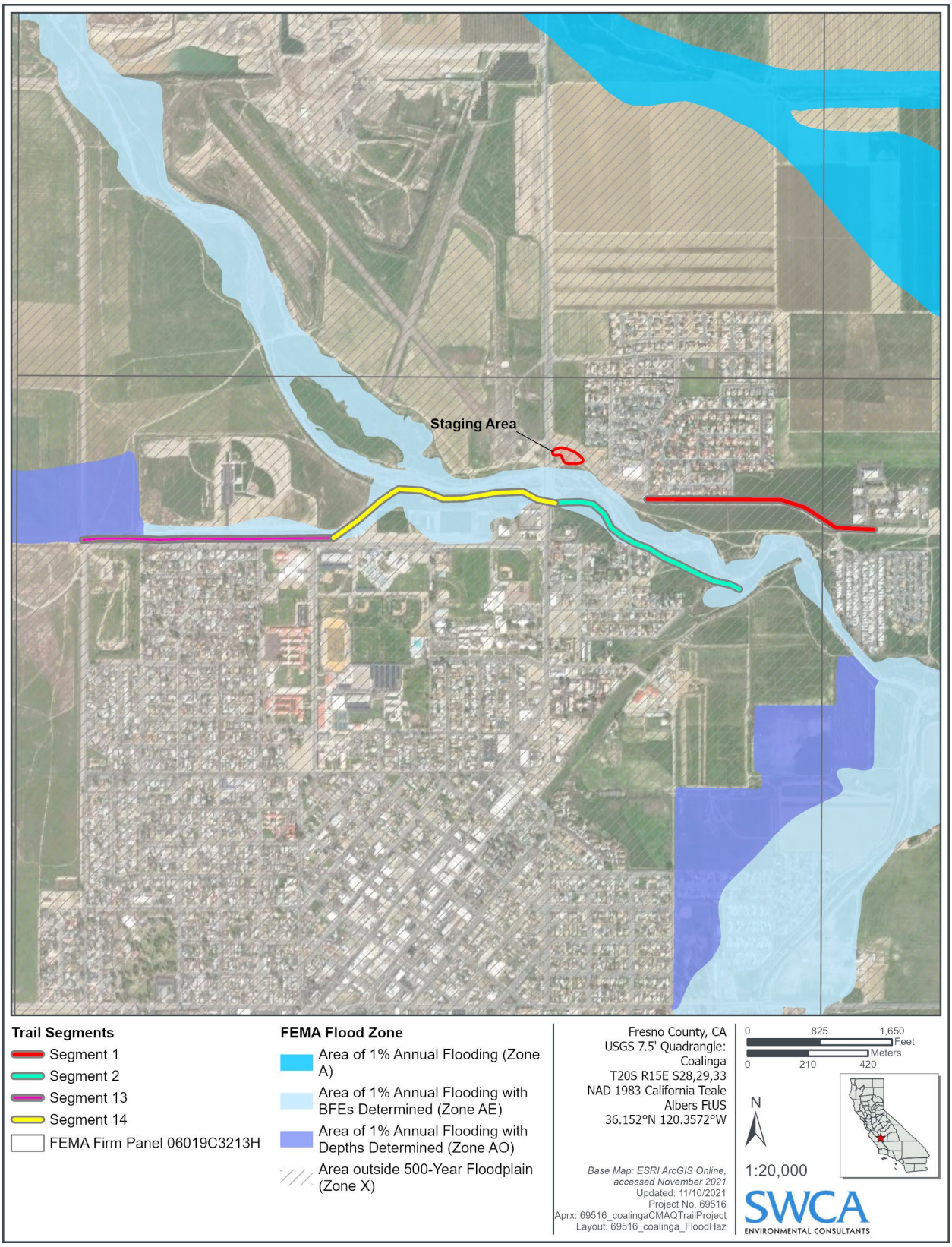

Figure 7. FEMA floodplain map.

The project would develop portions of Segments 1 (partial), 2, 13, and 14, totaling approximately 10,520 linear feet (1.97 mile) of a multi-use (vehicle-separated) loop-and-spur Class I bicycle/pedestrian trail system. The proposed trails would consist of 10-foot-wide paved asphalt pathways bordered by 2 to 4 feet of decomposed granite shoulders, consistent with the Caltrans-preferred specifications for a Class I Bikeway. This would result in approximately 168,320 square feet (3.86 acres) of new impervious surface area. The proposed pathway would be cradled by a 4-foot-wide crushed stone walking/jogging path on one side and a 2-foot-wide drainage section on the opposite side. Because the new pathway would be linear and distributed over 1.97 mile, the project would not result in interference with groundwater recharge or otherwise impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin. Therefore, potential impacts would be *less than significant.*

(c) Would the project substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:

(c-i) Result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?

Project construction activities would require preparation and implementation of a SWPPP and corresponding BMPs, which would be administered throughout project construction. The SWPPP would be required to incorporate BMPs to ensure that potential water quality impacts during construction from soil erosion and other potential pollutants would be sufficiently reduced.

Upon completion of construction activities, the project would result in 168,320 square feet (3.86 acres) of new impervious surface area. Because the new pathway would be linear and distributed over 1.97 mile, the project would not substantially alter the existing drainage patterns or result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site; therefore, potential impacts would be *less than significant.*

(c-ii) Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site?

Upon completion of construction activities, the project would result in approximately 168,320 square feet (3.86 acres) of new trail segments. The proposed pathway would be cradled by a 4-foot-wide crushed stone walking/jogging path on one side and a 2-foot-wide drainage section on the opposite side, which would reduce the amount of new impermeable surfaces associated with the project. Additionally, the proposed trail design would maintain drainage patterns within the project area and would control long-term surface runoff and potential flood flows within the project area. Because the new pathway would be linear and distributed over 1.97 mile, the project would not substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area or result in flooding on- or off-site; therefore, potential impacts would be *less than significant.*

(c-iii) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?

Upon completion of construction activities, the project would result in approximately 168,320 square feet (3.86 acres) of new impervious surface area. Because the new pathway would be linear and distributed over 1.97 mile, the project would not substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, result in the creation or contribution of runoff water that would exceed the capacity of existing stormwater drainage systems, or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff. Project construction activities would be required to prepare and submit a SWPPP, which will be administered throughout project construction. The SWPPP would be required to incorporate BMPs to ensure that potential water

quality impacts during construction from soil erosion would be sufficiently reduced; therefore, potential impacts would be *less than significant.*

(c-iv) Impede or redirect flood flows?

Based on the FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) 06019C3213H (effective date 2/18/2009), proposed Segments 2, 13, and 14 are located within Zone AE and the western portion of Segment 13 is located within Zone AO (see Figure 7). Proposed trails would be cradled by a 4-foot-wide crushed stone walking/jogging path on one side and a 2-foot-wide drainage section on the opposite side. This design would continue to allow for drainage within the proposed project area and would reduce potential hazards related to flood events in the project area. Therefore, based on proposed project design, the project would not impede or redirect flood flows and potential impacts would be *less than significant*.

(d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, would the project risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?

The project site is located approximately 58 miles east of the coast of the Pacific Ocean. Therefore, there is no potential for the project to be inundated by a tsunami. Similarly, the project is not located adjacent to any standing bodies of water with the potential for a seiche to occur. Potential flooding impacts are discussed in threshold c-iv above. Therefore, impacts would be *less than significant*.

(e) Would the project conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?

Implementation of the project would not substantially change the volume or velocity of runoff leaving any portion of the site or result in a significant increase in impervious surface area. The project site is generally flat and, therefore, would not be particularly susceptible to erosion. Project construction activities would require preparation and implementation of a SWPPP, which would be administered throughout project construction. The SWPPP would be required to incorporate BMPs to ensure that potential water quality impacts during construction from soil erosion would be sufficiently reduced. The project would not substantially affect surface water or groundwater quality and would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan. Therefore, potential impacts would be *less than significant.*

Conclusion

The project would not result in potentially significant impacts related to hydrology and water quality with preparation of a SWPPP and implementation of Mitigation Measures BIO-1 through BIO-5.

Mitigation Measures

Implement Mitigation Measures BIO-1 through BIO-5.

XI. Land Use and Planning

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
(a) Physically divide an established community?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(b) Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	☐	☒	☐	☐

Setting

The project includes four proposed trail segments located in the city of Coalinga, Fresno County, California. Segment 1 (portion) would run along the north side of Phelps Avenue between the Coalinga Regional Medical Center and Posa Chanet Boulevard. Segment 2 would parallel Segment 1 in northeastern Coalinga along the south side of Los Gatos Creek. Segment 13 would run along an existing City maintenance road located on top of a berm north of Cambridge Avenue. Segment 14 would run along an existing maintenance road and behind a City park, connecting Segments 2 and 13 adjacent to the Coalinga Sports Complex in northern Coalinga. The proposed staging area would be within a vacant, undeveloped, disturbed lot located southeast of the intersection of Elm Avenue and Phelps Avenue.

Segment 1 would be surrounded by Residential Single-Family land uses to the north, and Residential Medium Density and Open Space land uses to the south. Segment 2 would be surrounded by Open Space land uses to the north and Residential Medium Density, Residential Single-Family, and Mixed-Use land uses to the south. Segment 13 is surrounded by Agriculture and Public Facilities land uses to the north and Residential Single-Family and Public Facilities to the south. Segment 14 is surrounded by Agricultural, Light Manufacturing/Business, and General Commercial uses to the north, and Agriculture, Mixed Use, and Light Manufacturing/Business to the south. The staging area is located in an area designated for General Commercial land use.

The *City of Coalinga General Plan 2005-2025* identifies several policies applicable to the project (City of Coalinga 2009a):

> **Policy AQ2-1:** The City shall encourage and support development projects that propose alternatives to standard vehicle trips.
>
> **Policy AQ2-2:** The City shall support upgrades and improvements to the transportation system that benefit bicycle, pedestrian, and other non-vehicular forms of circulation.
>
> **Policy C1-6:** The City shall encourage the use of transportation alternatives that reduce the use of personal vehicles.
>
> **Policy C2-1:** Promote non-motorized bike and pedestrian circulation facilities to serve all areas of the City and link regional systems, with priority coordination with school, park, transit, and major facilities.
>
> **Policy OSC1-3:** Protect special-status plant and animal species and their habitat in accordance with local, state, and federal regulations.

Policy OSC2-1: Identify and protect significant historic and archaeological resources in the City of Coalinga.

Environmental Evaluation

(a) Would the project physically divide an established community?

The purpose of the project is to connect areas on the periphery of the city to downtown areas. The project does not propose project elements or components that would physically divide surrounding areas and uses or an established community. The project would be consistent with the general level of development in the project vicinity and would not create, close, or impede any existing public or private roads, or create any other barriers to movement or accessibility in the city. Therefore, the proposed project would not physically divide an established community and *no impacts* would occur.

(b) Would the project cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?

The City's General Plan identifies goals, policies, and implementation measures for the protection of natural resources, including scenic resources, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, mineral resources, open space, and water resources. Mitigation measures have been identified to avoid and/or minimize potential project impacts associated with air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, and noise, which would be consistent with the *City of Coalinga General Plan 2005-2025 Safety, Air Quality and Noise Element* (Chapter 5), *Open Space and Conservation Element* (Chapter 3), and *Circulation Element* (Chapter 4). With implementation of the identified mitigation measures, the project would be consistent with standards and policies set forth in the City's General Plan, SJVAPCD regulations, and other land use policies applicable to the project. In addition, the project would be required to be consistent with standards set forth by the Coalinga Fire Department and the City Public Works Department; therefore, impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation*.

Conclusion

The project would not result in the division of an established community and the project would be consistent with local and regional land use designations, plans, and policies with implementation of identified mitigation measures. Therefore, potential impacts related to land use and planning would be less than significant with implementation of mitigation measures.

Mitigation Measures

Implement Mitigation Measures AQ-1 through AQ-3, BIO-1 through BIO-18, CR-1 through CR-5, and N-1 through N-2.

XII. Mineral Resources

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
(a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Setting

Coalinga's history is deeply rooted in the minerals and other extracted natural resources known to occur in the area. Extracted natural resources include fossil fuels, such as oil and coal; aggregate products, such as sand and gravel; and other metals and minerals. Oil development in the Coalinga area began as early as 1864, when efforts were made to produce oil from hand-dug oil wells. Today, extensive oil recovery operations are located mostly to the north of the city. Oil companies such as Chevron USA, Union Oil Company, Shell Production, and Santa Fe Energy have substantial land holdings in the area. Coal, in the form of lignite, occurs northwest and southwest of Coalinga but has not been commercially mined for 100 years (City of Coalinga 2009a).

Asbestos is surface mined in large quantities approximately 20 miles northwest of Coalinga. Serpentine rock, which covers approximately 2,000 square miles of the city, has the potential to contain up to 50% of asbestos. Total reserves are not known, but the deposit has been estimated to contain more than 100 million tons of ore. This area is one of the nation's principal producers of asbestos and contains one of the world's largest deposits of short-fiber asbestos (City of Coalinga 2009a).

Environmental Evaluation

(a) Would the project result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?

The project site is not zoned or designated for mineral extraction. The project would not result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state nor would the project result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site; therefore, *no impacts* would occur.

(b) Would the project result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan?

As discussed above, the project would not result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource nor the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site. Therefore, the project would not conflict with an applicable plan and *no impacts* would occur.

Conclusion

The project would not result in potentially significant impacts related to mineral resources and mitigation measures are not required.

Mitigation Measures

Mitigation is not necessary.

XIII. Noise

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project result in:				
(a) Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(b) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(c) For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Setting

Community noise levels are typically measured in terms of A-weighted decibels (dBA). A-weighting is a frequency correction that correlates overall sound pressure levels with the frequency response of the human ear. Equivalent noise level (Leq) is the average noise level on an energy basis for a specific time period. The duration of noise and the time of day at which it occurs are important factors in determining the impact of noise on communities. The Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) and Day-Night Average Level (Ldn) account for the time of day and duration of noise generation. These indicators are time-weighted average values equal to the amount of acoustic energy equivalent to a time-varying sound over a 24-hour period. Primary noise in the project site includes noise from surrounding residential and commercial land uses and noise from vehicles on adjacent roadways.

The *City of Coalinga General Plan 2005-2025 Safety, Air Quality and Noise Element* (General Plan Chapter 5) provides a policy framework for addressing potential long-term noise impacts in the planning process and includes noise compatibility standards for noise exposure by land use as shown in Table 6 (City of Coalinga 2009a).

Table 6. Acceptable Noise Levels by Land Use

Land Use	Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) or Day-Night Level (Ldn), dB							
	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85
Residential: Low-Density Single-Family, Duplex, Mobile Homes								
Residential: Multi-Family								
Transient Lodging: Motels, Hotels								
Schools, Libraries, Churches, Hospitals, Nursing Homes								
Auditoriums, Concert Halls, Amphitheaters								
Sports Arenas, Outdoor Spectator Sports								
Playgrounds, Neighborhood Parks								
Golf Courses, Riding Stables, Water Recreation, Cemeteries								
Office Buildings, Business, Commercial and Professional								

Normally Acceptable		Specified land use is satisfactory, based on the assumption that any buildings are of normal conventional construction, without any special noise insulation requirements.
Conditionally Acceptable		New construction or development should be undertaken only after a detailed analysis of noise reduction requirements is made and needed noise insulation features included in design.
Normally Acceptable		New construction or development should generally be discouraged. If new construction or development does proceed, a detailed analysis of noise reduction requirements must be made and needed noise insulation features included in design.
Clearly Acceptable		New construction or development should generally be discouraged.

Nature of the noise environment where the CNEL or Ldn Level is:

Below 55 dB: Relatively quiet suburban or urban areas, no arterial streets within one block, no freeways within 0.25 mile.

55–65 dB: Mostly somewhat noisy urban areas, near but not directly adjacent to high volumes of traffic.

65–75 dB: Very noisy urban areas near arterials, freeways, or airports.

75+ dB: Extremely noisy urban areas adjacent to freeways or under airport traffic patterns. Hearing damage with constant exposure outdoors.

Source: City of Coalinga (2009a)

Environmental Evaluation

(a) Would the project result in generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?

Project construction would result in a temporary increase in noise levels associated with grading, construction activities, equipment, and vehicle trips (Table 7). The eastern portion of Segment 2 is located 50 feet north from existing single-family residences. The western portion of Segment 1 is located 35 feet south from single-family residences.

Table 7. Construction Equipment Noise Emission Levels

Equipment Type	Typical Noise Level (dBA) 50 Feet from Source
Backhoe	80
Compactor	80
Concrete mixer	85
Concrete pump	82
Dozer	85
Excavator	85
Heavy truck	84
Paver	85
Roller	80
Scraper	85
Water truck	76

Source: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (1971)

Noise naturally attenuates (diminishes) at a rate of 6 decibels (dB) per doubling of distance (OSHA 2013), so maximum construction noise levels at the nearest residential land uses would range between 70 dBA and 79 dBA.

Construction-related noise could temporarily affect the residential land uses located south of Segments 2 and 13 and north of Segment 1. Mitigation Measures N-1 and N-2 have been incorporated to minimize potential impacts related to construction noise. These measures include adherence to the City's construction work hours, implementation of noise control measures for stationary equipment, and proper maintenance of all equipment to avoid unnecessary increased noise levels. Construction-related noise would be variable, temporary, and limited in duration and nature. Therefore, potential construction-related impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation*.

The project would result in the development of a new bicycle and pedestrian pathway in an area where there are no existing public recreational facilities. This would result in a minor increase in noise levels associated with users of the new trail; however, trail usership would not be expected to result in a noticeable increase in the ambient noise environment or produce noise levels above typical residential uses. The project would have the potential to induce a minor increase in vehicle traffic at the trail entrance locations but would not result in a substantial increase above existing traffic levels at these locations because many trail users would walk and/or bike to the trail from nearby residential areas. The project does not propose any uses or features that would generate a new significant permanent source of mobile or stationary noise sources. Ambient noise levels at the project site and in surrounding areas after project implementation would not be significantly different than existing levels. Therefore, potential operational noise impacts would be *less than significant*.

(b) Would the project result in generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?

The project does not propose pile driving or other high-impact activities that would generate substantial groundborne noise or groundborne vibration during construction. Heavy equipment would generate groundborne noise and vibration, but these activities would be limited in duration and consistent with other standard construction activities. In addition, any groundborne noise generated by short-term construction activities would be limited to the immediate project area and is not anticipated to disturb

nearby residential or other land uses. Therefore, impacts related to exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels would be *less than significant.*

(c) For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?

The project site is located a minimum of 2.7 miles west of the Coalinga Municipal Airport. The project site is not located within or adjacent to an airport land use plan or within 2 miles of a public airport or private airstrip; therefore, *no impacts* would occur.

Conclusion

Potential noise levels generated by construction activities may affect nearby residential land uses; however, construction-related noise would be short term and intermittent and would not create a new source of noise that would be inconsistent with the City's General Plan Safety, Air Quality, and Noise Element. Mitigation Measures N-1 and N-2 have been identified to reduce potential impacts associated with temporary construction noise to less than significant. No other potentially significant impacts associated with noise would result from the project.

Mitigation Measures

N-1 During project construction, construction activities shall be limited to the hours between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. in accordance with the City's Safety, Air Quality and Noise Element. Construction equipment maintenance shall be limited to the same hours. Construction activities that do not require the use of mechanical equipment are not subject to these restrictions.

Stationary construction equipment that generates noise that exceeds 65 dBA at the project boundaries shall be shielded with the most modern noise control devices (i.e., mufflers, lagging, and/or motor enclosures). Impact tools (e.g., jackhammers, pavement breakers, rock drills) used for project construction shall be hydraulically or electrically powered wherever possible to avoid noise associated with compressed air exhaust from pneumatically powered tools. Where use of pneumatic tools is unavoidable, an exhaust muffler on the compressed air exhaust shall be used.

N-2 All equipment shall be properly maintained to ensure that no additional noise, due to worn or improperly maintained parts, is generated. Stockpiling and vehicle staging areas shall be located as far as practical from sensitive noise receptors. Every effort shall be made to create the greatest distance between noise sources and sensitive receptors during construction activities.

XIV. Population and Housing

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
(a) Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Setting

The *City of Coalinga Housing Element* assesses the current and projected housing needs of the community and identifies available land and housing programs to provide adequate housing to meet those needs. The City's Housing Element was updated in 2016 as a part of a Multi-Jurisdictional Housing Element with 11 of the 15 other cities in Fresno County, which allowed for countywide housing issues and needs to be more effectively addressed at the regional level rather than just at the local level (Fresno County et al. 2016). Regional efforts also provide the opportunity for the local governments in the county to work together to accommodate the Regional Housing Needs Allocation assigned to the Fresno County region.

Coalinga had a population of 17,590 in 2020 and Fresno County had a total population of over 1,008,645 in 2020. Between 2015 and 2019, the city of Coalinga had 4,293 households, with an average of 3.11 persons per household. In that same time period, the Fresno County had 307,906 households with an average of 3.14 persons per household. The owner-occupied housing rates for the city of Coalinga and the county of Fresno between 2015 and 2019 were 54.6% and 53.3%, respectively (U.S. Census Bureau 2020).

The City's General Plan states that the population of Coalinga could reach build-out by the year 2025. This population growth may be accompanied by the development of 14,719 additional dwelling units. The City's General Plan goals, policies, and implementation measures aim to accommodate the city's projected level of growth while avoiding harm to the environment and improving the overall quality of life in Coalinga.

Environmental Evaluation

(a) Would the project induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?

The project does not include the construction of new homes or businesses or the extension or establishment of roads, utilities, or other infrastructure that would induce direct or indirect population growth in the project area. Construction of the trail segments has the potential to increase temporary construction-related employment opportunities. Temporary employment opportunities generated by the project are anticipated to be filled by the local workforce and would not result in a substantial short-term population increase within the city. Additionally, the project would be limited to the operation of public

trail segments and would be maintained by existing City employees; therefore, the project would not generate a substantial number of new permanent employment opportunities that would encourage population growth in the area. Therefore, the project would not directly or indirectly induce substantial growth and *no impacts* would occur.

(b) Would the project displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

The project would not displace existing housing or necessitate the construction of replacement housing elsewhere; therefore, *no impacts* would occur.

Conclusion

The project would not result in potentially significant impacts related to population or housing and mitigation measures are not required.

Mitigation Measures

Mitigation is not necessary.

XV. Public Services

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
(c) Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for any of the public services:				
Fire protection?	☐	☐	☒	☐
Police protection?	☐	☐	☒	☐
Schools?	☐	☐	☐	☒
Parks?	☐	☐	☒	☐
Other public facilities?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Setting

Fire protection in the city is provided by the Coalinga Fire Department, which is staffed by 18 full-time firefighters and located at 300 West Elm Avenue. The City also has “mutual aid” and “instant aid” agreements with the Fresno County Fire Protection District. Under the instant aid agreement, Fresno County Fire Protection District automatically responds to critical facility fires in Coalinga. Critical facilities (i.e., those facilities which are occupied) in the city include schools, convalescent homes, prisons, and the hospital. In return, the Coalinga Fire Department responds to any fire within 0.5 mile of the City’s incorporated boundary.

Police protection is provided by the Coalinga Police Department, which is staffed by 15 sworn officers and supported by 10 full- and part-time non-sworn personnel. The Coalinga Police Department is located in the City Center at 270 North Sixth Street.

The proposed project is located within the Coalinga-Huron Unified School District (CHUSD), which includes five elementary schools, two middle schools, two continuation high schools, a community day school, and one senior high school. All of the CHUSD facilities are located in Coalinga except for one elementary school, a middle school, and a continuation high school, which are located in Huron. The Coalinga-Huron Recreation and Park District provides recreational facilities to the cities of Coalinga and Huron and the rural areas. The two developed parks in the city include Keck Park and George E. Olsen Memorial Park. Keck Park is located approximately 0.8 mile south of Segment 13, approximately 1 mile southwest of Segment 14, approximately 1.3 miles southwest of Segment 2, and approximately 1.5 miles southwest of Segment 1. George E. Olsen Park is located approximately 1.1 miles southeast of Segment 13, approximately 0.9 mile southwest of Segment 14, approximately 0.7 mile south of Segment 2, and approximately 0.9 mile south of Segment 1.

The City charges development impact fees to require proposed developments to fund wastewater treatment and disposal; water treatment, storage, and distribution; police services; fire services; streets; storm drainage; parks; community facilities; and habitat conservation. In addition, residential and commercial uses are subject to Coalinga-Huron Recreation and Park District impact fees. Residential, commercial, and rental self-storage developments are also subject to CHUSD impact fees. Lastly, all residential and non-residential developments (with the exception of educational and government facilities) are subject to Fresno Council of Governments transportation impact fees. The majority of these fees are scaled to the size and/or capacity of the proposed development, so that the fee reflects a fair-share contribution for the additional public services it would utilize (City of Coalinga 2018).

Environmental Evaluation

(a) Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for any of the public services:

Fire protection?

The project area would continue to be served by the Coalinga Fire Department, which is located approximately 1 mile south of Segments 13 and 14, 1.2 miles southwest of Segment 2, and 1.3 miles southwest of Segment 1. The project includes development of a new bicycle and pedestrian pathway and would not result in new structures that would require fire protection or otherwise result in a notable increased demand for fire protection services. Therefore, the project would not require or otherwise facilitate the need for additional or expanded fire protections services and potential impacts would be *less than significant.*

Police protection?

The project area would continue to be served by the Coalinga Police Department, which is located approximately 0.8 mile south from Segments 13 and 14, approximately 1 mile southwest from Segment 2, and approximately 1.1 miles southwest from Segment 1. The project includes development of a new bicycle and pedestrian pathway and would not result in an increase of the city population or otherwise result in an increased demand for police protection services. Therefore, the project would not require or

facilitate the need for additional or expanded police protection services and potential impacts would be *less than significant.*

Schools?

The project would not result in an increase of the population of school-aged children within the city. Therefore, the project would not result in an increased demand on existing school district facilities and *no impact* would occur.

Parks?

The project would not result in an increase of the city population or otherwise result in an increased demand on existing City park facilities. Therefore, potential impacts would be *less than significant.*

Other public facilities?

The project would not result in an increase in population or otherwise result in an increased demand on other public facilities. Therefore, potential impacts would be *less than significant.*

Conclusion

The project would not result in potentially significant impacts related to public services and mitigation measures are not necessary.

Mitigation Measures

Mitigation is not necessary.

XVI. Recreation

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	☐	☒	☐	☐

Setting

The Coalinga-Huron Recreation and Park District provides recreational facilities to the cities of Coalinga and Huron and the surrounding rural areas. The two developed parks in the city of Coalinga include Keck Park and George E. Olsen Memorial Park. Keck Park is located approximately 0.8 mile south of Segment 13, approximately 1 mile southwest of Segment 14, approximately 1.3 miles southwest of Segment 2, and approximately 1.5 miles southwest of Segment 1. George E. Olsen Memorial Park is located approximately 1.1 miles southeast of Segment 13, approximately 0.9 mile southwest of Segment 14, approximately 0.7 mile south of Segment 2, and approximately 0.9 mile south of Segment 1. There are no

existing recreational facilities located within the project site or in the immediate vicinity of the project site.

Environmental Evaluation

(a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?

The project includes development of four segments (Segments 1 [partial], 2, 13, and 14) of a new multi-use trail. The project would not result in an increase of the city's population or otherwise result in an increased demand on existing recreational facilities within the city. Establishment of this new recreational facility may result in a slight decrease in use of existing park facilities by providing recreational facilities closer in proximity to existing residential areas. Therefore, *no impacts* would occur.

(b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?

Construction and operation of the proposed trail segments would have the potential to result in adverse physical effects on the environment associated with air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, hazards and hazardous materials, and noise, as described in the corresponding resource sections in this Initial Study. Mitigation measures have been identified to reduce potential impacts associated with these resources to less than significant; therefore, potential impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation.*

Conclusion

Potential impacts associated with development of the proposed recreational bicycle and pedestrian trail segments would be reduced to less than significant with implementation of the mitigation measures identified below.

Mitigation Measures

Implement mitigation measures AQ-1 through AQ-3, BIO-1 through BIO-18, CR-1 through CR-5, N-1, and N-2.

XVII. Transportation

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
(a) Conflict with a program plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(b) Would the project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?	☒	☐	☒	☐

	Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(c)	Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(d)	Result in inadequate emergency access?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Setting

In 2013, SB 743 was signed into law with the intent to "more appropriately balance the needs of congestion management with statewide goals related to infill development, promotion of public health through active transportation, and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions" and required the California Governor's Office of Planning and Research to identify new metrics for identifying and mitigating transportation impacts within CEQA. As a result, in December 2018, the California Natural Resources Agency certified and adopted updates to the State CEQA Guidelines. The revisions included new requirements related to the implementation of SB 743 and identified VMT per capita, VMT per employee, and net VMT as new metrics for transportation analysis under CEQA (as detailed in Section 15064.3 [b]). Since July 1, 2020, the newly adopted VMT criteria for determining significance of transportation impacts was required to be implemented statewide.

The *City of Coalinga General Plan 2005-2025 Circulation Element* (General Plan Chapter 4) identifies goals, policies, and implementation measures to guide short- and long-range decision making by the community (City of Coalinga 2009a). Applicable goals, policies, and implementation measures to the project include, but are not limited to, the following:

> **Goal C1:** A balanced, safe, and efficient circulation system that includes cars, public transportation, bicycles, and pedestrians while accommodating future growth, maintaining acceptable Levels of Service.
>
> > **Policy C1-6:** The City shall encourage the use of transportation alternatives that reduce the use of personal vehicles.
>
> **Goal C2:** A network of multi-use recreational trails along Los Gatos and Warthan Creeks with inner City and regional connections for use by local residents and visitors.
>
> > **Policy C2-1:** Promote non-motorized bike and pedestrian circulation facilities to serve all areas of the City and link regional systems, with priority coordination with school, park, transit, and major facilities.
>
> **Goal C3:** Create a system of pedestrian and bicycle routes and transit-related facilities that provide an efficient alternative to automobile transportation.
>
> > **Policy C3-1:** Propose the installation of additional, distinctive transit stops at key activity areas and encourage covered shelters at new stops that are linked to safe pedestrian and bicycle routes.

The City's adopted ATP advances the three goals detailed above and identifies improvements for the City's active transportation network. The ATP identifies recommended trail facilities within and/or near the locations of the currently proposed Segments 1, 2, 13, and 14 (City of Coalinga 2017).

Environmental Evaluation

(a) Would the project conflict with a program plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities?

The project includes the design, construction, and operation of four segments (Segments 1 [partial], 2, 13, and 14) of the City's planned 8.8-mile perimeter trail and spur system identified in the City's TMP using CMAQ funding. The project would be consistent with the goals and policies identified in the City's General Plan pertaining to development of multi-use trails and bicycle infrastructure to reduce the use of personal vehicles and provide safe recreational opportunities for residents and visitors. The project would be consistent with the proposed active transportation network improvements detailed in the City's General Plan, ATP, and TMP. Therefore, the project would not conflict with a program plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system and *no impacts* would occur.

(b) Would the project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?

The City has not yet identified an appropriate model or method to estimate VMT for proposed land use development projects. State CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3(b) states that if existing models or methods are not available to estimate the VMT for the particular project being considered, a lead agency may analyze the project's VMT qualitatively.

Based on the nature and location of the project, the project would not generate a significant increase in construction-related or operational traffic trips or VMT. The purpose of the project is to establish a multi-use trail to connect residents on the periphery of the city to downtown areas. The project would establish four segments of a proposed pedestrian and bicycle path that would primarily be used by local residents and would not result in the need for additional new or expanded transportation facilities. By design, the project is intended to reduce VMT by providing alternate modes of regional travel. Therefore, potential impacts would be *less than significant.*

(c) Would the project substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?

The project proposes development of four segments of a separated pedestrian walkway and bicycle path and would not allow for motorized vehicle access. The proposed trail segments would consist of 10-foot-wide paved asphalt pathways bordered by between 2 and 4 feet of decomposed granite shoulders, consistent with the Caltrans-preferred specifications for a Class I Bikeway. The proposed paved pathway would be cradled by a 4-foot-wide crushed stone walking/jogging path on one side and a 2-foot-wide shoulder on the opposite side. The paths would be positioned away from the nearest roadways but with connectivity at key intersections to existing sidewalks and Class II and III bicycle routes on existing roads near the perimeter trail. Signage would be installed to alert trail users to places where the trail will interface with existing roads and destinations. The project has been designed to minimize potential safety hazards and restrict incompatible uses (e.g., all-terrain vehicles [ATVs]); therefore, potential impacts would be *less than significant*.

(d) Would the project result in inadequate emergency access?

The project may result in temporary road detours or traffic controls during construction of Segment 14; however, the project site and surrounding areas would remain accessible during construction of the proposed trail segments. Following construction, the project would not result in any road closures or

otherwise impede emergency access throughout the city. Therefore, potential impacts would be *less than significant.*

Conclusion

The project would not alter existing transportation facilities, result in the generation of substantial additional trips or VMT, or result in inadequate emergency access. The project has been designed to minimize potential safety hazards and restrict incompatible uses (e.g., ATVs). Therefore, potential impacts related to transportation would be less than significant and mitigation measures are not necessary.

Mitigation Measures

Mitigation is not necessary.

XVIII. Tribal Cultural Resources

	Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(a)	Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code Section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:				
	(i) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code Section 5020.1(k), or	☐	☒	☐	☐
	(ii) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.	☐	☒	☐	☐

Setting

Approved in 2014, AB 52 added tribal cultural resources to the categories of resources that must be evaluated under CEQA. Tribal cultural resources are defined as either of the following:

1) Sites, features, cultural landscapes, sacred places, and objects with cultural value to a California Native American tribe that are either of the following:
    a. Included or determined to be eligible for inclusion in the CRHR; or
    b. Included in a local register of historical resources as defined in PRC Section 5020.1(k).

2) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in PRC Section 5024.1(c). In applying these criteria

for the purposes of this paragraph, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American Tribe.

Recognizing that tribes have expertise with regard to their tribal history and practices, AB 52 requires lead agencies to provide notice to tribes that are traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of a proposed project if they have requested notice of projects proposed within that area. If the tribe requests consultation within 30 days upon receipt of the notice, the lead agency must consult with the tribe regarding the potential for adverse impacts on tribal cultural resources as a result of a project. Consultation may include discussing the type of environmental review necessary, the presence and/or significance of tribal cultural resources, the level of significance of a project's impacts on the tribal cultural resources, and available project alternatives and mitigation measures recommended by the tribe to avoid or lessen potential impacts on tribal cultural resources.

In accordance with AB 52 requirements, the City initiated Native American consultation on November 11, 2021. One response was received from the Santa Rosa Rancheria Tachi Yokut Tribe on November 22, 2021.

Environmental Evaluation

(a) Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code Section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:

(a-i) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code Section 5020.1(k)?

The City sent notification of a consultation opportunity to the Santa Rosa Rancheria Tachi Yokut Tribe regarding this project on November 11, 2021. Pursuant to AB 52, the Santa Rosa Rancheria Tachi Yokut Tribe had 30 days to respond in writing to request consultation. The City received a request for consultation pursuant to AB 52 for this project from Samantha McCarty of the Santa Rosa Rancheria Tachi Yokut Tribe on November 22, 2021. The City had a follow-up conversation with the Santa Rosa Rancheria Tachi Yokut Tribe on November 29, 2021, and incorporated additional information and mitigation requirements in this document following that conversation to address comments received.

The City has provided notice of the opportunity to consult with appropriate tribes per the requirements of AB 52 and the project site does not contain any known tribal cultural resources that have been listed in or been found eligible for listing in the CRHR, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in PRC Section 5020.1.

The project site is located in previously disturbed areas in the vicinity of Los Gatos Creek, with Segments 2 and 14 being located along the Los Gatos Creek bank. The project would require minimal grading and vegetation removal for site preparation activities. Per AB 52 consultation with the Santa Rosa Rancheria Tachi Yokut Tribe, Los Gatos Creek has been identified as a culturally sensitive location. Mitigation Measures CR-1 through CR-5 have been included to protect tribal cultural resources in the event inadvertent discovery of resources occurs during proposed ground-disturbing activities. Mitigation Measure CR-1 would require a representative of the Santa Rosa Rancheria Tachi Yokut Tribe to conduct cultural resource awareness training for all construction personnel prior to construction activities. Mitigation Measure CR-2 has been included to require monitoring during all ground disturbance activities. Mitigation Measure CR-3 requires a curation agreement to be established for the project.

Mitigation Measure CR-4 requires that work be halted in the vicinity of the find until a qualified archaeologist can assess the significance of the find. Additionally, Mitigation Measure CR-5 requires the project to comply with California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5. Implementation of the identified mitigation measures would ensure protection of tribal cultural resources during implementation of the project; therefore, impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation*.

(a-ii) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.

See discussion under Impact XVIII(a-i).

Conclusion

The City sent notification of a consultation opportunity to the Santa Rosa Rancheria Tachi Yokut Tribe regarding this project on November 11, 2021. Pursuant to AB 52, the Santa Rosa Rancheria Tachi Yokut Tribe had 30 days to respond in writing to request consultation. The City received a request for consultation pursuant to AB 52 for this project from Samantha McCarty of the Santa Rosa Rancheria Tachi Yokut Tribe on November 22, 2021. The City had a follow-up conversation with the Santa Rosa Rancheria Tachi Yokut Tribe on November 29, 2021, and incorporated additional information and mitigation requirements in this document following that conversation to address comments received. Project activities are not anticipated to result in the inadvertent discovery of tribal cultural resources; however, Mitigation Measures CR-1 through CR-5 have been included to ensure previously unrecorded tribal cultural resources and/or human remains are protected during project activities. Therefore, with implementation of the identified mitigation measure, impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

Implement Mitigation Measures CR-1 through CR-5.

XIX. Utilities and Service Systems

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
(a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or stormwater drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry, and multiple dry years?	☐	☐	☒	☐

	Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(c)	Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(d)	Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(e)	Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Setting

The City controls and administers the wastewater system for both domestic and industrial sewage. The oldest portions of the City's wastewater collection system were constructed in the first half of the twentieth century to serve what is now the central portion of the city. As the city has grown, the collection system has been extended to serve new development. The collection system currently serves all developed areas within the city limits. Maintenance of the City's sewer system is financed by sewer charges, and extension of sewer mains to new development is paid for by the developer. The City owns and operates a wastewater treatment plant under RWQCB Waste Discharge Requirements Order No. 94-184. There are no significant industrial users currently discharging into the wastewater treatment plant. The wastewater treatment plant is located at the confluence of Los Gatos and Warthan Creeks, approximately 1 mile east of the city.

The City is one of only three local jurisdictions in California that owns and operates a natural gas distribution system. The city has over 35 miles of gas lines, which were upgraded substantially after the 1983 earthquake. Between 200 and 210 million cubic feet of gas per year is distributed to 3,100 customers.

Currently, the City subcontracts its solid waste collection and disposal services within the city limits. The Coalinga Disposal Site, operated by the County of Fresno, is located 1 mile south of the city adjacent to SR 118. This landfill serves the cities of Coalinga and Huron, as well as the rural areas of southwestern Fresno County. Currently, the Coalinga Disposal Site averages 50 tons per day with a maximum daily permitted capacity of 100 tons per day; the city generates approximately 20 tons per day. The landfill is expected to serve the Coalinga region for the next 35–40 years. Once the landfill has reached capacity, local solid waste will be taken to the regional county landfill on American Avenue, approximately 45 miles east of the city. This landfill is presently expanding to 440 acres in order to accommodate regional growth (City of Coalinga 2009a).

Environmental Evaluation

(a) Would the project require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or stormwater drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?

The project would not result in a substantial increase in demand on water, wastewater, or stormwater collection, treatment, or disposal facilities and would not require the construction of new or expanded water, wastewater, or stormwater facilities. The project would not result in a substantial increase in energy demand, natural gas, or telecommunications; no new or expanded facilities would be required. No utility relocations are proposed. Therefore, *no impacts* would occur.

(b) Would the project have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry, and multiple dry years?

The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation provides domestic water service to the City. The major source of water is the Central Valley Project through the Coalinga Canal. The project would be consistent with existing and planned levels and types of development in the project area and would not create new or expanded water supply entitlements. Short-term construction activities would require minimal amounts of water for dust suppression and other ancillary uses, which would be supplied by the City. Operational water demands would be limited to maintenance of proposed landscaping areas which would be supplied by the City. The City plans to use a native, drought-tolerant seed mix to reduce overall water demand. Therefore, potential impacts on water supplies would be *less than significant*.

(c) Would the project result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?

The project does not include new connections to wastewater treatment facilities; therefore, *no impacts* would occur.

(d) Would the project generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?

Construction activities would result in the generation of minimal solid waste materials; no significant long-term increase in solid waste would occur. The City would install trash receptacles along the proposed trail and would service those trash receptacles. Local landfills have adequate permitted capacity to serve the project and the project does not propose to generate solid waste in excess of state or local standards or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals. Therefore, potential impacts would be *less than significant.*

(e) Would the project comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?

The project would not result in a substantial increase in waste generation during project construction or operation. Construction waste disposal would comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste. Therefore, potential impacts would be *less than significant*.

Conclusion

The project would not result in significant increased demands on water, wastewater, or stormwater infrastructure and facilities. No substantial increase in solid waste generation would occur. Therefore, potential impacts to utilities and service systems would be less than significant and mitigation measures are not necessary.

Mitigation Measures

Mitigation measures are not necessary.

XX. Wildfire

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:				
(a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(b) Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(c) Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines, or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(d) Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Setting

In central California, the fire season usually extends from roughly May through October; however, recent events indicate that wildfire behavior, frequency, and duration of the fire season are changing in California. FHSZs are defined by CAL FIRE based on the presence of fire-prone vegetation, climate, topography, assets at risk (e.g., high population centers), and a fire protection agency's ability to provide service to the area (CAL FIRE 2021).

Based on the CAL FIRE Hazard Severity Zone Map, Coalinga is located in a local responsibility area in a Moderate FHSZ. The Moderate designation does not mean the area cannot experience a damaging fire; rather, it indicates that the probability is reduced, generally because the number of days a year that the area has "fire weather" is less than in high or very high fire severity zones.

The *City of Coalinga General Plan 2005-2025 Safety, Air Quality and Noise Element* (General Plan Chapter 5) addresses potential safety concerns related to wildland fires and includes goals and policies associated with wildfire threats (City of Coalinga 2009a):

> **Goal S1:** A safe community that ensures the protection and well-being of its residents.

Policy S1-1: The City shall maintain its emergency preparedness, including evacuation procedures, to address potential manmade and natural disasters in order to guarantee the safety of, and accessibility to, all its residents. Procedures shall be developed in coordination with local, State, and Federal emergency operations and Plans.

Goal S2: Minimize loss of life, structures, and environment that may result from natural and man-made disasters.

Policy S2-1: The City shall ensure that developments, structures, and public facilities are sited within consideration to safety.

Policy S2-5: The City shall ensure new development in high fire risk areas is carefully sited and configured.

Environmental Evaluation

(a) If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

The project site is not located within a state responsibility area or within land classified as a very high FHSZ. The project may result in temporary road detours or traffic controls for construction of Segment 14; however, the project site and surrounding areas would remain accessible during implementation of the proposed trail segments. Therefore, the project would not substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or evacuation plan during construction or operation and impacts would be *less than significant*.

(b) If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project, due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?

The project site is characterized by generally flat topography with limited vegetation. Implementation of the project would result in developed trail segments that would establish new public uses within a previously undeveloped area. Although the project would introduce new public uses within a natural area, the project is not anticipated to expose project occupants to the uncontrolled spread of wildfire because the project site is not located within a state responsibility area or within land classified as a very high FHSZ. Additionally, the trail segments would be maintained to reduce potential hazards, including wildfire risk. Therefore, the project would not significantly increase or exacerbate potential fire risks or expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of wildfire, and impacts would be *less than significant*.

(c) If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines, or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?

The project site is not located within a state responsibility area or within land classified as a very high FHSZ. Additionally, the project would not require the installation or maintenance of utility or wildfire protection infrastructure that could exacerbate fire risk or result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the

environment as a result of the development of wildfire prevention, protection, and/or management techniques. Therefore, potential impacts would be *less than significant*.

(d) If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?

The project site is generally flat and would not be located near a hillslope or in an area subject to downstream flooding or landslides. The project site is not in a state responsibility area or high or very high wildfire risk area and does not include any design elements that would expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes. Therefore, impacts would be *less than significant*.

Conclusion

The project would not expose people or structures to new or exacerbated wildfire risks and would not require the development of new or expanded infrastructure or maintenance to reduce wildfire risks. Therefore, potential impacts associated with wildfire would be less than significant and mitigation measures are not necessary.

Mitigation Measures

Mitigation is not necessary.

XXI. Mandatory Findings of Significance

	Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(a)	Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(b)	Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.)	☐	☒	☐	☐
(c)	Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	☐	☒	☐	☐

Environmental Evaluation

(a) Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?

Based on the nature and scale of proposed development and the analysis provided in the resource sections above, the project has the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory. Mitigation Measures BIO-1 through BIO-18 and CR-1 through CR-5 have been identified and would reduce potential impacts to less than significant. Therefore, potential impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation*.

(b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.)

Based on the nature and scale of proposed development and the analysis provided in the resource sections above, the project would have the potential to result in environmental impacts associated with air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, hazards, and noise that would have a cumulative effect with other development projects in the city and surrounding areas. Mitigation measures have been identified to reduce potential environmental impacts to a less-than-significant level, which would result in the reduction of impacts to a less-than-cumulatively-considerable level. Therefore, potential impacts would be *less than cumulatively considerable with mitigation.*

(c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?

Based on the nature and scale of proposed development and the analysis provided in the resource sections above, the project has the potential to have environmental effects that could result in substantial adverse effects on human beings during the construction phase of the project. Potential impacts associated with air quality, NOA, cultural resources, and noise would be reduced to less-than-significant levels with the implementation of mitigation measures AQ-1 through AQ-3, BIO-1 through BIO-18, CR-1 through CR-5, and N-1 and N-2. Upon completion of the construction phase, the project would connect residents in Coalinga (and a disadvantaged census tract) to activity centers, such as schools, parks, a college, shopping, neighborhoods, and jobs. The project would provide a safe option to enable increased bicycle/pedestrian transportation use. Increased active transportation would address health disparities in a community that faces higher-than-average California city rates of asthma, obesity, and heart disease. Therefore, potential impacts associated with environmental effects that would cause substantial adverse effects on human beings would be *less than significant with mitigation*.

Conclusion

Potential impacts associated with mandatory findings of significance would be less than significant with mitigation.

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APPENDIX A

CalEEMod Results