



2022 Trinity County  
Regional Transportation Plan  
Initial Study/Negative Declaration

October 2022

2022 Trinity County

Initial Study/Negative Declaration

Report Prepared For:

Trinity County Transportation Commission

31301 State Highway 3 Weaverville, CA 96093



Report Prepared By:

**GREEN**  **DOT**  
transportation solutions

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# O. Introduction

## I. Project Title

Trinity County 2022 Regional Transportation Plan

## II. Lead Agency Name and Address

Trinity County Transportation Commission (TCTC)  
PO Box 2490  
31301 Highway 3  
Weaverville, CA 96093

## III. Contact Person and Phone Number

Jeff Schwein  
530-895-1109

## IV. Project Sponsor's Name and Address

Trinity County Transportation Commission (TCTC)  
PO Box 2490  
31301 Highway 3  
Weaverville, CA 96093

## V. Project Location and Setting

The project area consists of the entire County of Trinity. Trinity County is in the northwestern portion of California known for its scenic Trinity Alps. The County has a diverse geography that includes the South Fork Mountain and other ridges of the Klamath Mountains and Coastal Range. There is an extensive wild and scenic river system, and the terrain is rugged and forested, with the highest points at around 9,000 feet. The landscape has been eroded into its current form with the deep canyons and valleys of the Trinity, Van Duzen, and Eel Rivers. According to the 2000 Census, the county has a total area of 3,208 square miles of which, 3,179 square miles is land, and 29 square miles is water. There are no incorporated cities or towns in Trinity County. Trinity County's Census Designated Places (CDPs) include Hayfork, Lewiston, and Weaverville. Smaller communities include Big Bar, Burnt Ranch, Douglas City, Junction City, Salyer, Trinity Center, Hyampom, Mad River, Ruth and Coffee Creek.

Trinity County is bordered by the following five counties: Siskiyou County on the north, Mendocino County on the south, Humboldt County on the west, Shasta County on the east, and Tehama County on the southeast. The largest town in the County is Weaverville. The major highways in the County include State Route 3, State Route 36, and State Route 299. There are four national protected areas found in Trinity County including: Shasta-Trinity National Forest (933,674 acres), Six Rivers National Forest

(229,601 acres), Whiskeytown National Recreation Area (222,134 acres), and Mendocino National Forest (78,643 acres).

The County is served by a county wide airport system consisting of five public use general aviation airports located throughout the County - Lonnie Pool Field in Weaverville; James E. Swett Field in Trinity Center; Hayfork Airport; Hyampom Airport; and Ruth Airport.

## VI. General Plan And Zoning

There are a variety of General Plan Land Use designations applicable throughout the entire County, which includes the entire project area. The proposed project was designed to be consistent with the General Plan of Trinity County. The Circulation Element from the County's general plan was used as a reference during the development of the Trinity County 2022 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). The proposed project is consistent with the General Plan and does not include any proposed changes to the County's general plan. There are a variety of zoning designations applicable throughout the entire County, which includes the entire project area. The proposed project was designed to be consistent with the zoning code of Trinity County.

## VII. Project Description

The Trinity County Transportation Commission (TCTC) is the Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA) for Trinity County. The Trinity County Transportation Commission (TCTC) is established by Section 29535 of the Government Code and organized per Chapter 3, Title 21 of the California Administrative Code.

The RTPA is required by California law to adopt and submit an updated Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) to the California Transportation Commission (CTC) and to the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) every five years. The last update to the Trinity County RTP was adopted in 2016. The horizon year for the 2022 Trinity County RTP is 2042, with transportation improvements in the RTP identified as short term (0-5 years), mid term (6-10 years) or long-term (11-20 years).

The 2022 Regional Transportation Plan is considered a "project" under CEQA, and this Initial Study is focused on the Plan as a long-term planning effort. Projects identified within the Plan will be individually evaluated under CEQA at the project level when the project is being delivered. The RTP update must be consistent with the 2017 Regional Transportation Plan Guidelines, which requires inclusion of program-level outcome-based performance measures and close ties to the Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) and the Interregional Transportation Improvement Program (ITIP).

The overall focus of the 2022 RTP is directed at developing a coordinated and balanced multimodal regional transportation system that is financially constrained to the revenues anticipated over the life of the plan. The coordination focus brings the County, Caltrans, local communities, governmental resource agencies, commercial interests, and residents into the planning process. The balance is achieved by considering investment and improvements for moving people and goods across all modes including roads, transit, bicycle, pedestrian, trucking, and aviation, and by performing a robust stakeholder and community engagement process throughout the Plan's development.

The State and the County are at a pivotal moment in creating a new transportation pattern integrated

with land use planning. Regions across California have been asked to develop plans for more efficient land use and development to reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT). As per Senate Bill 743, VMT data is annually reported as part of the Federal Highway Performance Monitoring System (HPMS) program. The HPMS program uses a sample-based method that combines traffic counts stratified by functional classification of roadways by volume groups to produce sample based geographic estimates of VMT. HPMS VMT estimates are considered “ground truth” by the 1990 Federal Clean Air Act Amendments (November 15, 1990). HPMS VMT estimates are used to validate baseline travel demand models and to track modeled VMT forecasts over time. HPMS VMT estimates are reported for each county by local jurisdiction, state highway use, and other state/federal land roadways, e.g. State Parks, US Bureau of Land Management, US Forest Service, US Fish and Wildlife Service. HPMS VMT estimates are sample based. Due to smaller sampling requirements at the sub-county level of geography and in federal air quality attainment areas, desired 90/10 confidence level estimates of VMT are typically not attained in more rural areas of the state. Planners generally agree that reducing congestion, commute times, and VMT will lead to reduced carbon emissions while improving the quality of life for communities throughout California.

According to the California Department of Finance (DOF), the total population in Trinity County in 2020 was 16,112. The population has a -0.3 percent annual change on average. Countywide population density in 2020 was estimated to equal 5.1 persons per square mile. Trinity County’s population is slowly declining and has slowly been declining since 2011. We can expect the population to continue to slowly decline from now until 2042.

## VIII. Purpose of the Plan

As defined by the 2017 RTP Guidelines, the purpose of the regional transportation plan is to accomplish the following objectives:

- ❖ Providing an assessment of the current modes of transportation and the potential of new travel options within the region;
- ❖ Projecting/estimating the future needs for travel and goods movement;
- ❖ Identification and documentation of specific actions necessary to address regional mobility and accessibility needs;
- ❖ Identification of guidance and documentation of public policy decisions by local, regional, state and federal officials regarding transportation expenditures and financing;
- ❖ Identification of needed transportation improvements, in sufficient detail, to serve as a foundation for the: (a) Development of the Federal State Transportation Improvement Program (FSTIP, which includes the STIP), (b) Facilitation of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)/404 integration process and (c) Identification of project purpose and need;
- ❖ Employing performance measures that demonstrate the effectiveness of the system of transportation improvement projects in meeting the intended goals;
- ❖ Promotion of consistency between the CTP, the RTP and other plans developed by cities, counties, districts, California Tribal Governments, and state and federal agencies in responding to statewide and interregional transportation issues and needs;
- ❖ Providing a forum for: (1) participation and cooperation and (2) facilitation of partnerships that reconcile transportation issues which transcend regional boundaries; and,

- ❖ Involving community-based organizations as part of the public, Federal, State and local agencies, California Tribal Governments, as well as local elected officials, early in the transportation planning process so as to include them in discussions and decisions on the social, economic, air quality and environmental issues related to transportation. The TCTC prepared this 2022 RTP based on these objectives consistent with the 2017 RTP Guidelines (adopted January 18, 2017).

## IX. Project Purpose and Need

The RTP guidelines require that an RTP “provide a clearly defined justification for its transportation projects and programs.” This requirement is often referred to as The Project Purpose and Need Statement. Caltrans’ Deputy Directive No. DD 83 describes a project’s “Need” as an identified transportation deficiency or problem, and its “Purpose” is the set of objectives that will be met to address the transportation deficiency. For Trinity County, each project by mode in Attachment E of the 2022 RTP includes a qualitative assessment of purpose and need indicating a project’s contribution to system preservation, safety, multimodal improvements, regional and local mobility. These broader categories capture the intended outcome for projects during the life of the RTP and serve to enhance and protect the “livability” for residents in the County.

All projects listed in the Action Element of the RTP fall into one of the following designations. It should be noted that projects within each grouping are for the most part in random order. Consequently, the TCTC, County, and/or Caltrans may change the priority ranking or project scope during the RTP approval process.

- ❖ Short Range: RTP improvements represent short-range projects that are fully fundable from anticipated revenue sources, referred to as “constrained”, and will normally be programmed during the first five (0-5) years of the RTP.
- ❖ Mid Range: RTP Improvements represent mid-range projects that are included on the unconstrained or “unfunded” list, but are planned for programming in the 6-10 year time frame of the RTP horizon. year.
- ❖ Long Range: RTP improvements represent long-range projects that are included on the unconstrained or “unfunded” list of projects in Appendix G of the RTP and are planned for programming in the 11-20 year time frame (by the RTP horizon year, 2042).

There are no new roadways proposed as part of the proposed project. The RTP does not directly provide for the implementation of transportation projects and/or facilities. Rather, it identifies necessary improvements in order to provide the best possible transportation/circulation system to meet the mobility and access needs of the entire County.

Due to the regional nature of the RTP, the analysis in this Initial Study focuses on those impacts that are anticipated to be potentially significant on a regional system-wide level. As individual projects near implementation, it will be necessary to undertake project-specific environmental assessments before each project is approved and implemented. Such future environmental review will be required in accordance with CEQA and, if federally funded, NEPA. Adoption of this Initial Study/Negative Declaration and approval of the RTP does not authorize Trinity County or Caltrans to undertake construction of specific improvement projects identified in the RTP without further environmental review and consideration.

The following definitions are used in the RTP document.

**System Preservation** – This category of improvement indicates a project that serves to maintain the integrity of the existing system so that access and mobility are not hindered for travelers. Improvements may include bridge repairs, upgrading of existing rail lines, airport runway repairs, and upgrades to signs and traffic control devices and striping. In addition, because Trinity County is very rural and contains several small communities, the lack of maintenance funding has resulted in a large amount of “deferred maintenance” that has actually lapsed into a serious need to “rehabilitate” roadways to maintain system preservation. Rehabilitation entails primarily overlay and/or chip seal work that can also be considered a safety improvement. Most road projects listed indicate either “rehabilitation” or “reconstruction” to maintain system preservation.

**Safety Projects** – Safety improvements are intended to reduce the chance of conflicts between modes, prevent injury to motorists using the transportation system, and to ensure that motorists can travel to their destination in a timely manner. Safety improvements may include roadway and intersection realignments to improve sight-distance, pavement or runway resurfacing to provide for a smooth travel surface, signage to clarify traffic and aviation operations, congestion relief, obstacle removal so that traffic flows are not hindered, and improvements to pedestrian and bicycle facilities to promote safe travel to desired destinations. In addition, bridge repairs and reinforcement serve to improve safety. The desired outcome is to reduce the incident of collisions on County facilities and the societal costs in terms of injury, death or property damage.

**Multimodal Enhancement** – This type of improvements focus on non-auto modes of travel such as bicycling, walking and transit. Projects that are designated as multimodal are designed to enhance travel by one or more of these modes, provide for better connectivity between modes, and to improve non-auto access to major destinations and activity centers. Typical projects include separated bike lanes, shared bike routes, sidewalks, transit amenities, street furniture, and signage.

## X. Regional Goals

The comprehensive goals, objectives, and policies that have been developed for this RTP meet the needs of the region and are consistent with the County’s regional vision and priorities for action, which set the framework for carrying out the roles and responsibilities of the TCTC and assists them in their decision-making process for transportation investment. These objectives are intended to guide the development of a transportation system that is balanced, multi-modal, and will maintain and improve the quality of life in Trinity County.

## XI. Trinity County Regional Goals:

- ❖ Goal #1: Develop and maintain an efficient and safe system of streets, highways, and bridges that adhere to the existing and future needs while simultaneously promoting preservation of the environment, equitable access, and economic well-being.
- ❖ Goal #2: Support recreational travel by making it safe, easy, and inviting.
- ❖ Goal #3: Upgrade and improve roadways in order to preserve the existing regional roadway system.
- ❖ Goal #4: Increase the safety for all types of non-motorized transportation users; Increase

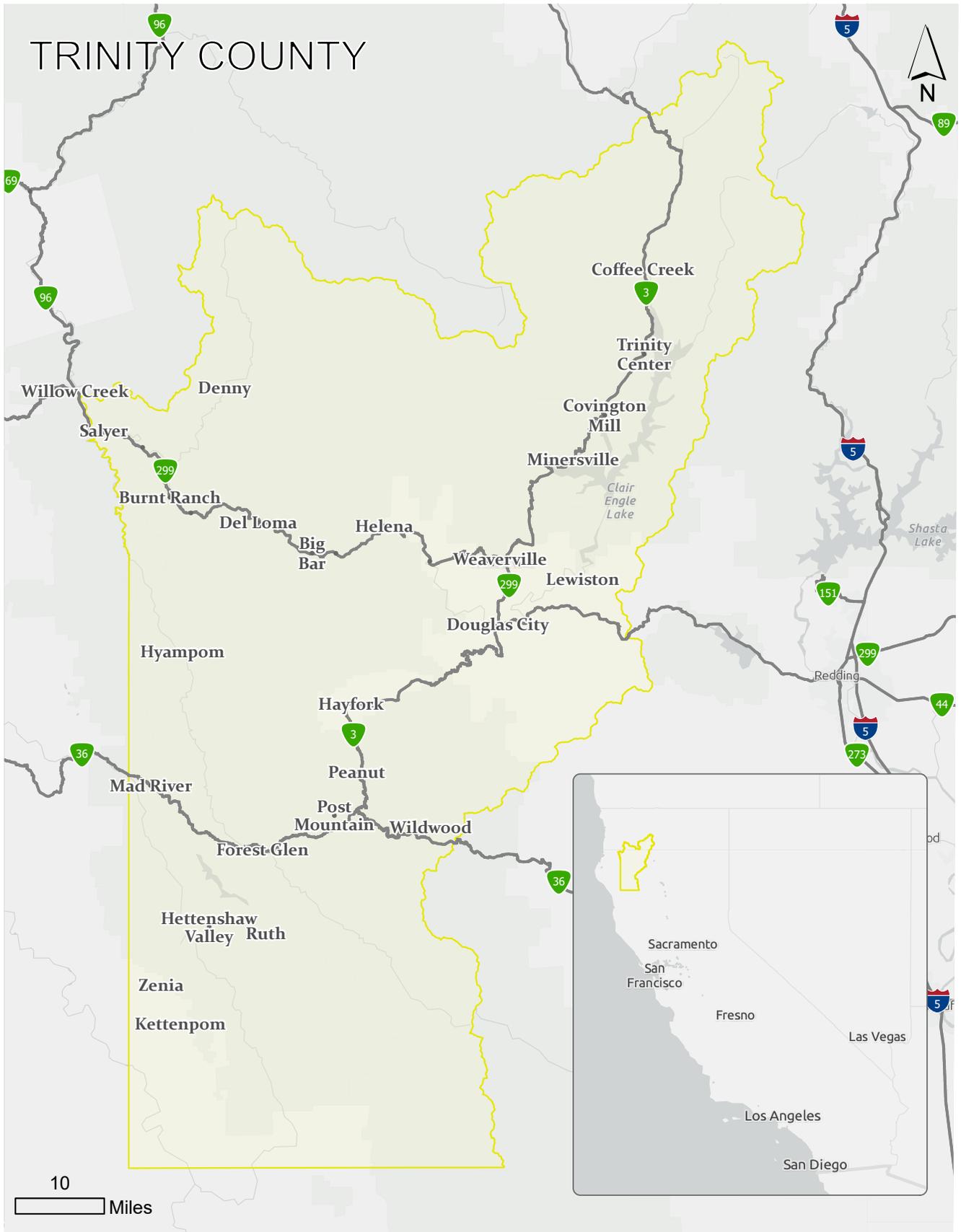
mobility among all types of non-motorized transportation users. Support the reduction of greenhouse gases; Promote public health; Ensure disadvantaged communities have full share of program benefits; Provide a broad spectrum of projects to benefit many types of bicyclists and pedestrians.

- ❖ Goal #5: Provide, where possible, an interconnected regional system that consists of transportation and recreational paths and trails.
- ❖ Goal #6: Provide affordable, consistent, and efficient public transportation options that will meet user demand.
- ❖ Goal #7: Prioritize the mobility needs of County residents, visitors, employees even with the financial constraints of state and federal transit funding.
- ❖ Goal #8: Maintain safe and efficient commercial and general aviation facility.
- ❖ Goal #9: Provide safe and efficient movement of regional and interregional goods.
- ❖ Goal #10: For Tribal residents within the Trinity region to have safe, effective, functional transportation systems, including streets, roads pedestrian and bicycle facilities and transit.
- ❖ Goal #11: Support tourism throughout Trinity County.
- ❖ Goal #12: Consider the environment and climate change impacts in all transportation decisions.
- ❖ Goal #13: Include climate change strategies in transportation investment decisions.

## XII. Other Public Agencies Whose Approval Is Required (e.g., Permits, etc.)

Trinity County will be the Lead Agency for the proposed project pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), Section 15050. No specific permits are required to approve the proposed project. Future permit approvals vary among projects and may include, but are not necessarily limited to: Caltrans, CA Department of Fish and Wildlife, Regional Water Quality Control Board, Bureau of Reclamation, Bureau of Land Management, US Army Corps of Engineers, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Federal Highway Administration, Federal Aviation Administration, and the California Transportation Commission.

**Figure 1: Location Map**



# 1. Environmental Factors Potentially Affected

None of the environmental factors listed below would be potentially affected by this project, as described on the following pages.

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

## DETERMINATION

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

X	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 measures 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.

Panos Kokkas, Executive Secretary Panos Kokkas  
Panos Kokkas (Oct 26, 2022 16:06 PDT)

Date Oct 26, 2022

## 2. Evaluation of Environmental Impacts

In each area of potential impact listed in this section, there are one or more questions which assess the degree of potential environmental effect. A response is provided to each question using one of the four impact evaluation criteria described below. A discussion of the response is also included.

- ❖ **Potentially Significant Impact.** This response is appropriate when there is substantial evidence that an effect is significant. If there are one or more “Potentially Significant Impact” entries, upon completion of the Initial Study, an EIR is required.
- ❖ **Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated.** This response applies when the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from “Potentially Significant Impact” to a “Less Than Significant Impact”. The Lead Agency must describe the mitigation measures and briefly explain how they reduce the effect to a less than significant level.
- ❖ **Less than Significant Impact.** A less than significant impact is one which is deemed to have little or no adverse effect on the environment. Mitigation measures are, therefore, not necessary, although they may be recommended to further reduce a minor impact.
- ❖ **No Impact.** These issues were either identified as having no impact on the environment, or they are not relevant to the Project.

### 3. Environmental Checklist

This section of the Initial Study incorporates the most current Appendix “G” Environmental Checklist Form, contained in the CEQA Guidelines. Impact questions and responses are included in both tabular and narrative formats for each of the 17 environmental topic areas.

#### I. AESTHETICS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>a)</b> Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?			X	
<b>b)</b> Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?			X	
<b>c)</b> Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?			X	
<b>d)</b> Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?			X	

#### SETTING

Trinity County is characterized by large mountain ranges, pine and fir forested slopes, and tarns with visible granite peaks. Located in the Cascade Range and being home to the scenic Trinity Alps, this area has spectacular views of the snow packed mountains, waterways, vast forests, blooming wildflowers, and other scenic resources that are available from highways and roadways throughout the County. The region’s economy is largely dependent on the visitors who come to recreate in these diverse natural settings, and they are a significant reason why many residents choose to live in Trinity County. The Trinity County General Plan envisions conservation rather than development of open lands, and the RTP aligns with this vision by programming transportation system improvements rather than expansion.



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## *Responses To Checklist Questions*

Response ad): Less than Significant.

Trinity County has California State Route 3, 36 and 299, as well as the Trinity Scenic Byway, roadways, and several Forest Service roads. The roads expose beautiful views of the surrounding areas, including the Trinity Alps, Trinity Lake, Trinity River, Mad River, New River, Lewiston Lake, Ruth Reservoir, Van Duzen River, and Ewing Reservoir. The proposed project does not entitle, propose, or otherwise require the construction of new roadways in any of these areas. The proposed project includes a variety of roadway improvement projects, which consist primarily of roadway rehabilitation efforts and roadway safety improvements. Improvements occur on State Highways and on local roadways, which would not significantly alter the aesthetics of an area or lead to indirect population growth as a result of access improvements into areas that are currently undeveloped. There are no new roadways proposed as part of the 2022 RTP update, and as such, the proposed project would not lead to indirect population growth as a result of access improvements into areas that are currently undeveloped. The proposed project identifies roadway and multimodal transportation improvement funding priorities that will be implemented over the next 20 years. Implementation of the proposed project would not result in significant or adverse changes to the visual quality of the County and would not result in the introduction of increased nighttime lighting or daytime glare. This is a less than significant impact and no mitigation is required.

## II. AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>a)</b> 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?				X
<b>b)</b> Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?				X
<b>c)</b> Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non- agricultural use?				X

### SETTING

According to the 2017 Census of Agriculture for Trinity County, there are 185 farms in the County making up 65,800 acres. The average farm size is 356 acres with 65% of farms being used for pastureland, 29% being used for woodland, and 3% being used for cropland. According to the 2018 Trinity County Annual Crop and Livestock Report, the 2016 gross production of agricultural commodities was estimated to be \$13.5 million.

### Responses To Checklist Questions

Response a): No Impact. Implementation of the proposed project would allow for roadway and multimodal transportation improvements throughout the County over the next 20 years. The proposed project would not result in the conversion of any agricultural lands to non- agricultural uses, and as such, would have no impact on any Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland or Farmland of Statewide importance. There is no impact, and no mitigation is required.

Response b): No Impact. The proposed project does not propose any changes to General Plan land use designations or zoning districts and would have no impact on zoning for agricultural use. The proposed project would not result in conflicts with any Williamson Act contracts, nor would it result in the cancellation of any Williamson Act contracts. Implementation of the proposed project will have no impact on a Williamson Act contract, and no mitigation is required.

Response c): No Impact. See responses a) and b) above. The proposed project will have no impact on agricultural lands or operations.

### III. AIR QUALITY

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>a)</b> Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?			X	
<b>b)</b> Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?			X	
<b>c)</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 (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?			X	
<b>d)</b> Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?			X	
<b>e)</b> Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?			X	

#### SETTING

The California Air Resources Board (CARB) divides the State into air basins and adopts standards of quality for each air basin. Trinity County is part of the North Coast Air Basin, with air quality managed by the North Coast Unified Air Quality Management District (NCUAQMD). The NCUAQMD has a monitoring station located in Trinity County on the roof of the Courthouse in Weaverville.

#### TRINITY COUNTY AIR POLLUTION CONTROL DISTRICT

The North Coast Unified Air Quality Management District (NCUAQMD) is the regional government agency that works to protect the people and the environment of Trinity County from the harmful effects of air pollution. The NCUAQMD is responsible for the preparation of plans for the attainment and maintenance of Ambient Air Quality Standards (AAQS), adoption and enforcement of rules and regulations for sources of air pollution, and issuance of permits for stationary sources of air pollution.

The NCUAQMD also inspects stationary sources of air pollution, regulates agricultural burning, responds to citizen complaints, monitors ambient air quality and meteorological conditions, and implements programs and regulations required by federal and state air quality regulations. The NCUAQMD works to ensure a coordinated approach in the development and implementation of



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transportation plans throughout the County. This coordination ensures compliance with pertinent provisions of the federal and state Clean Air Acts, as well as related transportation legislation.

The only pollutant monitored at this site is Particulate Matter 10 (particulate matter ten microns in diameter or less) or PM<sub>10</sub>. Airborne Particulate Matter is caused by a combination of sources including fine fugitive dust, combustion from automobiles and heating, road salt, conifer pollen, and others. Constituents that comprise suspended particulates include organic, sulfate, and nitrate aerosols which are formed in the air from emitted hydrocarbons, and chloride, sulfur oxides, and oxides of nitrogen. The 24-hour Federal PM<sub>10</sub> Standard is 150 µg/m<sup>3</sup>, while the State Standard is 50 µg/m<sup>3</sup>. The low population density, limited number of industrial and agricultural installations, and minimal problems with traffic congestion all contribute to Trinity County's generally good air quality.

During the last three years of data (2014-2016), the North Coast Air Basin was in attainment with the Federal PM<sub>10</sub> standard but was in non-attainment for the State PM<sub>10</sub> standard for 2 days during that period, in August 2015, by 7.6 µg/m<sup>3</sup>. This is likely due to numerous wildfires in the region. This is generally the case. In Trinity County, the primary sources of pollutants contributing to the non-attainment designation for PM<sub>10</sub> are wood stoves, wind-blown dust from dirt roads and agriculture, and open burning such as backyard burns, prescribed burning and wildfire. An air quality conformity determination is not required for adoption of this RTP, as Trinity County is not within a designated Federal non-attainment or maintenance area for air quality and is therefore exempt. However, since the County, and other areas in the North Coast District exceed the State PM<sub>10</sub> standard, The North Coast Unified Air Quality Management District has established a PM<sub>10</sub> Attainment Plan, which includes Transportation Control Measures (TCMs) and land use measures affecting motor vehicles.

Some of the project alternatives proposed in this RTP would lead to reduced traffic congestion, resulting in slightly lower emissions. In addition, some projects to surface unpaved roads follow the PM<sub>10</sub> Attainment Plan being implemented by the NCUAQMD. Therefore, this RTP is consistent with the District's PM<sub>10</sub> Attainment Plan.

### *Responses to Checklist Questions*

Responses ae): Less Than Significant. It is the intention of the RTP to maintain the current transportation network and improve existing and future circulation within the County wherever possible. With this focus, improvements in the RTP may benefit regional air quality by reducing congestion on major roads within the County. Some of the route improvements identified in the RTP could have direct impacts on air quality, sensitive receptors, or create objectionable odors on a project-specific basis during construction. The Clean Air Act sets national ambient air quality standards for various air pollutants, including carbon monoxide, ozone, oxides of nitrogen, sulfur dioxide and particulate matter.

Individual projects identified in the RTP will be subject to project-level environmental review prior to approval and construction. Measures, such as construction best management practices (BMPS), may be required for individual projects to reduce temporary short-term construction related impacts to air quality. The project would not result in any indirect or cumulatively adverse impacts on air quality, as the project would not result in increased vehicle trips within the County or an overall increase in vehicle miles travelled as a result of implementation of the RTP. The proposed project would not conflict with or obstruct the implementation of the air quality plan, or violate any air quality standard.

In 2006, the California State Legislature adopted Assembly Bill (AB) 32 known as the California Global



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Warming Solutions Act (Section 38560.5 of the Health and Safety Code). The bill, and subsequent legislation (SB 375) establishes a cap on statewide greenhouse gas emissions and sets forth the regulatory framework to achieve the corresponding reduction in statewide emissions levels.

In January 2007, the Legislature asked the CTC to review the RTP guidelines to incorporate climate change emission reduction measures. The request emphasized that RTPs should utilize models that accurately measure the benefits of land use strategies aimed at reducing vehicle trips and/or trip length. The CTC staff established an RTP guidelines work group to assist in the development of “best practices” for inclusion in the RTP Guidelines. The newest 2017 RTP Guidelines provides several recommendations for consideration by rural RTPAs to address GHG reductions. The following strategies from the 2017 RTP guidelines have specific application to Trinity County.

- ❖ For purposes of allocating transportation investments, recognize the rural contribution towards GHG reduction for counties that have policies that support development within their cities, and protect agriculture and resource lands. Consideration should be given to jurisdictions that contribute towards these goals for projects that reduce GHG or are GHG neutral, such as safety, rehabilitation, connectivity and for alternative modes.
- ❖ In setting priorities, consider transportation projects that increase efficiency, connectivity and/or accessibility or provide other means to reduce GHG.
- ❖ In setting priorities, consider transportation projects that provide public health co-benefits.
- ❖ Emphasize transportation investments in areas where desired land uses as indicated in the County General Plan may result in vehicle miles traveled (VMT) reduction or other lower impact use.
- ❖ Employ “Fix It First” policies to ensure that preventive maintenance and repair of existing transit and roads are the highest priority for spending, to reduce overall maintenance costs, and to support development in existing centers and corridors.

The transportation planning literature recognizes three interrelated components that contribute to transportation emissions reductions. Those components include changes in vehicle technology (cleaner burning engines), alternative fuel sources, and vehicle use. The first two components are typically the responsibility of industry and national governmental interests. RTPAs and local governments can affect vehicle use by promoting transportation alternatives to the automobile, and by managing the demand for transportation. These efforts typically involve goals and policies and/or projects and programs focused on getting people out of their cars and into non-auto modes of travel (mode shifting).

RTPAs which are not located within the boundaries of a metropolitan planning organization (which TCTC is not) are not subject to the provisions of SB 375 which require addressing regional greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) targets in the RTP and preparation of a sustainable community strategy. Future improvements to the transit system and a commitment to a future rideshare program could provide residents another alternative to driving a car.



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The following RTP goals are established for Trinity County to increase safety while reducing dependence on the automobile and to promote mode shifting to other forms of transportation.

- ❖ Goal #2: Support recreational travel by making it safe, easy, and inviting.
- ❖ Goal #4: Increase the safety for all types of non-motorized transportation users;
  - ◇ Increase mobility among all types of non-motorized transportation users;
  - ◇ Support the reduction of greenhouse gases;
  - ◇ Promote public health;
  - ◇ Ensure disadvantaged communities have full share of program benefits;
  - ◇ Provide a broad spectrum of projects to benefit many types of bicyclists and pedestrians.
- ❖ Goal #5: Provide, where possible, an interconnected regional system that consists of transportation and recreational paths and trails.
- ❖ Goal #6: Provide affordable, consistent, and efficient public transportation options that will meet user demand.
- ❖ Goal #7: Prioritize the mobility needs of County residents, visitors, employees even with the financial constraints of state and federal transit funding.
- ❖ Goal #10: For Tribal residents within the Trinity region to have safe, effective, functional transportation systems, including streets, roads pedestrian and bicycle facilities and transit.
- ❖ Goal #12: Consider the environment and climate change impacts in all transportation decisions.
- ❖ Goal #13: Include climate change strategies in transportation investment decisions.

The effectiveness of efforts by the RTPA to provide transportation alternatives and to implement TDM and TSM policies and strategies can be measured in terms of reductions in vehicle miles traveled (VMT) or the expected growth in VMT. VMT reductions correlates directly with reductions in GHG emissions.

Caltrans reports VMT by County on an annual basis (see Figure 2). The daily vehicle miles traveled on County roads increased by 18.6% between 2014 and 2018, or an average of a 4.6% increase every year. Federally maintained US Forest Service roads almost doubled, increasing from 1.35 daily VMT in 2014 to 2.32 daily VMT in 2018. Additionally, State highways increased an average of 1.3% daily VMT each year with a total increase of 5.2%.

**Table 2.21: Historic and Existing Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Per Capita**

Table 2.21 Historic and Existing Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Per Capita					
Jurisdiction	2015 VMT Per Capita	2016 VMT Per Capita	2017 VMT Per Capita	2018 VMT Per Capita	2019 VMT Per Capita
National Park Service	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002
State Highways	25.420	26.330	25.920	25.190	25.740
Trinity County	9.480	8.300	8.310	8.290	5.840
U.S. Forest Services	0.900	16.840	16.860	16.930	15.210
Total	35.800	51.470	51.080	50.400	46.790

Source: 2010 - 2018 California Public Road Data

**Table 2.22: Forecasted Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Per Capita**

Table 2.22 Forecasted Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Per Capita					
Jurisdiction	2022 VMT Per Capita	2027 VMT Per Capita	2032 VMT Per Capita	2037 VMT Per Capita	2042 VMT Per Capita
National Park Service	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002
State Highways	27.486	29.343	31.257	33.390	35.741
Trinity County	5.874	5.675	5.469	5.287	5.120
U.S. Forest Services	16.248	17.346	18.477	19.738	21.128
Total	49.610	52.365	55.202	58.412	61.987

Source: 2010 - 2018 California Public Road Data

In recent years, Trinity County has experienced decreasing growth (approximately -0.3 percent change per year) in population and employment. Due to the minimal decrease, however, future trends of population decrease could easily change. Additionally, the population changes throughout the year due to seasonal residents with vacation homes. A variable formula was used to forecast average daily VMT based on the average annual change from 2015-2019. Roadway segments with no increases or decreases in this time period were projected at a matching constant rate. Roadways with significant average VMT increases were projected at a higher rate of increase in proportion to VMT increases experienced between 2015 and 2019. Road segments that experienced no change between 2015 and 2019 have been projected to remain constant. Based on this trend and the guidelines established in the 2017 RTP guidelines, the County is not required to run a network travel demand model to estimate VMT. The guidelines cite the lack of road congestion and the fact that emission changes from higher-MPG vehicles will continue to help the County comply with future emission caps established by the California Air Resources Board as part of AB 32. Increases in VMT in the region are mainly due to interregional freight moving within and through Trinity County. The Trinity County region will rapidly need to prepare for vehicle electrification. In addition to personal vehicles and the transit fleet, Trinity



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County Regional Transportation Plan sets forth goals and objectives to prepare roadways to address sustainable freight transition. It is recommended that further planning efforts are needed to prepare for and implement Zero Emissions Vehicle (ZEV) infrastructure readiness, electric vehicle plug-in stations, and other planned improvements that would benefit economic outcomes while reducing the impacts of climate change on the region.

The Trinity County 2022 RTP recognizes that TDM and other non-auto mobility options, including walking, biking and transit, require coordinated land use decisions and improved infrastructure. To this degree, the goals and policies in the RTP are consistent with the County's proposed general plan revisions to provide a balanced multi-modal transportation system that includes non-auto choices for access and mobility.

The County is committed to implementing these types of policies and strategies that reduce reliance on the automobile and contribute to the reduction of GHG emissions. Although the RTP mentions projects that will enhance the countywide transportation system, the proposed improvements would not influence VMT or population levels, nor would it significantly alter current air quality levels. As such, the proposed project would result in less than significant impacts to air quality, and no mitigation is required.

## IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>a)</b> 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?			X	
<b>b)</b> Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or US Fish and Wildlife Service?			X	
<b>c)</b> Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?			X	
<b>d)</b> 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?			X	
<b>e)</b> Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?			X	
<b>f)</b> Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?			X	

## SETTING

Trinity County extends from low elevations near 2,000 feet in the Weaverville basin high elevations near 10,000 feet in the Trinity Alps. As a result of the changes in elevation, Trinity County includes a variety of climatic, soils and geographic conditions which, in turn, influence the distribution, variety, and abundance of the plant and animal species within the county. Trinity County contains a variety of vegetation associations, which support a diverse array of plant and animal species. The variety of vegetative cover types in the county provide habitat for many different types of wildlife. Of particular significance is the large expanse of deer range located in the Trinity Alps. The migratory deer spend summers at high elevations in the Trinity Alps and migrate to lower elevations in the winter. In the National Forests within Trinity County, the Forest Service maintains a habitat management program, the main objective of which is to maintain or enhance viable populations of fish and wildlife species. To ensure that viable populations of all species are maintained, several species have been selected as “management indicator species” (MIS) to function as barometers for wildlife communities. These include species designated as Sensitive by the Forest Service, species of local interest, and species listed as Threatened or Endangered by either the Federal or State government. These include the bald eagle, peregrine falcon, and northern spotted owl (Threatened/Endangered); fisher, goshawk and marten (sensitive), black-tailed deer, douglas tree squirrel and western gray squirrel (harvest); tule elk (special interest); and acorn woodpecker, pileated woodpecker, and California thrasher (maintenance). The major aquatic resources found in Trinity County include the Trinity River, North Fork of the Trinity, New River, South Fork of the Trinity, Eel River, Mad River, Van Duzen River, Trinity Lake, Lewiston Lake, Ruth Reservoir and Ewing Reservoir. High elevation streams in the national forests are occupied by species adapted to the cool, swift-moving, highly oxygenated waters. Such species include rainbow trout, steelhead trout, brook trout, brown trout, black bass, small mouth bass, catfish, kokanee salmon, and coho salmon (State and Federally listed as Threatened). Foothill and meadow streams generally flow in winter but are intermittent in the summer.

## STATE WILDLIFE ACTION PLAN

The goals identified in the Policy Element (Chapter 3) of this Plan consider stressors identified in the State Wildlife Action Plan. The State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP) identifies separate conservational provinces broken into subzones called ecoregions. During the process of this RTP, The TCTC coordinated with the California State Wildlife Action Plan to ensure that the RTP action items aligned with the conservation strategies for the Central Valley and Sierra Nevada regions.

According to the California State Wildlife Action Plan, the major stressors in the Central Valley and Sierra Nevada Region are as follows:

### Stressors affecting upland habitats:

- ❖ Growth and land development
- ❖ Forest management conflicts
- ❖ Altered fire regimes
- ❖ Excessive livestock grazing
- ❖ Invasive Plants
- ❖ Recreational Pressures
- ❖ Climate change

### Stressors affecting aquatic and riparian habitats:

- ❖ Water diversions and dams
- ❖ Watershed fragmentation and fish barriers
- ❖ Hydropower project operations
- ❖ Excessive livestock grazing
- ❖ Water diversions from the Owens Valley
- ❖ Introduced non-native fish



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Although Trinity County is located within the Trinity Alps, Klamath Mountains and Coastal Range, the California state Wildlife Action Plan was not developed on a county-basis. The larger region that applies to Trinity County contains species, stressors and recommended actions that are not relevant to Trinity County. For a complete list of actions suggested for wildlife management in Trinity County, see Attachment C of the Regional Transportation Plan.

### *CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE (CDFW) CALIFORNIA NATURAL DIVERSITY DATABASE (CNDDDB)*

A review was performed of county-wide species using the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB). The information in the species list includes known occurrences and historical occurrences of species listed as threatened, endangered or otherwise protected under policies or ordinances at the local or regional level as required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA, §15380).

The CNDDDB County Species List for Trinity County contains 84 total animal and plant species and communities within the County. Of these, 13 species are classified by the CDFW, with 8 being listed as threatened or endangered. Of those 8 species, 5 are threatened and 3 are endangered.

### *Responses To Checklist Questions*

Response af): Less than Significant. The proposed project does not propose the construction of new roadways in areas of the County that have previously been undisturbed. Nearly all of the roadway projects identified in the RTP consist of rehabilitation efforts, which would occur within the roadbeds of the existing roadways and would not have the potential to impact any special status species or habitat. Individual projects identified in the RTP that may include the widening of a particular roadway would be subject to project-level environmental review prior to approval and construction of the improvements. This future project-level environmental review of individual projects would identify the potential for impacts to any special status species, habitat, or wetlands. As such, implementation of the proposed project would not directly or indirectly impact any biological resources, wetland resources, or conflict with any habitat conservation plan or local ordinance protecting natural and biological resources. This is a less than significant impact and no mitigation is required.

## V. CULTURAL RESOURCES

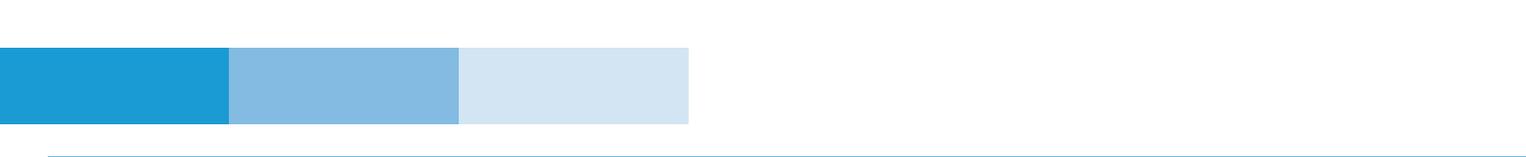
	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>a)</b> Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in §15064.5?			X	
<b>b)</b> Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?			X	
<b>c)</b> Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?			X	
<b>d)</b> Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?			X	

### SETTING

Trinity County has a uniquely rich historic and prehistoric heritage. The County lies within the traditional Wintu aboriginal lands. The deer and elk near the Trinity River and food found in the mountains and valleys of Trinity County have provided subsistence and spiritual sustenance to the Wintu for millennia. There are no federally recognized tribes in the region but the following are present and active in the area: Nor Rel Muk Nation; and the Wintu, Tsungwe, Yurok, and Hoopa Tribes. Each tribal entity was contacted during the RTP development process to discuss transportation deficiencies, improvements to existing system infrastructure, and mode specific plans. Euro-American travel through the County and its later settlement are also of interest and importance to the people of Trinity County, for the County's identity is closely related to these historic events. The first explorers came in 1845 and was later populated during the gold rush in 1849, bringing more Europeans and Chinese settlers. Prehistoric and historic resources are valuable to the people of Trinity County in many ways: spiritual importance, community identity, aesthetic beauty, historic interest, and recreation opportunities. Prehistoric, historic, and contemporary cultural resources could be located anywhere within the County. No comprehensive inventory of cultural resource sites within Trinity County exists.

### Responses To Checklist Questions

Response ad): Less than Significant. The proposed project does not entitle, propose, or otherwise require the construction of new roadways. The proposed project includes a variety of roadway improvement projects, which consist primarily of roadway rehabilitation efforts and roadway safety improvements. The proposed project identifies roadway and multimodal transportation improvement funding priorities that will be implemented over the next 20 years. Nearly all of the roadway projects identified in the RTP consist of rehabilitation efforts, which would occur within the roadbeds of the existing roadways and would not have the potential to impact any known or previously undiscovered



cultural resources. Individual projects identified in the RTP that may include the widening or a particular roadway would be subject to project-level environmental review prior to approval and construction of the improvements. This future project-level environmental review of individual projects would identify the potential for impacts to any cultural, historical, paleontological or archaeological resources. A project level environmental review is required under CEQA for each project identified in the Regional Transportation Plan and will be evaluated at that time for cultural resources. This Plan as a Project has a less than significant impact on the environment and no mitigation is required.

## VI. GEOLOGY AND SOILS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>a)</b> Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:			X	
<b>i)</b> 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.			X	
<b>ii)</b> Strong seismic ground shaking?			X	
<b>iii)</b> Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?			X	
<b>iv)</b> Landslides?			X	
<b>b)</b> Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?			X	
<b>c)</b> 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?			X	
<b>d)</b> Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?			X	
<b>e)</b> Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?			X	

## SETTING

Trinity County is in the northwestern portion of California. The geology of the County is defined by the Trinity Alps, South Fork Mountain and other ridges of the Klamath Mountains and Coastal Range, carved by the deep canyons and valleys of the Trinity, Van Duzen, and Eel Rivers. There is an extensive wild and scenic river system, and the terrain is rugged and forested, with the highest points at around 9,000 feet. Trinity County is underlain predominately by Paleozoic Marine rocks in the Western Klamath Mountains, the Franciscan Complex in the Coast Ranges, Mesozoic granite rocks in the Klamath Mountains, Schist of various types in the Klamath Mountains, and Ultramafic rocks in Trinity Ophiolite.

Trinity County was not determined to be affected by Existing Earthquake Fault Zones and does not have any active faults. However, Trinity could potentially feel earthquakes and experience low to moderate levels of ground shaking from distant earthquakes.

### *Responses To Checklist Questions*

Responses ae): Less than Significant. Seismicity is directly related to the distribution of fault systems within a region. Depending on activity patterns, faults and fault-related geologic features may be classified as active, potentially active, or inactive. The entire State of California is considered seismically active and is susceptible to seismic ground shaking, however, the most highly active fault zones are along the coastal areas.

Fault Rupture. A fault rupture occurs when the surface of the earth breaks as a result of an earthquake, although this does not happen with all earthquakes. These ruptures generally occur in a weak area of an existing fault. Ruptures can be sudden (i.e. earthquake) or slow (i.e. fault creep). The Alquist-Priolo Fault Zoning Act requires active earthquake fault zones to be mapped and it provides special development considerations within these zones. While it is possible for a fault rupture throughout seismically active areas of California, there are no Alquist-Priolo Fault zones within Trinity County.

Seismic Ground Shaking. The potential for seismic ground shaking in California is expected. As a result of the foreseeable seismicity in California, the State requires special design considerations for all structural improvements in accordance with the seismic design provisions in the California Building Code. These seismic design provisions require enhanced structural integrity based on several risk parameters. Any future roadway improvements implemented as a result of adoption of the RTP would be subject to detailed engineering requirements to ensure structural integrity consistent with the requirements of state law. As such, implementation of the proposed project would result in a less than significant impact from seismic ground shaking.

Liquefaction. Liquefaction typically requires a significant sudden decrease of shearing resistance in cohesionless soils and a sudden increase in water pressure, which is typically associated with an earthquake of high magnitude. The potential for liquefaction is highest when groundwater levels are high, and loose, fine, sandy soils occur at depths of less than 50 feet. Most areas of Trinity County are at a low risk of hazards from liquefaction. Any future roadway improvements implemented as a result of adoption of the RTP would be subject to detailed engineering requirements to ensure structural integrity consistent with the requirements of state law. As such, implementation of the proposed project would result in a less than significant impact from liquefaction.

Landslides. Landslides include rockfalls, deep slope failure, and shallow slope failure. Factors such as the



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geological conditions, drainage, slope, vegetation, and others directly affect the potential for landslides. One of the most common causes of landslides is construction activity that is associated with road building (i.e. cut and fill). The projects identified in the RTP consist primarily of roadway maintenance and improvement projects and would occur within the existing right of way of the County's roadway system. As such, the potential for impacts related to landslides is considered less than significant.

**Lateral Spreading.** Lateral spreading typically results when ground shaking moves soil toward an area where the soil integrity is weak or unsupported, and it typically occurs on the surface of a slope, although it does not occur strictly on steep slopes. Oftentimes, lateral spreading is directly associated with areas of liquefaction. Any future roadway improvements implemented as a result of adoption of the RTP would be subject to detailed engineering requirements to ensure structural integrity consistent with the requirements of state law. As such, implementation of the proposed project would result in a less than significant impact from lateral spreading.

**Erosion.** Erosion naturally occurs on the surface of the earth as surface materials (i.e. rock, soil, debris, etc.) is loosened, dissolved, or worn away, and transported from one place to another by gravity. Two common types of soil erosion include wind erosion and water erosion. The steepness of a slope is an important factor that affects soil erosion. Erosion potential in soils is influenced primarily by loose soil texture and steep slopes. Loose soils can be eroded by water or wind forces, whereas soils with high clay content are generally susceptible only to water erosion. The potential for erosion generally increases as a result of human activity, primarily through the development of facilities and impervious surfaces and the removal of vegetative cover. Future roadway improvement projects would be required to implement measures during construction, including various BMPs, that would reduce potential impacts related to erosion. This is considered a less than significant impact.

**Expansive Soils.** Expansive soils are those that shrink or swell with the change in moisture content. The volume of change is influenced by the quantity of moisture, by the kind and amount of clay in the soil, and by the original porosity of the soil. Shrinking and swelling can damage roads and structures unless special engineering design is incorporated into the project plans.

**Septic Tanks.** Implementation of the RTP would not result in the use or expansion of any septic systems. Implementation of the proposed project would have a less than significant impact on this environmental topic, and no mitigation is required.

## VII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>a)</b> Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?			X	
<b>b)</b> Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?			X	

### SETTING

The RTP includes goals, policies, and strategies aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions in Trinity County. RTP projects such as roadway and bridge repairs are necessary to maintain a safe regional transportation system and to prevent deterioration of roadways and bridges which may require costlier repairs in the future. These projects will not result in greater traffic volumes along state highways or County roads. To the degree that keeping an existing travel route open avoids travel via longer alternative routes that would accompany a closure, maintaining existing roadways and bridges can help to avoid increases in Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT).

The RTP should be consistent with any County General Plan updates or County land use guidelines and will encourage new developments to be placed adjacent to existing development in order to assist in VMT reduction and shorter travel distances. The RTP also includes long-term bicycle and pedestrian improvement projects which will create more bicycle and pedestrian friendly communities and potentially further reduce VMT. The RTP also includes public transit elements. By expanding alternative forms of transportation, Trinity County is in-line with statewide climate change goals. The RTP is a programmatic document, and the proposed projects will be reviewed on a project-by-project basis, therefore there is no potential for significant impact. The potential impacts of the entirety will be considered with further impacts and details to be refined in each project specific environmental document completed for those projects.

### Responses To Checklist Questions

Response a) and b): Less than Significant. The population has decreased slightly in Trinity County over the past decade, and this trend is anticipated to continue through 2040. As a result of the County's historic and projected population decrease, increases in VMT are anticipated to remain low as well. The RTP includes numerous goals related to the increase in multi-modal transportation options, which reduce dependence on the automobile, and may subsequently result in decreases in total VMT throughout the County.

## VIII. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>a)</b> Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?				X
<b>b)</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?				X
<b>c)</b> Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?				X
<b>d)</b> 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?				X
<b>e)</b> For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?			X	
<b>f)</b> For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?			X	
<b>g)</b> Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?				X

**h)** Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?

X

## SETTING

The State of California has adopted U.S. DOT regulations for the intrastate movement of hazardous materials; State regulations are contained in 26 CCR. In addition, the State of California regulates the transportation of hazardous waste originating in the state and passing through the state (26 CCR). Both regulatory programs apply in California. The two State agencies with primary responsibility for enforcing Federal and State regulations and responding to hazardous materials transportation emergencies are the CHP and Caltrans. The CHP enforces hazardous material and hazardous waste labeling and packing regulations to prevent leakage and spills of material in transit. Caltrans has emergency chemical spill identification teams at as many as 72 locations throughout the State that can respond quickly in the event of a spill. Additionally, the Trinity County Public Health Department serves the public to protect the health and welfare of the general public and environment through prevention and control of disease and pollutants.

## Responses To Checklist Questions

Responses ac): No Impact. A “hazardous material” is a substance or combination of substances that, because of its quantity, concentration, or physical, chemical, or infectious characteristics, may pose a potential hazard to human health or the environment when handled improperly. The proposed project does not propose new development or any use that would result in the transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials. Furthermore, the proposed project would not result in a foreseeable upset, accident, or emission of hazardous materials. Implementation of the proposed project would have a less than significant impact on this environmental topic and no mitigation is required.

Responses d): Less than Significant. There are no locations in Trinity County that are registered with the Department of Toxic Substances Control and included on the Cortese List. Implementation of the proposed project would have no impact on this environmental topic and no mitigation is required.

Response ef): Less than Significant. The Action Element of the RTP includes a list of proposed improvement projects related to aviation facilities in the County. The proposed aviation facility improvements consist primarily of rehabilitation efforts, and the implementation of other ancillary improvements such as fencing, lighting, etc. All improvements to aviation facilities within the County identified in the RTP are consistent with the applicable airport land use plans (ALUPs) and would not result in changes to the aviation and flight patterns surrounding County aviation facilities. Implementation of the proposed project would have a less than significant impact on this environmental topic and no mitigation is required.

Response g): Less than Significant. The proposed project would not impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. The improvements identified in the RTP would improve the transportation network in Trinity County, which would serve to improve emergency response times countywide. Construction activities associated with



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projects identified within the RTP may result in temporary lane closures that may temporarily impede emergency access to certain areas within the County during construction. However, each improvement project, when undertaken, will include measures to ensure that emergency access is not adversely impeded. Implementation of the proposed project would have a less than significant impact on this environmental topic and no mitigation is required.

Response h): Less than Significant. Wildfires are a major hazard in the State of California. Wildfires burn natural vegetation on developed and undeveloped lands and include timber, brush, woodland, and grass fires. While low intensity wildfires have an important role in the ecosystem, modern wildfires are exacerbated due to fire suppression, extreme drought and climate change. These higher intensity fires put human health and safety, structures (e.g., homes, schools, businesses, etc.), air quality, recreation areas, water quality, wildlife habitat and ecosystem health, and forest resources at risk.

The proposed project consists primarily of projects that will improve and rehabilitate roadways throughout the County. Roadway rehabilitation is necessary for improving emergency response and evacuation efficiency. There are no new homes, businesses or habitable structures proposed as part of the RTP. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project would not result in increased risks associated with wildfires. This is a less than significant impact and no mitigation is required.

## IX. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>a)</b> Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?			X	
<b>b)</b> Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?			X	
<b>c)</b> Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?			X	
<b>d)</b> Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site?			X	
<b>e)</b> 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?			X	
<b>f)</b> Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?			X	
<b>g)</b> Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?			X	

<b>h)</b> Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures which would impede or redirect flood flows?			X	
<b>i)</b> Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?			X	
<b>j)</b> Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?			X	

## SETTING

Trinity County gets 43 inches of rain on average. The precipitation in Trinity County flows through the Trinity River Basin. Trinity County’s hydrologic sources are dominated by surface water flow from the Trinity River, according to the US Geological Survey. The major sources of groundwater in Trinity County include rainfall, infiltration from nearby rivers and streams, Trinity River flow, and subsurface inflow.

Trinity County’s population and economy is dependent upon adequate water supplies. Water is a necessity for agricultural production and economic development and is vitally important to maintaining many of the county’s wildlife resources and recreation attractions. Trinity County contains many lakes and streams that not only are a vital water source, but also serve as recreational attractions. There are 22 reservoirs in the Trinity River Basin with more than 10,000 acre-feet of storage and hundreds of smaller reservoirs, mostly flood-control structures built by the Natural Resources Conservation Service. These reservoirs have an appreciable effect on streamflow and water quality in the basin. They tend to increase base flow in streams by releasing stored water during dry periods. They tend to reduce flood peaks by storing floodwaters. They affect water quality by trapping sediment and associated nutrients and contaminants and by altering the stream habitat both in the flooded lake area and downstream.

## Responses To Checklist Questions

Response aj): Less than Significant. Implementation of the proposed project would result in the improvement and rehabilitation of roadways and transportation infrastructure throughout Trinity County. The project would not result in the development or construction of housing or other habitable structures that would be at risk from flooding events. There are a small number of projects identified within the RTP that may increase the area of impervious surfaces within the County. Such improvements consist primarily of roadway widening to address safety and operational concerns. The number of impervious surfaces that may be added to the County as a result of project implementation is negligible and would not result in impacts to groundwater recharge rates. The improvements identified in the RTP would not result in increased uses of ground or surface water and would not directly or indirectly lead to population growth. As such, the project would not result in an increased demand for ground or surface water resources and would have no impact on these environmental topics.

There is the potential for water quality impacts to occur during construction activities associated with the various projects identified in the RTP. Each project is subject to further project-level environmental review prior to approval and construction. During subsequent environmental review, potential project-



specific construction impacts to water quality would be identified, and mitigation measures, in the form of BMPs would be identified and implemented to ensure that impacts to water quality are reduced or avoided. Impacts to these environmental topics are considered less than significant and no mitigation is required.

During subsequent environmental review, potential project-specific construction impacts to water quality would be identified, and mitigation measures, in the form of BMPs, would be identified and implemented to ensure that impacts to water quality are reduced or avoided. If applicable, the county would prepare a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan, (SWPPP) and obtain Water Quality Certification or Waste Discharge Requirements, or a Waiver of Waste Discharge Requirements from the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (NCRWQCB). Impacts of specific projects will be mitigated to less than significant levels. The impact of this RTP is less than significant, and no mitigation is required for preparation of the RTP.

## X. LAND USE AND PLANNING

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>a)</b> Physically divide an established community?				X
<b>b)</b> Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?				X
<b>c)</b> Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?				X

### SETTING

Trinity County has a General Plan containing policies to guide growth and land use changes.

### Responses To Checklist Questions

Responses ac): No Impact. Implementation of the proposed project would result in improvements to the County's transportation network. None of the proposed projects would divide any communities within the plan area. There are no changes to land uses or land use designations proposed as part of the RTP. The County General Plan was reviewed during preparation of the RTP, and the RTP is consistent with these documents. No housing would be removed as part of the proposed project, and there are no new roadways proposed that would divide an established community. Implementation of the RTP would not conflict with a habitat conservation plan. There are no impacts to land use associated with the proposed project and no mitigation is required.

## XI. MINERAL RESOURCES

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>a)</b> 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?				X
<b>b)</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?				X

### SETTING

The Office of Mine Reclamation periodically publishes a list of mines regulated under SMARA that is generally referred to as the AB 3098 List. The Public Contract Code precludes mining operations that are not on the AB 3098 List from selling sand, gravel, aggregates, or other mined materials to state or local agencies. The current AB 3098 list (November 6, 2022) indicates that there are 5 mines regulated under SMARA in Trinity County: 91-53-0002 Dinsmore Bar, Mercer-Fraser Company, INC.; 91-53-0007 La Grange Mine, Eagle Rock, INC.; 91-53-0015 Smith Pit Phase 2, Concrete Aggregate Products; 91-53-0021 Blue Rock Quarry 2, Meyers Earthwork, INC; 91-53-0025 Mann Mine. Mann Mine.

### Responses To Checklist Questions

Response ab): No Impact. There are no active mines located within the areas proposed for improvement in the RTP. The proposed project would not result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource or mineral resource recovery site. Implementation of the proposed project would have a less than significant impact on this environmental topic.

## XII. NOISE

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>a)</b> Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?			X	
<b>b)</b> Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?			X	
<b>c)</b> A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?			X	
<b>d)</b> A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?			X	
<b>e)</b> For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two 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?			X	
<b>f)</b> For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?			X	

### SETTING

Due to the lack of sizeable industrial operations, the Trinity County General Plan identifies existing noise sources in Trinity County related to vehicular traffic on State Routes 299, 36, and 3. Recreation and tourism can cause higher levels of noise on these routes than would otherwise exist.

### Responses To Checklist Questions

Responses af): Less than Significant. Implementation of the proposed project consists primarily of improvements to the existing transportation network in Trinity County. There are no new roadways proposed that would introduce new vehicle trips into areas not currently exposed to mobile noise sources from the existing transportation network. The improvements identified in the RTP would not directly result in increased vehicle trips on the County roadway network, and would therefore,



not result in increased noise levels from vehicles travelling on existing roadways and transportation facilities in the County. Construction activities associated with the various improvements identified in the RTP could result in short-term temporary noise impacts in the immediate vicinity of the improvements. These noise increases would be temporary in nature, and construction activities in the vicinity of residences and other sensitive noise receptors would usually be limited to the daytime hours. However, as described throughout this initial study, subsequent environmental review of project-specific impacts would be required prior to approval and implementation of future improvements. This future environmental review would identify the potential for short-term construction noise impacts to sensitive receptors and assign mitigation measures as needed to reduce noise impacts. This is a less than significant impact and no mitigation is required.

### XIII. POPULATION AND HOUSING

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>a)</b> Induce substantial 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)?			X	
<b>b)</b> Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?			X	
<b>c)</b> Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?			X	

#### SETTING

According to the American Community Survey, the total number of housing units in Trinity County was estimated at 8,137 in 2021. An estimated 68.5% of the housing units were owner. The median home value in the County is \$285,700.

According to the US Census, the population of Trinity County started to slowly decline around the year 2000. Growth has decreased, but the margin is so small that in the future, it could remain steady. Trinity County has seasonal population increases that are directly related to the large recreational tourism industry. Transportation planning efforts must accommodate the seasonal population boosts.

#### Responses To Checklist Questions

Responses ac): Less than Significant. The Trinity County region is not undergoing any major development or construction that would significantly contribute to greenhouse gas emissions. The proposed project consists primarily of the rehabilitation of the existing transportation network in Trinity County. There are no new roadways proposed that would extend vehicular access into areas of the County that are not currently accessible by area roadways. The project would not result in the direct or indirect inducement of population growth. The proposed project includes projects that would occur primarily within the right-of-way of the existing transportation network and would not displace any persons or housing units. This is a less than significant impact and no mitigation is required.

## XIV. PUBLIC SERVICES

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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:			X	
Fire protection?			X	
Police protection?			X	
Schools?			X	
Parks?			X	
Other public facilities?			X	

### SETTING

Trinity County is served by 23 fire departments including volunteer fire departments and the California Department of Forestry, City Fire Departments, US Forest Service Fire Departments, and Fire Protection (Cal Fire). Law enforcement for the County is provided by the Trinity County Sheriff's Office, located in Markleeville. The California Highway Patrol enforces traffic laws throughout the county.

Trinity County is served by four school districts, the Trinity Alps, Groveton, Centerville, and Apple Springs Unified School District, which contain a total sixteen different schools. There is also Shasta College Trinity Campus and Shasta College located in Weaverville.

The Weaverville-Douglas City Recreation District, Greater Hayfork Valley Park and Recreation District operates and maintains parks and community facilities in Markleeville and Bear Valley. There are facilities that include community meeting rooms, playgrounds, pools, disc golf courses, campgrounds, and open space. Additionally, there is an abundance of National Forest land, State Park land, and privately owned recreation facilities within the County that are widely utilized for recreational purposes.

### Responses To Checklist Question

Response a): Less than Significant. As described throughout this initial study, the proposed project



(adoption of the RTP) consists primarily of the rehabilitation and improvement of the existing transportation network in Trinity County. The projects included in the RTP would not extend roadway infrastructure into areas not currently served and would not result in the direct or indirect growth of the County's population. As such, the demand for increased public services, including police protection, fire protection, schools, parks and other public facilities would not increase as a result of implementation of the proposed project. This is a less than significant impact and no mitigation is required.

## XV. RECREATION

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>a)</b> 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?			X	
<b>b)</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?			X	

### SETTING

As discussed previously, Trinity County parks are operated and maintained by the County Department. The Parks system consists of facilities that include a variation of parks and community centers. However, most recreation takes place within the abundance of Federal lands and State Parks within the county.

### Responses To Checklist Questions

Responses ab): Less than Significant. As described throughout this initial study, the proposed project (adoption of the RTP) consists primarily of the rehabilitation and improvement of the existing transportation network in Trinity County. The projects included in the RTP would not extend roadway infrastructure into areas not currently served and would not result in the direct or indirect growth of the County's population. As such, the demand for increased recreational facilities would not increase as a result of implementation of the proposed project. This is a less than significant impact and no mitigation is required.

## XVI. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>a)</b> Conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation including mass transit and non-motorized travel and relevant components of the circulation system, including but not limited to intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit?			X	
<b>b)</b> Conflict with an applicable congestion management program, including, but not limited to level of service standards and travel demand measures, or other standards established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?			X	
<b>c)</b> Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?			X	
<b>d)</b> Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?			X	
<b>e)</b> Result in inadequate emergency access?			X	
<b>f)</b> Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such facilities?			X	

### SETTING

Trinity County is served by four state highways and numerous local roadways. The roadway network provides the regional transportation routes for automobiles and trucks. The three major highways that

transverse the County are State Route 3 running north-south, State Route 36 running east-west, and State Route 299 running east-west. State Route (SR) 3, SR 96, SR 161, SR 263, SR 265, as well as other streets located in Weed and Mt Shasta are classified as minor arterials in Trinity County. I-5, SR 139, US 97, and SR 89 are classified as principal arterials.

State Route 3 runs north-south through Trinity County, beginning at SR 36 just south of Peanut and passing out of Trinity County over Scott's Mountain north of Trinity Lake. SR 3 passes through Hayfork, Douglas City, Weaverville, Trinity Center, and Coffee Creek as well as several smaller communities. It serves as the primary north-south roadway in the county, connecting central and northern Trinity County with the county seat of Weaverville. Between Douglas City and Weaverville, Routes 3 and 299 are the same route (by statute, SR 299 is the assigned route number). SR 3 carries local (intra-county) traffic as well as recreational and commercial (primarily natural resource) traffic. SR 3 has sharp curves, limited passing opportunities between Douglas City and Hayfork as well as between Slate Creek and Trinity Center and is not maintained during winter months over Scott's Mountain. Within Weaverville, SR 3 provides access between the central commercial district and Weaverville Elementary School, residential areas, and the Weaverville Airport.

State Route 36 runs east-west through the southern portion of the county, entering Trinity County near Wildwood from the east and crossing into Humboldt County west of Mad River. Other than passing through the communities of Forest Glen and Mad River, SR 36 mostly passes through undeveloped forest land. SR 36 provides access to Fortuna in Humboldt County to the west and Red Bluff in Tehama County to the east, as well as Hayfork and Weaverville (via Route 3), to Wildwood and Post Mountain, and to Southern Trinity County, including Ruth, Zenia and Kettenpom via County collector roads. SR 36 provides access for residents of Southern Trinity County who travel to Eureka for shopping opportunities. The capacity of SR 36 is limited by horizontal and vertical curves, narrow lane and shoulder widths, and by the limited passing opportunities.

State Route 299 runs east-west through Trinity County, entering over Buckhorn Summit from Redding to the east and crossing into Humboldt County near Salyer to the west. SR 299 links the communities of Lewiston, Douglas City, Weaverville, Junction City, Big Flat, Big Bar, Burnt Ranch, and Salyer, as well as several smaller communities. SR 299 carries a variety of traffic including local (intra-regional), recreational, commuter, and commercial. SR 299 has been classified as a National Forest scenic byway and is heavily utilized for access to and along the Trinity River. It is also classified as a Focus Route by Caltrans because of its importance as an inter-regional route (for both auto and truck traffic) between the Northern Sacramento Valley and the North Coast. SR 299 also serves as the major roadway within Weaverville, connecting the more established commercial and government center on the northwest with newer commercial and employment centers to the southeast. Due to the limited roadway network, virtually all trips in Weaverville use SR 299, which (in combination with through traffic) results in 299 carrying the highest traffic volumes within the County, particularly during peak summer travel periods. SR 299 has limited passing opportunities, particularly west of Weaverville. Implementation of federally mandated barrier striping on state highways in 1988 resulted in severely restricted passing opportunities. Only six passing lanes exist (four eastbound, two westbound) on SR 299 between Willow Creek and Douglas City, a stretch of 65 miles. The distance between passing lanes for eastbound traffic is 26 miles (Hawkins Bar to Big Flat), while the distance for westbound traffic is a 52-mile gap between passing lanes (Oregon Mountain to Willow Creek).

Other roadways with similar functional classifications as the state highways in Trinity County include Interstate and U.S. Highways. Neither of these roadway types are located directly in Trinity County,



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but they serve as a route option for travelers in the larger region. Forest roads are also present in the county and are described in more detail below.

### *Responses To Checklist Questions*

Responses ab): Less than Significant. The project is preparation of the Regional Transportation Plan, which is a plan and set of policies establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, considering all modes of transportation. It establishes level of service standards and other standards established by the Trinity County Transportation Commission for the County's roads and highways. It also includes policies regarding public transit, bicycle and pedestrian facilities and airports. As such, there is no conflict with established applicable plans because this is the transportation management plan for the region. The RTP is also consistent with the circulation element of the General Plans and would not result in conflicts or inconsistencies with that plan. Therefore, there is no impact, and no mitigation is required. Implementation of the proposed RTP would result in improvements and rehabilitation to the existing transportation and roadway network in Trinity County.

Although a slight increase in VMT is likely to occur throughout the lifetime of this RTP, few changes are expected in the ratings of state routes in Trinity County. In 2042, most highway segments are expected to be operating at an acceptable congestion rating.

Implementation of the proposed project would not result in population growth within Trinity County and would not directly result in increases of VMT. The proposed project would improve traffic flows and operations throughout the County and would not result in VMT that exceeds applicable standards or thresholds. This is a less than significant impact and no mitigation is required.

Responses cf): Less than Significant. As described throughout this initial study, implementation of the proposed project would assist in the improvement of the County's transportation network across all modes of transit and transportation. The improvements proposed to aviation facilities in the County would not result in an increase in flights or a change in flight patterns. There are policies and programs included in the RTP that would improve public access to transit systems and alternative modes of transit, such as bicycle use. The various roadways improvements identified in the RTP would assist in the delivery of emergency services by improving the local and regional roadway network and eliminating existing design and safety hazards. The RTP and the projects included within were developed after careful review of the General Plan of the County. The RTP is consistent with the circulation element of the General Plan and would not result in conflicts or inconsistencies with the above referenced plan. This is considered a less than significant impact and no mitigation is required.

## XVII. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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:				
<b>a)</b> Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of the Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k), or			X	
<b>b)</b> 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 Resources Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American Tribe.			X	

### SETTING

The County has a standing Memorandum of Agreement with the Nor Rel Muk Band of Wintu Indians of Northern California that formalizes notification, consultation and monitoring procedures applicable to County public works projects, particularly transportation projects. There are no federally recognized tribes in the region but the following are present and active in the area: Nor Rel Muk Nation; and the Wintu, Tsnungwe, Yurok, and Hoopa Tribes. Each tribal entity was contacted during the RTP development process to discuss transportation deficiencies, improvements to existing system infrastructure, and mode specific plans.

### Responses To Checklist Questions

Response a-b): Less than Significant. The County has a standing Memorandum of Agreement with the Nor Rel Muk Band of Wintu Indians of Northern California that formalizes notification, consultation and monitoring procedures applicable to County public works projects, particularly transportation projects. This agreement requires consultation during the environmental phase of all projects and allows for



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Tribal monitoring of construction within the Tribe's ancestral lands within the County. Consultation is also conducted during the environmental phase with other Tribes for projects within their ancestral territories. If consultation for a project in the RTP reveals a concern about a potentially significant Tribal cultural Page 31 Page 32 resource, the County will negotiate with the Tribe to determine a course of action regarding the project or treatment of the cultural resource that can be agreed on by all parties before the project can proceed. This is standard policy and is included in the RTP. Therefore, impacts on Tribal cultural resources will be less than significant, and no further mitigation is required.

CEQA requires lead agencies to determine if a proposed project would have a significant effect on tribal cultural resources. The CEQA Guidelines define tribal cultural resources as: (1) a site, feature, place, cultural landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American Tribe that is listed or eligible for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources, or on a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code Section 5020.1(k); or (2) a resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant according to the historical register criteria in Public Resources Code Section 5024.1(c), and considering the significance of the resource to a California Native American Tribe. The County provides notices of projects under AB52 to the designated contact of, or a tribal representative of, traditionally and culturally affiliated California Native American tribes that have requested notice.

The proposed project does not entitle, propose, or otherwise require the construction of new roadways. The proposed project includes a variety of roadway improvement projects, which consist primarily of roadway rehabilitation efforts and roadway safety improvements. The proposed project identifies roadway and multimodal transportation improvement funding priorities that will be implemented over the next 20 years. Nearly all of the roadway projects identified in the RTP consist of rehabilitation efforts, which would occur within the roadbeds of the existing roadways, and would not have the potential to impact any known or previously undiscovered cultural resources. Individual projects identified in the RTP that may include the widening of a roadway would be subject to project-level environmental review prior to approval and construction of the improvements. This future project-level environmental review of individual projects would identify the potential for impacts to any cultural resources. This is a less than significant impact and no mitigation is required.

## XVIII. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>a)</b> Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?			X	
<b>b)</b> Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?			X	
<b>c)</b> Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?			X	
<b>d)</b> Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?			X	
<b>e)</b> Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the projects projected demand in addition to the providers existing commitments?			X	
<b>f)</b> Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the projects solid waste disposal needs?			X	
<b>g)</b> Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?			X	

### SETTING

Trinity County's population and economy is dependent upon adequate water supplies. Water is a necessity for economic development and is vitally important to maintaining many of the county's wildlife resources and recreation attractions. The major aquatic resources found in Trinity County include the Trinity River, North Fork of the Trinity, New River, South Fork of the Trinity, Eel River, Mad River, Van Duzen River, Trinity Lake, Lewiston Lake, Ruth Reservoir and Ewing Reservoir. The Trinity River Basin has 22 reservoirs that help with runoff. The major sources of groundwater in Trinity County include rainfall, infiltration from nearby rivers and streams, Carson River flow, and subsurface inflow.



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## *Responses To Checklist Questions*

Responses ag): Less than Significant. The project consists of various roadway and transportation network improvement projects throughout the County. The project would not result in direct or indirect population growth, and as such, would not increase the demand for water supplies or the treatment and/or conveyance of wastewater. The various roadway and infrastructure improvements may require modifications or expansions to existing and future stormwater conveyance infrastructure adjacent to roadways proposed for rehabilitation or modification. As described throughout this initial study, projects identified in the RTP would be subject to project-level environmental review to determine if potential impacts to the County's stormwater detention and conveyance infrastructure may occur. This future project-specific environmental review may include mitigation measures, as appropriate, to avoid or lessen potential impacts to the stormwater infrastructure adjacent to roadway and other improvement projects. Implementation of the projects identified in the RTP would not generate significant amounts of solid waste, and would not result in an exceedance of any landfill's capacity or violate any state, federal or local statutes related to the disposal of solid waste. This is considered a less than significant impact and no mitigation is required.

## XIX. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>a)</b> Does the project have the potential to 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, 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?			X	
<b>b)</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)?			X	
<b>c)</b> Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?			X	

### Responses To Checklist Questions

Responses a) - c): Less than Significant. As described throughout the analysis above, the proposed project will not result in any changes to General Plan land use designations or zoning districts, would not result in annexation of land, and would not allow development in areas that are not already planned for development in the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance. The proposed project would not result in new adverse environmental impacts. The project would not threaten a significant biological resource, nor would it eliminate important examples California history or prehistory. The proposed project does not have impacts that are cumulatively considerable, nor would it have substantial adverse effects on human beings. Implementation of the proposed project would have a less than significant impact on these environmental topics.

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# Initial Study (IS)

Final Audit Report

2022-10-26

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