

# INITIAL STUDY AND MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

FOR THE

## FLINT TRAIL ACCESS ROAD

JANUARY 2023

*Prepared for:*

Calaveras County - Planning Department  
891 Mountain Ranch Road  
San Andreas, CA 95249  
(209) 754-6394

*Prepared by:*

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D e N o v o P l a n n i n g G r o u p

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A Land Use Planning, Design, and Environmental Firm





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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Statutory Authority and Requirements

This Initial Study has been prepared in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (California Public Resources Code [PRC] Sections 21000, et seq.) and the State CEQA Guidelines (14 California Code of Regulations Title 14 Sections 15000, et seq.). This Initial Study is an informational document intended to be used as a decision-making tool for the Lead Agency and responsible agencies in considering and acting on the proposed Project.

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15063, Calaveras County (County), as Lead Agency, has prepared this Initial Study to determine if the proposed South Flint Trail Secondary Access Road Project (Project) would have a significant effect on the environment. If, as a result of the Initial Study, the Lead Agency finds that there is evidence that mitigation cannot reduce the impact to a less than significant level for any aspect of the proposed Project, then the Lead Agency must prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) to analyze project-related and cumulative environmental impacts. Alternatively, if the Lead Agency finds that there is no evidence that the Project as proposed may cause a significant effect on the environment, the Lead Agency may prepare a Negative Declaration (ND). If the Lead Agency finds that there is evidence of a significant impact, but the impact can be reduced through mitigation, the Lead Agency may prepare a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND). Such determination can be made only if “there is no substantial evidence in light of the whole record before the Lead Agency” that such significant environmental impacts may occur (PRC Section 21080(c)).

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15063(c), the purposes of an Initial Study are to:

1. Provide the Lead Agency with information to use as the basis for deciding whether to prepare an EIR, MND or a ND;
2. Enable an applicant or Lead Agency to modify a project, mitigating adverse impacts before an EIR is prepared, thereby enabling the project to qualify for a ND;
3. Assist in the preparation of an EIR, if one is required, by;
  - a. Focusing the EIR on the effects determined to be significant,
  - b. Identifying the effects determined not to be significant,
  - c. Explaining the reasons for determining that potentially significant effects would not be significant, and
  - d. Identifying whether a program EIR, tiering, or another appropriate process can be used for analysis of the project’s environment effects.
4. Facilitate environmental assessment early in the design of a project;
5. Provide documentation of the factual basis for the finding in a MND or ND that a project will not have a significant effect on the environment;
6. Eliminate unnecessary EIRs; and
7. Determine whether a previously prepared EIR could be used with the project.

The environmental documentation, which is ultimately selected by the County in accordance with CEQA, is intended as an informational document undertaken to provide an environmental basis for subsequent discretionary actions upon the proposed Project. The resulting environmental documentation is not, however, a policy document and its approval and/or certification neither presupposes nor mandates any actions on the part of those agencies from whom permits and other discretionary approvals would be required.

## 1.2 Summary of Findings

Pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15367, Calaveras County (County), as the Lead Agency, has the authority for environmental review and adoption of the environmental documentation, in accordance with CEQA. As set forth in State CEQA Guidelines Section 15070, an Initial Study leading to a Negative Declaration (IS/ND) or Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) can be prepared when:

- The Initial Study shows that there is no substantial evidence, in light of the whole record before the agency, that the project may have a significant effect on the environment (resulting in a Negative Declaration), or
- The Initial Study identifies potentially significant effects, but:
  - Revisions in the project plans or proposals made by, or agreed to by the applicant before a proposed mitigated negative declaration and initial study are released for public review would avoid the effects or mitigate the effects to a point where clearly no significant effects would occur, and
  - There is no substantial evidence, in light of the whole record before the agency, that the project as revised may have a significant effect on the environment (resulting in a Mitigated Negative Declaration).

Based on the Environmental Checklist Form and supporting environmental analysis provided in [Section 4.0, \*Environmental Analysis\*](#), the proposed Project would have no impact or a less than significant impact concerning all environmental issue areas, except the following, for which the Project would have a less than significant impact with mitigation incorporated:

- Biological Resources;
- Cultural Resources;
- Geology and Soils; and
- Tribal Cultural Resources.

## 1.3 Incorporation by Reference

Pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15150, an IS/MND may incorporate by reference all or portions of another document which is a matter of public record or is generally available to the public. Where all or part of another document is incorporated by reference, the incorporated language shall be considered to be set forth in full as part of the MND's text.

The following documents are formally incorporated by reference into this IS/MND:



Calaveras County Draft General Plan Final Environmental Impact Report, SCH No. 2017012043, April 2019. The Calaveras County Draft General Plan Final Environmental Impact Report (General Plan FEIR) analyzed the potential environmental impacts that would result from implementation of the Calaveras County General Plan. The General Plan FEIR forecast 48,567 dwelling units and a resulting population of 117,045 persons at estimated buildout of the General Plan. General Plan buildout was estimated to occur in 2035. The General Plan FEIR concluded significant and unavoidable impacts concerning Aesthetics, Agricultural Resources, Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Biological Resources, Cultural and Tribal Cultural Resources, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Noise, Population and Housing, Public Services and Utilities, and Transportation.

Saddle Creek Specific Plan. The Saddle Creek (formally Calaveras Country Club) Specific Plan (Specific Plan) was approved on December 6, 1993. The Specific Plan establishes goals, policies, implementation measures, development standards, land uses, and zoning for the approximately 890-acre Saddle Creek master-planned development. The Specific Plan's unique land use designations, goals, policies, and implementation programs are intended to implement the General Plan and provide detailed guidance on the long-term development of the Specific Plan area.

Saddle Creek Specific Plan Final Environmental Impact Report, SCH No. 92042068, September 1993. The Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) for the Saddle Creek Specific Plan (formally Calaveras Country Club Specific Plan) was certified by the Calaveras County Board of Supervisors on December 6, 1993. The Saddle Creek FEIR analyzed the potential environmental impacts that would result from implementation of the approximately 890-acre Saddle Creek development project, including the Saddle Creek Specific Plan and subsequent project approvals. The Saddle Creek FEIR concluded significant and unavoidable impacts concerning Air Quality and Noise.

## 1.4 Report Organization

This document is organized into the following sections:

Section 1.0, Introduction, provides the CEQA Statute and Guidelines applicable to the Initial Study, summarizes the findings of the Initial Study, describes the public review process, and identifies documents incorporated by reference as part of the Initial Study.

Section 2.0, Project Description, provides a detailed description of the proposed Project, including Project location, environmental setting, Project characteristics, construction program and phasing, and requested entitlement, permits and approvals.

Section 3.0, Environmental Checklist Form, provides Project background information and a summary of environmental factors potentially affected by the proposed Project and the Lead Agency Determination based on the analysis and impact determinations provided in Section 4.0. The impact evaluation criteria utilized in Section 4.0 is also provided.

Section 4.0, Environmental Analysis, provides a detailed analysis of the environmental impacts identified in the environmental checklist, and identifies mitigation measures, if necessary.

Section 5.0, References, identifies the information sources utilized in preparation of the Initial Study to support the environmental analysis.

Section 6.0, *Report Preparation Personnel*, identifies personnel involved in preparation of the Initial Study.

## 2.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

### 2.1 Background

The Golf Club at Copper Valley (formerly Saddle Creek) is a master-planned development and 18-hole golf course located in the community of Copperopolis, in southwestern Calaveras County (County). This development is primarily implemented by the Saddle Creek (formally Calaveras Country Club) Specific Plan (Specific Plan).

In October 1992, an Administrative Draft EIR was submitted to the County of Calaveras for the Specific Plan. The project proposed a master-planned development consisting of residential uses, recreation facilities, a championship-style golf course, and supporting commercial facilities. A revised Administrative Draft EIR was subsequently prepared in 1993. The Calaveras County Board of Supervisors approved the Specific Plan and certified Final EIR on December 6, 1993.

On May 5, 1994, the County Planning Commission signed a Resolution approving a Tentative Subdivision Tract Map (TSTM) to create 1,650 single-family parcels and recommended that the Board of Supervisors adopt an ordinance approving the Saddle Creek Development Agreement (Development Agreement). On June 13, 1994, the Board of Supervisors approved an ordinance adopting the Development Agreement, which specifies the standards and requirement for development of the project as a whole as well as the individual homesites within the Specific Plan. The Development Agreement was approved for a term of 15 years. A 5-year extension of time for the Development Agreement was approved in 2008. A second 5-year extension of time for the Development Agreement was approved in 2014. The Development Agreement expired on June 13, 2019, and the remaining unrecorded portions of the approved tentative subdivision map expired on the same date. All obligations required by the Development Agreement were completed prior to expiration, including: construction of the 18-hole golf course, clubhouse and lodging units; construction of the Little John Road extension to State Route 4; construction of the left turn lane from Copper Cove Drive onto Little John Road; funding for the Copperopolis Fire Department; completion of the Public Works Route Corridor Study; off-site improvements for water and sewer; wetlands mitigation for the entire site; establishment of a Community Services District; and recordation of seven units of the TSTM.

Currently, the Golf Club at Copper Valley is accessed via a single entrance point from Little John Road by way of Saddle Creek Drive. The 1994 entitlements issued for the Golf Club at Copper Valley require the construction of a second access road prior to the recordation of any additional final maps for the development. Two approved second entrances, at Bow Drive and Flint Trail, were depicted on the 1994 approved TSTM. The Tentative Map expired prior to issuance of the building permit, thus the threshold for the required construction of the second access was never accomplished.

In 2019, TSTM 2019-006 was submitted to continue development within the Golf Club at Copper Valley. As this development was located fully within the Saddle Creek Specific Plan, a notice of exemption was filed and no environmental analysis was completed. A condition of approval recommended that a secondary access be connected at Flint Trail with any development in the southern portion of the project. The proposed South Flint Trail secondary access was added and found to be exempt from CEQA; a Notice of Exemption (NOE) was filed with the County on September 11, 2020.

The approved secondary access road, which was contained entirely within the existing Specific Plan area, proved problematic. The road funneled all subdivision traffic through an area proposed for high-density residential development and adversely impacted protected wetland areas. The protected wetland areas are described in the US Army Corps of Engineers Nationwide Permit 26, No. 199100807, June 13, 1998, and are shown on recorded maps of the development. The protected wetland areas are also described and protected in perpetuity by the “Declaration of Restrictions” recorded June 12, 1998, as instrument #1998 7539. Wetland areas are monitored and maintained by the Golf Club at Copper Valley Community Services District (CSD). These wetland areas shall remain protected.

Accordingly, the project applicant has proposed the construction of a revised and improved South Flint Trail Secondary Access Road to the Golf Club at Copper Valley. The proposed South Flint Trail Secondary Access Road is the subject of this environmental analysis, and is described in greater detail below.

## 2.2 Project Location

The South Flint Trail Secondary Access Road Project (Project) site is located southwest of the intersection of Little John Road and Flint Trail in the community of Copperopolis in southwestern Calaveras County; refer to [Figure 1, Regional Vicinity](#). The Project site is comprised of three parcels (APNs 055-051-059, 055-051-008, and 055-051-068) and covers a disturbed area of approximately 9.6 acres; refer to [Figure 2, Project Site](#). The Project’s Area of Disturbance (AOD) represents the outer boundary of ground disturbance for the Project, which generally consists of the roadway, associated shoulders and right-of-way (ROW), plus drainage areas and drainage infrastructure such as culverts, etc. Local access to the Project site is provided via Saddle Creek Drive from Little John Road. The Project site runs from the intersection of Flint Trail and Little John Road to an unnamed access road approximately 1,800 feet southwest of Oak Creek Drive.

## 2.3 Existing Setting

### On-Site Land Uses

The Project site is currently undeveloped grassland and oak woodland. Two intermittent streams traverse the Project site. A segment of Oak Creek Drive consisting of dirt and gravel bisects the Project site at a location just east of the golf course. The northern terminus of the Project site is Little John Road, a two-lane paved roadway.

### General Plan and Zoning

#### *Saddle Ranch Specific Plan Land Use Designation*

The northern and southern portions of the Project site (APNs 055-051-059 and 055-051-068) are located within the Saddle Ranch Specific Plan area. Within the Specific Plan area, the Project site is designated as Commercial, Recreation, and Single Family Residential.

#### *Calaveras County General Plan Land Use Designation*

A portion of the Project site (APN 055-051-008) is located on a parcel with the Public/Institutional (PI) designation. According to the Calaveras County General Plan (General Plan), the PI land use designation identifies public or quasi-public facilities. Typical uses include public buildings and grounds, schools,

community centers, libraries, airports, cemeteries, fire stations, sewer and water treatment facilities, solid and liquid waste disposal facilities, power substations, and other similar and compatible uses.

### *Zoning*

Title 17 of the Calaveras County Code contains the County's Zoning Ordinance (Zoning Code). The northern and southern portions of the Project site, located within the Specific Plan area, are zoned Specific Plan (SP). The SP zone allows for uses specified in the land use district in the adopted specific plan. The portion of the Project site that is outside of the Specific Plan area is zoned Public Service (PS). The PS zone allows for public uses.

### *Surrounding Uses*

Uses surrounding the Project site include:

- North: Immediately north of the site is Little John Road. North of Little John Road are rural residential uses.
- East: East of the site is undeveloped grassland and oak woodland, rural residential uses, and a maintenance yard.
- South: South of the site is undeveloped grassland and oak woodland.
- West: West of the site are residential uses and the Golf Club at Copper Valley.

## 2.4 Project Characteristics

### *Proposed Development*

Copper Valley Development Partners (the project applicant) is proposing to construct a revised and improved secondary access road to the Golf Club at Copper Valley. The Project would construct an approximately one-mile-long paved access road across previously undeveloped grassland and oak woodland from the intersection of Flint Trail and Little John Road to an unnamed access road approximately 1,800 feet southwest of Oak Creek Drive. The proposed access road begins and ends on lands within the Specific Plan area; however, a middle portion of the revised road is located in an adjacent parcel outside of the Specific Plan area (APN 055-051-008). The proposed Project, with a portion located on an adjacent parcel outside the Specific Plan area, avoids both the high-density residential area and protected wetlands and allows a greater number of subdivision residents a direct route to the minor collector roadway in the event of an emergency evacuations. The proposed Project would serve the previously entitled and largely constructed residential subdivision; the road is not intended to provide access to new development areas or to otherwise alter traffic patterns in the area, beyond providing a secondary access for an existing entitled development project.

### *Requested Entitlements and Other Approvals*

Potentially significant environmental impacts resulting from the construction and operation of the Golf Club at Copper Valley (formerly Saddle Creek) were analyzed in earlier CEQA documents (State Clearinghouse Number 92042068). The Golf Club at Copper Valley is a fully entitled development. Mitigation measures and Project Conditions of Approval are in place for all land uses and activities within the Specific Plan area. Therefore, all previously analyzed potential environmental impacts unrelated to the relocation of the secondary access road will not be reanalyzed in this document.

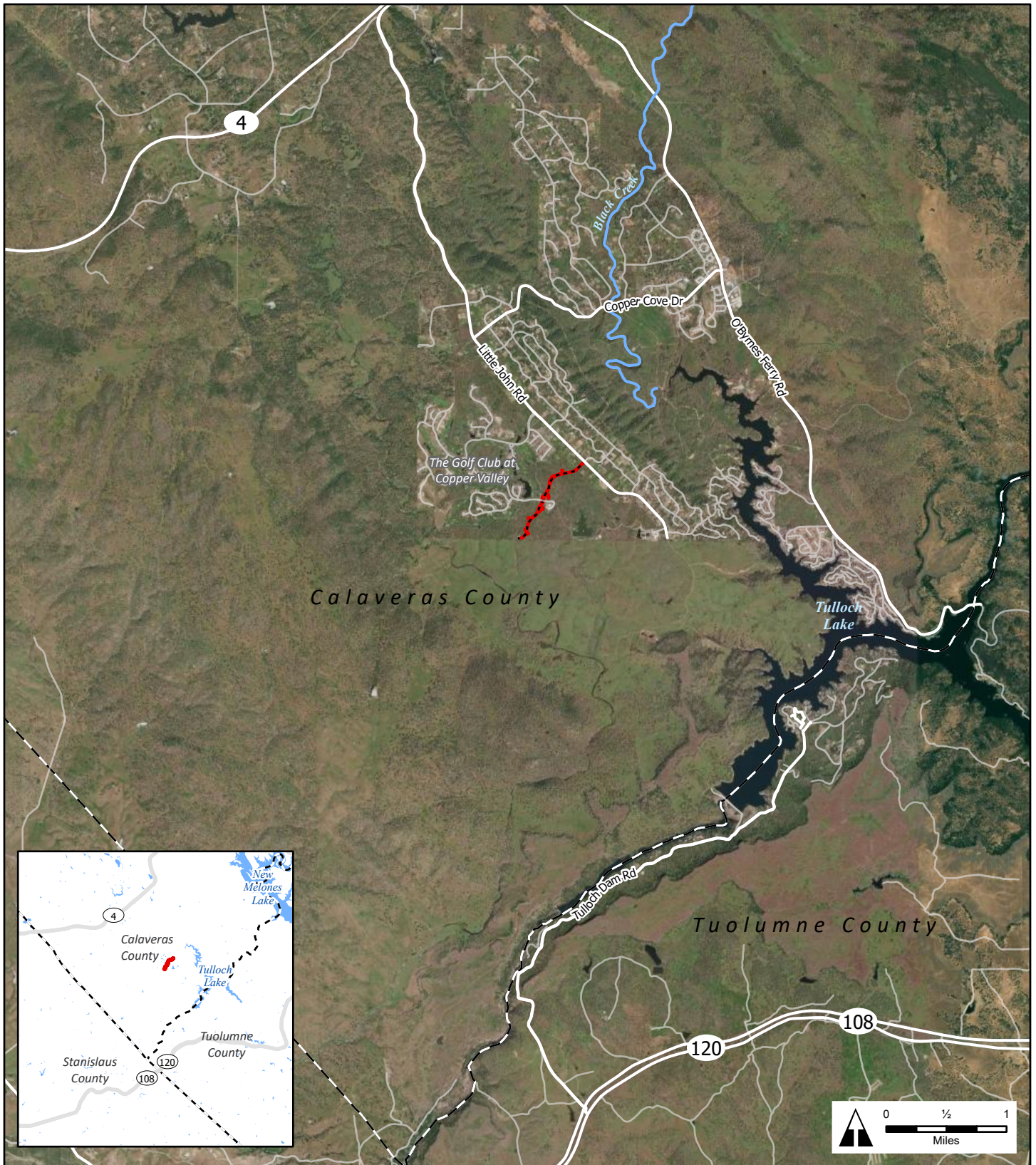
The Project requests approval of the following entitlements:

- Grading Permit

## 2.5 Permits and Approvals

Calaveras County, as the Lead Agency, has discretionary authority over the proposed Project. To implement the proposed Project, at a minimum, the following discretionary permits/approvals must be granted by the County and others in addition to the approval of the Mitigated Negative Declaration.

- Grading Permit
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers permits
- Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board permits
- California Department of Fish and Wildlife permits



**Legend**

- Proposed South Flint Trail Secondary Access Road Centerline
- Area of Disturbance (9.64 ac)
- Black Creek
- County Boundary

**FLINT TRAIL ACCESS ROAD - IS/MND  
CALAVERAS COUNTY, CALIFORNIA**

Figure 1. Regional Location



**Legend**

- Area of Disturbance (9.64 ac)
- Proposed South Flint Trail Secondary Access Road Centerline
- Unnamed Ephemeral Stream
- Lake/Pond

**FLINT TRAIL ACCESS ROAD - IS/MND  
CALAVERAS COUNTY, CALIFORNIA**

Figure 2. Project Site



## 3.0 ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST FORM

### Background

<b>1. Project Title:</b> South Flint Trail Secondary Access Road Project
<b>2. Lead Agency Name and Address:</b> Calaveras County Planning Department 891 Mountain Ranch Road San Andreas, CA 95249
<b>3. Contact Person and Address:</b> Gabriel Elliott Director of Planning Calaveras County, Planning Department 891 Mountain Ranch Road San Andreas, CA 95249 Email: GElliott@co.calaveras.ca.us
<b>4. Project Location:</b> Southwest of the intersection of Little John Road and Flint Trail in the community of Copperopolis in southwestern Calaveras County (APNs 055-051-059, 055-051-008, and 055-051-068)
<b>5. Project Sponsor's Name and Address:</b> CV Development Partners, LLC 100 Town Square Road Copperopolis, CA 95228
<b>6. General Plan Designation:</b> Specific Plan (SP), Public/Institutional (PI)
<b>7. Zoning:</b> Specific Plan (SP), Public Service (PS)
<b>8. Description of the Proposed Project:</b> See Section 2.4.
<b>9. Surrounding Land Uses and Setting:</b> See Section 2.3.
<b>10. Other public agencies whose approval is required:</b> United States Army Corps of Engineers, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board.
<b>11. Have California Native American tribes traditionally and culturally affiliated with the project area requested consultation pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21080.3.1? If so, is there a plan for consultation that includes, for example, the determination of significance of impacts to tribal cultural resources, procedures regarding confidentiality, etc.? N/A</b>

### Environmental Factors Potentially Affected

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this Project, involving at least one impact that is a “Potentially Significant Impact” or “Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated” as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

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

### Determination

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

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

CALAVERAS COUNTY

\_\_\_\_\_  
Gabriel Elliott  
Director of Planning

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Evaluation of Environmental Impacts

The environmental analysis in this section is patterned after CEQA Guidelines Appendix G. An explanation is provided for all responses with the exception of “No Impact” responses, which are supported by the cited information sources. The responses consider the whole action involved, including on- and off-site project level and cumulative, indirect and direct, and short-term construction and long-term operational impacts. The evaluation of potential impacts also identifies the significance criteria or threshold, if any, used to evaluate each impact question. If applicable, mitigation measures are identified to avoid or reduce the impact to less than significant. There are four possible responses to each question:

- 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 Impact 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.

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## 4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

### 4.1 Aesthetics

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

#### Environmental Setting

Calaveras County is a rural county consisting of a number of diverse communities that are rich in scenic and historical value. The proposed Project is located southwest of the intersection of Little John Road and Flint Trail and east of the Golf Club at Copper Valley in the Copperopolis community area. The Project site has a generally rolling topography. Onsite uses include undeveloped grassland, oak woodland, and two intermittent streams. A segment of Oak Creek Drive consisting of dirt and gravel bisects the Project site at a location just east of the golf course. Rural residential uses exist to the north and west of the Project site.

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

**Less Than Significant Impact.** A scenic vista is an area that is designated, signed, and accessible to the public for the express purposes of viewing and sightseeing. The County General Plan does not specifically

designate any scenic vistas within the County; however, the Conservation and Open Space Element notes that the County's scenic resources are some of its most valued assets and include forests, rolling hills, ranches, agricultural land, historic landscapes, oak woodlands, rock formations and other unique topographical features, river corridors, lakes, and streams.

For analysis purposes, a scenic vista can be discussed in terms of a foreground, middleground, and background viewshed. The middleground and background viewshed is often referred to as the broad viewshed. Examples of scenic vistas can include mountain ranges, valleys, ridgelines, or water bodies from a focal point of the forefront of the broad viewshed, such as visually important trees, rocks, or historic buildings. An impact would generally occur if a project would change the view to the middle ground or background elements of the broad viewshed, or remove the visually important trees, rocks, or historic buildings in the foreground.

The proposed Project would include grading and construction of roadway infrastructure on previously undeveloped land, but would not remove or impact existing trees. The Project site is not designated as a scenic vista by the County General Plan, nor does it contain any unique or distinguishing features that would qualify the site for designation as a scenic vista. However, the Project site does contain scenic resources identified in the County General Plan, including rolling hills, oak woodlands, and streams.

Due to the rolling topography of the Project site and surrounding area, public views of the Project site are limited to transient views from motorists traveling along Little John Road. In addition, these public views of rolling hills, oak woodlands, and streams are characteristic of Calaveras County, and exist throughout the region. Implementation of the proposed Project would change the existing visual character of the site from undeveloped grassland and oak woodland to roadway infrastructure. No structures would be constructed as part of the Project, nor would any features that could obstruct views.

Construction activities related to the Project would be temporary in nature and all construction equipment would ultimately be removed following completion of construction activities. Therefore, changes to local visual character and/or public views associated with construction of future development would be temporary, and impacts would be less than significant.

The proposed Project would result in the conversion of undeveloped land to roadway infrastructure, which would contribute to long-term changes in the regional landscape and visual character of the area. In order to reduce visual impacts, development of the Project site is required to be consistent with the General Plan and the County Code, which includes development standards and design guidelines. Implementation of these standards would ensure development is compatible with the scale and character of existing development and would help to retain the vividness, intactness, and unity of the existing rural landscapes. Further, the proposed Project is consistent with the planned development of the area. The proposed Project provides secondary access to the existing entitled Copper Valley development. Mitigation measures and Project Conditions of Approval are in place for all land uses and activities within the Saddle Ranch Specific Plan area. Therefore, implementation of the proposed Project would have a less than significant impact relative to this topic.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

**b) *Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?***

**No Impact.** The Project site is not located within view of a state scenic highway. The nearest officially designated State Scenic Highway is the portion of State Route 4 (SR 4) known as Ebbetts Pass National Scenic Byway, located approximately 28 miles northeast of the Project site. The nearest Eligible State Scenic Highway is State Route 108 (SR 108), located approximately eight miles east of the Project site (Caltrans, 2022). As the Project site is not visible from SR 4, SR 108, or any other state scenic highways, no impact would occur to scenic resources within a State Scenic Highway.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

**d) *Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?***

**Less Than Significant Impact.** Lighting effects are associated with the use of artificial light during the evening and nighttime hours. There are two primary sources of light: light emanating from building interiors passing through windows and light from exterior sources (i.e., street lighting, building illumination, security lighting, parking lot lighting, landscape lighting, and signage). Uses such as residences and hotels are considered light sensitive, since occupants have expectations of privacy during evening hours and may be subject to disturbance by bright light sources. Light spill is typically defined as the presence of unwanted light on properties adjacent to the property being illuminated. With respect to lighting, the degree of illumination may vary widely depending on the amount of light generated, height of the light source, presence of barriers or obstructions, type of light source, and weather conditions.

Glare is primarily a daytime occurrence caused by the reflection of sunlight or artificial light on highly polished surfaces such as window glass or reflective materials and, to a lesser degree, from broad expanses of light-colored surfaces. Daytime glare generation is common in urban areas and is typically associated with buildings with exterior facades largely or entirely comprised of highly reflective glass. Glare can also be produced during evening and nighttime hours by the reflection of artificial light sources such as automobile headlights. Glare generation is typically related to either moving vehicles or sun angles, although glare resulting from reflected sunlight can occur regularly at certain times of the year. Glare-sensitive uses include residences, hotels, transportation corridors, and aircraft landing corridors.

Implementation of the Project would introduce new sources of light and glare into the undeveloped Project site. No structures are proposed as part of the Project. New sources of light would occur primarily from vehicle headlights. New sources of glare would occur primarily from the windshields of vehicles. The Project would serve the previously entitled and largely constructed Copper Valley development; the road is not intended to provide access to new development areas or to otherwise alter traffic patterns in the area, beyond providing a secondary access for an existing entitled development project. Because the proposed Project is not increasing capacity based on existing or anticipated regional travel demands, the Project would not result in an increase in traffic volumes along Little John Road; therefore, an increase in light and glare from additional vehicles traveling through the area is not expected. The Project does not include the installation of any light sources. Therefore, the Project would not result in light and glare

impacts which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area. Impacts would be less than significant in this regard.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.



## 4.2 Agriculture and Forestry Resources

<i>Would the project:</i>	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?				X
b. Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?				X
c. Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 1222(g)) or timberland (as defined in Public Resources Code section 4526)?				X
d. Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?				X
e. Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?				X

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

**b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?**

**No Impact.** The Project site does not contain any mapped Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (California Department of Conservation, 2022a). The County General Plan indicates that prime farmland in the County has been identified under the Williamson Act program and the full extent of prime or unique farmlands is unknown. According to the County General Plan EIR, the Project site is not under a Williamson Act contract. The Project site is zoned SP and PS. While the PS zone permits accepted farming practices and conditionally permits commercial agriculture land uses, neither the SP nor PS zone are intended primarily for agricultural uses. Further, the Project site is not located on lands

actively used for agricultural production. Thus, the Project would not involve the conversion of farmland to a non-agricultural use or conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

**c) *Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?***

**d) *Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?***

**No Impact.** According to Section 17.14.010 of the County Code, lands in the Timber Production (TP) zone are commonly known as timber preserves and are intended for the primary and productive use of timber resources. This includes timber and wildlife management. The Project site is zoned SP and PS and does not contain forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined in Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g)). Thus, the proposed Project would not conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned Timberland Production, and would not result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

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

**No Impact.** Refer to Responses 4.2(a) through 4.2(d), above. It is further noted that the project does not have the potential to indirectly induce growth in other locations in Calaveras County that could lead to the conversion of farmland or forest lands. As noted under the Project Description, the proposed Project would provide a secondary access road to a previously entitled development project that has already undergone thorough review under CEQA.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

### 4.3 Air Quality

<b><i>Would the project:</i></b>	<b>Potentially Significant Impact</b>	<b>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
a. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?			X	
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?			X	
c. Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?			X	
d. Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?			X	

#### **Environmental Setting**

The Project site is located in the Mountain Counties Air Basin and is under the jurisdiction of the Calaveras County Air Pollution Control District (CCAPCD). The County is in nonattainment of the State and federal ozone standard, and the State particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub>) standard. Table 4.3-1 presents the federal and State attainment status for monitored pollutants.

**Table 4.3-1  
Calaveras County Attainment Status Designations**

<b>Pollutants</b>	<b>State Designation</b>	<b>Federal Designation</b>
Ozone	Nonattainment	Nonattainment
Particulate Matter (PM <sub>10</sub> )	Nonattainment	Unclassified
Particulate Matter (PM <sub>2.5</sub> )	Unclassified	Unclassified/Attainment
Carbon Monoxide	Unclassified	Unclassified/Attainment
Nitrogen Dioxide	Attainment	Unclassified/Attainment
Sulfur Dioxide	Attainment	Unclassified/Attainment
Sulfates	Attainment	N/A
Lead	Attainment	Unclassified/Attainment
Hydrogen Sulfide	Unclassified	N/A
Visibility Reducing Particulates	Unclassified	N/A

Source: California Air Resources Board, *Maps of State and Federal Area Designations*, <https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/resources/documents/maps-state-and-federal-area-designations>, accessed December 19, 2022a.

- a) ***Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?***
- b) ***Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?***

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The Project site is located in the Mountain Counties Air Basin and is under the jurisdiction of the CCAPCD. CCAPCD manages the County's air quality through education and enforcement of CCAPCD rules and California Air Resources Board (CARB) measures and regulations.

The County is in nonattainment of the State and federal ozone standard, and the State particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub>) standard. The primary source of ozone precursors (i.e., ROG and NOx) is mobile sources, including cars, trucks, buses, construction equipment, and agricultural equipment. Common sources of particulate matter pollution in the County include residential, development, and land management related activities such as woodstoves, windblown dust and/or diesel from construction activities, and forestry management burning. According to the County General Plan EIR, the nonattainment status of the County is predominantly attributable to the overwhelming transport of pollutants from the Central Valley and the Bay Area into the County. Nonetheless, air pollutant emissions resulting from construction and operation of development projects in the County have the potential to represent a significant air quality impact.

The Project proposes the development of roadway infrastructure to an existing entitled development project. The Project would serve the previously entitled and largely constructed Copper Valley development; the road is not intended to provide access to new development areas or to otherwise alter traffic patterns in the area, beyond providing a secondary access for an existing entitled development project. Because the proposed Project is not increasing capacity based on existing or anticipated regional travel demands, the Project would not result in new sources of air pollutant emissions. Therefore, Project operation would not violate applicable air quality standards or substantially contribute to an existing or projected air quality violation.

Construction-generated emissions are temporary and short term but have the potential to represent a significant air quality impact. The construction and development of the Project would result in the temporary generation of emissions. Emissions of airborne particulate matter are largely dependent on the amount of ground disturbance associated with site preparation activities. According to the County GP EIR, CCAPCD requires that any project including soil disturbance in excess of one acre submit a Dust Control Plan to the District for review and approval. The Project would disturb approximately 9.6 acres and would be subject to all applicable CCAPCD requirements, including submittal of a Dust Control Plan. Adherence to standard construction best management practices (BMPs) would further reduce construction-generated emissions. Accordingly, the limited development associated with the Project would not substantially increase construction emissions.

The Project is consistent with the General Plan and Specific Plan land use designation for the site, and would not result in increased impacts associated with air quality. The project would be subject to the applicable CCAPCD rules and regulations in addition to the General Plan policies and actions that aim to improve air quality and minimize pollutant concentrations. Therefore, the Project would have a less than significant impact related to the potential to conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable

air quality plan, or to 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.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

- c) ***Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?***
- d) ***Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?***

**Less Than Significant Impact.** Sensitive receptors are those individuals within the population that have an increased sensitivity to air pollution or environmental contaminants. Sensitive receptors include children, the elderly, and those with pre-existing serious health problems affected by air quality, and sensitive receptor locations include schools, parks and playgrounds, day care centers, nursing homes, hospitals, and residences. The closest sensitive receptors are the residences located on either side of the Project site along Little John Road.

The construction phase of the Project would be temporary and pollution concentrations would be localized within the immediate vicinity. The implementation of all State, federal, and CCAPCD requirements would greatly reduce pollution concentrations generated during construction activities. Therefore, construction-related impacts to sensitive receptors from substantial pollutant concentrations would be a less than significant impact.

The Project would serve the previously entitled and largely constructed Copper Valley development; the road is not intended to provide access to new development areas or to otherwise alter traffic patterns in the area, beyond providing a secondary access for an existing entitled development project. Because the proposed Project is not increasing capacity based on existing or anticipated regional travel demands, the Project would not result in increased emissions. Therefore, operational impacts associated with Project implementation to sensitive receptors from substantial pollutant concentrations would be a less than significant impact.

The proposed Project would not generate objectionable odors that would adversely affect substantial numbers of people. People in the immediate vicinity of construction activities may be subject to temporary odors typically associated with construction activities (diesel exhaust, hot asphalt, etc.). However, any odors generated by construction activities would be minor and would be temporary in duration. Operation of the proposed Project does not involve land uses associated with other emissions such as odor sources. The Project proposes to construct roadway infrastructure to an existing development project, and would not involve activities that would emit objectionable odors affecting substantial numbers of people. Therefore, the proposed Project would not create objectionable odors and impacts would be less than significant.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

#### 4.4 Biological Resources

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

This section is based primarily on the *Biological Resource Evaluation, Flint Trail Access Road Project* (Biological Resource Evaluation), prepared by Colibri Ecological Consulting, dated April 2022; *Aquatic Resource Delineation Report, North Crossing, Flint Trail Access Road Project* (Aquatic Resource Report, North Crossing), prepared by Colibri Ecological Consulting, dated March 2022; *Aquatic Resource*

*Delineation Report, South Crossing, Flint Trail Access Road Project* (Aquatic Resource Report, South Crossing), prepared by Colibri Ecological Consulting, dated March 2022; and *Special-Status Plan Survey Report* (Plant Survey Report), prepared by Colibri Ecological Consulting, dated July 2022. These documents are included as Appendix A, Biological Resource Evaluation.

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

**Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated.** The Project site is currently undeveloped grassland and oak woodland. Two intermittent streams traverse the Project site. A segment of Oak Creek Drive consisting of dirt and gravel bisects the Project site at a location just east of the golf course. The northern terminus of the Project site is Little John Road, a two-lane paved roadway.

There are numerous special-status wildlife and plant species known to occur within the region. As part of the Biological Resource Evaluation, a search of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB), California Native Plant Society (CNPS) Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Official Species List was completed. Additionally, field reconnaissance surveys of the Project site were conducted in March, June, and July 2022 to evaluate and document the potential for the area to support State- or federally-protected resources.

Searching the CNDDDB for records of special-status species from the Copperopolis 7.5-minute USGS topographic quad and the eight surrounding quads produced 164 records of 53 species. Of those 53 species, 13 are not given further consideration because they are not CEQA-recognized as special-status species. Of the remaining 40 species, 14 are known from within five miles of the Project site. Of those species, only Chinese Camp brodiaea (*brodiaea pallida*) and beaked clarkia (*Clarkia rostrata*) could occur on or near the Project site due to the existence of potential habitat for these species. In addition, the Project site provides potential habitat for forked hare-leaf (*Lagophylla dichotoma*), Stanislaus monkeyflower (*Erythranthe marmorata*), and veiny monardella (*Monardella venosa*), which were identified in the nine-quad search, and could occur on or near the Project site.

A number of migratory birds protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) and California Fish and Game Code (CFGF) could nest on or near the Project site, including, but not limited to, mourning dove (*Zenaida macroura*), oak titmouse (*Baeolophus inornatus*), and western bluebird (*Sialia mexicana*).

Searching the CNPS inventory of rare and endangered plants of California yielded 23 species, two of which have a rank of 2B (meaning plants that are rare, threatened, or endangered in California but are more common elsewhere), and 21 of which have a rank of 1B (meaning plants that are rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere). Five of those species, which were also identified in the CNDDDB search, could occur on or near the Project site based on the presence of habitat.

The five special-status species that could occur on or near the Project site are discussed further below.

*Chinese Camp brodiaea*: Chinese Camp brodiaea is an erect, herbaceous, perennial plant in the family Themidaceae. Chinese Camp brodiaea is federally listed as threatened, state listed as endangered, and

has a CRPR of 1B.1 (plants rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere; seriously threatened in California). It is known from three populations along limited stretches of intermittent streams in the western Sierra Nevada foothills of northern Tuolumne and southern Calaveras counties. Chinese Camp brodiaea grows in overflow channels, seeps, and springs in clays that may be derived from serpentine soils; it flowers May–June.

Four CNDDDB records from 2005–2008 are known from within 5 miles of the Project site. The nearest records of Chinese Camp brodiaea are from approximately 0.7 miles south of the Project site along Littlejohns Creek and approximately 0.7 miles northeast of the Project site along Black Creek. The intermittent drainages on and near the Project site provide potential habitat for Chinese Camp brodiaea. Although this species was not detected during the reconnaissance survey, the survey was not conducted within the blooming period. This species could occur in the survey area. However, the proposed access road will span the intermittent drainages with bridges. Consequently, no impacts to Chinese Camp brodiaea are anticipated.

*Beaked clarkia*: Beaked clarkia is an annual herb in the family Onagraceae with a CRPR of 1B.3 (i.e., plants rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere; not very threatened in California). It grows erect stems to 1.6 feet tall with lavender-pink to reddish purple flowers below closed, hanging flower buds. It occurs in grasslands and woodlands of the Sierra Nevada foothills; it flowers April–May.

Two historic CNDDDB records of beaked clarkia are known from within 10 miles of the Project. The nearest record of beaked clarkia is a 1994 CNDDDB occurrence from approximately 3.5 miles west of the Project site. The grassland and foothill woodland in and around the Project site provide potential habitat for beaked clarkia. This species was not detected during the reconnaissance surveys conducted in March, June, or July 2022. Although the surveys were not conducted during the April and May blooming period, pre-blooming individuals would have been detected in March or post-blooming individuals would have been detected in June had they been present. Consequently, no impacts to this species are anticipated.

*Forked hare-leaf*: Forked hare-leaf is an annual herb in the family Asteraceae with a CRPR of 1B.1 (i.e., plants rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere; seriously threatened in California). It grows to two feet tall with distally glandless or sparsely stalked-glandular stems, panicle-like inflorescences, and yellow ray flowers. Forked hare-leaf occurs in grassland and woodland in the western Sierra Nevada foothills, eastern San Joaquin Valley, and eastern Coast Range; it flowers April–May.

Two historic CNDDDB records of forked hare-leaf are known from within 10 miles of the Project site. The nearest record of forked hare-leaf involves a vague, non-specific 2000 CNDDDB occurrence overlapping the northern third of the survey area. The grassland and open woodland in and around the Project site provide potential habitat for forked hare-leaf. This species was not detected during the reconnaissance surveys conducted in March, June, or July 2022. Although the surveys were not conducted during the April and May blooming period, pre-blooming individuals would have been detected in March or post-blooming individuals would have been detected in June had they been present. Consequently, no impacts to this species are anticipated.

*Stanislaus monkeyflower*: Stanislaus monkeyflower is an annual herb in Family Phrymaceae with a CRPR of 1B.1 (i.e., plants rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere; seriously threatened in California). It grows to 0.9 feet tall with glandular, hairy stems, ovate to elliptical leaves, and yellow



flowers. Stanislaus monkeyflower occurs in seeps and streambanks in the western Sierra Nevada foothills; it flowers March–May.

Two historic CNDDDB records of Stanislaus monkeyflower are known from within 10 miles of the Project site. The nearest record is of a non-specific 1923 CNDDDB occurrence approximately 7 miles southeast of the Project site near Highway 120. The intermittent drainages and associated streambanks and wet meadows on and near the Project site provide potential habitat for Stanislaus monkeyflower. Although this species was not detected during the reconnaissance survey, the survey was conducted early in the blooming period. This species could occur within the survey area, but the proposed access road will span the intermittent drainages with bridges. Consequently, no impacts to Stanislaus monkeyflower are anticipated.

*Veiny monardella*: *Veiny monardella* is an annual herb in the family Lamiaceae with a CRPR of 1B.1 (i.e., plants rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere; seriously threatened in California). It grows to 1.3 feet tall with stout stems, linear-oblong to lanceolate leaves, and ovate clusters of hairy, purple flowers. *Veiny monardella* occurs in grasslands in the central and northern Central Valley; it flowers June–July.

One historic CNDDDB record of *veiny monardella* is known from within 10 miles of the Project site. The nearest record of *veiny monardella* is a 1998 CNDDDB occurrence approximately 6.5 miles east of the Project Site. The grassland in and around the Project site provide potential habitat for *veiny monardella*. This species was not detected during the reconnaissance surveys conducted in March, June, or July 2022. Consequently, no impacts to this species are anticipated.

## Conclusion

Implementation of the Project would result in temporary and permanent impacts to pasture and oak forest land cover. The Project site provides potential habitat for five species listed as threatened or endangered under the federal or State Endangered Species Act or considered by the CNPS to be rare, threatened, or endangered. Construction activities such as excavating, trenching, or using other heavy equipment that disturbs or harms a special-status species could constitute a significant impact. No candidate, sensitive, or special-status species were detected within a 50-foot buffer of the Project site during the field reconnaissance surveys conducted in March, June, and July 2022 as part of the Biological Resources Evaluation. As such, impacts to these special status plant species is not anticipated, and no mitigation is required.

The Project could impede the use of nursery sites for native birds protected under the MBTA and CFGC. Migratory birds are expected to nest on and near the Project site. Construction disturbance during the breeding season could result in the incidental loss of fertile eggs or nestlings or otherwise lead to nest abandonment. Disturbance that causes nest abandonment or loss of reproductive effort can be considered take under the MBTA and CFGC. Loss of fertile eggs or nesting birds, or any activities resulting in nest abandonment, could constitute a significant effect if the species is particularly rare in the region. Construction activities such as excavating, trenching, and grading that disturb a nesting bird on the Project site or immediately adjacent to the construction zone could constitute a significant impact.

The following mitigation measure would reduce the potential special-status wildlife impacts noted above to a less than significant level.

**Mitigation Measures:**

BIO-1: To the extent practicable, construction shall be scheduled to avoid the nesting season, which extends from February through August. If it is not possible to schedule construction between September and January, pre-construction surveys for nesting birds shall be conducted by a qualified biologist to ensure that no active nests will be disturbed during the implementation of the Project. A pre-construction survey shall be conducted no more than 14 days prior to the initiation of construction activities. During this survey, the qualified biologist shall inspect all potential nest substrates in and immediately adjacent to the impact areas. If an active nest is found close enough to the construction area to be disturbed by these activities, the qualified biologist shall determine the extent of a construction-free buffer to be established around the nest. If work cannot proceed without disturbing the nesting birds, work may need to be halted or redirected to other areas until nesting and fledging are completed or the nest has otherwise failed for non-construction related reasons.

- b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?***
- c) Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?***

**Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.** Riparian habitats are described as the land and vegetation that is situated along the bank of a stream or river. A sensitive natural community is a biological community that is regionally rare, provides important habitat opportunities for wildlife, is structurally complex, or is in other ways of special concern to local, State, or federal agencies. Wetlands are areas where water covers the soil, or is present either at or near the surface of the soil all year or for varying periods of time during the year. Wetlands are ecologically complex habitats that support a variety of both plant and animal life. The federal government defines wetlands as “those areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support and under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions” [33 C.F.R. §328.3(b)]. Wetlands require wetland hydrology, hydric soils, and hydrophytic vegetation. Examples of wetlands include freshwater marsh, seasonal wetlands, and vernal pool complexes that have a hydrologic link to waters of the U.S.

The Biological Resources Evaluation found that the Project site is dominated by blue oak woodland and forest with smaller areas of wild oats and annual brome grasslands. Two intermittent streams are present on the Project site, as are sections of gravel road. No rare natural communities were found on the Project site or vicinity.

The Biological Resources Evaluation identified four features determined to be jurisdictional and under the regulatory authority of the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), the CDFW, and the Regional

Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB). All were intermittent streams, including the Ramsey Gulch and two unnamed tributaries to Ramsey Gulch in the central portion of the Project vicinity about 400 feet southwest of Oak Creek Drive, and another unnamed tributary to Ramsey Gulch in the northern portion of the Project vicinity about 0.24 miles southwest of Little John Road. Ramsey Gulch flows into Littlejohns Creek, which flows into the San Joaquin River via French Camp Slough, a traditional navigable water under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. As water is present in each stream channel most years from December to May or June, the streams meet the criteria of relatively permanent water under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. Therefore, the streams are likely regulated by the USACE. As the intermittent streams contain surface water and have a defined bed and bank, they are likely regulated by the SWRCB and the CDFW.

According to the Biological Resources Evaluation, no impacts to regulated habitats are expected as a result of Project implementation. Ramsey Gulch and the northern tributary would each be spanned with a bridge, and the other two tributaries are outside the Project footprint. Additionally, protected wetland areas are described in the US Army Corps of Engineers Nationwide Permit 26, No. 199100807, June 13, 1998, and are shown on recorded maps of the development. The protected wetland areas are also described and protected in perpetuity by the "Declaration of Restrictions" recorded June 12, 1998, as instrument #1998 7539. None of these identified protected wetland areas would be impacted by the proposed Project. Wetland areas in the vicinity of the proposed construction activities would be monitored and maintained by the project applicant, as required by Mitigation Measure BIO-2. Compliance with the following mitigation measure would reduce potential impacts to riparian habitat or other sensitive natural communities, or State or federally protected wetlands, to a level that is less than significant.

**Mitigation Measures:**

BIO-2: Prior to project construction activities, a buffer zone (i.e., protected area) shall be established around the top edge of bank of all wetlands within the Project's Area of Potential Effects (APE). The installation of barrier fencing prior to any ground disturbing activities shall be the responsibility of the project applicant, and the placement and location of the barriers shall be overseen by a qualified biologist. No construction equipment, vehicles, or ground disturbing activities shall be allowed within the protected area, and barrier fencing shall be required to be in place throughout all stages of project construction.

***d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?***

**Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.** The Biological Resources Evaluation did not reveal any documented wildlife corridors on or adjacent to the Project site. However, as discussed in Response 4.4(a), the Project would result in temporary and permanent impacts to pasture and oak forest land cover and could impede the use of nursery sites for native birds protected under the MBTA and CFGC. Migratory birds are expected to nest on and near the Project site. Construction disturbance during the breeding season could result in the incidental loss of fertile eggs or nestlings or otherwise lead to nest abandonment. Disturbance that causes nest abandonment or loss of reproductive effort can be considered take under the MBTA and CFGC. Loss of fertile eggs or nesting birds, or any activities resulting

in nest abandonment, could constitute a significant effect if the species is particularly rare in the region. Construction activities such as excavating, trenching, and grading that disturb a nesting bird on the Project site or immediately adjacent to the construction zone could constitute a significant impact. Implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-1 would reduce the above-stated special-status wildlife impacts to a less than significant level.

The Biological Resources Evaluation did not identify suitable habitat for any listed or protected fish species within the Project site. Specifically, the Project site lacked connectivity to the aquatic habitat required for Delta smelt and steelhead trout - Central Valley Distinct Population Segment; the Project site does not contain vernal pools or other potentially suitable aquatic features for vernal pool fairy shrimp and vernal pool tadpole shrimp; and the Project site is outside the known range for Red Hills roach. Therefore, following implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-1, impacts related to the movement of any resident or migratory wildlife species or with established resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impeding the use of wildlife nursery sites would be considered less than significant.

**Mitigation Measures:** Refer to Mitigation Measure BIO-1.

***e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?***

**Less Than Significant Impact.** Implementation of the Project would result in temporary and permanent impacts to pasture and oak forest land cover. Native oak trees are located within the vicinity of the Project, but would not be removed or impacted as part of the Project. The County is currently working on a draft Oak Woodlands Ordinance that would mitigate the loss of Oak Woodlands and/or individual oak trees, but the ordinance is not yet in place. In addition, the County General Plan Conservation and Open Space Element contains goals, policies, and implementation measures related to the protection of biological resources. Specifically, Implementation Measure COS-4d requires that development projects subject to a discretionary entitlement and CEQA review and enlist the services of a qualified professional (i.e., a qualified biologist, botanist, arborist, or Registered Professional Forester) to survey the property in question for oak woodlands and, if a potentially significant impact to oak woodlands is identified, to recommend options for avoidance and/or mitigation consistent with the provisions of Public Resources Code Section 21083.4. As the Project would comply with local regulations and would not remove or impact native oak trees, impacts would be less than significant in this regard.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

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

**No Impact.** The Project site is not located within the boundaries of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or State habitat conservation plan. Thus, the Project would not conflict with any of these plans and no impact would occur.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

## 4.5 Cultural Resources

<b><i>Would the project:</i></b>	<b>Potentially Significant Impact</b>	<b>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
a. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to § 15064.5?			X	
b. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to § 15064.5?		X		
c. Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?		X		

This section is based primarily on the *Cultural Resources Inventory and Evaluation Report, Copper Valley Parcel Acquisition Project* (Cultural Resources Assessment), prepared by Solano Archaeological Services, dated November, 2021 and included in its entirety as Appendix B, Cultural Resources Assessment. The Cultural Resources Assessment established a 41.45-acre Area of Potential Effects (APE) to encompass the maximum limits of potential future ground-disturbing activities that would reasonably be expected from the proposed parcel acquisition and eventual road construction.

**a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to § 15064.5?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** As part of the Cultural Resources Assessment, a search of the Central California Information Center (CCIC) of the California Historical Resources Information System was performed that includes the Project site APE and a surrounding 0.5-mile area. The CCIC search also included the National Register of Historic Places Historic Properties Directory, California Register of Historic Places Historic Properties Directory, California Historical Landmarks, California Points of Historical Interest, and California Inventory of Historic Resources. The results of the search indicated that no previously documented cultural resources were located within the APE; however, 12 sites and artifacts had been documented in the 0.5-mile search area surrounding the APE, including prehistoric and historic-era resources. Review of historic-era maps, aerial photography, and a pedestrian field survey were also conducted.

The Cultural Resources Assessment did not result in the documentation of any prehistoric or historic-era sites, features, or artifacts within the APE. In addition, due to a lack of Tertiary gravels and quartz occurrences, it does not appear that mining was an important historic pursuit within or adjacent to the APE. As a result, the Cultural Resources Assessment determined it is unlikely that any subsurface or otherwise presently undocumented mining resources are located within the APE. Other historic-period activities such as ranching, or transportation would have left remains on the ground surface but none were noted as a result of the pedestrian field survey.

As no historic or potentially historic built environment resources are located within the site, the Project would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to §15064.5 and impacts would be less than significant.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

**b) *Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to § 15064.5?***

**Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.** As stated above, results of the records search indicated that no previously documented cultural resources were located within the APE; however, 12 sites and artifacts had been documented in the 0.5-mile search area surrounding the APE, including prehistoric and historic-era resources. Review of historic-era maps, aerial photography, and a pedestrian field survey were also conducted.

The Cultural Resources Assessment did not result in the documentation of any prehistoric or historic-era sites, features, or artifacts within the APE. In addition, due to a lack of significant water sources or concentrations of other resources potentially attractive to native peoples, the APE exhibits a low level of sensitivity for containing prehistoric sites. However, as the proposed Project includes ground-disturbing activities, there is the potential for discovery of a previously unknown archaeological resource. With implementation of Mitigation Measure CUL-1, the Project would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5 and impacts would be less than significant.

**Mitigation Measures:**

CUL-1: Should buried, unforeseen archaeological deposits be encountered during any construction activity, work must cease within a 50-foot radius of the discovery. If a potentially significant discovery is made, it must be treated in accordance with 33 CFR 325, Appendix C which generally states that the lead federal agency (in this case the Corps) must be notified immediately of the find to ensure that mitigation/management recommendations are developed. In the event that human remains, or any associated funerary artifacts are discovered during construction, all work must cease within the immediate vicinity of the discovery. In accordance with the California Health and Safety Code (Section 7050.5), the Calaveras County Sheriff/Coroner must also be contacted immediately. If the remains are deemed to be Native American, the coroner must notify the NAHC, which will in turn appoint and notify a Most Likely Descendent (MLD) to act as a tribal representative. The MLD will work with a qualified archaeologist to determine the proper treatment of the human remains and associated funerary objects. Construction activities will not resume until the human remains are exhumed and official notice to proceed is issued.

**c) *Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?***

**Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.** There are no dedicated cemeteries within the Project site or surrounding area. Most Native American human remains are found in association with prehistoric archaeological sites. As discussed above, there are no known archaeological resources within the Project site; however, the potential for discovery of previously unknown archaeological resources exists. There is the potential for previously unknown human remains to be discovered/disturbed during

the Project's ground disturbing activities, resulting in a potentially significant impact. Implementation of Mitigation Measure CUL-1 would ensure that in the event human remains are discovered, the remains would be handled in accordance with applicable laws, including California Health and Safety Code §7050.5, Public Resources Code §5097.98 and the California Code of Regulations §15064.5(e). Thus, with implementation of Mitigation Measures CUL-1, impacts associated with the potential disturbance of human remains would be reduced to a less than significant level.

**Mitigation Measures:** Refer to Mitigation Measure CUL-1.

## 4.6 Energy

<i>Would the project:</i>	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?			X	
b. Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?			X	

### REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

#### California Building Energy Efficiency Standards (Title 24)

The 2019 California Building Energy Efficiency Standards for Residential and Nonresidential Buildings (California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 6), commonly referred to as “Title 24,” became effective on January 1, 2020. In general, Title 24 requires the design of building shells and building components to conserve energy. The standards are updated periodically to allow consideration and possible incorporation of new energy efficiency technologies and methods. The 2019 Title 24 standards require installation of energy efficient windows, insulation, lighting, ventilation systems, rooftop solar panels, and other features that reduce energy consumption in homes and businesses.

#### California Green Building Standards (CALGreen)

The 2019 California Green Building Standards Code (California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 11), commonly referred to as CALGreen, went into effect on January 1, 2020. CALGreen is the first-in-the-nation mandatory green buildings standards code. The California Building Standards Commission developed CALGreen in an effort to meet the State’s landmark initiative Assembly Bill (AB) 32 goals, which established a comprehensive program of cost-effective reductions of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to 1990 levels by 2020. CALGreen was developed to (1) reduce GHG emissions from buildings; (2) promote environmentally responsible, cost-effective, and healthier places to live and work; (3) reduce energy and water consumption; and (4) respond to the environmental directives of the administration. CALGreen requires that new buildings employ water efficiency and conservation, increase building system efficiencies (e.g. lighting, heating/ventilation and air conditioning [HVAC], and plumbing fixtures), divert construction waste from landfills, and incorporate electric vehicles charging infrastructure. There is growing recognition among developers and retailers that sustainable construction is not prohibitively expensive, and that there is a significant cost-savings potential in green building practices and materials (U.S. Green Building Council, 2020).

#### Senate Bill 100

Senate Bill (SB) 100 (Chapter 312, Statutes of 2018) requires that retail sellers and local publicly owned electric utilities procure a minimum quantity of electricity products from eligible renewable energy



resources so that the total kilowatt-hours (kWh) of those products sold to their retail end-use customers achieve 44 percent of retail sales by December 31, 2024; 52 percent by December 31, 2027; 60 percent by December 31, 2030; and 100 percent by December 31, 2045. The bill requires the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC), California Energy Commission (CEC), State board or the California Air Resources Board's (CARB), and all other State agencies to incorporate the policy into all relevant planning. In addition, SB 100 requires the CPUC, CEC, and CARB to utilize programs authorized under existing statutes to achieve that policy and, as part of a public process, issue a joint report to the Legislature by January 1, 2021, and every four years thereafter, that includes specified information relating to the implementation of SB 100.

**a) Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?**

**b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The means to achieve the goal of conserving energy include decreasing overall energy consumption, decreasing reliance on natural gas and oil, and increasing reliance on renewable energy sources. In particular, the proposed Project would be considered “wasteful, inefficient, and unnecessary” if it were to violate State and federal energy standards and/or result in significant adverse impacts related to project energy requirements, energy inefficiencies, energy intensiveness of materials, cause significant impacts on local and regional energy supplies or generate requirements for additional capacity, fail to comply with existing energy standards, otherwise result in significant adverse impacts on energy resources, or conflict or create an inconsistency with applicable plan, policy, or regulation.

The Project proposes the development of roadway infrastructure to an existing entitled development project. The Project would serve the previously entitled and largely constructed Copper Valley development; the road is not intended to provide access to new development areas or to otherwise alter traffic patterns in the area, beyond providing a secondary access for an existing entitled development project. Because the proposed Project is not increasing capacity based on existing or anticipated regional travel demands, the Project would not generate new vehicle trips. Therefore, the Project would not result in energy usage during operation.

Energy usage during the construction phase would directly correlate to the energy consumption (including fuel) used by vehicle trips generated during project construction and fuel used by off-road construction vehicles during construction. Construction-related energy usage can vary substantially depending on the level of activity, length of the construction period, specific construction operations, and types of equipment. The Project would only use the amount of energy resources necessary to complete construction. Energy usage during the construction phase of the proposed Project would be typical for a project of this kind, and therefore would not represent a wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources.

Calaveras County has not adopted a local renewable energy or energy efficient plan. All new construction would comply with adopted State regulations. Therefore, the Project would not result in potentially significant environmental impacts due to inefficient, wasteful, or unnecessary use of energy resources

during construction and operation, nor conflict with or obstruct a State or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency. This is a less than significant impact.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

#### 4.7 Geology and Soils

<b><i>Would the project:</i></b>	<b>Potentially Significant Impact</b>	<b>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
a. Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
1) 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	
2) Strong seismic ground shaking?			X	
3) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?			X	
4) Landslides?			X	
b. Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?			X	
c. Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on-or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?			X	
d. Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?			X	
e. 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
f. Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?		X		

This section is based primarily on the *Geotechnical Engineering Study: South Flint Trail Extension Project* (Geotechnical Evaluation), prepared by Condor Earth, dated November 11, 2022 and included in its entirety as Appendix D, *Geotechnical Evaluation*.

- a) ***Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:***
- 1) ***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.***

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act was passed in 1972 to mitigate the hazard of surface faulting to structures for human occupancy. The Act's main purpose is to prevent the construction of buildings used for human occupancy on the surface trace of active faults. The Act requires the State Geologist to establish regulatory zones, known as "Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zones," around the surface traces of active faults and to issue appropriate maps. If an active fault is found, a structure for human occupancy cannot be placed over the trace of the fault and must be set back from the fault (typically 50 feet). According to the Geotechnical Evaluation, there are no active or potentially active faults known to cross the Project site and the Project site is not located in a Fault-Rupture Hazard Zone as established by the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act. Therefore, the probability of damage from surface fault rupture is considered to be low and impacts would be less than significant in this regard.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

- 2) ***Strong seismic ground shaking?***

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan (MJHMP) identifies potentially active faults within the County, including the Bear Mountains and Melones Fault Zones, part of the Foothills Fault System, which pass through the western County near Valley Springs, Mokelumne Hill and south of Copperopolis (Calaveras County, 2021). A number of faults do not traverse the County, but may cause shaking effects inside the County, including the San Andreas Fault, the Hayward Fault, the Calaveras Fault and the Greenville Fault. Rupture of any of these faults, or of a known or unknown fault in the region, could cause seismic ground shaking. The intensity of ground shaking on the Project site would depend upon the earthquake's magnitude, distance to the epicenter, and geology of the area between the Project site and epicenter. The MJHMP indicates that based on patterns of previous occurrences, the probability of damaging seismic ground shaking in the County as a result of an earthquake is unlikely.

The Geotechnical Evaluation indicates that the Project site is near several moderately active faults within the Foothills Fault System capable of generating strong earthquakes. The Geologic Evaluation concluded that development of the Project, as proposed, is suitable from a geotechnical standpoint for construction provided the recommendations presented in the Geologic Evaluation are incorporated into design and construction of the Project. The Geotechnical Evaluation includes specific recommendations based on the results of the subsurface evaluation and laboratory testing, review of referenced geologic materials, and

geotechnical analysis. Specific recommendations address earthwork and grading, underground utility trenches, surface drainage control, retaining walls, pavements, and ground corrosivity, among other factors. Further, design of the proposed Project in accordance with the current California Building Code is anticipated to adequately mitigate concerns with ground shaking.

Chapter 15.04 of the County Code contains the County building code. Section 15.04.050 adopts and incorporates into the County Code the California Building Standards Code (CBSC), as amended, which includes design requirements to mitigate the effects of potential hazards associated with seismic ground shaking. Compliance with the County's established regulatory framework and standard engineering practices and design criteria would ensure potential impacts associated with strong seismic ground shaking at the Project site would be reduced to a less than significant level.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

### **3) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** Liquefaction is a phenomenon where earthquake-induced ground vibrations increase the pore pressure in saturated, granular soils until it is equal to the confining, overburden pressure. Engineering research of soil liquefaction potential indicates that generally three basic factors must exist concurrently in order for liquefaction to occur. These factors include:

- A source of ground shaking, such as an earthquake, capable of generating soil mass distortions;
- A relatively loose silty and/or sandy soil; and
- A relative shallow groundwater table (within approximately 50 feet below ground surface) or completely saturated soil conditions that will allow positive pore pressure generation.

According to the Geotechnical Evaluation, no potentially liquefiable deposits were identified at the Project site, and groundwater is not anticipated within 50 feet of the ground surface; therefore, the risk from liquefaction is considered non-existent. Additionally, the County General Plan FEIR notes that because the County is not located within a seismic hazard zone, the entire County, including the Project site, would not be considered at risk from seismic-related ground failure hazards, including liquefaction. Therefore, the Project would not expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects related to liquefaction and impacts would be less than significant in this regard.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

### **4) Landslides?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** As indicated in the County General Plan FEIR, Calaveras County is not located in a seismic hazard zone; thus, the Project site is not considered to be at risk from seismic-related ground failure hazards, including landslides. The County's MJHMP does not identify the Project area as an area with high landslide susceptibility (Calaveras County, 2021). However, as indicated in the County General Plan FEIR, areas with steep slopes (20 percent grade or higher) have an elevated risk of landslide from erosion. The Geotechnical Report notes that the Project site consists of rolling hills with natural slopes ranging up to 15 percent. As such, the Project site is exposed to little or no risk associated with landslides. Construction activities associated with the Project would be conducted in accordance with Chapter 15.05

of the County Code, which contains the County's grading regulations. Compliance with the County's established regulatory framework and standard construction and engineering practices would ensure potential impacts associated with landslides at the Project site would be reduced to a less than significant level.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

**b) *Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?***

**Less Than Significant Impact.** Construction activities associated with the Project would involve excavation and other soil disturbing activities that have the potential to temporarily increase erosion and sedimentation rates above existing conditions.

The proposed Project would be subject to the County's Grading and Drainage Ordinance (Chapter 15.05 of the County Code). The Grading and Drainage Ordinance supplements the regulations from the California Building Standards Code (CBSC), which addresses standards for all grading construction. The Ordinance helps to maintain safe grading conditions and erosion control in order to avoid potentially harmful impacts related to property, the public, and environmental health.

Additionally, in accordance with National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit regulations, the State of California requires that any construction activity disturbing one acre or more of soil comply with the Construction General Permit (Order No. 2009-0009-DWQ). The permit requires development and implementation of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) and monitoring plan, which must include erosion-control and sediment-control Best Management Practices (BMPs) that would meet or exceed measures required by the Construction General Permit to control stormwater quality degradation due to potential construction-related pollutants. The SWPPP would include project specific BMPs that are designed to control drainage and erosion. Such BMPs may include: temporary erosion control measures such as silt fences, staked straw bales/wattles, silt/sediment basins and traps, check dams, geofabric, sandbag dikes, and temporary revegetation or other ground cover. The BMPs and overall SWPPP is reviewed by the Regional Water Quality Control Board as part of the permitting process.

Following compliance with the established regulatory framework, including the County Code and Construction General Permit, potential impacts associated with soil erosion and the loss of topsoil would be less than significant.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

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

**Less Than Significant Impact.** Refer to Responses 4.7(a)(3) and 4.7(a)(4) regarding the potential for liquefaction and landslides, respectively. Due to the low potential for liquefaction, the potential for lateral spreading to occur at the Project site is also considered low.

According to the Geotechnical Evaluation, to provide suitable support and reduce the potential for settlement of the proposed improvements, the areas beneath the new pavements would need to be over-

excavated and replaced with engineered fill and compacted. The Geotechnical Evaluation includes specific recommendations based on the results of the subsurface evaluation and laboratory testing, review of referenced geologic materials, and geotechnical analysis. These recommendations address earthwork and grading, underground utility trenches, surface drainage control, retaining walls, pavements, and ground corrosivity, among other factors. The project is required to implement these recommendations during construction.

The Project would be required to comply with all applicable regulations in the most recent CBSC, as amended by the County Code. Compliance with the County's established regulatory framework and standard engineering practices and design criteria would ensure potential impacts associated with a geologic unit or soil that is unstable or would become unstable at the Project site would be reduced to a less than significant impact.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

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

**Less Than Significant Impact.** 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. Without proper mitigation measures, shrinking and swelling could result in damage to roads and other structures. The Geotechnical Evaluation identified the site as underlain by phyllite bedrock overlain on hillsides by three to six inches of residual soil and by up to two feet of alluvium in low-lying areas adjacent to ephemeral creek crossings.

According to the Geotechnical Evaluation, to provide suitable support and reduce the potential for settlement of the proposed improvements, the areas beneath the new pavements would need to be over-excavated and replaced with engineered fill and compacted. The Geotechnical Evaluation includes specific recommendations based on the results of the subsurface evaluation and laboratory testing, review of referenced geologic materials, and geotechnical analysis. These recommendations address earthwork and grading, underground utility trenches, surface drainage control, retaining walls, pavements, and ground corrosivity, among other factors. The project is required to implement these recommendations during construction.

The Project would be required to comply with all applicable regulations in the most recent CBSC, as amended by the County Code. Compliance with the County's established regulatory framework and standard engineering practices and design criteria would ensure potential impacts associated with expansive soils at the Project site would be reduced to a less than significant impact.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

**e) *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?***

**No Impact.** The proposed Project would not require the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems for the disposal of waste water. Implementation of the Project would result in no impact relative to this topic.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

**f) *Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?***

**Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.** Significant paleontological resources are determined to be fossils or assemblages of fossils that are unique, unusual, rare, uncommon, or diagnostically important. Significant fossils can include remains of large to very small aquatic and terrestrial vertebrates or remains of plants and animals previously not represented in certain portions of the stratigraphy. Assemblages of fossils that might aid stratigraphic correlation, particularly those offering data for the interpretation of tectonic events, geomorphologic evolution, and paleoclimatology are also critically important.

The County General Plan indicates that Calaveras County has yielded paleontological resources and geologic features and it is likely that such resources will continue to be encountered in the County. Damage to or destruction of a paleontological resource would be considered a potentially significant impact under local, State, or federal criteria.

The Conservation and Open Space Element of the County General Plan includes several goals, policies, and implementation measures related to the preservation of prehistoric, archaeological, cultural, historical, and paleontological resources. In particular, the following policy would apply to the Project site:

**COS 7.1:** New development shall be designed to avoid significant cultural and paleontological resources to the extent feasible.

While there are no known unique paleontological resources within the project area, there is always the potential for a previously unknown resource to be discovered during ground disturbing activities. Implementation of Mitigation Measure GEO-1 would ensure steps would be taken to reduce impacts to paleontological resources in the event that they are discovered during construction. This would ensure that any potentially significant impacts would be reduced to a less than significant level regarding this topic.

**Mitigation Measures:**

**GEO-1:** In the event a paleontological or other geologically sensitive resources (such as fossils or fossil formations) are identified during any phase of project development, all excavations within 100 feet of the find shall be temporarily halted until the find is examined by a qualified paleontologist, in accordance with Society of Vertebrate Paleontology standards. The paleontologist shall notify the appropriate representative at Calaveras County who shall coordinate with the paleontologist as to any necessary investigation of the find. If the find is determined to be significant under CEQA, the County shall implement those measures which may include avoidance, preservation in place, or other appropriate measures, as outlined in Public Resources Code Section 21083.2.



#### 4.8 Greenhouse Gas Emissions

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

#### Existing Setting

Various gases in the Earth’s atmosphere, classified as atmospheric greenhouse gases (GHGs), play a critical role in determining the Earth’s surface temperature. Solar radiation enters Earth’s atmosphere from space, and a portion of the radiation is absorbed by the Earth’s surface. The Earth emits this radiation back toward space, but the properties of the radiation change from high-frequency solar radiation to lower-frequency infrared radiation.

Greenhouse gases, which are transparent to solar radiation, are effective in absorbing infrared radiation. As a result, this radiation that otherwise would have escaped back into space is now retained, resulting in a warming of the atmosphere. This phenomenon is known as the greenhouse effect, which leads to global warming as well as an overall global climate change, which includes long-term shifts in temperatures and weather patterns. Among the prominent GHGs contributing to the greenhouse effect are carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), methane (CH<sub>4</sub>), ozone (O<sub>3</sub>), water vapor (H<sub>2</sub>O), N<sub>2</sub>O, and chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs).

Naturally occurring greenhouse gases include water vapor (H<sub>2</sub>O), carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), methane (CH<sub>4</sub>), nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O), and ozone (O<sub>3</sub>). Several classes of halogenated substances that contain fluorine, chlorine, or bromine are also greenhouse gases, but they are, for the most part, solely a product of industrial activities. There are also several gases that do not have a direct global warming effect but indirectly affect terrestrial and/or solar radiation absorption by influencing the formation or destruction of greenhouse gases, including tropospheric and stratospheric ozone. These gases include carbon monoxide (CO), oxides of nitrogen (NO<sub>x</sub>), and non-CH<sub>4</sub> volatile organic compounds (NMVOCs). Aerosols, which are extremely small particles or liquid droplets, such as those produced by sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) or elemental carbon emissions, can also affect the absorptive characteristics of the atmosphere (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 2011).

Emissions of GHGs contributing to global climate change are attributable in large part to human activities associated with the industrial/manufacturing, utility, transportation, residential, and agricultural sectors. Consumption of fossil fuels in the transportation sector was the single largest source of California’s GHG emissions in 2020 accounting for 37 percent of total GHG emissions in the state (CARB, 2022b). This

category was followed by the industrial sector (20 percent), the electricity generation sector (including both in-state and out of-state sources) (16 percent), the residential and commercial sector (11 percent), the agriculture and forestry sector (9 percent), high-Global Warming Potential gases (includes emissions from refrigerants used in vehicles, airplane, train, and ship and boat) (6 percent), and waste (2 percent).

As the name implies, global climate change is a global problem. GHGs are global pollutants, unlike criteria air pollutants and toxic air contaminants, which are pollutants of regional and local concern, respectively. California produced approximately 418.2 million gross metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalents (MMTCO<sub>2</sub>e) in 2019, satisfying the annual statewide target set by the California Air Resources Board (CARB), that California emissions be below 431 MMTCO<sub>2</sub>e by 2020 (CARB, 2021). To meet CARB's statewide targets, California emissions must further be reduced to below 260 MMTCO<sub>2</sub>e by 2030.

Carbon dioxide equivalents are a measurement used to account for the fact that different GHGs have different potential to retain infrared radiation in the atmosphere and contribute to the greenhouse effect. This potential, known as the global warming potential of a GHG, is also dependent on the lifetime, or persistence, of the gas molecule in the atmosphere. Expressing GHG emissions in carbon dioxide equivalents takes the contribution of all GHG emissions to the greenhouse effect and converts them to a single unit equivalent to the effect that would occur if only CO<sub>2</sub> were being emitted.

- a) ***Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?***
- b) ***Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?***

**Less Than Significant Impact.** Existing science is inadequate to support quantification of impacts that project specific GHG emissions have on global climatic change. This is readily understood when one considers that global climatic change is the result of the sum total of GHG emissions, both man-made and natural that occurred in the past; that is occurring now; and will occur in the future. The effects of project specific GHG emissions are cumulative, and unless reduced or mitigated, their incremental contribution to global climatic change could be considered significant.

The Project proposes the development of roadway infrastructure to an existing entitled development project. The Project would serve the previously entitled and largely constructed Copper Valley development; the road is not intended to provide access to new development areas or to otherwise alter traffic patterns in the area, beyond providing a secondary access for an existing entitled development project. Because the proposed Project is not increasing capacity based on existing or anticipated regional travel demands, the Project would not generate new vehicle trips resulting in an increase of GHG emissions during operation.

The primary source of construction-related GHGs from the proposed Project would result from emissions of CO<sub>2</sub> associated with the construction of the Project, and worker vehicle trips. The Project would involve construction activities such as excavating, trenching, and grading. These emissions would be temporary and would not result in a significant source of GHG.

The Project would result in less than significant GHG emissions during construction and no increased emissions during operation. Therefore, the proposed Project would not generate a significant cumulative

impact to GHGs. Because the Project is not creating a new source of long-term emissions, the Project would not conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions. Overall, the Project would not generate GHG emissions that would have a significant impact on the environment or conflict with any applicable plans, policies, or regulations. Therefore, impacts related to greenhouse gases are less than significant.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

#### 4.9 Hazards and Hazardous Materials

<b><i>Would the project:</i></b>	<b>Potentially Significant Impact</b>	<b>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
a. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?			X	
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	
c. Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?				X
d. Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?				X
e. 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 or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?				X
f. Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?			X	
g. Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?			X	

- a) ***Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?***
- b) ***Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?***

**Less Than Significant Impact.** Generally, the exposure of persons to hazardous materials could occur in the following manners: improper handling or use of hazardous materials or hazardous wastes during construction or operation of future development, particularly by untrained personnel; an accident during transport; environmentally unsound disposal methods; or fire, explosion or other emergencies. The severity of potential effects varies with the activity conducted, the concentration and type of hazardous material or wastes present, and the proximity of sensitive receptors.

Construction activities associated with the proposed Project may involve the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials, such as petroleum-based fuels or hydraulic fluid used for construction equipment. The level of risk associated with the accidental release of hazardous substances is not considered significant due to the small volume and low concentration of hazardous materials utilized during construction. The construction contractor would be required to use standard construction controls and safety procedures that would avoid and minimize the potential for accidental release of such substances into the environment. Standard construction practices would be observed such that any materials released are appropriately contained and remediated as required by local, State, and federal law.

The Project proposes to construct roadway infrastructure to an existing development project, and would not result in increased routine transport of hazardous materials. Proposed operations as a roadway would not involve the use, storage, or disposal of hazardous materials creating a significant hazard to the public or the environment. Any transport along the proposed roadway would be subject to applicable State and federal laws, minimizing the potential for upset and accident conditions to occur within the Project site. Implementation of the proposed Project would result in a less than significant impact relative to this topic.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

- c) ***Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?***

**No Impact.** There are no existing or proposed schools within 0.25 mile of the Project site. The nearest school to the Project site is Copperopolis Elementary School, located approximately 4.6 miles to the northwest. Therefore, no impact is anticipated.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

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

**No Impact.** Government Code Section 65962.5, commonly referred to as the “Cortese List”, requires the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) and the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) to compile and update a regulatory sites list (pursuant to the criteria of the Section). The California Department of Health Services is also required to compile and update, as appropriate, a list of all public drinking water wells that contain detectable levels of organic contaminants and that are subject to water analysis pursuant to Health and Safety Code Section 116395. Government Code Section 65962.5 requires the local enforcement agency, as designated pursuant to Section 18051 of Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations, to compile, as appropriate, a list of all solid waste disposal facilities from which there is a known migration of hazardous waste. The Project site is not included on any of the data resources identified as meeting the Cortese List requirements (DTSC, 2022). Therefore, the Project site has not been included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

**e) *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 or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?***

**No Impact.** The Project site is not located within an airport land use plan, nor is the Project site located within two miles of a public airport or public use airport. Thus, the Project would not result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the area. No impact would occur.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

**f) *Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?***

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The Calaveras County Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) outlines the functions, responsibilities, and regional risk assessments of Calaveras County for large scale emergencies such as wildland fires, hazardous materials incidents, flooding, and dam failure. The EOP addresses the planned response to extraordinary emergency situations and establishes a flexible, all hazards, emergency management organization required to facilitate the response to, and provide for short term recovery activities related to any significant emergency or disaster affecting Calaveras County. The EOP tasks the Calaveras County Sheriff’s Department with authority and responsibility for evacuation and movement of citizens in times of crisis, including the identification of evacuation routes (Calaveras County, 2019).

The Project includes the development of roadway infrastructure to an existing entitled development project. The proposed improvements would enhance emergency response and/or emergency evacuation by providing a secondary access road to the Golf Club at Copper Valley. The access road would be designed and constructed in accordance with Chapter 12.02 of the County Code, which includes standards for the construction and maintenance of roads. In accordance with Chapter 12.08 of the County Code, the Project would also be required to obtain an encroachment permit before doing any work in the County right-of-way. The Safety Element of the County General Plan includes several goals, policies, and implementation measures related to emergency response and evacuation. In particular, the following policy would apply to the Project site:

**S 3.4:** All new development shall meet any applicable standards for access by emergency vehicles and egress by residents.

During construction activities, there is the potential for temporary traffic disruptions to occur along Little John Road or other nearby roadways. However, this would be temporary and emergency access to the Project site and surrounding area would be required to be maintained at all times. Additionally, all construction staging would occur within the boundaries of the Project site and would not interfere with circulation along Little John Road, or any other nearby roadways. Thus, the Project would not substantially impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan and impacts would be less than significant.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

**g) *Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?***

**Less Than Significant Impact.** According to the CalFire Hazard Severity Zone Map, the Project site is designated as a High Fire Hazard Severity Zone within a State Responsibility Area (SRA) (CALFIRE, 2022). The Project site is served by the Copperopolis Fire Protection District (FPD).

The Project includes the development of roadway infrastructure to an existing entitled development project. The Project would not result in development of structures or housing which would subject residents, visitors, or workers to long-term wildfire danger. Therefore, impacts from implementation of the Project would be considered less than significant relative to this topic.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

#### 4.10 Hydrology and Water Quality

<b><i>Would the project:</i></b>	<b>Potentially Significant Impact</b>	<b>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
a. Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?			X	
b. Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?			X	
c. Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:				
1) Result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?			X	
2) Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or offsite?			X	
3) 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	
4) Impede or redirect flood flows?			X	
d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?			X	
e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?			X	



**a) *Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?***

**Less Than Significant Impact.**

**Short-Term Construction**

Short-term construction activities associated with the proposed Project could impact water quality. Sources of potential construction-related storm water pollution include handling, storage, and disposal of construction materials containing pollutants; maintenance and operation of construction equipment; and site preparation activities, such as excavation, grading, and trenching. These sources, if not controlled, can generate soil erosion and on- and off-site transport via storm run-off or mechanical equipment. Poorly maintained vehicles and heavy equipment leaking fuel, oil, antifreeze, or other vehicle-related fluids on the Project site are also common sources of storm water pollution and soil contamination. Generally, standard safety precautions for handling and storing construction materials can adequately reduce the potential pollution of storm water by these materials. Grading activities would displace soils and temporarily increase the potential for soils to be subject to wind and water erosion. Two general strategies are recommended to prevent soil materials from entering local storm drains. First, erosion control procedures should be implemented for those areas that must be exposed, and secondly, the Project site should be secured to control off-site transport of pollutants. In order to reduce the amount of on-site exposed soil, grading would be limited to the extent feasible, and any graded areas would be protected against erosion once they are brought to final grade.

Construction-related erosion effects would be addressed through compliance with the Construction General Permit. Construction activity subject to this General Permit includes any construction or demolition activity, including, but not limited to, clearing, grading, grubbing, or excavation, or any other activity that results in a land disturbance of equal to or greater than one acre. The Project would disturb approximately 9.6 acres and therefore would be subject to the Construction General Permit. To obtain coverage under the Construction General Permit, dischargers are required to file with the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) the Permit Registration Documents (PRDs), which include a Notice of Intent (NOI) and other compliance-related documents. The Construction General Permit requires development and implementation of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) and monitoring plan, which must include erosion-control and sediment-control Best Management Practices (BMPs) that would meet or exceed measures required by the General Permit to control potential construction-related pollutants. Erosion-control BMPs are designed to prevent erosion, whereas sediment controls are designed to trap sediment once it has been mobilized.

The community of Copperopolis is covered under the statewide NPDES General Permit for Storm Water Discharges from Small MS4s. As a condition of permit coverage, the community of Copperopolis is required to implement the Calaveras County Storm Water Management Plan, which includes BMPs designed to protect water quality and reduce the discharge of pollutants into the County's storm drain systems. The proposed Project would also be subject to the County's Grading and Drainage Ordinance (Chapter 15.05 of the County Code). The Grading and Drainage Ordinance supplements the regulations from the California Building Standards Code (CBSC), which addresses standards for all grading construction. The Ordinance helps to maintain safe grading conditions and erosion control in order to avoid potentially harmful impacts related to property, the public, and environmental health.

Compliance with the NPDES and County Code requirements would ensure the Project's construction-related activities would not violate any water quality standards or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality, resulting in a less than significant impact.

### **Long-Term Operations**

Urban runoff is typically associated with impervious surfaces such as rooftops, streets, and other paved areas, where various types of pollutants may build up and eventually be washed into the storm drain system after storm events. Sediment, trash, organic contaminants, nutrients, trace metals, and oil and grease compound are common urban pollutants that can affect receiving water quality if not properly managed.

The Project proposes the development of roadway infrastructure to an existing entitled development project. Under proposed conditions, stormwater runoff from the road would flow into proposed retention basins within six drainage management areas (DMAs).

Development within the Copperopolis community area is subject to regulations specified in the Calaveras County Stormwater Management Plan, including requirements for implementation of both structural and non-structural BMPs. Examples of such structural control measures include storm water retention, porous pavement, infiltration basins, and landscaping features (such as grassy swales, filter strips, and artificial wetlands) designed to remove pollutants from storm water runoff and facilitate percolation. Nonstructural measures include buffer zones, minimization of land disturbance, maximizing open space, and discouraging development in sensitive ecological areas with critical habitat for plant and animal wildlife. As required by the statewide General Storm Water Discharge Permit, new developments within designated Storm Water Discharge Permit areas would also be required to submit annual reports to the County following the completion of construction confirming on-going maintenance of BMPs and evaluating the extent to which required BMPs are effectively controlling discharges into the County storm drain system. The proposed Project would also be subject to Section 15.05.180 of the County Code, which ensures that stormwater drainage systems be constructed in accordance with the Calaveras County Grading, Drainage, and Erosion Control Manual, and states that, for engineered grading projects, the peak off-site storm water discharge from the Project site shall not exceed pre-construction conditions unless the applicant demonstrates that downstream stormwater conveyance systems have sufficient capacity to handle the increased flow rate without exceeding established design standards.

The Copper Valley Community Services District (CSD) is responsible for the maintenance of land and infrastructure within the Copper Valley development, including roads, storm drains, wildlife, and wetlands easements. The Copper Valley CSD would ensure long-term maintenance of BMPs for the proposed roadway infrastructure and retention basins.

Compliance with NPDES and County Code requirements, which include implementation of BMPs, and maintenance of BMPs through the Copper Valley CSD, would ensure that Project operations would not violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality. Impacts would be less than significant in this regard.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

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

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The Golf Club at Copper Valley is served by the Calaveras County Water District (CCWD) – Copper Cove/Copperopolis Service Area, which receives water supplies from the Stanislaus River Watershed (Sub-Region B) (Woodard & Curran, 2021). Water supplies from CCWD’s Sub-Region B consist of surface water and recycled water (Woodard & Curran, 2021).

As indicated in the County General Plan FEIR, most of the County is underlain by faulted and folded igneous and metamorphic rock. Groundwater recharge currently occurring in the County is generally focused in the northwestern portion of the County, where the bedrock of the Sierra Nevada is overlain by alluvial sediments. The alluvial sediments generally allow for higher rates of recharge than the bedrock.

As the Project involves the development of roadway infrastructure, the Project would not generate new residential or employment uses and would not decrease groundwater supplies via an increase in water demand. Additionally, while the Project would introduce new impervious surfaces to a previously undeveloped area, new impervious surfaces associated with the Project would not significantly affect infiltration rates, given the limited new areas of impervious surfaces that would be created by the new roadway. As such, the Project would not substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the Project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin. Impacts would be less than significant.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

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

- 1) *Result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?***
- 2) *Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or offsite?***
- 3) *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?***
- 4) *Impede or redirect flood flows?***

**Less Than Significant Impact.** Refer to Response 4.10(a) regarding potential impacts involving erosion and water quality. Compliance with NPDES and County Code requirements would ensure the Project would not result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site.

The Project proposes the development of roadway infrastructure to an existing entitled development project. The Project would span two streams, Ramsey Gulch and an unnamed tributary to Ramsey Gulch, with bridges. The Project would not block, reroute, or otherwise impede the two streams occurring within the Project site during construction or operation. Therefore, while streams and water courses are present

within the Project area, they would not be impacted or altered as a result of Project implementation. Under proposed conditions, stormwater runoff from the road would flow into proposed retention basins within six drainage management areas (DMAs).

The Project would create new impervious surface on a previously undeveloped site. As described above, the Project would be subject to regulations specified in the Calaveras County Stormwater Management Plan, including requirements for implementation of both structural and non-structural BMPs. The Project would also be subject to Section 15.05.180 of the County Code, which ensures that stormwater drainage systems be constructed in accordance with the Calaveras County Grading, Drainage, and Erosion Control Manual, and states that, for engineered grading projects, the peak off-site storm water discharge from the Project site shall not exceed pre-construction conditions unless the applicant demonstrates that downstream stormwater conveyance systems have sufficient capacity to handle the increased flow rate without exceeding established design standards. Additionally, the Copper Valley CSD is responsible for the maintenance of land and infrastructure within the Copper Valley development, including roads, storm drains, wildlife, and wetlands easements. The Copper Valley CSD would ensure long-term maintenance of BMPs for the proposed roadway infrastructure and retention basins. Therefore, the Project would not substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding, create or contribute runoff that would exceed the capacity of the existing drainage system, or impede or redirect flood flows. Impacts would be less than significant.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

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

**Less Than Significant Impact.** According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM), the majority of the Project site is located within an area of minimal flood hazard (Zone X) (FEMA, 2010). The Project site traverses two streams, which are located within a mapped portion of the 100-year flood zone (Zone A). Tsunamis are sea waves that are generated in response to large-magnitude earthquakes, which can result in coastal flooding. Seiches are the oscillation of large bodies of standing water, such as lakes, that can occur in response to ground shaking. The Project site is located approximately 100 miles east of the Pacific Ocean; therefore, the County is not at risk for inundation by tsunamis. Several lakes and reservoirs exist within Calaveras County; however, the Project site is not located within an existing Dam Breach Inundation Zone (DWR, 2022). Therefore, seiches would not pose a substantial risk to the Project.

As discussed in Response 4.10(a), compliance with NPDES and County Code requirements would reduce potential impacts involving erosion and water quality to a less-than-significant level. Compliance with the County Code would ensure the Project would be designed and engineered to ensure that peak off-site storm water discharge is equal to or less than pre-construction conditions. Therefore, the Project would not risk release of pollutants due to project inundation. Impacts would be less than significant.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

**e) *Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?***

**Less Than Significant Impact.** Calaveras County is located within the jurisdiction of the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (CVRWQCB) (Region 5). The CVRWQCB developed a Water Quality Control Plan (Basin Plan) for the Sacramento and San Joaquin River Basins, which includes a summary of beneficial water uses, water quality objectives needed to protect the identified beneficial uses, and implementation measures. The Basin Plan establishes water quality standards for all the ground and surface waters of the region. The RWQCB regulates waste discharges to minimize and control their effects on the quality of the region's ground and surface water. Permits are issued under a number of programs and authorities. The terms and conditions of these discharge permits are enforced through a variety of technical, administrative, and legal means. Water quality problems in the region are listed in the Basin Plan, along with the causes, where known.

As discussed above, impacts related to water quality during Project construction and operation would be less-than-significant with compliance with NPDES and County Code requirements. The proposed Project would create new impervious surfaces in a previously undeveloped area. Long-term operations of the Project would not result in long-term impacts to surface water quality from urban stormwater runoff. Overall, implementation of the proposed Project would have a less than significant impact related to conflicts with the Basin Plan.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

#### 4.11 Land Use and Planning

<i>Would the project:</i>	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Physically divide an established community?				X
b. Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?			X	

**a) Physically divide an established community?**

**No Impact.** The Project site is undeveloped grassland and oak woodland. Immediately north of the site is Little John Road. North of Little John Road are rural residential uses. East of the site is undeveloped grassland and oak woodland, rural residential uses, and a maintenance yard. South of the site is undeveloped grassland and oak woodland. West of the site are residential uses and the Golf Club at Copper Valley.

The Project proposes the development of roadway infrastructure to an existing entitled development project. The Project site is adjacent to primarily undeveloped land. The Project would provide a secondary access point to the existing residential uses west of the Project site. Development of the Project would not result in any physical barriers, such as a wall, or other division, that would divide an existing community, but would serve as an orderly extension of an existing roadway. Thus, no impact would occur in this regard.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

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

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The majority of the Project site is located within the Saddle Ranch Specific Plan area. Within the Specific Plan area, the Project site is designated as Commercial, Recreation, and Single Family Residential. A portion of the Project site is located on a parcel designated Public/Institutional (PI). According to the County General Plan, the PI land use designation identifies public or quasi-public facilities. Typical uses include public buildings and grounds, schools, community centers, libraries, airports, cemeteries, fire stations, sewer and water treatment facilities, solid and liquid waste disposal facilities, power substations, and other similar and compatible uses.

Title 17 of the Calaveras County Code contains the County’s Zoning Ordinance (Zoning Code). The majority of the Project site, located within the Specific Plan area, is zoned Specific Plan (SP). The SP zone allows for uses specified in the land use district in the adopted specific plan. The portion of the Project site that is outside of the Specific Plan area is zoned Public Service (PS). The PS zone allows for public uses.

The Project proposes the development of roadway infrastructure to an existing entitled development project. The Project would be consistent with General Plan land use designations, Saddle Ranch Specific Plan, and Zoning Code. The potential for the Project to result in a significant impact due to a conflict with policies and regulations adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect is addressed throughout this Initial Study, on a topic-by-topic basis. As demonstrated throughout this report, the Project would have a less than significant impact related to conflicting with applicable land use plans, policies, regulations, or surrounding uses.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

#### 4.12 Mineral Resources

<i>Would the project:</i>	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?			X	
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	

- a) *Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?***
- b) *Result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?***

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975 (SMARA) requires classification of land into mineral resource zones (MRZs) according to the area’s known or inferred mineral potential. The State Division of Mines and Geology has not designated the Project site as a State classified mineral resources deposit area (CGS, 2022). The Project site is not located within the County’s Mineral Resource Overlay, nor is the Project site designated as Resource Production (RP) or Working Lands (WL), which are land use designations for areas within the County known to contain mineral resources. The Project site is not within or adjacent to any active mining operations (California Department of Conservation, 2022b). Thus, the Project would not result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resources of value to the region or result in the loss of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.



### 4.13 Noise

<i>Would the project result in:</i>	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?			X	
b. Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?			X	
c. For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 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

#### Fundamentals of Acoustics

Acoustics is the science of sound. Sound may be thought of as mechanical energy of a vibrating object transmitted by pressure waves through a medium to human (or animal) ears. If the pressure variations occur frequently enough (at least 20 times per second), then they can be heard and are called sound. The number of pressure variations per second is called the frequency of sound, and is expressed as cycles per second or Hertz (Hz). Noise is a subjective reaction to different types of sounds.

Noise is typically defined as (airborne) sound that is loud, unpleasant, unexpected or undesired, and may therefore be classified as a more specific group of sounds. Perceptions of sound and noise are highly subjective from person to person.

Measuring sound directly in terms of pressure would require a very large and awkward range of numbers. To avoid this, the decibel scale was devised. The decibel scale uses the hearing threshold (20 micropascals), as a point of reference, defined as 0 dB. Other sound pressures are then compared to this reference pressure, and the logarithm is taken to keep the numbers in a practical range. The decibel scale allows a million-fold increase in pressure to be expressed as 120 dB, and changes in levels (dB) correspond closely to human perception of relative loudness.

The perceived loudness of sounds is dependent upon many factors, including sound pressure level and frequency content. However, within the usual range of environmental noise levels, perception of loudness is relatively predictable, and can be approximated by A-weighted sound levels. There is a strong correlation between A-weighted sound levels (expressed as dBA) and the way the human ear perceives sound. For this reason, the A weighted sound level has become the standard tool of environmental noise

assessment. All noise levels reported in this section are in terms of A-weighted levels, but are expressed as dB, unless otherwise noted.

The decibel scale is logarithmic, not linear. In other words, two sound levels 10-dB apart differ in acoustic energy by a factor of 10. When the standard logarithmic decibel is A-weighted, an increase of 10-dBA is generally perceived as a doubling in loudness. For example, a 70-dBA sound is half as loud as an 80-dBA sound, and twice as loud as a 60 dBA sound. Community noise is commonly described in terms of the ambient noise level, which is defined as the all-encompassing noise level associated with a given environment. A common statistical tool is the average, or equivalent, sound level (Leq), which corresponds to a steady-state A weighted sound level containing the same total energy as a time varying signal over a given time period (usually one hour). The Leq is the foundation of the composite noise descriptor, Ldn, and shows very good correlation with community response to noise. The day/night average level (Ldn) is based upon the average noise level over a 24-hour day, with a +10- decibel weighting applied to noise occurring during nighttime (10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.) hours. The nighttime penalty is based upon the assumption that people react to nighttime noise exposures as though they were twice as loud as daytime exposures. Because Ldn represents a 24-hour average, it tends to disguise short-term variations in the noise environment.

### **Effects of Noise on People**

The effects of noise on people can be placed in three categories:

- Subjective effects of annoyance, nuisance, and dissatisfaction
- Interference with activities such as speech, sleep, and learning
- Physiological effects such as hearing loss or sudden startling

Environmental noise typically produces effects in the first two categories. Workers in industrial plants can experience noise in the last category. There is no completely satisfactory way to measure the subjective effects of noise or the corresponding reactions of annoyance and dissatisfaction. A wide variation in individual thresholds of annoyance exists and different tolerances to noise tend to develop based on an individual's past experiences with noise. Thus, an important way of predicting a human reaction to a new noise environment is the way it compares to the existing environment to which one has adapted: the so-called ambient noise level. In general, the more a new noise exceeds the previously existing ambient noise level, the less acceptable the new noise will be judged by those hearing it. With regard to increases in A-weighted noise level, the following relationships occur:

- Except in carefully controlled laboratory experiments, a change of 1-dBA cannot be perceived;
- Outside of the laboratory, a 3-dBA change is considered a just-perceivable difference;
- A change in level of at least 5-dBA is required before any noticeable change in human response would be expected; and
- A 10-dBA change is subjectively heard as approximately a doubling in loudness, and can cause an adverse response.

Stationary point sources of noise – including stationary mobile sources such as idling vehicles – attenuate (lessen) at a rate of approximately 6-dB per doubling of distance from the source, depending on environmental conditions (i.e., atmospheric conditions and either vegetative or manufactured noise

barriers, etc.). Widely distributed noises, such as a large industrial facility spread over many acres, or a street with moving vehicles, would typically attenuate at a lower rate.

### **Sensitive Receptors**

Noise exposure standards and guidelines for various types of land uses reflect the varying noise sensitivities associated with each of these uses. Noise sensitive land uses in Calaveras County include residential development, schools, hospitals, convalescent homes, places of worship, and libraries. The sensitive receptor nearest to the Project site consists of a residential use approximately 50 feet to the west of the Project site.

- a) *Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?***

### **Less Than Significant Impact.**

#### **Construction Noise**

Construction activities associated with the Project would involve the use of heavy equipment and impact tools. The degree of construction noise may vary for different areas of the Project site and also vary depending on the construction activities. Noise levels associated with the construction would vary with the different phases of construction. Most of the building construction would occur at distances of 50 feet or greater from the nearest residences. Construction activities would be temporary in nature and are anticipated to occur during normal daytime working hours.

Noise would also be generated during the construction phase by increased truck traffic on area roadways. A Project-generated noise source would be truck traffic associated with transport of heavy materials and equipment to and from the construction site. This noise increase would be of short duration, and would likely occur primarily during daytime hours.

Chapter 9.02 of the County Code contains the County Noise Ordinance. According to Section 9.02.060(d), noise from construction activities is exempt from the County's noise level standards provided that all construction in or adjacent to residential areas shall be limited to the daytime hours between 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.

Construction noise is considered a short-term impact and would be considered significant if construction activities occur outside the allowable times as described in the County Code. However, Project construction would occur during the permissible hours in accordance with the County Code. Thus, construction impacts would not be considered significant.

#### **Operational Noise**

The Project proposes the development of roadway infrastructure to an existing entitled development project. Noise impacts associated with Project operation would arise from vehicular travel on the newly constructed access road. The Project would serve the previously entitled and largely constructed Copper Valley development; the road is not intended to provide access to new development areas or to otherwise alter traffic patterns in the area, beyond providing a secondary access for an existing entitled development project. Because the proposed Project is not increasing capacity based on existing or anticipated regional

travel demands, the Project would not result in an increase in traffic volumes along Little John Road. Additionally, although the Project would introduce new sources of noise on previously undeveloped land, the Project is a local road that is not anticipated to carry high traffic volumes or exceed acceptable noise levels for nearby sensitive receptors. As such, the Project would have a negligible effect on existing ambient noise levels.

Given that the Project would comply with all noise requirements, Project construction and operation would not generate a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the Project in excess of standards established in the County General Plan or Noise Ordinance and impacts would be less than significant.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

**b) *Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?***

**Less Than Significant Impact.** Vibration is like noise in that it involves a source, a transmission path, and a receiver. While vibration is related to noise, it differs in that noise is generally considered to be pressure waves transmitted through air, whereas vibration usually consists of the excitation of a structure or surface. As with noise, vibration consists of an amplitude and frequency. A person's perception to the vibration will depend on their individual sensitivity to vibration, as well as the amplitude and frequency of the source and the response of the system which is vibrating.

Vibration can be measured in terms of acceleration, velocity, or displacement. A common practice is to monitor vibration measures in terms of peak particle velocities in inches per second. Standards pertaining to perception as well as damage to structures have been developed for vibration levels defined in terms of peak particle velocities.

Human and structural response to different vibration levels is influenced by several factors, including ground type, distance between source and receptor, duration, and the number of perceived vibration events. The threshold for damage to structures ranges from 0.2 to 0.6 peak particle velocity in inches per second (in/sec p.p.v). One-half this minimum threshold or 0.1 in/sec p.p.v. is considered a safe criterion that would protect against architectural or structural damage. The general threshold at which human annoyance could occur is noted as 0.1 in/sec p.p.v.

The primary vibration-generating activities associated with the proposed Project would occur during construction when activities such as grading and roadway construction occur. Sensitive receptors which could be impacted by construction related vibrations, especially vibratory compactors/rollers, are located approximately 50 feet or further from the Project site. At this distance, construction vibrations are not predicted to exceed acceptable levels. Additionally, construction activities would be temporary in nature and would occur during normal daytime working hours. This would ensure Project construction activities with the highest potential to produce perceptible vibration would occur during hours with the least potential to affect nearby residential uses, in order to ensure that perceptible vibration can be kept to a minimum. Therefore, the potential for significant impacts associated with construction vibration is less than significant.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

- c) *For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 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?*

**No Impact.** The Project site is not located within an airport land use plan, nor is the Project site located within two miles of a private airstrip, public airport or public use airport. The nearest airport, Kistler Ranch Airport, is a private airfield located approximately eight miles southeast of the Project site. Thus, the Project would not expose people residing or working in the area to excessive noise levels. No impact would occur.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

#### 4.14 Population and Housing

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

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

**No Impact.** The Project proposes the development of roadway infrastructure to an existing entitled development project. As the Project involves the development of roadway infrastructure, the Project would not generate new residential or employment uses and thus would not directly induce population growth. The Project would serve the previously entitled and largely constructed Copper Valley development; the road is not intended to provide access to new development areas or to otherwise alter traffic patterns in the area, beyond providing a secondary access for an existing entitled development project. Because the proposed Project is not increasing capacity based on existing or anticipated regional travel demands, the Project would not indirectly induce population growth. Thus, the Project would not induce substantial unplanned population growth to the area and impacts would be less than significant.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

**b) *Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?***

**No Impact.** The Project site is currently undeveloped grassland and oak woodland. The site does not contain any housing. Thus, the proposed Project would not displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

#### 4.15 Public Services

<b><i>Would the project:</i></b>	<b>Potentially Significant Impact</b>	<b>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
a. 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:				
1) Fire protection?			X	
2) Police protection?			X	
3) Schools?				X
4) Parks?				X
5) Other public facilities?				X

**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:***

**1) *Fire protection?***

**Less Than Significant Impact.** Fire protection services within the Project site are provided by the Copperopolis Fire Protection District (FPD). The Copperopolis FPD operates out of three stations. Station 2, located approximately 1.5 miles northwest of the Project site at 1927 Quiver Street, is the closest station to the Project site.

The Project site is currently undeveloped. The Project proposes to construct a secondary access road at the intersection of Little John Road and Flint Trail. The Project would provide secondary access, including access for emergency vehicles, to the existing Golf Club at Copper Valley.

The proposed Project would not result in the construction of new or physically altered fire facilities. As the Project involves the development of roadway infrastructure, the Project would not generate new residential or employment uses and would not impact fire protection services resulting in the need for new or physically altered facilities. In compliance with County General Plan Implementation Measure S-

3W, Project approval would require review by CalFire and the responsible fire district to determine the ability of the district to provide fire protection service. Further, the Project would enhance emergency vehicle access to the existing Golf Club at Copper Valley. Thus, the Project would not require the need for new or physically altered fire station facilities in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives and impacts would be less than significant.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

**2) Police protection?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** Police protection services within the Project site are provided by the Calaveras County Sheriff's Department.

The Project site is currently undeveloped. The Project proposes to construct a secondary access road at the intersection of Little John Road and Flint Trail. The Project would provide secondary access to the existing Golf Club at Copper Valley.

The proposed Project would not result in the construction of new or physically altered police facilities. As the Project involves the development of roadway infrastructure, the Project would not generate new residential or employment uses and is not anticipated to increase calls for service or alter response times or other performance objectives that would result in the need for new or substantially altered police protection facilities. Further, the Project would enhance emergency vehicle access to the existing Golf Club at Copper Valley. Thus, the Project would not require the need for new or physically altered police protection facilities in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives and impacts would be less than significant.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

**3) Schools?**

**4) Parks?**

**5) Other public facilities?**

**No Impact.** The Project includes the development of roadway infrastructure to an existing entitled development project. The Project does not propose any new structures and would not induce population growth within the County that would potentially result in a significant increase in the use of existing schools, parks, or other public facilities within the area. The Project would not involve the construction of new schools, parks, or other public facilities nor would it result in the need for new or physically altered schools, parks, or other public facilities. Therefore, the Project would not result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered schools, parks, or other public facilities.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.



#### 4.16 Recreation

<i>Would the project:</i>	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?				X
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

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

**No Impact.** Refer to Response to 4.15(a)(4).

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

**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?***

**No Impact.** Refer to Response to 4.15(a)(4). The Project proposes the development of roadway infrastructure to an existing entitled development project. The development of recreational facilities is not proposed as part of the Project. No impact would occur.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

#### 4.17 Transportation

<i>Would the project:</i>	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Conflict with a program plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?			X	
b. Would the project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?			X	
c. Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?			X	
d. Result in inadequate emergency access?			X	

**a) Conflict with a program plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The Project includes the development of roadway infrastructure, providing access an existing entitled development project, and would connect to the T-junction (three-way intersection) of Little John Road and Flint Trail. The County General Plan Circulation Element classifies Little John Road as a minor collector and Flint Trail would be considered a local road. Minor collectors move traffic from traffic generators (such as residential areas) to major collectors or arterials. Little John Road provides access to State Route 4 and is a 2-lane facility north of the Project site.

Pedestrian and bicycle facilities do not exist along Little John Road. Public transit in Calaveras County is provided by Calaveras Connect. There are no scheduled bus routes within the Project site or surrounding area; however, the intersection of Little John Road and Flint Trail is within the service area of the County’s Direct Connect Dial-a-ride service, which offers curb-to-curb service by reservation (Calaveras Connect, 2022). The proposed Project would not alter or have any detrimental effects on the existing and planned pedestrian, bicycle, and transit network in Calaveras County, nor would it conflict with any plans or planned improvements to these systems.

The Project does not propose any modifications to Little John Road or Flint Trail. The Project would connect to the southern portion of Little John Road at the T-junction (three-way intersection) of Little John Road and Flint Trail. A stop sign would be constructed at the connection point of the Project roadway and Little John Road, so that vehicle traffic traveling north on the Project roadway would yield to traffic on Little John Road (i.e., a two-way stop intersection). Therefore, impacts related to conflicts with a program plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities, would be less than significant.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

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

**Less Than Significant Impact.** Section 15064.3 of the CEQA Guidelines provides specific considerations for evaluating a project's transportation impacts. Per Section 15064.3, analysis of vehicle miles traveled (VMT) attributable to a project is the most appropriate measure of transportation impacts. While changes to driving conditions that increase intersection delay are an important consideration for traffic operations and management, the method of analysis does not fully describe environmental effects associated with fuel consumption, emissions, and public health. Section 15064.3(3) changes the focus of transportation impact analysis in CEQA from measuring impact to drivers to measuring the impact of driving.

The Project proposes the development of roadway infrastructure to an existing entitled development project. The Project would serve the previously entitled and largely constructed Copper Valley development; the road is not intended to provide access to new development areas or to otherwise alter traffic patterns in the area, beyond providing a secondary access for an existing entitled development project. Because the proposed Project is not increasing capacity based on existing or anticipated regional travel demands, the Project would not result in an increase in traffic volumes or VMT. Impacts would be less than significant in this regard.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

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

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The Project proposes the development of roadway infrastructure to an existing entitled development project. Thus, the Project would not introduce an incompatible use to the site. Further, the Project would not introduce a geometric design feature such as sharp curves or dangerous intersections. The Project would connect to the southern portion of Little John Road at the T-junction (three-way intersection) of Little John Road and Flint Trail. A stop sign would be constructed at the connection point of the Project roadway and Little John Road, so that vehicle traffic traveling north on the Project roadway would yield to traffic on Little John Road (i.e., a two-way stop intersection). A stop sign currently exists at the connection point of Flint Trail and Little John Road. No site circulation or access issues have been identified that would cause a traffic safety problem or hazard. In addition, the Project would undergo a site plan review by the County prior to development. Therefore, the Project would not increase hazards due to a geometric design feature or incompatible use.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

**d) Result in inadequate emergency access?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The Project includes the development of roadway infrastructure to an existing entitled development project. The proposed improvements would enhance emergency access by providing a secondary access road to the Golf Club at Copper Valley. The access road would be designed and constructed in accordance with Chapter 12.02 of the County Code, which includes standards for the construction and maintenance of roads. In accordance with Chapter 12.08 of the County Code, the Project would also be required to obtain an encroachment permit before doing any work in the County right-of-way. The Safety Element of the County General Plan includes several goals, policies, and implementation measures related to emergency response and emergency access. In particular, the following policy would apply to the Project site:

**S 3.4:** All new development shall meet any applicable standards for access by emergency vehicles and egress by residents.

During construction activities, there is the potential for temporary traffic disruptions to occur along Little John Road or other nearby roadways. However, this would be temporary and emergency access to the Project site and surrounding area would be required to be maintained at all times. Additionally, all construction staging would occur within the boundaries of the Project site and would not interfere with circulation along Little John Road, or any other nearby roadways. Thus, the Project would not result in inadequate emergency access and impacts would be less than significant.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

#### 4.18 Tribal Cultural Resources

<b><i>Would the project:</i></b>	<b>Potentially Significant Impact</b>	<b>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
a. 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:				
1) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k), or		X		
2) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.		X		

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

- 1) *Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k)?***
- 2) *A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.***

**Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.** As part of the Cultural Resources Assessment, a search of the Sacred Lands File (SLF) was requested from the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC). The NAHC responded indicating the search was negative for any previously known tribal cultural resources or sacred lands within the Project site APE or immediate vicinity. The NAHC also provided contact information for the following tribal organizations and representatives: Gloria Grimes, Chair - Calaveras Band of Mi-Wuk Indians; California Valley Miwok Tribe; Sheep Rancheria of Me-Wuk Indians of California; Lloyd Mathesen, Chair - Chicken Ranch Rancheria of Me-Wuk Indians; Sara A. Dutschke, Chair - Lone Band of Miwok Indians; Cosme Valdez, Chair - Nashville Enterprise Miwok-Maidu-Nishinam Tribe; Katherine Erolinda Perez, Chair - North Valley Yokuts Tribe; Timothy Perea - North Valley Yokuts Tribe; Neil Peyron, Chair - Tule River Indian Tribe; and Kenneth Woodrow, Chair - Wuksache Indian Tribe/Eshom Valley Band. Contact letters, two phone calls, and an email were sent to each tribal organization and/or representative between November 10 and November 22, 2021; however, no responses were received.

As discussed in Section 4.5, *Cultural Resources*, the Cultural Resources Assessment did not result in the documentation of any prehistoric or historic-era sites, features, or artifacts within the APE. In addition, due to a lack of significant water sources or concentrations of other resources potentially attractive to native peoples, the APE exhibits a low level of sensitivity for containing prehistoric sites.

Assembly Bill (AB) 52 requires that lead agencies evaluate a project's potential impact on "tribal cultural resources", which include "[s]ites, features, places, cultural landscapes, sacred places, and objects with cultural value to a California Native American tribe that are eligible for inclusion in the California Register of Historical Resources or included in a local register of historical resources." AB 52 also gives lead agencies the discretion to determine, based on substantial evidence, whether a resource qualifies as a "tribal cultural resource." AB 52 applies whenever a lead agency adopts an environmental impact report, mitigated negative declaration, or negative declaration.

In the event that human remains, or any associated funerary artifacts are discovered during construction, all work must cease within the immediate vicinity of the discovery. If the remains are deemed to be Native American, the coroner must notify the NAHC, which will in turn appoint and notify a Most Likely Descendent (MLD) to act as a tribal representative. The MLD will work with a qualified archaeologist to determine the proper treatment of the human remains and associated funerary objects. With implementation of Mitigation Measures CUL-1, the proposed Project would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significant of a tribal cultural resource and impacts would be reduced to a less than significant level.

**Mitigation Measures:** Refer to Mitigation Measure CUL-1.

#### 4.19 Utilities and Service Systems

<i><b>Would the project:</b></i>	<b>Potentially Significant Impact</b>	<b>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
a. Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, or wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?				X
b. Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?				X
c. Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?				X
d. Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?			X	
e. Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?			X	

**a) *Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, or wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?***

**No Impact.** The Project includes the development of roadway infrastructure to an existing entitled development project. No new water, wastewater, electrical, natural gas, or telecommunications infrastructure or facilities would be constructed. The Project proposes to construct a new culvert that would attach to an existing culvert under Little John Road, but this improvement would not result in the need for additional storm water facilities. Operation of the proposed Project would not generate demand for utilities requiring the relocation or construction of new or expanded facilities. The potential environmental effects associated with construction and operation of the Project are analyzed within this Initial Study and impacts have been determined to be less than significant with compliance with regulatory

requirements and/or implementation of mitigation measures. Thus, the proposed Project would not require or result in relocation or construction of new or expanded water, or wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

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

**No Impact.** The Project includes the development of roadway infrastructure to an existing entitled development project. No new structures or facilities would be constructed requiring the use of potable water. Thus, no impact to water supplies would occur as a result of the proposed Project.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

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

**No Impact.** The Project includes the development of roadway infrastructure to an existing entitled development project. No new structures or facilities would be constructed that would generate wastewater requiring treatment. Thus, no impact to wastewater treatment capacity would occur as a result of the proposed Project.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

**d) *Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?***

**e) *Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?***

**Less Than Significant Impact.** Solid waste collection in the County is provided by Calaveras County Integrated Waste Management. The nearest landfill within Calaveras County is Rock Creek Solid Waste Facility, located at 12021 Hunt Road, Milton, California (CalRecycle, 2022a). Rock Creek Solid Waste Facility covers 201 acres of land, with 57 acres permitted for disposal (CalRecycle, 2022b). The site has a maximum permitted throughput of 500 tons of waste per day and is estimated to remain open until 2035. The facility's maximum capacity is 7,651,000 cubic yards and has a remaining capacity of 318,000 cubic yards as of May 2020.

Construction activities associated with the Project would generate a relatively minor amount of solid waste requiring disposal. The Project would be required to comply with all federal, State, and local statutes and regulations related to the collection and disposal of solid waste. Thus, the Project is not anticipated to generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals. Impacts would be less than significant.



**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

#### 4.20 Wildfire

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

#### **Environmental Setting**

According to the CalFire Hazard Severity Zone Map, the Project site is designated as a High Fire Hazard Severity Zone within a State Responsibility Area (SRA) (CALFIRE, 2022). The Project site is served by the Copperopolis FPD.

#### **a) *Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?***

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The Calaveras County Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) outlines the functions, responsibilities, and regional risk assessments of Calaveras County for large scale emergencies such as wildland fires, hazardous materials incidents, flooding, and dam failure. The EOP addresses the planned response to extraordinary emergency situations and establishes a flexible, all hazards, emergency management organization required to facilitate the response to, and provide for short term recovery activities related to any significant emergency or disaster affecting Calaveras County. The EOP tasks the Calaveras County Sheriff’s Department with authority and responsibility for evacuation and movement of citizens in times of crisis, including the identification of evacuation routes (Calaveras County, 2019).

The Project includes the development of roadway infrastructure to an existing entitled development project. The proposed improvements would enhance emergency response and/or emergency evacuation

by providing a secondary access road to the Golf Club at Copper Valley. The access road would be designed and constructed in accordance with Chapter 12.02 of the County Code, which includes standards for the construction and maintenance of roads. In accordance with Chapter 12.08 of the County Code, the Project would also be required to obtain an encroachment permit before doing any work in the County right-of-way. The Safety Element of the County General Plan includes several goals, policies, and implementation measures related to emergency response and evacuation. In particular, the following policy would apply to the Project site:

**S 3.4:** All new development shall meet any applicable standards for access by emergency vehicles and egress by residents.

During construction activities, there is the potential for temporary traffic disruptions to occur along Little John Road or other nearby roadways. However, this would be temporary and emergency access to the Project site and surrounding area would be required to be maintained at all times. Additionally, all construction staging would occur within the boundaries of the Project site and would not interfere with circulation along Little John Road, or any other nearby roadways. Thus, the Project would not substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. Impacts would be less than significant in this regard.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

**b) *Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to, pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?***

**No Impact.** The Project would not exacerbate wildfire risks as the project involves the development of roadway infrastructure to an existing entitled development project. No impact would occur in this regard.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

**c) *Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?***

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The Project includes the development of roadway infrastructure to an existing entitled development project. The Project would not require the installation or maintenance of new infrastructure that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment. Impacts would be less than significant in this regard.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

**d) *Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?***

**No Impact.** The Project includes the development of roadway infrastructure to an existing entitled development project. No new structures are proposed. The Project would not expose people or structures

to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes. No impact would occur in this regard.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

#### 4.21 Mandatory Findings of Significance

<i>Would the project:</i>	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?			X	
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	
c. Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?			X	

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

**Less Than Significant Impact.** Although relatively unlikely, based upon the current land cover types found on-site, special-status species and/or federally- or State-protected birds could be occupying the site. In addition, although unlikely, the possibility exists for subsurface excavation of the site during grading and other construction activities to unearth deposits of cultural significance. However, this IS/MND includes mitigation measures that would reduce any potential impacts to less than significant levels. Therefore, the Project would have less than significant impacts related to degradation of the quality of the environment, reduction of habitat, threatened species, and/or California's history or prehistory.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

- 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)?***

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The proposed Project, in conjunction with other development within the County, could incrementally contribute to cumulative impacts in the area. However, mitigation measures for all potentially significant project-level impacts identified for the proposed Project in this IS/MND have been included that would reduce impacts to less than-significant levels. As such, the Project’s incremental contribution towards cumulative impacts would not be considered significant. In addition, all future discretionary development projects in the area would be required to undergo the same environmental analysis and mitigate any potential impacts, as necessary. Therefore, the proposed Project would not have any impacts that would be cumulatively considerable, and impacts would be less than significant.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

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

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The proposed Project would provide access to existing and planned development and is consistent with the land use designations for the site. Substantial adverse effects on human beings are not anticipated with implementation of the proposed Project. It should be noted that during construction activities, the Project could result in potential impacts related to soil erosion, surface water quality impacts, and noise. However, compliance with the existing regulatory environment and/or mitigation measures would reduce any potential impacts to a less-than-significant level. In addition, the proposed Project would be designed in accordance with all applicable building standards and codes to ensure adequate safety is provided for the Project’s roadway users. Therefore, impacts related to environmental effects that could cause adverse effects on human beings would be less than significant.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

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