



CEQA Referral Initial Study And Notice of Intent to Adopt a Negative Declaration

Date: February 07, 2024

To: Distribution List (See Attachment A)

From: Teresa McDonald, Associate Planner
Planning and Community Development

Subject: USE PERMIT APPLICATION NO. PLN2023-0056 – CALIFORNIA NUT
COMPANY

Comment Period: February 07, 2024 – March 11, 2024

Respond By: March 11, 2024

Public Hearing Date: Not yet scheduled. A separate notice will be sent to you when a hearing is scheduled.

You may have previously received an Early Consultation Notice regarding this project, and your comments, if provided, were incorporated into the Initial Study. Based on all comments received, Stanislaus County anticipates adopting a Negative Declaration for this project. This referral provides notice of a 30-day comment period during which Responsible and Trustee Agencies and other interested parties may provide comments to this Department regarding our proposal to adopt the Negative Declaration.

All applicable project documents are available for review at: Stanislaus County Department of Planning and Community Development, 1010 10th Street, Suite 3400, Modesto, CA 95354. Please provide any additional comments to the above address or call us at (209) 525-6330 if you have any questions. Thank you.

Applicant: George Tavernas (Trustee of the G & D Tavernas 2016 Trust)

Project Location: 5166 Sperry Road, between East Grayson and Hamlow Roads, in the Denair area

APN: 019-031-018 and 019-031-019

Williamson Act Contract: 1972-0745

General Plan: Agriculture

Current Zoning: General Agriculture (A-2-40)

Project Description: Request to expand an existing almond processing and storage facility by permitting an area of illegal expansion and constructing five almond storage buildings totaling 210,000 square feet, in the General Agriculture (A-2-40) zoning district. The request also includes a lot line adjustment to increase the 10.28± acre parcel to 20.12± acres in size to accommodate the proposed expansion.

Full document with attachments available for viewing at:
<http://www.stancounty.com/planning/pl/act-projects.shtm>

USE PERMIT APPLICATION NO. PLN2023-0056 – CALIFORNIA NUT COMPANY

Attachment A

Distribution List

X	CA DEPT OF CONSERVATION Land Resources / Mine Reclamation		STAN CO ALUC
X	CA DEPT OF FISH & WILDLIFE		STAN CO ANIMAL SERVICES
	CA DEPT OF FORESTRY (CAL FIRE)	X	STAN CO BUILDING PERMITS DIVISION
	CA DEPT OF TRANSPORTATION DIST 10	X	STAN CO CEO
X	CA OPR STATE CLEARINGHOUSE		STAN CO CSA
X	CA RWQCB CENTRAL VALLEY REGION	X	STAN CO DER
	CA STATE LANDS COMMISSION		STAN CO ERC
	CEMETERY DISTRICT	X	STAN CO FARM BUREAU
	CENTRAL VALLEY FLOOD PROTECTION	X	STAN CO HAZARDOUS MATERIALS
	CITY OF:		STAN CO PARKS & RECREATION
	COMMUNITY SERVICES DIST:	X	STAN CO PUBLIC WORKS
X	COOPERATIVE EXTENSION	X	STAN CO PUBLIC WORKS - SURVEY
	COUNTY OF:		STAN CO RISK MANAGEMENT
X	DER GROUNDWATER RESOURCES DIVISION	X	STAN CO SHERIFF
X	FIRE PROTECTION DIST: DENAIR	X	STAN CO SUPERVISOR DIST #2: CHIESA
X	GSA: TURLOCK SUBBASIN (EAST)	X	STAN COUNTY COUNSEL
	HOSPITAL DIST:		StanCOG
X	IRRIGATION DIST: TID	X	STANISLAUS FIRE PREVENTION BUREAU
X	MOSQUITO DIST: TURLOCK	X	STANISLAUS LAFCO
X	STANISLAUS COUNTY EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES	X	STATE OF CA SWRCB DIVISION OF DRINKING WATER DIST. 10
X	MUNICIPAL ADVISORY COUNCIL: DENAIR	X	SURROUNDING LANDOWNERS
X	PACIFIC GAS & ELECTRIC		INTERESTED PARTIES
	POSTMASTER:	X	TELEPHONE COMPANY: AT&T
X	RAILROAD: BURLINGTON NORTHERN SANTA FE		TRIBAL CONTACTS (CA Government Code §65352.3)
X	SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY APCD		US ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
X	SCHOOL DIST 1: GRATTON SCHOOL DISTRCT	X	US FISH & WILDLIFE
X	SCHOOL DIST 2: HUGHSON UNIFIED		US MILITARY (SB 1462) (7 agencies)
	WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT		USDA NRCS
X	STAN CO AG COMMISSIONER		
	TUOLUMNE RIVER TRUST		



STANISLAUS COUNTY
CEQA REFERRAL RESPONSE FORM

TO: Stanislaus County Planning & Community Development
1010 10th Street, Suite 3400
Modesto, CA 95354

FROM: _____

SUBJECT: USE PERMIT APPLICATION NO. PLN2023-0056 - CALIFORNIA NUT COMPANY

Based on this agency's particular field(s) of expertise, it is our position the above described project:

- _____ Will not have a significant effect on the environment.
_____ May have a significant effect on the environment.
_____ No Comments.

Listed below are specific impacts which support our determination (e.g., traffic general, carrying capacity, soil types, air quality, etc.) - (attach additional sheet if necessary)

- 1.
2.
3.
4.

Listed below are possible mitigation measures for the above-listed impacts: PLEASE BE SURE TO INCLUDE WHEN THE MITIGATION OR CONDITION NEEDS TO BE IMPLEMENTED (PRIOR TO RECORDING A MAP, PRIOR TO ISSUANCE OF A BUILDING PERMIT, ETC.):

- 1.
2.
3.
4.

In addition, our agency has the following comments (attach additional sheets if necessary).

Response prepared by:

Name Title Date



DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

1010 10TH Street, Suite 3400, Modesto, CA 95354
Planning Phone: (209) 525-6330 Fax: (209) 525-5911
Building Phone: (209) 525-6557 Fax: (209) 525-7759

CEQA INITIAL STUDY

Adapted from CEQA Guidelines APPENDIX G Environmental Checklist Form, Final Text, January 1, 2020

1. **Project title:** Use Permit Application No. PLN2023-0056 – California Nut Company
2. **Lead agency name and address:** Stanislaus County
1010 10th Street, Suite 3400
Modesto, CA 95354
3. **Contact person and phone number:** Teresa McDonald, Associate Planner
(209) 525-6330
4. **Project location:** 5166 Sperry Road between East Grayson and Hamlow Roads, in the Denair area (APN: 019-031-018 and 019-031-019).
5. **Project sponsor's name and address:** George Tavernas, Trustee of the G&D Tavernas 2016 Trust
5166 Sperry Road
Denair, CA 95316
Agriculture
6. **General Plan designation:** Agriculture
7. **Zoning:** General Agriculture (A-2-40)
8. **Description of project:**

Request to expand an existing almond processing and storage facility by permitting an area of illegal expansion and constructing five almond storage buildings totaling 210,000 square feet, in the General Agriculture (A-2-40) zoning district. The request also includes a lot line adjustment to increase the 10.28± acre parcel to 20.12± acres in size to accommodate the proposed expansion. The adjacent parcel will decrease from 28.52± acres to 18.68± acres and remain in agricultural production, removing 9.84± acres of agricultural production. The proposed almond storage buildings will include one 110,000 and four 25,000 square-foot dry storage buildings. Each building will be capable to be utilized for dry and cold storage, however, they will be utilized primarily for dry storage. The expansion is necessary to comply with changes in food safety handling requirements, that no longer allow outdoor storage of commodities. The facility operates Monday through Thursday from 6:00 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. and Friday from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Currently the facility has 30 employees on a maximum shift, with two shifts per day during the peak season (for a total of 120 automobile trips per day). There are currently four truck deliveries per day between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. (for a total of eight daily truck trips). The proposed storage buildings are not expected to result in any additional employees, truck trips, or hours of operation. The balance of the parcel has been previously developed with eight agricultural storage buildings, six fumigation chambers, a steam dryer and cooler elevator building, and an office for a total of 153,398± square feet of building space, originally approved under Use Permit No. 89-33 and expanded under Use Permit Nos. 93-03 and 2007-14. The existing operation is also utilizing 1.5± acres of the adjacent parcel to the east, also identified as Assessor Parcel Number (APN): 019-031-019, for the storage of equipment, without obtaining any land use entitlement. The nut processing on-site consists of boxing, sizing, grading, and pasteurization, which take place seasonally for approximately nine months out of the year, while the nut storage takes place year-round. Almonds arrive hulled and shelled. A limited number of almonds may arrive unshelled, which are bagged and shipped off-site. The site is served by a private well and septic system.

9. **Surrounding land uses and setting:** Irrigated orchards and scattered ranchettes in all directions.
10. **Other public agencies whose approval is required (e.g., permits, financing approval, or participation agreement.):** Stanislaus County Department of Public Works, Department of Environmental Resources, San

Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District,
California Department of Conservation.

11. Attachments:

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” as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

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

DETERMINATION: (To be completed by the Lead Agency)

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

- I find that the proposed project **COULD NOT** have a significant effect on the environment, and a **NEGATIVE DECLARATION** will be prepared.
- I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A **MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION** will be prepared.
- I find that the proposed project **MAY** have a significant effect on the environment, and an **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT** is required.
- I find that the proposed project **MAY** have a “potentially significant impact” or “potentially significant unless mitigated” impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation 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.

Signature on File
Prepared by Teresa McDonald, Associate Planner

January 11, 2024
Date

EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS:

- 1) A brief explanation is required for all answers except “No Impact” answers that are adequately supported by the information sources a lead agency cites in the parentheses following each question. A “No Impact” answer is adequately supported if the referenced information sources show that the impact simply does not apply to projects like the one involved (e.g., the project falls outside a fault rupture zone). A “No Impact” answer should be explained where it is based on project-specific factors as well as general standards (e.g., the project will not expose sensitive receptors to pollutants, based on a project-specific screening analysis).
- 2) All answers must take account of the whole action involved, including off-site as well as on-site, cumulative as well as project-level, indirect as well as direct, and construction as well as operational impacts.
- 3) Once the lead agency has determined that a particular physical impact may occur, then the checklist answers must indicate whether the impact is potentially significant, less than significant with mitigation, or less than significant. “Potentially Significant Impact” is appropriate if there is substantial evidence that an effect may be significant. If there are one or more “Potentially Significant Impact” entries when the determination is made, an EIR is required.
- 4) “Negative Declaration: Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated” applies where 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 (mitigation measures from Section XVII, “Earlier Analyses,” may be cross-referenced).
- 5) Earlier analyses may be used where, pursuant to the tiering, program EIR, or other CEQA process, an effect has been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or negative declaration.

Section 15063(c)(3)(D). In this case, a brief discussion should identify the following:

- a) **Earlier Analysis Used.** Identify and state where they are available for review.
 - b) **Impacts Adequately Addressed.** Identify which effects from the above checklist were within the scope of and adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and state whether such effects were addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis.
 - c) **Mitigation Measures.** For effects that are “Less than Significant with Mitigation Measures Incorporated,” describe the mitigation measures which were incorporated or refined from the earlier document and the extent to which they address site-specific conditions for the project.
- 6) Lead agencies are encouraged to incorporate into the checklist references to information sources for potential impacts (e.g., general plans, zoning ordinances). References to a previously prepared or outside document should, where appropriate, include a reference to the page or pages where the statement is substantiated.
 - 7) **Supporting Information Sources:** A source list should be attached, and other sources used or individuals contacted should be cited in the discussion.
 - 8) This is only a suggested form, and lead agencies are free to use different formats; however, lead agencies should normally address the questions from this checklist that are relevant to a project’s environmental effects in whatever format is selected.
 - 9) The explanation of each issue should identify:
 - a) the significant criteria or threshold, if any, used to evaluate each question; and
 - b) the mitigation measure identified, if any, to reduce the impact to less than significant.

ISSUES

I. AESTHETICS – Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, could the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included	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	

Discussion: The site is currently improved with eight agricultural storage buildings, six fumigation chambers, a steam dryer and cooler elevator building, and an office for a total of 153,398± square feet of building space on Assessor Parcel Number (APN): 019-031-018. If approved, the proposed storage buildings will be located on a portion of what is currently APN: 019-031-019. APN: 019-031-019 is currently planted in almonds, receiving irrigation water from Turlock Irrigation District. The remaining 18.68 acres of APN: 019-031-019 will remain in production if the project is approved. The only scenic designation in the County is along I-5, which is not near the project site. The site itself is not considered to be a scenic resource or a unique vista. The project will not degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site or its surroundings. Standard conditions of approval will be added to this project to address glare from any on-site lighting. Conditions of approval will be added to the project requiring building permits for the storage buildings, to be obtained from the Stanislaus County Building Permits Division prior to operation. No adverse impacts to the existing visual character of the site or its surroundings are anticipated.

Mitigation: None.

References: Application information; Stanislaus County Zoning Ordinance; the Stanislaus County General Plan and Support Documentation¹.

II. AGRICULTURE AND FOREST RESOURCES: In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Department of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state’s inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. -- Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included	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 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?			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	

Discussion: The project site, Assessor Parcel Numbers (APNs): 019-031-018 and -019, are enrolled in Williamson Act Contract No. 1972-0745. The existing facility located on APN: 019-031-018 is classified as “Urban and Built-Up Land”, and APN: 019-031-019 is classified as “Prime Farmland” by the California Department of Conservation’s Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program. The United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA NRCS) Web Soil Survey indicates that the property is 82.5% underlain by Grade 2 Tujunga loamy sand, 0 to 3 percent slopes (California Revised Storie Index Rating: 67); 8.4% underlain by Grade 3 Dinuba sandy loam, deep, 0 to 1 percent slopes (California Revised Storie Index Rating: 47); 8.1% underlain by Greenfield sandy loam, 0 to 3 percent slopes (California Revised Storie Index Rating: 98); and 1% underlain by Dinuba sandy loam, 0 to 1 percent slopes (California Revised Storie Index Rating: 86). The California Revised Storie Index is a rating system based on soil properties that dictate the potential for soils to be used for irrigated agricultural production in California. This rating system grades soils with an index rating of 86 and 98 as excellent, areas of 67 as good, and areas of 47 as fair. Grade 1 and 2 soils are deemed prime farmland by Stanislaus County’s Uniform Rules, which comprises a 91.6% of the project site.

County Code Section 21.20.045, in compliance with Government Code Section 51238.1, specifies that uses approved on contracted lands shall be consistent with three principles of compatibility. Those principles state that the proposed use shall not significantly compromise, displace, impair, or remove current or reasonably foreseeable agricultural operations on the subject contracted parcel or parcels or on other contracted lands in the General Agriculture (A-2) zoning district. Pursuant to Section 21.20.045(F) of the Stanislaus County Zoning Code, all other uses requiring use permits on contracted lands, except those specified in subsections B, C, D and E of the subject section, shall be evaluated on a case-by-case basis by the planning commission and/or board of supervisors to determine whether they are consistent with the principles of compatibility set forth in Government Code Section 51238.1. Those principles state that the proposed use shall not significantly compromise, displace, impair, or remove current or reasonably foreseeable agricultural operations on the subject contracted parcel or parcels or on other contracted lands in the A-2 zoning district. Pursuant to Section 21.20.045(F) of the Stanislaus County Zoning Code, compatibility with the Williamson Act shall be evaluated on a case-by-case basis by the planning commission set forth in Government Code Section 51238.1.

This project is considered to be a Tier One use. Within the A-2 zoning district, the County has determined that certain uses related to agricultural production, such as Tier One uses, are “necessary for a healthy agricultural economy,” provided it is found that the proposed use “will not be substantially detrimental to or in conflict with the agricultural use of other property in the vicinity.” Pursuant to Section 21.20.045(B)(3) of the Stanislaus County Zoning Ordinance, Tier One uses are determined to be consistent with the Principles of Compatibility and may be approved on contracted land unless a finding to the contrary is made. During project review, this application was referred to the Department of Conservation (DOC) for review and input; no response has been received to date.

The site has been developed with 153,398± square feet of building space. The developed area consists of agricultural processing, storage, and fumigation chambers. The five proposed storage buildings will be located on the southern 10±

acres of APN: 019-031-019, which will result in the removal of approximately 8.5± acres of orchard. While the proposed expansion will result in a decrease in production agriculture, the remaining 18.68± acre of APN: 019-031-019 will remain in production. Additionally, the use is directly in support of the agricultural productivity of the surrounding area.

The surrounding area is composed of irrigated orchards and scattered ranchettes in all directions. Surrounding parcels are primarily ten to 40 acres in size, in active agricultural production, and mostly enrolled in Williamson Act Contracts. There is no indication this project will result in the removal of adjacent contracted land from agricultural use. To minimize conflicts between agriculture operations and non-agricultural operations Buffer and Setback Guidelines (Appendix A of the Agricultural Element) will be adopted for this project. Policy 1.10, Buffer and Setback Guidelines is applicable to new or expanding uses approved in or adjacent to the A-2 (General Agriculture) zoning district. Appendix A states: "All projects shall incorporate a minimum 150-foot-wide buffer setback. Projects which propose people intensive outdoor activities, such as athletic fields, shall incorporate a minimum 300-foot-wide buffer setback. Permitted uses within a buffer area shall include landscaping, parking lots, and similar low-people intensive uses." General Plan Amendment No. 2011-01 - Revised Agricultural Buffers was approved by the Board of Supervisors on December 20, 2011, to modify County requirements for buffers on agricultural projects. As this is a Tier One use, if not considered people intensive by the Planning Commission and is not subject to agricultural buffers.

The project is anticipated to have less than significant impacts to Agriculture Resources. No forest or timberland exist in Stanislaus County. Therefore, this project is not anticipated to have impact to forest land or timberland.

Mitigation: None.

References: Application Information; Natural Resources Conservation Service Soil Survey; California State Department of Conservation Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program - Stanislaus County Farmland 2022; Stanislaus County Zoning Ordinance (Title 22); Stanislaus County General Plan and Support Documentation¹.

III. AIR QUALITY: Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management district or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. -- Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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 odors adversely affecting a substantial number of people)?			X	

Discussion: The proposed project is located within the San Joaquin Valley Air Basin (SJVAB) and, therefore, falls under the jurisdiction of the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD). In conjunction with the Stanislaus Council of Governments (StanCOG), the SJVAPCD is responsible for formulating and implementing air pollution control strategies. The SJVAPCD’s most recent air quality plans are the 2007 PM10 (respirable particulate matter) Maintenance Plan, the 2008 PM2.5 (fine particulate matter) Plan, and the 2007 Ozone Plan. These plans establish a comprehensive air pollution control program leading to the attainment of state and federal air quality standards in the SJVAB, which has been classified as “extreme non-attainment” for ozone, “attainment” for respirable particulate matter (PM-10), and “non-attainment” for PM 2.5, as defined by the Federal Clean Air Act.

The primary source of air pollutants generated by this project would be classified as being generated from "mobile" sources. Mobile sources would generally include dust from roads, farming, and automobile exhausts. Mobile sources are generally regulated by the Air Resources Board of the California EPA which sets emissions for vehicles and acts on issues regarding cleaner burning fuels and alternative fuel technologies. As such, the SJVAPCD has addressed most criteria air pollutants through basin wide programs and policies to prevent cumulative deterioration of air quality within the Basin. The project will

not substantially increase traffic in the area and, thereby, impact air quality. The facility operates Monday through Thursday from 6:00 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. and Friday from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. The applicant is not anticipating an increase in the existing 30 employees on a maximum shift with two shifts per day during the peak season. There are currently four truck deliveries per day between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. No additional truck trips per day are anticipated as part of this project. During the peak season there are a maximum of up to eight heavy-truck trips per day (total inbound and outbound), and a total of 120 automobile trips per day (anticipated inbound and outbound trips by employees), for a total of 128 trips per day. The project was referred to SJVAPCD, and no response has been received to date. However, the SJVAPCD's Small Project Analysis Level (SPAL) guidance identifies thresholds of significance for criteria pollutant emissions, which are based on the SJCAPCD's New Source Review (NSR) offset requirements for stationary sources. The SJVAPCD has pre-qualified emissions and determined a size below, which is reasonable to conclude that a project would not exceed applicable thresholds of significance for criteria pollutants. Any project falling below the thresholds identified by the SJVAPCD are deemed to have a less-than significant impact on air quality due to criteria pollutant emissions. The SJVAPCD's threshold of significance for industrial projects is identified as 1,506 additional trips per day. As stated previously, the project currently generates 120 employee vehicle-trips and eight truck-trips per day, and no additional trips will be generated as part of this request. As this is below the SJVAPCD's threshold of significance, no significant impacts to air quality are anticipated.

Construction activities associated with new development can temporarily increase localized PM₁₀, PM_{2.5}, volatile organic compound (VOC), nitrogen oxides (NO_x), sulfur oxides (SO_x), and carbon monoxide (CO) concentrations a project's vicinity. The primary source of construction-related CO, SO_x, VOC, and NO_x emission is gasoline and diesel-powered, heavy-duty mobile construction equipment. Primary sources of PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} emissions are generally clearing and demolition activities, grading operations, construction vehicle traffic on unpaved ground, and wind blowing over exposed surfaces. Construction activities for the proposed project would consist primarily of constructing the single 110,000 and four 25,000 square-foot storage buildings. These activities may require temporary use of heavy-duty construction equipment associated with the removal of 8.5± acres of orchard. Furthermore, all construction activities would occur in compliance with all SJVAPCD regulations; therefore, construction emissions would be less than significant without mitigation.

Potential impacts to air quality from the proposed project are also evaluated by Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT). The calculation of VMT is the number of cars/trucks multiplied by the distance traveled by each car/truck. CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (a), defines VMT as the amount and distance of automobile travel attributable to a project. A technical advisory on evaluating transportation impacts in CEQA published by the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) in December of 2018 clarified the definition of automobiles as referring to on-road passenger vehicles, specifically cars and light trucks. While heavy trucks are not considered in the definition of automobiles for which VMT is calculated for, heavy-duty truck VMT could be included for modeling convenience. According to the same OPR technical advisory, many local agencies have developed a screening threshold of VMT to indicate when detailed analysis is needed. Absent substantial evidence indicating that a project would generate a potentially significant level of VMT, or inconsistency with a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) or general plan, projects that generate or attract fewer than 110 trips per day generally may be assumed to cause a less-than significant transportation impact. Employee and truck trips for the existing operation were previously evaluated under the environmental document completed for Use Permit Nos. 89-33 and 2007-14, which were listed as 30 employees on a maximum shift and four truck deliveries per day. As no additional trips will be created as part of this request, impacts to VMT are expected to be less than significant.

For these reasons, potential impacts on local and regional air quality are anticipated to be less than significant, falling below SJVAPCD thresholds, as a result of the nature of the proposed project and project's operation after construction. Implementation of the proposed project would fall below the SJVAPCD significance thresholds for both short-term construction and long-term operational emissions, as discussed below. Because construction and operation of the project would not exceed the SJVAPCD significance thresholds, the proposed project would not increase the frequency or severity of existing air quality standards or the interim emission reductions specified in the air plans. Additionally, the proposed project would be consistent with the applicable air quality plans, nor would it conflict with applicable regional plans or policies adopted by agencies with jurisdiction over the project, thus it would be considered to have a less than significant impact.

Mitigation: None.

References: Application information; San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District - Regulation VIII Fugitive Dust/PM-10 Synopsis; www.valleyair.org; San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Small Project Analysis Level (SPAL) Guidance dated November 13, 2020; and the Stanislaus County General Plan and Support Documentation¹.

IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES -- Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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	

Discussion: The project is located within the Denair Quad of the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB). There are 12 animal species and four plant species, which are state or federally listed, threatened, or identified as species of special concern or a candidate of special concern within this quad. These species include the Swainson’s hawk, burrowing owl, riffle sculpin, Sacramento hitch, hardhead, Pacific lamprey, steelhead (Central Valley DPS), chinook salmon (Central Valley fall / late fall-run ESU), Crotch bumble bee, valley elderberry longhorn beetle, American badger, Northern California legless lizard, heartscale, subtle orache, stinkbells, and San Joaquin Valley Orcutt grass. There are no reported sightings of any of the aforementioned species on the project site, however, according to the CNDDB, a Swainson’s hawk nesting site was observed in 1994, approximately 2± miles southeast of the project, located within the Denair Quad.

An Early Consultation was referred to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and no response has been received to date.

There is a very low likelihood that these species are present on the project site as it has already been disturbed for agricultural purposes and developed with various residential and agricultural structures. It does not appear this project will result in impacts to endangered species or habitats, locally designated species, or wildlife dispersal or mitigation corridors. There are no known sensitive or protected species or natural communities located on the site. Therefore, the project is considered to be less than significant.

Mitigation: None.

References: California Department of Fish and Wildlife’s Natural Diversity Database Quad Species List; Stanislaus County General Plan and Support Documentation¹.

V. CULTURAL RESOURCES -- Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to in § 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 formal cemeteries?			X	

Discussion: A referral response received from the California Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) provided an overview of the requirements for tribal consultation under CA Assembly Bill 52 and Senate Bill 18. This project was not referred to the tribes listed with the NAHC as the request does not include a General Plan Amendment. It does not appear this project will result in significant impacts to any archaeological or cultural resources. The existing facility located on Assessor Parcel Number (APN): 019-031-018 is fully developed with multiple structures, well, and septic system. The proposed expansion area located on APN: 019-031-019 is currently planted in an almond orchard, and 1.5± acres of overflow storage area for the existing facility. Conditions of approval will be placed on the project, requiring that any construction activities shall be halted if any resources are found, until appropriate agencies are contacted, and an archaeological survey is completed.

Mitigation: None.

References: Application material; Stanislaus County General Plan and Support Documentation¹.

VI. ENERGY -- Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included	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	

Discussion: The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Appendix F states that energy consuming equipment and processes, which will be used during construction or operation such as: energy requirements of the project by fuel type and end use, energy conservation equipment and design features, energy supplies that would serve the project, total estimated daily vehicle trips to be generated by the project, and the additional energy consumed per trip by mode, shall be taken into consideration when evaluating energy impacts. Additionally, the project's compliance with applicable state or local energy legislation, policies, and standards must be considered.

Energy consuming equipment and processes include construction equipment, trucks, and the employee and customer vehicles. As discussed in Section III – Air Quality, these activities would not significantly increase Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT), as the number of vehicle or truck trips are not expected to increase as part of the request. Employee and truck trips for the existing operation were previously evaluated under the environmental document completed for Use Permit Nos. 89-33 and 2007-14 and were listed as 30 employees on a maximum shift and four truck deliveries (for a total of eight trips) per day. Additionally, the trucks are the main consumers of energy associated with this project but will be subject to applicable Air District regulations, including rules and regulations that increase energy efficiency for trucks. Consequently, emissions would be minimal. Therefore, consumption of energy resources would be less than significant without mitigation for the proposed project.

The proposed structures are subject to the mandatory planning and design, energy efficiency, water efficiency and conservation, material conservation and resources efficiency, and environmental quality measures of the California Green Building Standards (CALGreen) Code (California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 11). Conditions of approval will be added to the project requiring building permits for the four storage structures, to be obtained from the Stanislaus County Building Permits Division prior to issuance of a business license. The project site is served by the Turlock Irrigation District (TID) for electricity. TID was provided an Early Consultation referral and responded with a comment stating that a new electric line back to the expansion area will be required to serve the new load, that the owner/developer must apply for a facility change for any pole or electrical facility relocation, that the electric utility has an existing underground power line within the ten-foot Public Utility Easement. Applicable comments will be applied as conditions of approval.

Mitigation: None.

References: Application information; Referral response from the Turlock Irrigation District (TID), dated September 21, 2023; CEQA Guidelines; Title 16 of County Code; CA Building Code; Stanislaus County Zoning Ordinance (Title 21); Stanislaus County General Plan and Support Documentation¹.

VII. GEOLOGY AND SOILS -- Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.			X	
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?			X	
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?			X	
iv) 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	

Discussion: The California Revised Storie Index is a rating system based on soil properties that dictate the potential for soils to be used for irrigated agricultural production in California. This rating system grades soils with an index rating of 85

as excellent. The United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA NRCS) Web Soil Survey indicates that the property is 82.5% underlain by Grade 2 Tujunga loamy sand, 0 to 3 percent slopes (California Revised Storie Index Rating: 67); 8.4% underlain by Grade 3 Dinuba sandy loam, deep, 0 to 1 percent slopes (California Revised Storie Index Rating: 47); 8.1% underlain by Greenfield sandy loam, 0 to 3 percent slopes (California Revised Storie Index Rating: 98); and 1% underlain by Dinuba sandy loam, 0 to 1 percent slopes (California Revised Storie Index Rating: 86). As contained in Chapter 5 of the General Plan Support Documentation, the areas of the County subject to significant geologic hazard are located in the Diablo Range, west of Interstate 5; however, as per the California Building Code, all of Stanislaus County is located within a geologic hazard zone (Seismic Design Category D, E, or F) and a soils test may be required at the time of the building permit application. Results from the soils test will determine if unstable or expansive soils are present. If such soils are present, special engineering of the structure will be required to compensate for the soil deficiency. The structures resulting from this project will be designed and built according to building standards appropriate to withstand shaking for the area in which they are constructed. An Early Consultation referral response received from the Department of Public Works indicated that a grading, drainage, erosion, and sediment control plan for the project will be required, subject to Public Works review and Standards and Specifications. Storm water is proposed to be managed on-site by utilizing a either drainage basin, overland discharge, or a type of French drain system, depending on construction costs. A method will be required to be determined prior to issuance of any building permits. The proposed project does not include any water or wastewater facilities as the proposed buildings will only be used for storage of nuts. Any future development of a septic tank or alternative wastewater disposal system would require the approval of the Department of Environmental Resources (DER) through the building permit process, which also takes soil type into consideration within the specific design requirements. DER responded to the Early Consultation with comments requiring a permit for any on-site wastewater treatment systems (OWTS) that will be destroyed, that a site plan be submitted that includes the location, layout, and design of all-existing and proposed OWTS and expansion area, that any new building requiring OTWS are designed according to type and/or maximum occupancy of the proposed structure to the estimated waste/sewage design flow rate, that all applicable County Local Agency Management Program (LAMP) standards and required setbacks are to be met and that the existing OWTS serving the existing developments are to be contained within the boundaries of the project site. Conditions of approval regarding these standards will be applied to the project and will be triggered when a building permit is requested.

The project site is not located near an active fault or within a high earthquake zone. Landslides are not likely due to the flat terrain of the area.

Mitigation: None.

References: Application information; Referral response from the Stanislaus County Department of Public Works, dated October 4, 2023; Referral response from the Department of Environmental Resources, dated January 22, 2024; Natural Resources Conservation Service Soil Survey; Stanislaus County General Plan and Support Documentation¹.

VIII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS -- Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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	

Discussion: The principal Greenhouse Gasses (GHGs) are carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), nitrous oxide (N₂O), sulfur hexafluoride (SF₆), perfluorocarbons (PFCs), hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), and water vapor (H₂O). CO₂ is the reference gas for climate change because it is the predominant greenhouse gas emitted. To account for the varying warming potential of different GHGs, GHG emissions are often quantified and reported as CO₂ equivalents (CO₂e). In 2006, California passed the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (Assembly Bill [AB] No. 32), which requires the California Air Resources Board (ARB) design and implement emission limits, regulations, and other measures, such that feasible and cost-effective statewide GHG emissions are reduced to 1990 levels by 2020. Two additional bills, SB 350

and SB32, were passed in 2015 further amending the states Renewables Portfolio Standard (RPS) for electrical generation and amending the reduction targets to 40% of 1990 levels by 2030.

The request is to construct five storage buildings at an existing nut processing facility, totaling 210,000± square feet in size. The facility operates Monday through Thursday from 6:00 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. and Friday from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. The applicant is not anticipating an increase to the existing 30 employees on a maximum shift with two shifts per day during the peak season. There are currently four truck deliveries per day between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. No additional truck trips per day are anticipated as part of this project. During the peak season there are a maximum of up to eight heavy-truck trips per day (total inbound and outbound), and a total of 120 automobile trips per day.

The short-term emissions of GHGs during construction, primarily composed of CO₂, CH₄, and N₂O, would be the result of fuel combustion by construction equipment and motor vehicles. The other primary GHGs (HFCs, PFCs, and SF₆) are typically associated with specific industrial sources and are not expected to be emitted by future construction at this project site. As described above in Section III - Air Quality, construction activities may require the temporary substantial use of heavy-duty construction equipment associated with the removal of 8.5± acres of orchard. Furthermore, all construction activities would occur in compliance with all SJVAPCD regulations; therefore, construction emissions would be less than significant without mitigation. Additionally, the construction of any future proposed buildings is subject to the mandatory planning and design, energy efficiency, water efficiency and conservation, material conservation and resources efficiency, and environmental quality measures of the California Green Building Standards (CALGreen) Code (California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 11). Construction activities associated with this project are considered to be less than significant as they are temporary in nature and are subject to meeting San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD) standards for air quality control.

Potential impacts to air quality from the proposed project are also evaluated by Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT). The calculation of VMT is the number of cars/trucks multiplied by the distance traveled by each car/truck. CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (a), defines VMT as the amount and distance of automobile travel attributable to a project. A technical advisory on evaluating transportation impacts in CEQA published by the Governor’s Office of Planning and Research (OPR) in December of 2018 clarified the definition of automobiles as referring to on-road passenger vehicles, specifically cars and light trucks. While heavy trucks are not considered in the definition of automobiles for which VMT is calculated for, heavy-duty truck VMT could be included for modeling convenience. According to the same OPR technical advisory, many local agencies have developed a screening threshold of VMT to indicate when detailed analysis is needed. Absent substantial evidence indicating that a project would generate a potentially significant level of VMT, or inconsistency with a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) or general plan, projects that generate or attract fewer than 110 trips per day generally may be assumed to cause a less-than significant transportation impact. Employee and truck trips for the existing operation were previously evaluated under the environmental document completed for Use Permit Nos. 89-33 and 2007-14 and were listed as 30 employees on a maximum shift and four truck deliveries (for a total of eight trips) per day. As no additional trips will be created as part of this request, impacts to VMT are expected to be less than significant.

The project was referred to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, however, no response has been received to date.

Based on project details, GHG emissions are considered to be less than significant for the project.

Mitigation: None.

References: Application information; Stanislaus County General Plan and Support Documentation¹.

IX. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS -- Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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			X	

and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?				
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within 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	

Discussion: The project does not interfere with the Stanislaus County Local Hazard Mitigation Plan, which identifies risks posed by disasters and identifies ways to minimize damage from those disasters. The County Department of Environmental Resources (DER) is responsible for overseeing hazardous materials. This project was referred to the Department of Environmental Resources – Hazardous Materials Division, which responded that the project will not have a significant effect on the environment but did request standard conditions of approval be added to the project, requiring the applicant contact DER for any appropriate permitting requirements for hazardous materials and/or wastes and that the applicant complete a Phase I study, and if necessary, Phase II study prior to the issuance of any grading permit. The proposed use is not recognized as a generator and/or consumer of hazardous materials, therefore no significant impacts associated with hazards or hazardous materials are anticipated to occur as a result of the proposed project.

Pesticide exposure is a risk in areas located in the vicinity of agriculture. Sources of exposure include contaminated groundwater from drift from spray applications. Application of sprays is strictly controlled by the Agricultural Commissioner and can only be accomplished after first obtaining permits. Additionally, agricultural buffers are intended to reduce the risk of spray exposure to surrounding people.

Buffer and Setback Guidelines are applicable to new or expanding uses approved in or adjacent to the General Agriculture (A-2) zoning district and are required to be designed to physically avoid conflicts between agricultural and non-agricultural uses. General Plan Amendment No. 2011-01 – *Revised Agricultural Buffers* was approved by the Board of Supervisors on December 20, 2011, to modify County requirements for buffers on agricultural projects. As this is a Tier One use and is not considered people-intensive by the Planning Commission, the project is not subject to agricultural buffers. The request will not result in an increase in the number of employees on-site at one time. The project was referred to the Stanislaus County Agricultural Commissioner, and no comments have been received to date.

The project site is not listed on the EnviroStor database managed by the CA Department of Toxic Substances Control and is not within the vicinity of an airport. The site is located in a Local Responsibility Area (LRA) for fire protection and is served by Denair Protection District. The project was referred to the District, and no comments have been received to date. As stated previously, the project site will not include any water or wastewater facilities as the building will only be storing nuts.

No significant impacts associated with hazards or hazardous materials are anticipated to occur as a result of the proposed project.

Mitigation: None.

References: Application information; Referral response from the Department of Environmental Resources, Hazardous Materials Division, dated January 24, 2024; Stanislaus County General Plan and Support Documentation¹.

X. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY -- Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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:				
i) result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site;			X	
ii) substantially increase the rate of amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site.			X	
iii) create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or			X	
iv) 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	

Discussion: Areas subject to flooding have been identified in accordance with the Federal Emergency Management Act (FEMA). The project site is located in FEMA Flood Zone X, which includes areas determined to be outside the 0.2% annual chance floodplains. The project proposes to handle stormwater drainage overland into the existing orchard. An Early Consultation referral response received from the Department of Public Works indicated that a grading, drainage, and erosion and sediment control plan for the project will be required, subject to Public Works review and Standards and Specifications. Storm water is proposed to be managed on-site by utilizing a drainage basin, overland discharge, or a type of French drain system, depending on construction costs. A method will be required to be determined prior to issuance of any building permits. Accordingly, runoff associated with the construction at the proposed project site will be reviewed as part of the grading review process and be required to be maintained on-site.

The project site is operating under an existing public water system and the proposed expansion does not include any water or wastewater facilities as the proposed buildings will only be used for storage of nuts. However, if any future new wells are to be constructed on-site, they will be subject to review under the County’s Well Permitting Program, which will determine whether a new well will require environmental review. DER responded to the Early Consultation with comments requiring a permit for any on-site wastewater treatment systems (OWTS) that will be destroyed, that a site plan be submitted that includes the location, layout and design of all-existing and proposed OWTS and expansion area, that any new building requiring OTWS are designed according to type and/or maximum occupancy of the proposed structure to the estimated waste/sewage design flow rate, that all applicable County Local Agency Management Program (LAMP) standards and required setbacks are to be met and that the existing OWTS serving the existing developments are to be contained within

the boundaries of the project site. These comments will be applied as conditions of approval. No comments from DER regarding groundwater were received.

The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) was passed in 2014 with the goal of ensuring the long-term sustainable management of California’s groundwater resources. SGMA requires agencies throughout California to meet certain requirements including forming Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSA), developing Groundwater Sustainability Plans (GSP), and achieving balanced groundwater levels within 20 years. The site is located in the West Turlock Subbasin GSA, which together with the East Turlock Subbasin GSA, cover the Turlock Subbasin. The GSAs adopted the Turlock Subbasin GSP at a January 6, 2022 public hearing. The GSAs developed the GSP to comply with the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) of 2014 and achieve long-term sustainability of the Turlock Subbasin. While California’s Department of Water Resources DWR has through the end of 2024 to review the plan, the GSAs are preparing for GSP implementation. The project was referred to the GSA and no response has been received to date. A referral response received from the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) provided a list of the Board’s permits and programs that may be applicable to the proposed project. The developer will be required to contact RWQCB to determine which permits/standards must be met prior to construction as a condition of approval.

As a result of the project details, impacts associated with drainage, water quality, and runoff are expected to have a less than significant impact.

Mitigation: None.

References: Application information; Turlock Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP); Referral response from the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (CVRWQCB), dated September 21, 2023; Referral response from the Stanislaus County Department of Public Works, dated October 4, 2023; Referral response from the Department of Environmental Resources, dated January 22, 2024; Stanislaus County General Plan and Support Documentation¹.

XI. LAND USE AND PLANNING -- Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included	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	

Discussion: This is a request to expand an existing almond processing and storage facility by permitting an area of illegal expansion and constructing five almond storage buildings totaling 210,000 square feet, in the General Agriculture (A-2-40) zoning district. The request also includes a lot line adjustment to increase the 10.28± acre parcel to 20.12± acres in size to accommodate the proposed expansion. The adjacent parcel will decrease from 28.52± acres to 18.68± acres and remain in agricultural production, removing 9.84± acres of agricultural production. The proposed almond storage buildings will include one 110,000 and four 25,000 square-foot dry storage buildings. Each building will be capable to be utilized for dry and cold storage, however, they will be utilized primarily for dry storage. The expansion is necessary to comply with changes in food safety handling requirements, that no longer allow outdoor storage of commodities. The facility operates Monday through Thursday from 6:00 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. and Friday from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Currently the facility has 30 employees on a maximum shift, with two shifts per day during the peak season (for a total of 120 automobile trips per day). There are currently four truck deliveries per day between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. (for a total of eight daily truck trips). The proposed storage buildings are not expected to result in any additional employees, truck trips, or hours of operation. The balance of the parcel has been previously developed with eight agricultural storage buildings, six fumigation chambers, a steam dryer and cooler elevator building, and an office for a total of 153,398± square feet of building space, originally approved under Use Permit No. 89-33 and expanded under Use Permit Nos. 93-03 and 2007-14. The existing operation is also utilizing 1.5± acres of the adjacent parcel to the east, also identified as Assessor Parcel Number (APN): 019-031-019, for the storage of equipment, without obtaining any land use entitlement. The nut processing on-site consists of boxing, sizing, grading, and pasteurization, which take place seasonally for approximately nine months out of the year, while the nut storage takes place year-round. Almonds arrive hulled and shelled. A limited number of almonds may arrive unshelled, which are bagged and shipped off-site. The site is served by a private well and septic system.

In accordance with Subsection A of Section 21.100.050 of the Stanislaus County Code, minor changes to a use permit are allowed by staff approval provided there is not a change to the nature of, or added new uses to, the legally established use and no expansion to the area of the building or use by more than 25%. The current request will exceed the 25% allowance thus a new use permit is required for the proposed expansion.

The proposed use is considered a Tier One use, which are those uses closely related to agriculture and are necessary for a healthy agricultural economy. Tier One uses may be allowed when the Planning Commission finds that:

1. The use as proposed will not be substantially detrimental to or in conflict with agricultural use of other properties in the vicinity; and
2. The establishment, maintenance, and operation of the proposed use or building applied for is consistent with the General Plan designation of "Agriculture" and will not, under the circumstances of the particular case, be detrimental to the health, safety, and general welfare of persons residing or working in the neighborhood of the use and that it will not be detrimental or injurious to property and improvements in the neighborhood or to the general welfare of the County.

The project site is currently enrolled in California Land Conservation Act ("Williamson Act") Contract No. 1972-0745. County Code Section 21.20.045, in compliance with Government Code Section 51238.1, specifies that uses approved on contracted lands shall be consistent with three principles of compatibility. Those principles state that the proposed use shall not significantly compromise, displace, impair, or remove current or reasonably foreseeable agricultural operations on the subject contracted parcel or parcels or on other contracted lands in the A-2 zoning district. The project as proposed is considered a Tier One use. Within the A-2 zoning district, the County has determined that unless the Planning Commission and/or the Board of Supervisors makes a finding to the contrary, Tier One uses are consistent with the principles of compatibility set forth in Section 21.20.045 of the County Code. The request is not expected to perpetuate any significant conversion of farmland to non-agriculture use. No impacts to agriculture are anticipated to occur as a result of this project, as the project site is currently developed with an existing almond processing facility and considered topographically flat. Based on the specific features and design of this project, it does not appear this project will impact the long-term productive agricultural capability of surrounding contracted lands in the A-2 zoning district. There is no indication this project will result in the removal of adjacent contracted land from agricultural use. During project review, this application was referred to the Department of Conservation (DOC) for review and input and no response has been received to date.

With the application of conditions of approval, there is no indication that, under the circumstances of this particular case, the proposed operation will be detrimental to the health, safety, and general welfare of persons residing or working in the neighborhood of the use or that it will be detrimental or injurious to property and improvements in the neighborhood or to the general welfare of the County.

General Plan Amendment No. 2011-01 - Revised Agricultural Buffers was approved by the Board of Supervisors on December 20, 2011, to modify County requirements for buffers on agricultural projects. As stated in Section II – Agriculture and Forest Resources, as this is a Tier One use, if not considered people intensive by the Planning Commission, the project is not subject to agricultural buffers. The request is not expected to increase the number of employees on-site.

The project will not physically divide an established community nor conflict with any habitat conservation plans.

Mitigation: None.

References: Application information; Stanislaus County General Plan and Support Documentation¹.

XII. MINERAL RESOURCES -- Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included	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	

Discussion: The location of all commercially viable mineral resources in Stanislaus County has been mapped by the State Division of Mines and Geology in Special Report 173. There are no known significant resources on the site, nor is the project site located in a geological area known to produce resources.

Mitigation: None.

References: Stanislaus County General Plan and Support Documentation¹.

XIII. NOISE -- Would the project result in:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included	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	

Discussion: The proposed project shall comply with the noise standards included in the General Plan and Noise Control Ordinance. The Stanislaus County General Plan identifies noise levels up to 75 dB Ldn (or CNEL) as the normally acceptable level of noise for industrial and agricultural uses. Additionally, agricultural activity is exempt from the Stanislaus County Noise Control Ordinance (Ord. CS 1070 §2, 2010). The construction of the proposed structures may temporarily increase in the area's ambient noise levels; however, noise impacts associated with on-site activities and traffic are not anticipated to exceed the normally acceptable level of noise, as the storage of nuts will take place indoors. No heavy machinery is included as part of the proposed project. The facility operates Monday through Thursday from 6:00 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. and Friday from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Currently the facility has 30 employees on a maximum shift, with two shifts per day during the peak season. There are currently four truck deliveries per day between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. (for a total of eight daily truck trips). The proposed storage buildings are not expected to result in any changes to the hours of operation. The nearest sensitive noise receptor is a single-family residence approximately 200 feet to the southwest of the facility across Sperry Road.

The site is not located within an airport land use plan. Noise impacts associated with the proposed project are considered to be less than significant.

Mitigation: None.

References: Application information; Stanislaus County Noise Control Ordinance (Title 10); Stanislaus County General Plan, Chapter IV – Noise Element, and Support Documentation¹.

XIV. POPULATION AND HOUSING -- Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included	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	

Discussion: The site is not included in the vacant sites inventory for the 2016 Stanislaus County Housing Element, which covers the 5th Cycle Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) for the County and will therefore not impact the County’s ability to meet their RHNA. No population growth will be induced, nor will any existing housing be displaced as a result of this project.

Mitigation: None.

References: Stanislaus County General Plan and Support Documentation¹.

XV. PUBLIC SERVICES --	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Would the project result in the substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:				
Fire protection?			X	
Police protection?			X	
Schools?			X	
Parks?			X	
Other public facilities?			X	

Discussion: The County has adopted Public Facilities Fees, as well as Fire Facility Fees on behalf of the appropriate fire district, to address impacts to public services. School Districts also have their own adopted fees. All facility fees are required to be paid at the time of building permit issuance.

The project site is served by Turlock Irrigation District (TID) for electrical and irrigation service. TID provided a referral response stating that an existing irrigation pipeline shall be protected at all times during construction, a new electric line will need to be built back to the expansion area to serve the new load, the owner/developer must apply for a facility change for any pole or electrical facility relocation, the electric utility has an existing underground power line within the ten-foot Public Utility Easement and the District must be notified prior to any digging. These comments will be applied as conditions of approval.

Storm water is proposed to be managed on-site by utilizing either a drainage basin, overland discharge, or a type of French drain system, depending on construction costs. An Early Consultation referral response received from the Department of Public Works indicated that a grading, drainage, and erosion and sediment control plan for the project will be required, subject to Public Works review and Standards and Specifications, which will be added as a condition of approval.

A referral response received from the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) provided a list of the Board's permits and programs that may be applicable to the proposed project. The developer will be required to contact RWQCB to determine which permits/standards must be met prior to construction as a condition of approval. This project was circulated to the Denair Fire Protection District, Gratton School District, Hughson Unified School District, and Stanislaus County Sheriff during the Early Consultation referral period and no concerns were identified with regard to public services.

Mitigation: None.

References: Application information; Referral response from the Turlock Irrigation District (TID), dated September 21, 2023; Referral response from the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (CVRWQCB), dated September 21, 2023; Referral response from the Stanislaus County Department of Public Works, dated October 4, 2023; Stanislaus County General Plan and Support Documentation¹.

XVI. RECREATION --	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included	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	

Discussion: This project will not increase demands for recreational facilities, as such impacts typically are associated with residential development.

Mitigation: None.

References: Stanislaus County General Plan and Support Documentation¹.

XVII. TRANSPORTATION -- Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included	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	

Discussion: Potential impacts to transportation from the proposed project are evaluated by Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT). The calculation of VMT is the number of cars or trucks multiplied by the distance traveled by each car or truck. California Environment Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (a), defines VMT as the amount and distance of automobile travel attributable to a project. A technical advisory on evaluating transportation impacts in CEQA published by the Governor’s Office of Planning and Research (OPR) in December of 2018 clarified the definition of automobiles as referring to on-road passenger vehicles, specifically cars and light trucks. While heavy-duty trucks are not considered in the definition of automobiles for which VMT is calculated for, heavy-duty truck VMT could be included for modeling convenience. According to the same OPR technical advisory, many local agencies have developed a screening threshold of VMT to indicate when detailed analysis is needed. Absent substantial evidence indicating that a project would generate a potentially significant level of VMT, or inconsistency with a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) or general plan, projects that generate or attract fewer than 110 trips per day generally may be assumed to cause a less than significant transportation impact. No additional truck trips per day are anticipated as part of this project. During the peak season there are a maximum of up to eight heavy-truck trips per day (total inbound and outbound), and a total of 120 automobile trips per day (anticipated inbound and outbound trips by employees), for a total of 128 trips per day. As there will be no additional trips generated as part of this request, the overall VMT is not increasing. Employee and truck trips for the existing operation were previously evaluated under the environmental document completed for Use Permit Nos. 89-33 and 2007-14, which were listed as 30 employees on a maximum shift and eight truck deliveries (for a total of eight truck trips) per day. Accordingly, no significant impacts from vehicle and heavy-duty truck trips to transportation are anticipated.

The facility has existing access to County-Maintained South Sperry Road and no new driveways are proposed as part of this request. The proposed expansion area is directly adjacent to the east of the existing facility and there will be internal circulation throughout the existing facility and proposed expansion area. The project was referred to Public Works, and a referral response was received requiring that an encroachment permit be obtained for any work done within the County right-of-way and that a grading, drainage, and erosion and sediment control plan for the project will be required, subject to Public Works review and Standards and Specifications, which will be added as conditions of approval.

All development on-site will be required to pay applicable County public facility fees (PFF) fees, which will be utilized for maintenance and traffic congestion improvements to all County roadways.

The proposed project is not anticipated to conflict with any transportation program, plan, ordinance, or policy.

Mitigation: None.

References: Application information; Governor’s Office of Planning and Research Technical Advisory, December 2018; Referral response from the Stanislaus County Department of Public Works, dated October 4, 2023; Stanislaus County General Plan and Support Documentation¹.

XVIII. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES -- Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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:				
i) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k), or			X	
ii) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria			X	

<p>set for the in subdivision (c) of Public Resource 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.</p>				
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Discussion: It does not appear that this project will result in significant impacts to any archaeological or cultural resources. The parcel is already improved with an existing almond processing facility and the area where the proposed storage buildings will be constructed has already been disturbed. In accordance with SB 18 and AB 52, this project was not referred to the tribes listed with the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) as the project is not a General Plan Amendment and no tribes have requested consultation or project referral noticing. A condition of approval regarding the discovery of cultural resources during the construction process will be added to the project.

Mitigation: None.

References: Application material; Stanislaus County General Plan and Support Documentation¹.

XIX. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS -- Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<p>a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?</p>			X	
<p>b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?</p>			X	
<p>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?</p>			X	
<p>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?</p>			X	
<p>e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?</p>			X	

Discussion: Limitations on providing services have not been identified. As stated in Sections VII – Geology and Soils and X – Hydrology and Water Quality, the proposed project will not include any water or wastewater facilities, as the project will only include the construction of storage buildings for the storage of almonds. However, if any future new wells are to be constructed on-site, they will be subject to review under the County's Well Permitting Program, which will determine whether a new well will require environmental review. Additionally, any future development of a septic tank or alternative wastewater disposal system would require the approval of the Department of Environmental Resources (DER) through the building permit process, which also takes soil type into consideration within the specific design requirements. DER responded to the Early Consultation with comments requiring a permit for any on-site wastewater treatment systems (OWTS) that will be destroyed, that a site plan be submitted that includes the location, layout and design of all-existing and proposed OWTS and expansion area, that any new building requiring OTWS are designed according to type and/or maximum occupancy of the proposed structure to the estimated waste/sewage design flow rate, that all applicable County

Local Agency Management Program (LAMP) standards and required setbacks are to be met and that the existing OWTS serving the existing developments are to be contained within the boundaries of the project site. These comments will be applied as conditions of approval. No comments from DER regarding groundwater were received.

Storm water is proposed to be managed on-site by utilizing either a drainage basin, overland discharge, or a type of French drain system, depending on construction costs. An Early Consultation referral response received from the Department of Public Works indicated that a grading, drainage, and erosion and sediment control plan for the project will be required, subject to Public Works review and Standards and Specifications. Accordingly, runoff associated with the construction will be reviewed as part of the grading review process and be required to be maintained on-site.

The project site is served by Turlock Irrigation District (TID) for electrical and irrigation service. TID provided a referral response stating that an existing irrigation pipeline shall be protected at all times during construction, a new electric line will need to be built back to the expansion area to serve the new load, the owner/developer must apply for a facility change for any pole or electrical facility relocation, the electric utility has an existing underground power line within the ten-foot Public Utility Easement and the District must be notified prior to any digging. These comments will be applied as conditions of approval.

A referral response received from the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) provided a list of the Board's permits and programs that may be applicable to the proposed project. The developer will be required to contact RWQCB to determine which permits/standards must be met prior to construction as a condition of approval.

The project is not anticipated to have a significant impact to utilities and service systems.

Mitigation: None.

References: Application material; Referral response from the Stanislaus County Department of Public Works, dated October 4, 2023; Referral response from the Turlock Irrigation District (TID), dated September 21, 2023; Referral response from the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (CVRWQCB), dated September 21, 2023; Stanislaus County General Plan and Support Documentation¹.

XX. WILDFIRE – If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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 of 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	

Discussion: The Stanislaus County Local Hazard Mitigation Plan identifies risks posed by disasters and identifies ways to minimize damage from those disasters. The terrain of the site is relatively flat, and the site has access to a County-maintained Road, S Sperry Road. The site is located in a Local Responsibility Area (LRA) for fire protection and is served by the Denair Fire Protection District. The project was referred to the District, and no comments have been received to date. California Building and Fire Code establishes minimum standards for the protection of life and property by increasing the ability of a building to resist intrusion of flame and burning embers. Building permits for the storage buildings will be

required as conditions of approval for the project and will be reviewed by the County’s Building Permits Division and Fire Prevention Bureau to ensure all State of California Building and Fire Code requirements are met prior to issuance of a building permit.

Wildfire risk and risks associated with postfire land changes are considered to be less than significant.

Mitigation: None.

References: Application material; Stanislaus County General Plan and Support Documentation¹.

XXI. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE --	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included	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	

Discussion: This is a request to expand an existing almond processing and storage facility by permitting an area of illegal expansion and constructing five almond storage buildings totaling 210,000 square feet, in the General Agriculture (A-2-40) zoning district. The request also includes a lot line adjustment to increase the 10.28± acre parcel to 20.12± acres in size to accommodate the proposed expansion. The existing facility located on APN: 019-031-018 is classified as “Urban and Built-Up Land”, and APN: 019-031-019 is southwest quarter of the project site is classified as “Urban and Built-Up Land” while the remaining three-quarters are classified as “Prime Farmland” by the California Department of Conservation’s Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program. The United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA NRCS) Web Soil Survey indicates that the property is 82.5% underlain by Grade 2 Tujunga loamy sand, 0 to 3 percent slopes (California Revised Storie Index Rating: 67); 8.4% underlain by Grade 3 Dinuba sandy loam, deep, 0 to 1 percent slopes (California Revised Storie Index Rating: 47); 8.1% underlain by Greenfield sandy loam, 0 to 3 percent slopes (California Revised Storie Index Rating: 98); and 1% underlain by Dinuba sandy loam, 0 to 1 percent slopes (California Revised Storie Index Rating: 86). The proposed project will not convert any Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance to non-agricultural use.

Review of this project has not indicated any features which might significantly impact the environmental quality of the site and/or the surrounding area. With implementation of the conditions of approval recommended in this document, compliance with Stanislaus County requirements for Use Permits, and application of standard practices, project-related impacts are not anticipated to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of plant or wildlife species, cause a wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plants or animals; or, eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory. Impacts are anticipated to be less than significant.

All the parcels immediately surrounding the project site are in agricultural production, enrolled in Williamson Act Contracts, and are all zoned General Agriculture (A-2). Any future unrelated new or expanding development of parcels located in the A-2 zoning district in the vicinity of the project site would be subject to the uses permitted by the A-2 zoning district or would require discretionary land use permits that are subject to CEQA review and the public hearing process. Rezoning parcels to another designation that would create islands or disregard infilling are not consistent with the General Plan and would likely not be approved.

The project will not generate environmental impacts that will directly or indirectly cause substantial adverse effects on human beings. Where potential impacts occur, standard project measures have been implemented to ensure direct and indirect impacts to human beings do not occur. Review of this project has not indicated any features which might significantly impact the environmental quality of the site and/or the surrounding area and accordingly, impacts associated with the project are considered to be less than significant.

Mitigation: None.

References: Initial Study; Stanislaus County General Plan and Support Documentation¹.

¹ Stanislaus County General Plan and Support Documentation adopted in August 23, 2016, as amended. **Housing Element** adopted on April 5, 2016.

**CALIFORNIA
NUT COMPANY
UP
LLA 2023-0056**

AREA MAP

LEGEND



Project Site



Sphere of Influence



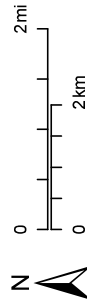
City



Road

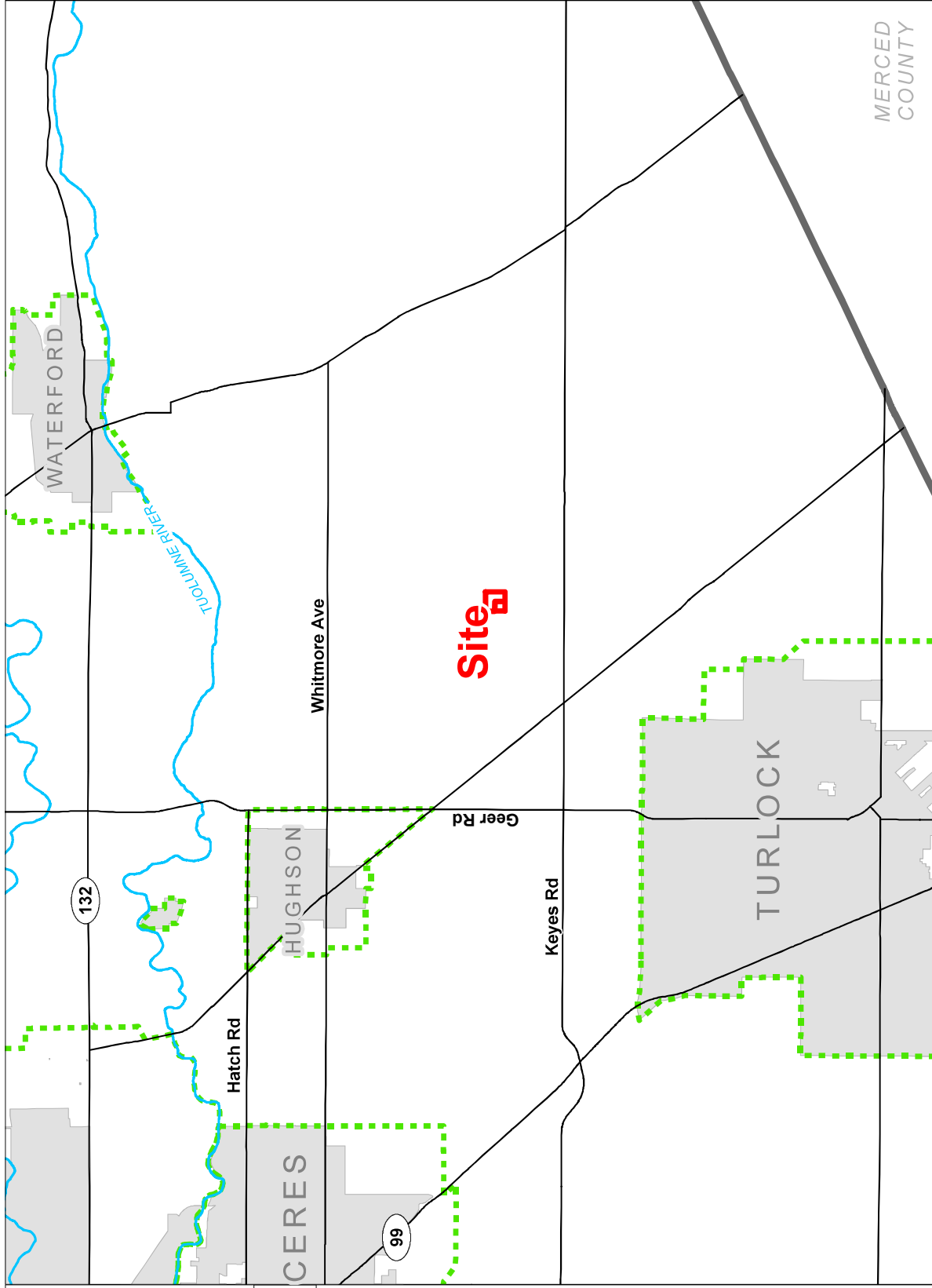


River



Source: Planning Department GIS

Date: 8/30/2023








MERCED
COUNTY

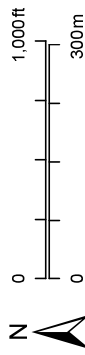
CALIFORNIA NUT COMPANY

UP LLA 2023-0056

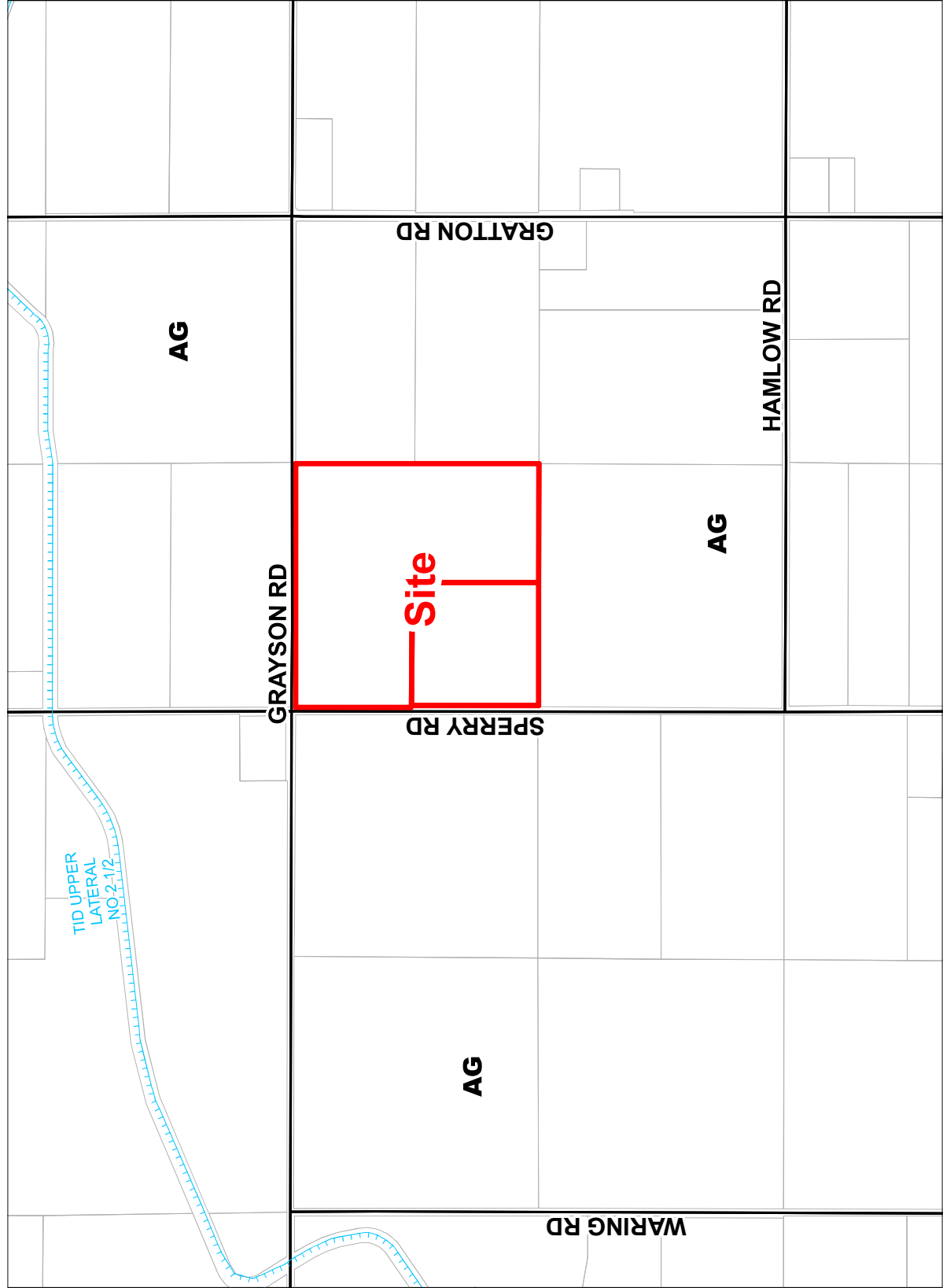
GENERAL PLAN MAP

LEGEND

-  Project Site
 -  Parcel
 -  Road
 -  Canal
- General Plan**
-  Agriculture



Source: Planning Department GIS Date: 8/30/2023

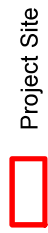


CALIFORNIA NUT COMPANY

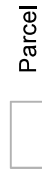
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ZONING MAP

LEGEND



Project Site



Parcel

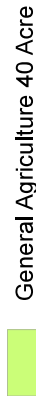


Road

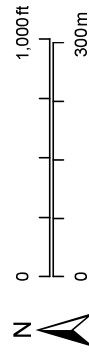


Canal

Zoning Designation

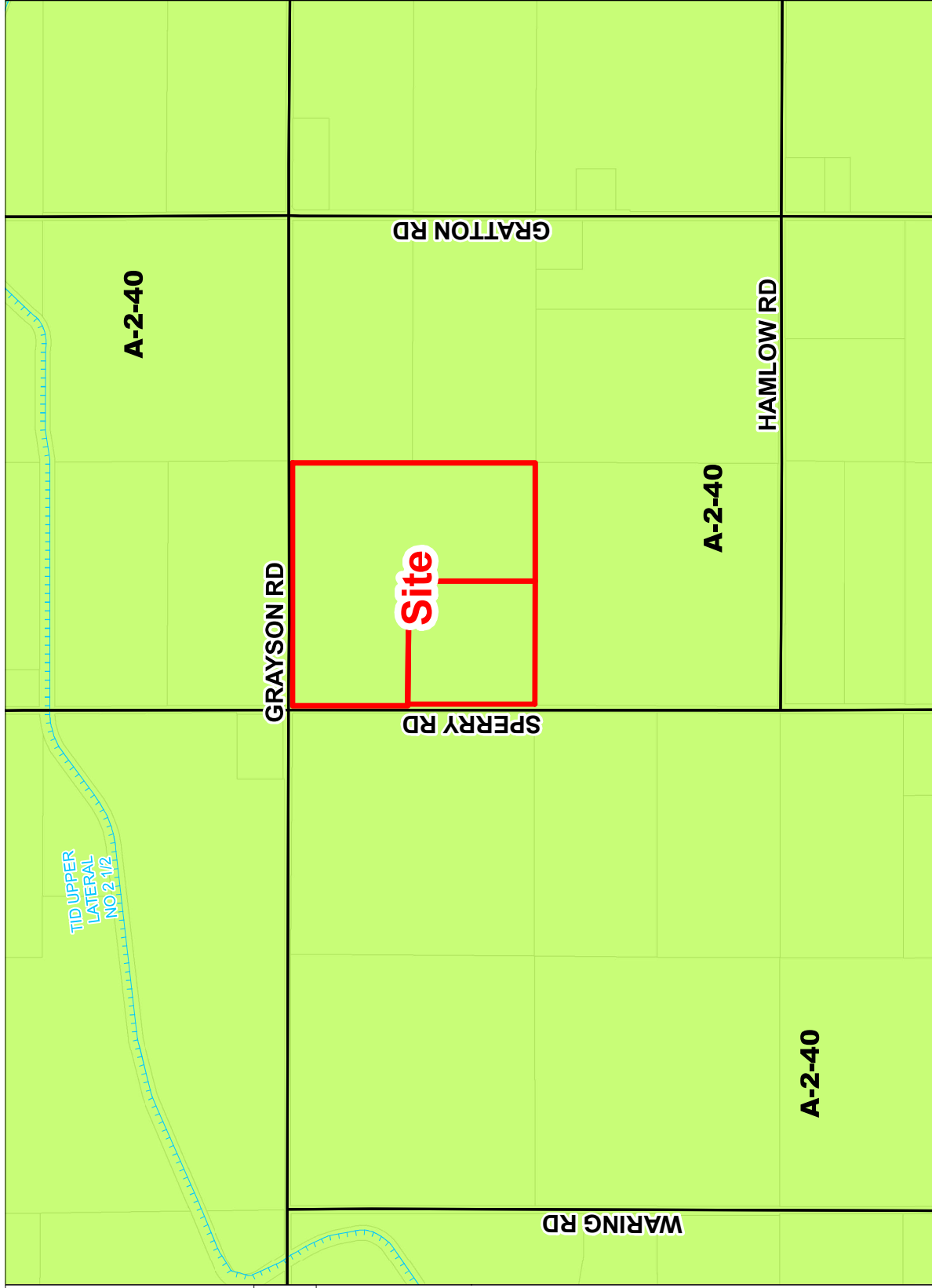


General Agriculture 40 Acre



Source: Planning Department GIS

Date: 8/30/2023






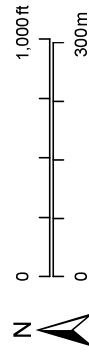
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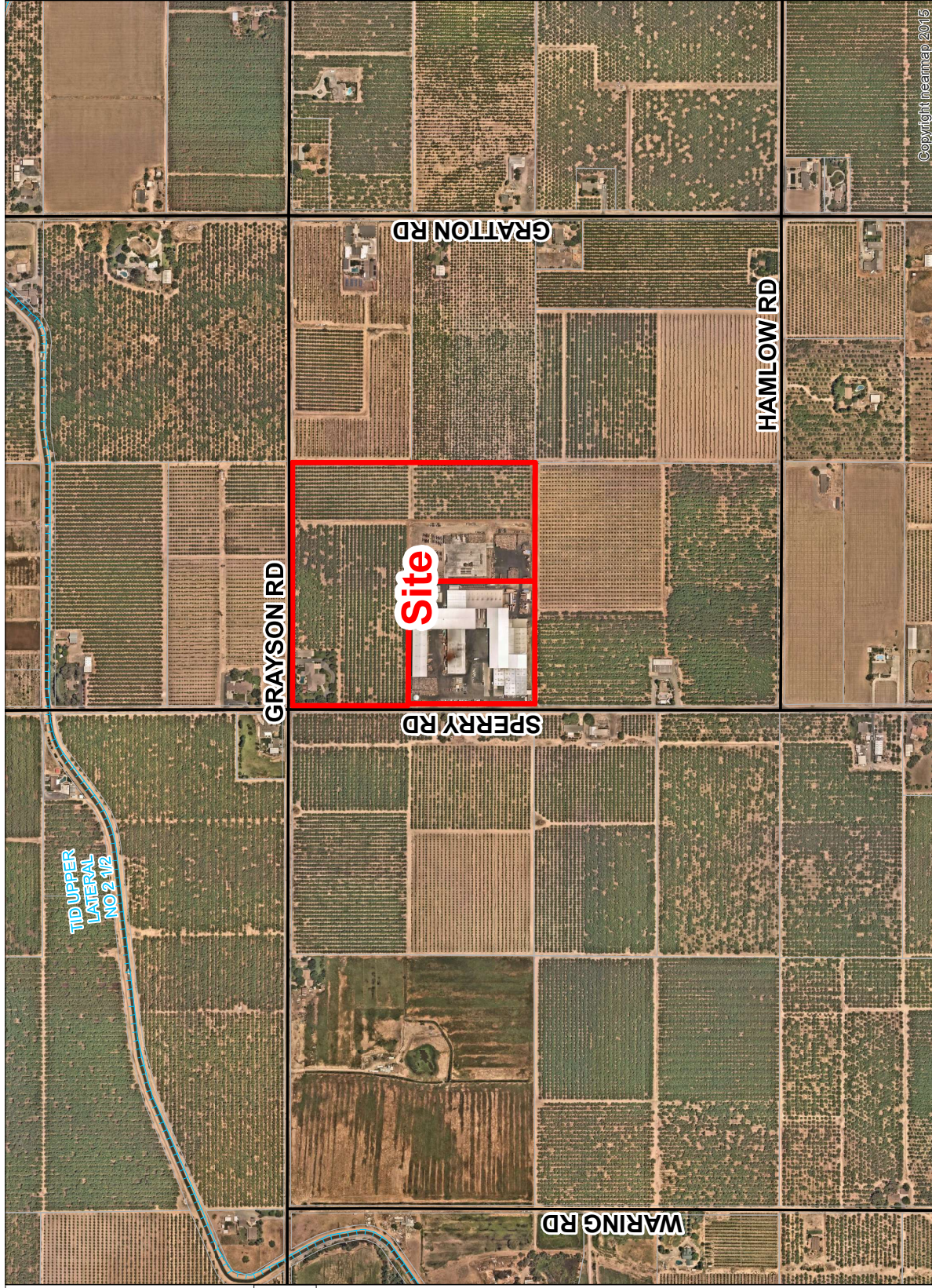
2022 AERIAL AREA MAP

LEGEND

-  Project Site
-  Road
-  Canal



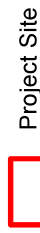
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2022 AERIAL SITE MAP

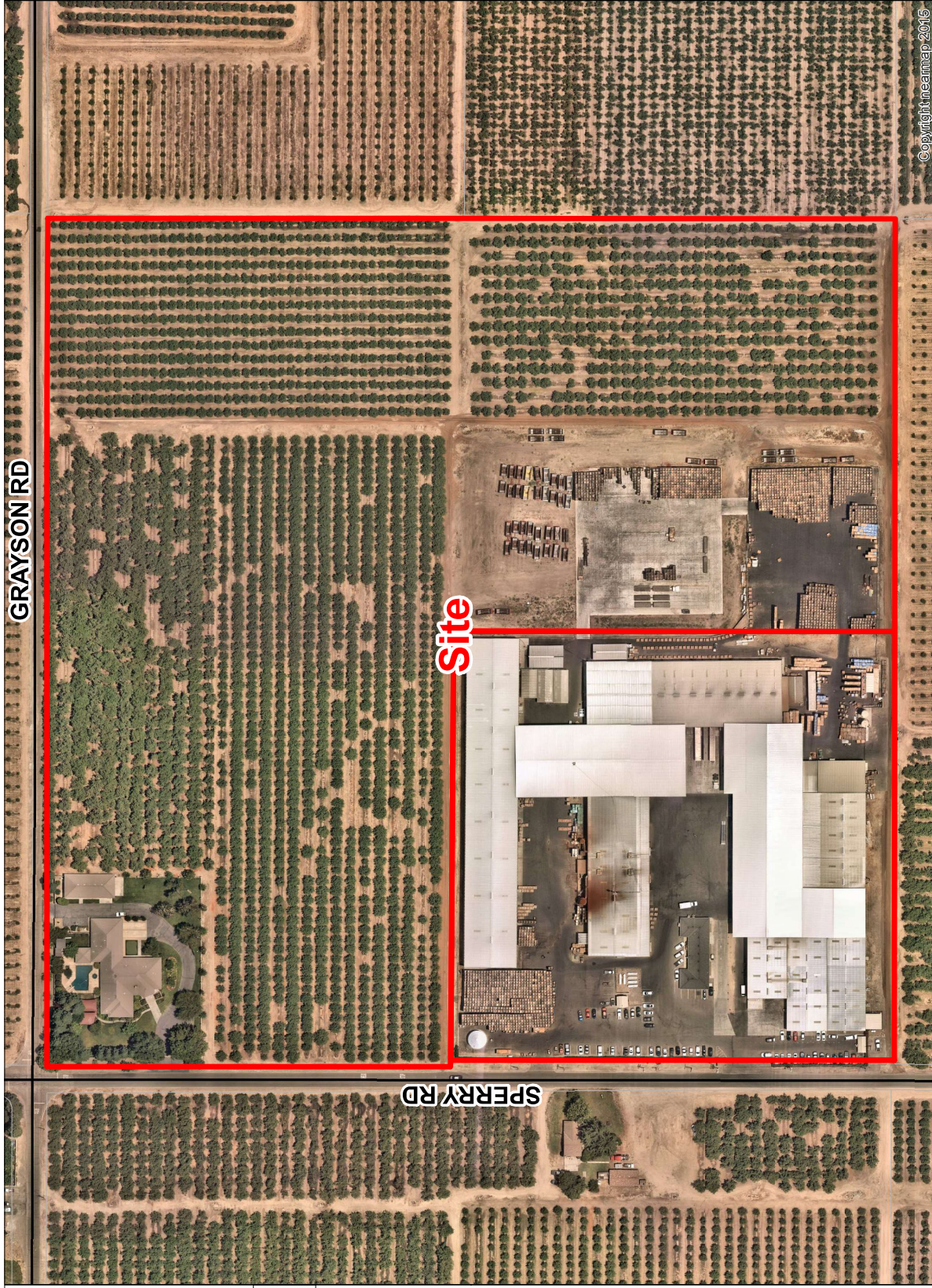
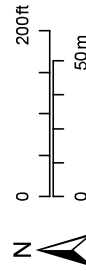
LEGEND



Project Site



Road







Date: 8/30/2023

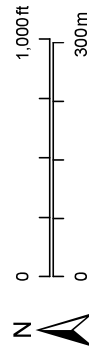
Source: Planning Department GIS

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ACREAGE MAP

LEGEND

-  Project Site
-  # Parcel/Acres
-  Road
-  Canal



Source: Planning Department GIS Date: 8/30/2023

