



State of California – Natural Resources Agency

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

Bay Delta Region

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**GAVIN NEWSOM, Governor**

**CHARLTON H. BONHAM, Director**



**Governor's Office of Planning & Research**

**November 20 2023**

## **STATE CLEARINGHOUSE**

November 17, 2023

William He, Senior Planner  
City of American Canyon  
4381 Broadway Street, Suite 201  
American Canyon CA, 94503  
[WHe@cityofamericancanyon.org](mailto:WHe@cityofamericancanyon.org)

Subject: SDG Commerce 220 Distribution Center Project, Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report, SCH No. 2023100842, City of American Canyon, Napa County

Dear Mr. He:

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) reviewed the Notice of Preparation (NOP) of a Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the SDG Commerce 220 Distribution Center Project (Project).

CDFW is providing the City of American Canyon (City) as the Lead Agency, with specific detail about the scope and content of the environmental information related to CDFW's area of statutory responsibility that must be included in the EIR (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15082, subd. (b)).

### **CDFW ROLE**

CDFW is a **Trustee Agency** with responsibility under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for commenting on projects that could impact fish, plant, and wildlife resources (Pub. Resources Code, § 21000 et seq.; Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15386). CDFW is also considered a **Responsible Agency** if a project would require discretionary approval, such as a permit pursuant to the California Endangered Species Act (CESA) or Native Plant Protection Act (NPPA), the Lake and Streambed Alteration (LSA) Program, and other provisions of the Fish and Game Code that afford protection to the state's fish and wildlife trust resources. Pursuant to our authority, CDFW has the following concerns, comments, and recommendations regarding the Project.

### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND LOCATION**

The Project objective is the construction of a 219,834-square-foot wine storage and distribution center, including the construction of vehicular access areas and drive isles and sharing a driveway with a neighboring facility. Additional vehicle parking spaces will be built, including 134 car spaces, 23 truck parking stalls, 19 electric vehicle stalls, and three bicycle storage lockers with room for 12 bicycles. Construction activities are

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expected to span 9.5 months and will include landscaping and the construction of large concrete slabs and wall panels using typical construction equipment. The Project site is located on 1055 Commerce Court in the City of American Canyon, Napa County; Latitude 38.185969 North, Longitude -122.274294 West; and encompasses approximately 10.45 acres.

The CEQA Guidelines (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15000 et seq.) require that the EIR incorporate a full Project description, including reasonably foreseeable future phases of the Project, that contains sufficient information to evaluate and review the Project's environmental impact (CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15124 & 15378). Please include a complete description of the following Project components in the Project description:

- Footprints of permanent Project features and temporarily impacted areas, such as staging areas and access routes;
- Area and plans for any proposed buildings/structures, ground-disturbing activities, fencing, paving, stationary machinery, landscaping, and stormwater systems;
- Operational features of the Project, including level of anticipated human presence (describe seasonal or daily peaks in activity, if relevant), artificial lighting/light reflection, noise, traffic generation, and other features; and
- Construction schedule, activities, equipment, and crew sizes.

## **REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS**

### **California Endangered Species Act and Native Plant Protection Act**

Please be advised that a CESA Incidental Take Permit (ITP) must be obtained if the Project has the potential to result in "take" of plants or animals listed under CESA or NPPA, either during construction or over the life of the Project. Issuance of a CESA ITP is subject to CEQA documentation; the CEQA document must specify impacts, mitigation measures, and a mitigation monitoring and reporting program. If the Project will impact CESA listed species, such as those identified in **Attachment 1**, early consultation is encouraged, as significant modification to the Project and mitigation measures may be required in order to obtain a CESA ITP.

CEQA requires a Mandatory Finding of Significance if a project is likely to substantially restrict the range or reduce the population of a threatened or endangered species (Pub. Resources Code, §§ 21001, subd. (c) & 21083; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15380, 15064, and 15065). Impacts must be avoided or mitigated to less-than-significant levels unless the CEQA Lead Agency makes and supports Findings of Overriding Consideration

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(FOC). The CEQA Lead Agency's FOC does not eliminate the Project proponent's obligation to comply with CESA.

### **Lake and Streambed Alteration**

An LSA Notification, pursuant to Fish and Game Code section 1600 et seq., is required for Project activities affecting lakes or streams and associated riparian habitat. Notification is required for any activity that may substantially divert or obstruct the natural flow; change or use material from the bed, channel, or bank including associated riparian or wetland resources; or deposit or dispose of material where it may pass into a river, lake, or stream. Work within ephemeral streams, washes, watercourses with a subsurface flow, and floodplains are subject to LSA Notification requirements. CDFW, as a Responsible Agency under CEQA, would consider the CEQA document for the Project and may issue an LSA Agreement. CDFW may not execute the final LSA Agreement until it has complied with CEQA as a Responsible Agency.

### **Nesting Birds**

CDFW has authority over actions that may disturb or destroy active nest sites or take birds. Fish and Game Code sections 3503, 3503.5, and 3513 protect birds, their eggs, and nests. Migratory birds are also protected under the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

### **Fully Protected Species**

Fully Protected species, including those listed in **Attachment 1**, may not be taken or possessed at any time (Fish & G. Code, §§ 3511, 4700, 5050, & 5515) except for: 1) collecting these species for necessary scientific research, including efforts to recover fully protected species; 2) relocation of the bird species for the protection of livestock; 3) if they are a covered species whose conservation and management is provided for in a Natural Community Conservation Plan, or 4) certain projects pursuant to Fish and Game Code section 2081.15.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING**

The EIR should provide sufficient information regarding the environmental setting ("baseline") to understand the Project's, and its alternative's (if applicable), potentially significant impacts on the environment (CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15125 & 15360).

CDFW recommends that the CEQA document prepared for the Project provide baseline habitat assessments for special-status plant, fish and wildlife species located and potentially located within the Project area and surrounding lands, including, but not limited to, all rare, threatened, or endangered species (CEQA Guidelines, § 15380). The EIR should describe aquatic habitats, such as wetlands or waters of the U.S. or state,

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and any sensitive natural communities or riparian habitat occurring on or adjacent to the Project site (for sensitive natural communities see: <https://wildlife.ca.gov/Data/VegCAMP/NaturalCommunities#sensitive%20natural%20communities>), and any stream or wetland set back distances the City may require. Fully protected, threatened or endangered, candidate, and other special-status species and sensitive natural communities that are known to occur, or have the potential to occur in or near the Project site, include, but are not limited to, those listed in **Attachment 1**.

Habitat descriptions and the potential for species occurrence should include information from multiple sources: aerial imagery, historical and recent survey data, field reconnaissance, scientific literature and reports, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (USFWS) Information, Planning, and Consultation System, and findings from "positive occurrence" databases such as California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB). Based on the data and information from the habitat assessment, the EIR should adequately assess which special-status species are likely to occur on or near the Project site, and whether they could be impacted by the Project.

CDFW recommends that prior to Project implementation, surveys be conducted for special-status species with potential to occur, following recommended survey protocols if available. Survey and monitoring protocols and guidelines are available at: <https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Survey-Protocol>.

Botanical surveys for special-status plant species, including those with a California Rare Plant Rank (<http://www.cnps.org/cnps/rareplants/inventory/>), must be conducted during the blooming period within the Project area and adjacent habitats that may be indirectly impacted by, for example, changes to hydrological conditions, and require the identification of reference populations<sup>1</sup>. More than one year of surveys may be necessary based on environmental conditions. Please refer to CDFW protocols for surveying and evaluating impacts to special-status plants available at: <https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Plants>.

## **IMPACT ANALYSIS AND MITIGATION MEASURES**

The EIR should discuss all direct and indirect impacts (temporary and permanent) that may occur with implementation of the Project (CEQA Guidelines, § 15126.2). This includes evaluating and describing impacts such as:

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<sup>1</sup>CRPR 1B plants are considered rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere. Further information on CRPR ranks is available in CDFW's Special Vascular Plants, Bryophytes, and Lichens List (<https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=109383&inline>) and on the California Native Plant Society website (<https://www.cnps.org/rare-plants/california-rare-plant-ranks>).

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- Encroachments into riparian habitats, wetlands or other sensitive areas;
- Potential for impacts to special-status species;
- Loss or modification of breeding, nesting, dispersal and foraging habitat, including vegetation removal, alternation of soils and hydrology, and removal of habitat structural features (e.g., snags, roosts, vegetation overhanging banks);
- Permanent and temporary habitat disturbances associated with ground disturbance, noise, lighting, reflection, air pollution, traffic or human presence; and
- Obstruction of movement corridors, fish passage, or access to water sources and other core habitat features.

The CEQA document should also identify reasonably foreseeable future projects in the Project vicinity, disclose any cumulative impacts associated with these projects, determine the significance of each cumulative impact, and assess the significance of the Project's contribution to the impact (CEQA Guidelines, §15355). Although a project's impacts may be insignificant individually, its contributions to a cumulative impact may be considerable; a contribution to a significant cumulative impact – e.g., reduction of available habitat for a special-status species – should be considered cumulatively considerable without mitigation to minimize or avoid the impact.

Based on the comprehensive analysis of the direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts of the Project, the CEQA Guidelines direct the Lead Agency to consider and describe all feasible mitigation measures to avoid potentially significant impacts in the EIR, and/or mitigate significant impacts of the Project on the environment (CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15021, 15063, 15071, 15126.2, 15126.4 & 15370). This includes a discussion of impact avoidance and minimization measures for special-status species, which are recommended to be developed in early consultation with CDFW, USFWS, and the National Marine Fisheries Service. These measures can then be incorporated as enforceable Project conditions to reduce potential impacts to biological resources to less-than-significant levels.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL DATA**

CEQA requires that information developed in EIRs and negative declarations be incorporated into a database which may be used to make subsequent or supplemental environmental determinations (Pub. Resources Code, § 21003, subd. (e)). Accordingly, please report any special-status species and natural communities detected during Project surveys to CNDDDB. The CNDDDB online field survey form and other methods for submitting data can be found at the following link: <https://wildlife.ca.gov/Data/CNDDDB/>

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[Submitting-Data](https://wildlife.ca.gov/Data/CNDDDB/Plantsand-Animals). The types of information reported to CNDDDB can be found at the following link: <https://wildlife.ca.gov/Data/CNDDDB/Plantsand-Animals>.

## FILING FEES

CDFW anticipates that the Project will have an impact on fish and/or wildlife, and assessment of filing fees is necessary (Fish & G. Code, § 711.4; Pub. Resources Code, § 21089). Fees are payable upon filing of the Notice of Determination by the Lead Agency and serve to help defray the cost of environmental review by CDFW.

If you have any questions, please contact Melanie Day, Senior Environmental Scientist (Supervisory), at (707) 210-4415 or [Melanie.Day@wildlife.ca.gov](mailto:Melanie.Day@wildlife.ca.gov).

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:

*Erin Chappell*

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Erin Chappell  
Regional Manager  
Bay Delta Region

Attachment 1: Special-Status Species and Sensitive Natural Communities

ec: Office of Planning and Research, State Clearinghouse (SCH No 2023100842)

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### ATTACHMENT 1: Special-Status Species and Sensitive Natural Communities

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status
<b>Amphibians &amp; Reptiles</b>		
<i>Rana draytonii</i>	California red-legged frog	FT, SSC
<i>Emys marmorata</i>	western pond turtle	SSC
<b>Birds</b>		
<i>Rallus obsoletus obsoletus</i>	California Ridgeway's rail	SE, FE, FP
<i>Laterallus jamaicensis coturniculus</i>	California black rail	ST, FP
<i>Buteo swainsoni</i>	Swainson's hawk	ST
<i>Agelaius tricolor</i>	tricolored blackbird	ST
<i>Melospiza melodia samuelis</i>	San Pablo song sparrow	SSC
<i>Geothlypis trichas sinuosa</i>	saltmarsh common yellowthroat	SSC
<i>Athene cunicularia</i>	burrowing owl	SSC
<i>Circus hudsonius</i>	northern harrier	SSC
<i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>	golden eagle	FP, BGEPA, WL
<i>Elanus leucurus</i>	white-tailed kite	FP
<i>Buteo regalis</i>	ferruginous hawk	WL
<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>	osprey	WL
<b>Fishes</b>		
<i>Hypomesus transpacificus</i>	Delta smelt	FT, SE
<i>Spirinchus thaleichthys</i>	longfin smelt	FC, ST
<i>Oncorhynchus mykiss irideus</i>	steelhead - central California coast DPS	FT
<i>Acipenser medirostris</i>	green sturgeon - southern DPS	FT

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<i>Pogonichthys macrolepidotus</i>	Sacramento splittail	SSC
<b>Mammals</b>		
<i>Reithrodontomys raviventris</i>	salt-marsh harvest mouse	FE, SE, FP
<i>Taxidea taxus</i>	American badger	SSC
<b>Plants</b>		
<i>Chloropyron molle</i> ssp. <i>molle</i>	soft salty bird's-beak	FE, SR
<i>Lilaeopsis masonii</i>	Mason's lilaeopsis	SR
<i>Trifolium amoenum</i>	two-fork clover	FE, CRPR 1B.1
<i>Trifolium hydrophilum</i>	saline clover	CRPR 1B.2
<i>Lathyrus jepsonii</i> var. <i>jepsonii</i>	Delta tule pea	CRPR 1B.2
<i>Carex lyngbyei</i>	Lyngbye's sedge	CRPR 2B.2
<i>Astragalus tener</i> var. <i>tener</i>	alkali milk-vetch	CRPR 1B.2
<i>Balsamorhiza macrolepis</i>	big-scale balsamroot	CRPR 1B.2
<i>Extriplex joaquinana</i>	San Joaquin spearscale	CRPR 1B.2
<b>Sensitive Natural Communities</b>		
<i>Baccharis pilularis</i> / <i>Carex obnupta</i> – <i>Juncus patens</i>	coyote brush/slough sedge – spreading rush	S3?
<i>Sarcocornia pacifica</i> or <i>Schoenoplectus</i> spp. alliance	Coastal salt marsh	Sensitive coastal salt marsh natural community may occur on or adjacent to Project site

FE = federally listed as endangered under the Endangered Species Act (ESA); FT = federally listed as threatened under ESA; FC = federally listed as candidate under ESA; SE = state listed as endangered under CESA; ST = state listed as threatened under CESA; SSC = state Species of Special Concern; FP = state fully protected; BGEPA = federal Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act; WL = CDFW Watch List; CRPR = California Rare Plant Rank; S3? = sensitive natural community state ranked as Vulnerable, with '?' denoting insufficient samples over full expected range; DPS = distinct population segment; SR = state listed as Rare pursuant to Native Plant Protection Act of 1977