

1 **3.4 Cultural Resources**

2 **3.4.1 Introduction**

3 This section describes the regulatory and environmental setting for cultural resources in the vicinity
4 of the Project. It also describes the impacts on cultural resources that would result from the Project
5 and mitigation measures that would reduce significant impacts, where feasible and appropriate.
6 Cumulative impacts on cultural resources materials, in combination with planned, approved, and
7 reasonably foreseeable projects, are discussed in Section 3.11, *Cumulative Impacts*.

8 **3.4.2 Regulatory Setting**

9 **3.4.2.1 Federal Regulations**

10 **National Historic Preservation Act (54 United States Code Section 300101 et** 11 **seq.)**

12 National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) establishes the federal government policy on historic
13 preservation, as well as the programs through which this policy is implemented, including the
14 National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Under NHPA, significant cultural resources, referred to
15 as *historic properties*, include any precontact or historic district, site, building, structure, or object
16 included in, or determined eligible for, inclusion in the NRHP. Historic properties also include
17 resources determined to be National Historic Landmarks, nationally significant historic places
18 designated by the United States (U.S.) Secretary of the Interior because they possess exceptional
19 value or quality in illustrating or interpreting U.S. heritage. A property is considered historically
20 significant if it meets one of the NRHP criteria and retains sufficient historic integrity to convey its
21 significance. NHPA also established the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, an independent
22 agency responsible for implementing Section 106 of NHPA by developing procedures to protect
23 cultural resources included, or eligible for inclusion, in the NRHP. Regulations are published in
24 36 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Parts 60, 63, and 800.

25 **3.4.2.2 State Regulations**

26 **California Environmental Quality Act**

27 California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires a lead agency to consider the effects of a
28 project on historical resources. CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5 provides specific guidance for
29 determining the significance of impacts on historical resources. Under CEQA, these resources are
30 called *historical resources*, whether they are of historic or pre-European contact age. CEQA Section
31 21084.1 defines historical resources as those listed in, or eligible for listing in, the California
32 Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) or listed in the historical register of a local jurisdiction
33 (county or city), unless the preponderance of evidence demonstrates that the resources are not
34 historically or culturally significant. The NRHP-listed historic properties in California are considered
35 historical resources for the purposes of CEQA and are also listed in the CRHR. The CRHR criteria for
36 listing such resources are based on, and similar to, the NRHP criteria. The CEQA Guidelines define

1 three ways that a cultural resource may qualify as a historical resource for the purposes of CEQA
2 review.

- 3 1. The resource is listed in or determined eligible for listing in the CRHR.
- 4 2. The resource is included in a local register of historical resources, as defined in California Public
5 Resources Code (PRC) Section 5020.1(k), or is identified as significant in a historical resource
6 survey meeting the requirements of PRC Section 5024.1(g) unless the preponderance of
7 evidence demonstrates that it is not historically or culturally significant.
- 8 3. The lead agency determines the resource to be significant, as supported by substantial evidence
9 in light of the whole record (14 California Code of Regulations [CCR] Section 15064.5[a]).

10 According to CEQA, a project that causes a substantial adverse change in the significance of a
11 historical resource or an archaeological resource has a significant effect on the environment (CEQA
12 Guidelines Section 15064.5; California PRC Section 21083.2). CEQA defines a *substantial adverse*
13 *change* as the following (CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5[b]).

- 14 • Physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of the resource or its immediate
15 surroundings such that the significance of a historical resource would be materially
16 impaired; or
- 17 • Demolition or material alteration in an adverse manner of the physical characteristics of an
18 historical resource that convey its historical significance and that justify its inclusion in, or
19 eligibility for, inclusion in the CRHR; or
- 20 • Demolition or material alteration in an adverse manner of the physical characteristics that
21 account for its inclusion in a local register of historical resources pursuant to Section
22 5020.1(k) of the PRC or its identification in a historical resource survey meeting the
23 requirements of Section 5024.1(g) of the PRC, unless the public agency reviewing the effects
24 of the project establishes by a preponderance of evidence that the resource is not
25 historically or culturally significant; or
- 26 • Demolition or material alteration in an adverse manner of the physical characteristics of a
27 historical resource that convey its historical significance and that justify its eligibility for
28 inclusion in the CRHR as determined by the lead agency.

29 California Public Resources Code

30 PRC Section 5097.5 prohibits excavation or removal of any “historic or prehistoric ruins, burial
31 grounds, archaeological or vertebrate paleontological site [...] or any other archaeological,
32 paleontological or historical feature, situated on public lands, except with express permission of the
33 public agency having jurisdiction over such lands.” *Public lands* are defined to include lands owned
34 by or under the jurisdiction of the state or any city, county, district, authority, or public corporation,
35 or any agency thereof. PRC Section 5097.5 states that any unauthorized disturbance or removal of
36 archaeological or historical materials or sites located on public lands is a misdemeanor.

37 California Health and Safety Code

38 With respect to the potential discovery of human remains, Section 7050.5 of the California Health
39 and Safety Code states the following:

- 1 a. Every person who knowingly mutilates or disinters, wantonly disturbs, or willfully removes
2 any human remains in or from any location other than a dedicated cemetery without authority
3 of law is guilty of a misdemeanor, except as provided in Section 5097.99 of the PRC. The
4 provisions of this subdivision will not apply to any person carrying out an agreement
5 developed pursuant to subdivision (l) of Section 5097.94 of the PRC, nor to any person
6 authorized to implement Section 5097.98 of the PRC.
- 7 b. In the event of discovery or recognition of any human remains in any location other than a
8 dedicated cemetery, there will be no further excavation or disturbance of the site or any
9 nearby area reasonably suspected to overlie adjacent remains until the coroner of the county
10 in which the human remains are discovered has determined, in accordance with Chapter 10
11 (commencing with Section 27460) of Part 3 of Division 2 of Title 3 of the California
12 Government Code, that the remains are not subject to the provisions of Section 27491 of the
13 California Government Code or any other related provisions of law concerning investigation of
14 the circumstances, manner and cause of any death, and the recommendations concerning the
15 treatment and disposition of the human remains have been made to the person responsible for
16 the excavation, or to their authorized representative, in the manner provided in Section
17 5097.98 of the PRC. The coroner will make their determination within 2 working days from the
18 time the person responsible for the excavation, or their authorized representative, notifies the
19 coroner of the discovery or recognition of the human remains.
- 20 c. If the coroner determines that the remains are not subject to their authority, and if the coroner
21 recognizes the human remains to be those of a Native American or has reason to believe that
22 they are those of a Native American, then they will contact, by telephone, within 24 hours, the
23 Native American Heritage Commission.

24 Of particular note to cultural resources is subsection (c) above, requiring the coroner to contact the
25 Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC within 24 hours if discovered human remains is
26 thought to potentially be of Native American origin. After notification, NAHC will follow the
27 procedures outlined in PRC Section 5097.98, which include notification of most likely descendants, if
28 possible, and recommendations for treatment of the remains. Also, knowing or willful possession of
29 Native American human remains, or artifacts taken from a grave or cairn is a felony under California
30 State law (PRC Section 5097.99).

31 **National Register of Historic Places Criteria for Evaluation**

32 The criteria for evaluation of eligibility for listing on the NRHP are outlined at 36 CFR Part 60.4. A
33 district, site, building, structure, or object must be at least 50 years old to be eligible for
34 consideration as a historic property. That district, site, building, structure, or object must retain
35 integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feelings, and association as well as
36 meet one of the following criteria to demonstrate its significance in American history, architecture,
37 archaeology, engineering, and culture. To be eligible for inclusion on the NRHP, a district, site,
38 building, structure, or object must:

- 39 (A) Be associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of
40 history; or
- 41 (B) Be associated with the lives of people significant in our past; or
- 42 (C) Embody the distinct characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or represent
43 the work of a master, or possess high artistic values, or represent a significant and
44 distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- 45 (D) Have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

1 An NRHP-eligible site must have integrity and meet one of the four criteria of eligibility to
2 demonstrate its historic associations to convey its significance. A property must be associated with
3 one or more events important in history or prehistory to be considered for listing under Criterion A.
4 Additionally, the specific association of the property itself must also be considered significant.
5 Criterion B applies to properties associated with individuals whose specific contributions to history
6 can be identified and documented. Properties significant for their physical design or construction
7 under Criterion C must have features with characteristics that exemplify such elements as
8 architecture, landscape architecture, engineering, and artwork. Criterion D most commonly applies
9 to properties that have the potential to answer, in whole or in part, important research questions
10 about human history that can only be answered by the actual physical materials of cultural
11 resources. A property eligible under Criterion D must demonstrate the potential to contain
12 information relevant to prehistory and history.

13 A district, site, building, structure, or object may also be eligible for consideration as a historic
14 property if that property meets one or more of the following NRHP Criteria Considerations:

- 15 a. a religious property deriving primary significance from architectural or artistic distinction or
16 historical importance; or
- 17 b. a building or structure removed from its original location but which is significant primarily
18 for architectural value, or which is the surviving structure most importantly associated with
19 a historic person or event; or
- 20 c. a birthplace or grave of a historical figure of outstanding importance if there is no
21 appropriate site or building directly associated with his productive life.
- 22 d. a cemetery which derives its primary significance from graves of persons of transcendent
23 importance, from age, from distinctive design features, or from association with historic
24 events; or
- 25 e. a reconstructed building when accurately executed in a suitable environment and presented
26 in a dignified manner as part of a restoration master plan, and when no other building or
27 structure with the same association has survived; or
- 28 f. a property primarily commemorative in intent if design, age, tradition, or symbolic value has
29 invested it with its own exceptional significance; or
- 30 g. a property achieving significance within the past 50 years if it is of exceptional importance.

31 **Tribal Cultural Resources (Assembly Bill 52)**

32 Assembly Bill (AB) 52 (Chapter 532, Statutes 2014) established policy that “a project with an effect
33 that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource is a
34 project that may have a significant effect on the environment” under CEQA (per PRC Section
35 21084.2). AB 52 acknowledges that previously under CEQA many projects did not “directly include
36 California Native American tribes’ knowledge and concerns,” which resulted in significant impacts
37 on tribal cultural resources and sacred places. To remedy the lack of including the California Native
38 American tribes’ knowledge and concerns, AB 52 established a requirement for a formal
39 consultation process with California Native American tribes for projects subject to CEQA. AB 52 took
40 effect on July 1, 2015, and resulted in an update to Appendix G (Initial Study Checklist) of the CEQA
41 Guidelines to include questions related to impacts to tribal cultural resources.

42 The PRC was also amended to include new provisions which set out specific steps and timelines for
43 the notice and consultation process. Each tribe is provided with a list of public agencies that may be
44 lead agencies under CEQA within their geographic area. If a tribe wishes to be notified of projects

1 within its geographic area, the tribe must submit a written AB 52 notice list request letter to the
2 relevant lead agency. A lead agency that receives a notice request must notify the requesting tribes
3 of new projects within 14 days of commencing the CEQA process. The tribe must respond to the
4 notice and request consultation within 30 days of receipt, and the lead agency must initiate
5 consultation within 30 days of receiving the request. Consultation concludes when either: 1) the
6 parties agree to measures to mitigate or avoid significant effects on the tribal cultural resources; or
7 2) a party, acting in good faith and after reasonable effort, concludes that a mutual agreement
8 cannot be reached (PRC § 21080.3.2 (b)(1) & (2)). Consultation may continue throughout the CEQA
9 process. This process is separate from other consultation procedures under state cultural resources
10 law.

11 **3.4.3 Environmental Setting**

12 The Project Footprint is located in Madera County, approximately 1 mile northeast of Madera
13 Community College and approximately 1 mile north of Avenue 12.

14 The location of the Project Footprint corresponds to the United States Geological Survey (USGS)
15 Madera 7.5-minute quadrangle in Township 11S, Range 18, and Section 21, and Gregg 7.5-minute
16 quadrangle in Township 11S, Sections 27, 34, and 35, Township 12S, Sections 2 and 3, Range 18E
17 (USGS 1922, 1946, 1965). The Project Footprint is in the Great Valley geomorphic province
18 (California Geological Survey [CGS] 2002), which is characterized by an alluvial plain with a
19 continuous deposit of sediment accumulating since the Jurassic Period (i.e., between 200 and 140
20 million years old) (CGS 2002). The Project Footprint is bordered by coastal mountain ranges to the
21 west and the Sierra Nevada range to the east.

22 **3.4.3.1 Cultural Resource Data Sources**

23 An Archaeological Survey Report (ASR; ICF 2024a) and a Historical Architectural Survey Report
24 (HASR; ICF 2024b) were prepared by ICF in October of 2024 for this Project as part of compliance
25 efforts under CEQA and to support NHPA Section 106. The effort to identify cultural resources
26 intersecting the Project Footprint included a review of the precontact, ethnographic, and historical
27 literature, a records search at the Southern San Joaquin Valley Information Center (SSJVIC),
28 examination of historical maps and photographs, consultation with NAHC, subsurface sensitivity
29 analysis, and field surveys.

30 **Records Search**

31 On July 29, 2024, a cultural resource records search was conducted by SSJVIC staff to identify any
32 previous cultural resource studies and previously recorded cultural resources that intersect with
33 the Project Footprint or are within 0.25 miles of the Project Footprint (also referred to as the *record*
34 *search radius*). The SSJVIC, an affiliate of the Office of Historic Preservation (OHP), is the official state
35 repository of cultural resource records and reports for Madera County. The records search compiled
36 the following bibliographic references, previous survey reports, historical maps, and cultural
37 resources site records pertinent to the Project to identify prior cultural resource studies and known
38 cultural resources within the record search radius.

- 39 • NRHP and CRHR;
- 40 • California OHP, Historic Property Directory (California OHP 2010);

- 1 • California Inventory of Historic Resources (California Department of Parks and Recreation.
2 1976);
- 3 • California State Historic Landmarks (California OHP 1996);
- 4 • California Points of Historical Interest (California OHP 1992); and
- 5 • Historic properties reference map.

6 The SSJVIC identified six previous cultural resource studies in the record search radius (**Table**
7 **3.4-1**). Of the six cultural resource studies, three intersect with the Project Footprint. The SSJVIC
8 also identified two previously recorded built environment cultural resources within the record
9 search radius (**Table 3.4-2**). P-20-002662 consists of the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe (ATSF)
10 Railway, currently named the BNSF Railway and located adjacent to the Project Footprint. P-20-
11 002904 is Wilson–Gregg 230-kilovolt (kV) Transmission Line and intersects the southern end of the
12 Project Footprint. No previously recorded archaeological resources were identified within the
13 Project Footprint or search radius during the records search.

14 P-20-002662 consists of the ATSF Railway (currently the BNSF Railway) constructed between 1895
15 and 1897. The site consists of a 5-mile segment situated between Mile Posts 2008.9 and 1013.0 and
16 was first recorded in 2009 by Josh Smallwood as a single, standard-gauge track laid on a raised bed
17 of earth and crushed rock ballasts (Smallwood 2009). Associated features include two historic-
18 period (150 to 50 years ago) concrete culverts and a segment of an abandoned telegraph line.

19 P-20-002904, Wilson–Gregg 230-kV Transmission Line, constructed between 1942 and 1946, was
20 originally recorded in 2007 by Cheryl Brookshear. The recorded segment includes nine towers and
21 connects to Gregg Substation. The transmission line is part of a longer line that connects to Panoche
22 and Henrietta substations, power plants on Kings River, and Brighton Substation in Sacramento.

23 **Table 3.4-1: Previous Cultural Resource Studies In or Adjacent to the Project Footprint**

Study Number	Author	Year	Title	Intersects Project?
MA-00035	Jensen, Sean M.	1996	<i>Archaeological Inventory Survey for the Tracy to Fresno Long-Haul Fiber Optics Data Transmission Line, Portions of Fresno, Madera, Merced, Stanislaus, and San Joaquin Counties, California</i>	Yes
MA-00216	Crist, Michael K.	1982	<i>Cultural Resource Reconnaissance for the Trigo Industrial Park EIR, Madera County</i>	Yes
MA-00455	Wren, Donald G.	1995	<i>An Archaeological Survey of the Weldon Property, 11 Avenue and Road 30, Madera County CUP #94-25</i>	No
MA-00739	Nelson, Wendy J.	2000	<i>Cultural Resources Survey for the Level (3) Communications Long-Haul Fiber Optics Project: Segment WS04: Sacramento to Bakersfield</i>	No
MA-01256	Asselin, Katie	2015	<i>Additional Cultural Resources Services for the Lotus Solar Project, Madera County, California</i>	Yes
MA-01334	Unknown	2020	<i>Merced to Fresno Project Section Final Archaeological Survey Report Addendum: HOG Flats/Curran Preservation Property</i>	No

24

1 **Table 3.4-2: Previously Recorded Cultural Resources within 0.25 Miles of the Project**

Primary/ Trinomial	Age	Archaeological/ Built Environment	Description	Intersects Area of Potential Effects?
P-20-002662	Historic period (150 to 50 years ago)	Built Environment	Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railway; Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway	No
P-20-002904	Historic period (150 to 50 years ago)	Built Environment	Wilson-Gregg 230-kV Transmission Line	Yes

kV = kilovolt

2 **Archival Map and Aerial Photograph Review**

3 Historical maps and historical aerial photographs to determine the presence of historic-period
4 buildings and/or structures in the Project Footprint and the general vicinity to assist in assessing
5 the potential for historic-period archaeological deposits. Historical maps show that, by 1922, the
6 ATSF Railway was located directly northeast/east of the Project; and the Southern Pacific Railroad
7 was located approximately 2 miles west-southwest of the Project Footprint. The towns of Trigo and
8 Madera had been established by that time, and various homesteads populated what is now Road
9 30½, Avenue 11, Avenue 12, and Avenue 13. A cemetery located 1.5 miles west of the Project
10 Footprint is also visible (USGS 1922). By 1946, transmission lines are visible west of the Project,
11 intersecting at Avenue 12 (USGS 1946). By 1965, Avenues 11, 12, and 13 are paved roads, various
12 orchards and vineyards are present east and west of the Project, and the Borden Substation is
13 present 0.5 miles south of Avenue 12 (USGS 1965). The transmission lines, ATSF Railway, and
14 homesteads are visible in historical aerial photographs from 1946, 1957, and 1962 (Nationwide
15 Environmental Title Research, LLC 2024).

16 **Native American Heritage Commission Sacred Lands File Search**

17 In November 2023, NAHC was contacted regarding the Project. As part of the research for the ASR
18 and on behalf of the CEQA lead agency, San Joaquin Joint Powers Authority (SJJPA), and to support
19 the later compliance by SJJPA with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), a CEQA Tribal
20 Consultation List (per AB 52) and a search of the NAHC Sacred Lands Files was requested for a
21 review of the NAHC's records regarding the Project Footprint. The NAHC is the official state
22 repository of Native American sacred location records in California.

23 In December 2023, a response from NAHC was received and, in part, stated that the results of the
24 Sacred Lands File check conducted through NAHC was negative. NAHC provided ICF with a list of 16
25 tribal contacts for Madera County. In December 2023, SJJPA sent formal consultation-opportunity
26 letters pursuant to PRC Section 21080.3.1 (AB 52) to each of the 16 tribal contacts. All tribal
27 consultation under CEQA (per AB 52) is being conducted by SJJPA (the lead agency). The letters
28 containing details about the Project and a location map were sent to the following 16 tribal contacts:

- 29 1. Tom Zizzo, Tribal Administrator;
- 30 2. Joel Marvin, Vice Chairperson;
- 31 3. Elizabeth Kipp, Chairperson

- 1 4. Robert Ledger, Chairperson;
- 2 5. Mary Stalter, Environmental/Heritage Manager;
- 3 6. Fred Beihn, Chairperson;
- 4 7. John Murga, Tribal Historian;
- 5 8. Timothy Perez, Tribal Compliance Officer;
- 6 9. Jessica Murga, Tribal Secretary;
- 7 10. Erolinda Perez, Tribal Administrator;
- 8 11. Tracey Hopkins, Chairperson;
- 9 12. Heather Airey, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer;
- 10 13. Sandra Chapman, Chairperson;
- 11 14. Brenda Lavell, Chairperson;
- 12 15. Neil Peyron, Chairperson; and
- 13 16. Kenneth Woodrow, Chairperson.

14 Tribal consultation is a continuous process that continues throughout the duration of a project. Any
15 additional information gained during consultation regarding potential sacred lands and/or cultural
16 resources in or associated with the Project Footprint or region will be presented in addendum to
17 this Environmental Impact Report.

18 **Subsurface Sensitivity Analysis**

19 A subsurface sensitivity analysis was conducted to consider the potential for the Project Footprint to
20 contain buried pre-contact-period archaeological resources. Based on the soil survey data, soil
21 classification, and analysis by Meyer et al. (2010) of geoarchaeological sensitivity of the region, the
22 Project Footprint has a low-to-high potential for buried archaeological deposits.

23 Located in the Great Valley geomorphic province, the Project Footprint is on an alluvial plain where
24 sediment has been continuously deposited since the Jurassic Period (i.e., between 200 and 140
25 million years old; CGS 2002). Meyer et al. (2010) identified the alluvium soil in the Project Footprint
26 as dating between Older Pleistocene (greater than 25,000 calibrated years before the present [Cal
27 BP]) to Latest Holocene (2000 to 150 Cal BP). Their analysis indicates that most buried sites are in
28 soil associated with fans and floodplains; however, other factors for buried site sensitivity consist of
29 landform age, proximity to water, slope, exposure, and distribution of subsistence resources.

30 The portion of the Project Footprint north of Cottonwood Creek and south of Avenue 12 consists of
31 Older Pleistocene landforms (i.e., greater than 25,000 Cal BP). Because they formed before human
32 occupation, Older Pleistocene landforms have a low sensitivity for buried archaeological deposits.
33 The portion of the Project Footprint extending south of Cottonwood Creek to Avenue 12 consists of
34 Latest Holocene landforms (2000 to 150 Cal BP), which have a higher sensitivity for buried
35 archaeological deposits due to greater human populations (Meyer et al. 2010). Small portions of the
36 Project along the northern boundary of Cottonwood Creek include Early Holocene sediment (11,500
37 to 7000 Cal BP). These landforms are considered to have a low sensitivity for buried archaeological
38 sites because “these landforms can only contain sites from the latest Pleistocene or earliest
39 Holocene” (Meyer et al. 2010).

1 Because the age of these landforms corresponds to the possible timeframe of Native American
2 occupation for the area, areas south of Avenue 12 and north of Cottonwood Creek have a low
3 sensitivity for buried archaeological sites, and areas between Cottonwood Creek and Avenue 12
4 have a high sensitivity for buried archaeological resources. **Table 3.4-3** shows the soil map units,
5 soil association, and landform ages identified in the Project Footprint (United States Department of
6 Agriculture [USDA] 2024; Meyer et al. 2010).

7 **Field Methods and Results**

8 **Archaeological Survey**

9 On July 18, 2024, an intensive pedestrian survey of the Project Footprint was conducted to
10 determine the presence of historical and archaeological cultural materials in the Project Footprint.
11 Intensive pedestrian survey methods consisted of walking 15-meter-wide, east-west-, north-south-,
12 and southeast-northwest-oriented transects to ensure optimal coverage of the Project Footprint.
13 The survey area consisted of approximately 85 acres of flat agricultural farmland used for vineyards,
14 row crops, orchards, and unpaved public access roads. Ground visibility varied from excellent (90 to
15 100 percent) in the graded sections of agricultural fields and dirt public access roads to low (0 to 15
16 percent) in areas with densely overgrown vegetation in vineyards that are no longer active or in use.

17 **Table 3.4-3: Soil Series Type and Associated Landform Age in the Project Footprint**

Soil Unit Key ¹	Soil Association ¹	Percent Slopes	Landform Age ²	Sensitivity Potential for Buried Archaeological Sites
AsA	Alamo clay	0–1	Older Pleistocene	Low
CuB	Cometa sandy loams	3–8	Older Pleistocene	Low
CwB	Cometa–Whitney sandy loam	3–8	Early Holocene	Low
DfA	Delhi sand	0–3	Latest Holocene	High
GsA	Greenfield fine sandy loam	0–3	Early Holocene	Low
HaA	Hanford fine sandy loam	0–1	Latest Holocene	High
HbA	Hanford fine sandy loam	0–1	Latest Holocene	High
HfA	Hanford sandy loam	0–3	Latest Holocene	High
HgA	Hanford sandy loam	0–3	Latest Holocene	High
SaA	San Joaquin sandy loam	0–3	Older Pleistocene	Low
ScB	San Joaquin–Whitney sandy loams	0–8	Older Pleistocene	Low
TwA	Tujunga loamy sand	0–3	Historic and Modern	High
WrB	Whitney and Rocklin sandy loam	3–8	Older Pleistocene	Low

Sources: (¹ USDA 2024; ² Meyer et al. 2010)

18 A portion of the survey area in Assessor’s Parcel Number 034-210-055 was not surveyed due to
19 active agricultural work, including large equipment in use. A portion of the survey area in Assessor’s
20 Parcel Number 047-070-025 was not surveyed because overgrown vineyards restricted survey
21 access. All other parts of the survey area that were not surveyed were due to not having parcel
22 access from the landowners. All areas without access issues were intensively surveyed.

1 No new evidence of precontact (i.e., Native American) and/or historic resources was found in the
2 Project Footprint during the pedestrian survey. The two previously recorded built environment
3 resources identified through the record search—ATSF Railway (P-20-002662), located directly east
4 of the Project Footprint, and Wilson–Gregg 230-kV Transmission Line (P-20-002904), located west
5 of the Project Footprint and intersecting the Project Footprint at Avenue 12—were visible and found
6 to be in similar condition and construction as other previously recorded segments beyond the
7 Project Footprint.

8 **Built Environment Survey**

9 SJJPA, the CEQA lead agency, took steps necessary to identify historic properties in the Project
10 Footprint by conducting a field survey by historians and architectural historians who met the
11 U.S. Secretary of the Interior’s Professional Qualifications Standards (36 CFR Part 61) in those
12 disciplines. The field survey of the Project Footprint occurred in July 2024.

13 To facilitate the field survey, the Project Footprint was mapped using Esri software. Potential
14 historic built resources were documented using a geographic information system–based application
15 to record georeferenced field notes and digital photographs.

16 **3.4.3.2 Precontact, Ethnographic, and Historic Conditions**

17 **Precontact Context**

18 The Project is located in the center of the Central Valley cultural region of California. Early
19 inhabitants of the Central Valley used the various habitats found throughout the valley, including
20 riparian forest, marsh, alkali basins, oak savanna, and foothill woodland communities. They created
21 a sophisticated material culture and established a trade system involving a wide range of
22 manufactured goods from distant and neighboring regions, and their population and villages
23 prospered in the centuries prior to historic contact (Rosenthal et al. 2007:147, 149). The setting
24 provided below is based on Fredrickson’s (1973) precontact cultural chronology and divides this
25 chronology into five periods: Paleo-Indian (13,550 to 10,550 before present [BP]); Lower Archaic
26 (10,550 to 7550 BP); Middle Archaic (7550 to 2550 BP); Upper Archaic (2550 BP to Anno Domini
27 [AD] 1100); and Emergent (AD 1100 to Historic Period [150 to 50 years ago]). These periods are
28 analytical constructs and do not necessarily reflect Native American views.

29 **Paleo-Indian (13,550 to 10,550 BP)**

30 At the end of the Pleistocene age, circa 13,550 to 10,550 BP, parts of the Sierra Nevada adjacent to
31 the Central Valley were covered with large glaciers, and the Central Valley provided a major
32 transportation route for animals and people (West et al. 2007:27). Although evidence for human
33 occupation during this period is rare, archaeological remains of this early period have been reported
34 in and around the Central Valley (Johnson 1967:283–284; Rosenthal and Meyer 2004; Rosenthal et
35 al. 2007).

36 The Farmington Complex was thought to be evidence of pre-projectile-point evidence dating from
37 the Late Pleistocene age based on lithic cores and a flake associated with Pleistocene gravels
38 (Johnson 1967:283–284; Rosenthal et al. 2007). However, geoarchaeological investigations at the
39 archaeological site CA-STA-69 (in the vicinity of Farmington Complex–type site CA-STA-44)
40 discovered that the assemblage was contained completely in Holocene alluvial terrace deposits, not
41 Pleistocene glacial outwash deposits (Rosenthal and Meyer 2004:96; Rosenthal et al. 2007:151).

1 Currently, evidence from basally thinned and fluted projectile points from scattered locations in the
2 southern portion of the Central Valley represent the earliest evidence of human occupation. Concave
3 base points have been found at only three locations in the San Joaquin Valley: Tracey Lake; Wolfsen
4 mound (MER-215); and Tulare Lake basin. Along a remnant shoreline at Tulare Lake in the southern
5 San Joaquin Valley, hundreds of concave base points were discovered at Witt site (KIN-32; Rosenthal
6 et al. 2007:151).

7 **Lower Archaic (10,550 to 7550 BP)**

8 During Lower Archaic, an accumulation of sediment occurred over the Pleistocene alluvial fans and
9 floodplains, creating a visible stratigraphic sequence between Late Pleistocene and Holocene
10 sediment (Rosenthal et al. 2007). Beginning at approximately 10,550 BP, a shift to a more-
11 specialized subsistence strategy began, focusing on ways of increasing the amount of food that could
12 be produced from smaller portions of land. This change can be at least partially corroborated by the
13 increasing numbers of people living in the Central Valley, which is indicated by a much more
14 abundant archaeological record, as well as by dietary stress, as indicated by dental pathologies
15 (Moratto 1984:203–204). Alongside early concave base points, Lower Archaic-stemmed points,
16 crescents, and other flaked-stone artifacts are found along the ancient shorelines of Tulare Lake
17 (Rosenthal et al. 2007). Human occupation during Lower Archaic is mostly represented by isolated
18 finds. KER-116 is the only Lower Archaic archaeological deposit in the Central Valley. Among the
19 lithic assemblage were three chipped-stone crescents, a stemmed projectile-point fragment, carved-
20 stone atlatl spur, and a few flaked-stone implements. One human skull fragment was found, and the
21 faunal assemblage included freshwater mussel shells, freshwater fish, waterfowl, and artiodactyl
22 bone fragments (Rosenthal et al. 2007).

23 **Middle Archaic (7550 to 2550 BP)**

24 The beginnings of the intensification emerging in Lower Archaic manifested even more so in Middle
25 Archaic. During Middle Archaic, two distinct settlement-subsistence adaptations began to emerge—
26 one centering around the Central Valley floor (Valley tradition) and the other centering around the
27 foothills (Foothill tradition) (Rosenthal et al. 2007). Foothill tradition sites are abundant in the
28 archaeological record, likely due to the elevation and slope of the foothills and less accumulation of
29 sedimentary deposits. The foothill tradition artifact assemblages contained mostly flaked- and
30 ground-stone tools, and very few beads, bone and shell artifacts, or ornaments.

31 The Valley tradition is rare in the Central Valley, due to periods of alluvial deposition (Rosenthal et
32 al. 2007). The regional cultural pattern in central California representing Middle Archaic is the
33 Windmill Pattern (4500 to 2800 BP), which shows evidence of a mixed economy of game
34 procurement and use of wild plant foods (Moratto 1984). Hunting was not limited to terrestrial
35 animals, as evidenced by fishing hooks and spears found in association with the remains of sturgeon
36 (*Acipenser sp.*), salmon (*Oncorhynchus sp.*), and other fish. Plants were also used, as indicated by
37 ground-stone artifacts and clay balls used for boiling acorn mush. The bone-tool industry appears
38 minimal, but includes awls, needles, and flakes. Other characteristic artifacts include charmstones,
39 quartz crystals, and abalone (*Haliotis sp.*) and olive snail (*Olivella sp.*) shell beads and ornaments
40 (Moratto 1984).

41 Windmill Pattern sites are concentrated on low rises or knolls in the floodplains of major creeks
42 or rivers. Such locations provided protection from seasonal flooding and proximity to riverine,
43 marsh, and valley grassland biotic communities. During Middle Archaic, subsistence strategies
44 evolved, and the population became more sedentary along the Sacramento–San Joaquin Valley River

1 corridor (Rosenthal et al. 2007). An economic shift from a foraging to a collecting strategy likely
2 occurred during Middle Archaic. Burials following this pattern consisted of formal cemeteries, both
3 in and separate from villages, suggesting a degree of sedentism. Burials appear in a ritual context
4 that included the use of red ochre, often rich grave offerings, and ventral extension with a western
5 orientation, although other burial positions, such as dorsal extension and flexed, and cremations are
6 also known (Moratto 1984; Rosenthal et al. 2007).

7 **Upper Archaic (2550 BP to AD 1100)**

8 The Middle Archaic–Upper Archaic transition corresponds with a dramatic climatic shift to cooler,
9 wetter conditions. These conditions resulted in the filling of inland lakes and greater freshwater
10 flow through the Sacramento–San Joaquin River Delta. Overall, Upper Archaic is characterized by a
11 proliferation and increased distinction of artifact types, burial positions, and specialized
12 technologies, such as widespread manufacture of ceremonial blades, obsidian biface blanks, Olivella
13 and Haliotis beads and ornaments, ground stone, and net sinkers (Rosenthal et al. 2007). Dominant
14 food resources in the Central Valley during Upper Archaic consisted of acorns, salmon, shellfish,
15 rabbit, and deer. In general, settlements became increasingly larger and of a more sedentary nature.
16 In the San Joaquine Valley during Upper Archaic, Rosenthal et al. (2007) theorized that the lower
17 foothills may have been a boundary for valley people to periodically colonize riparian and other
18 watered foothill habitats at the base of the Sierra Nevada.

19 Little is known about the Upper Archaic cultures in the San Joaquin Valley. Sites dating from Upper
20 Archaic have been investigated in the western areas of the San Joaquin Valley. The Pacheco Complex
21 from Mer-S-94, defined by Olsen and Payen (1969) is a Middle Archaic and Upper Archaic Complex
22 characterized by foliate bifaces, Olivella shell beads, rectangular abalone ornaments, bone awls,
23 perforated canine teeth, stemmed and side notched projectile points, and an abundance of
24 millingstones, mortars, and pestles (Moratto 1984; Olsen and Payen 1969).

25 **Emergent (AD 1100 to Historic Period)**

26 The trends toward specialization, exchange, and spatial circumscription that characterized prior
27 periods continued in the Emergent period. Population continued to increase, and group territories
28 became smaller and more defined. Patterns in the activities, social relationships, belief systems, and
29 material culture continued to develop during this period.

30 A generalized subsistence pattern with a high degree of technological specialization, termed the
31 Augustine Pattern (1200 BP to Historic Period), is associated with the Emergent period in the lower
32 Sacramento Valley/Delta region (Rosenthal et al. 2007). This pattern exhibits a great elaboration of
33 ceremonial and social organization, including the development of social stratification (Moratto
34 1984). Exchange became well developed, and an even more intensive emphasis was placed on the
35 use of acorns, as evidenced by the presence of shaped mortars and pestles and numerous hopper
36 mortars in the archaeological record. Other notable elements of the artifact assemblage include
37 flanged tubular smoking pipes, harpoons, clam-shell disc beads, bone awls for basketry, bone
38 whistles, stone pipes, and an especially elaborate baked-clay industry that includes figurines and
39 pottery vessels, known as Cosumnes Brownware. Small projectile-point types, called the Gunther
40 Barbed series, indicate the use of bow and arrow.

41 Excavations at sites Mer-3, Mer-14, and Me-S-94 defined two other complexes that are possibly
42 associated with the Emergent period—the Gonzaga Complex (calibrated [cal.] AD 300 to 1000) and
43 the Panoche Complex (cal. AD 1500 to 1850; Moratto 1984; Olsen and Payen 1969). Artifacts from

1 the Gonzaga Complex include extended and flexed burials, squared and tapered-stem projectile
2 points, bowl mortars and shaped pestles, bone awls, and grass saws. Shell ornaments included
3 abalone ornaments and Olivella beads. The Panoche Complex includes circular structures, flexed
4 burials, cremations, mortars and pestles, few milling stones, bone awls, saws, and whistles, small
5 side-notched projectile points, clam-shell disk beads, abalone beads, and Olivella disk beads
6 (Moratto 1984).

7 **Ethnographic Context**

8 The Project is in the southern boundary of the territory of Northern Valley Yokuts, members of the
9 Penutian-speaking Central California group (Wallace 1978). The Penutian language family is made
10 up of the Wintun speakers, along with Miwok, Maidu, Costanoan, and Yokuts (Kroeber 1925).
11 Southern Valley Yokuts, Northern Valley Yokuts, and Foothills Yokuts are geographical divisions of
12 Yokuts. Northern Valley Yokuts historically inhabited from San Joaquin River to the midway line
13 between Mokelumne River and Calaveras River; extending to the Sierra Nevada and West Coast
14 ranges (Asselin et al. 2016; Wallace 1978).

15 Subsistence pattern of Foothills, Northern Valley, and Southern Valley Yokuts emphasized fishing,
16 hunting, and gathering. Northern Yokuts relied on fishing year-round; they mainly caught salmon,
17 but white sturgeon (*Acipenser transmontanus*), river perch (*Perca fluviatilis*), western sucker
18 (*Catostomus commersonii*), and Sacramento pike (*Ptychocheilus grandis*) were also caught. Yokuts
19 varied their diet with waterfowl, including geese, ducks, and other aquatic birds, and the harvesting
20 of wild plant food, such as acorns, seeds, and tule root (*Schoenoplectus acutus*; Wallace 1978).

21 Northern Valley Yokuts built their settlements on low mounds or along the banks of major
22 watercourses (Wallace 1978). Building their settlements on higher ground kept their villages from
23 flooding during the spring floods (Cook 1960; Schenck 1926; Schenck and Dawson 1929). The
24 abundance of resources along major watercourses allowed a more sedentary lifestyle; however, due
25 to the occasional heavy snow melt and rain, villages were often forced to higher ground due to
26 flooding (Wallace 1978).

27 The main political unit of Yokuts was tribes of approximately 300 people, and each tribe was guided
28 by their own chief. Smaller villages including two or three houses also existed (Wallace 1978).
29 Villages included oval or round family houses, a community lodge for dances, and a sweathouse
30 (Wallace 1978). Dwellings were covered with tule stalks that had been woven into mats. Northern
31 Valley, unlike Southern Valley, dwellings were scattered about, with no clear order.

32 Trade was common with neighboring groups, as evidenced by extended trails through meadows and
33 along riverbanks that connected Southern Valley Yokuts and Northern Valley Yokuts. Boats crafted
34 from bundles of tule provided transportation through the waterways. Northern Valley Yokuts traded
35 dog pups with Miwok in exchange for baskets bows and arrows, and Costanoans exchanged mussels
36 and abalone (Wallace 1978). Based on ethnographic and archaeological data, the Yokuts' population
37 decreased after the invasion of Mexican ranchos and Spanish missionaries (Asselin et al. 2016).
38 Mexican settlements emerged at sites formerly occupied by Yokuts groups, but it is not known when
39 these areas were first inhabited by settlers of European heritage (Asselin et al. 2016). Contact with
40 Mexican ranchos, miners, and settlers affected the San Joaquin Valley ethnographically, due to
41 disease and cultural impactation. When the Gold Rush began in 1848, Algo-European settlers
42 inhabited California, causing a change in the Yokuts' territory (Asselin et al. 2016).

1 **Historic Context**

2 This section presents the historic context for the potential historic properties in the Project
3 Footprint. The historic context explores the major historic events, development trends, and built
4 resources typologies that occurred in the Project Footprint, which is in the San Joaquin Valley,
5 between Trigo to the south and Storey to the north, parallel to Sante Fe Drive in Madera County.
6 Material for this section was primarily drawn from *Merced to Fresno Section: Central Valley Wye*
7 *Historic Architectural Survey Report* (the Authority and FRA 2016).

8 **Establishment of Madera County**

9 Early Spanish explorers did not visit the area that became Madera County—the first post-contact
10 accounts of visits to the region by nonindigenous peoples were from trappers and explorers.
11 Lumbermen were specifically drawn to the region for its timber; the first mill was built in the central
12 portion of the county in 1852. After 1870, the Central Pacific Railroad’s establishment and growth
13 throughout the region spurred the development of the area that became the city of Madera. Madera
14 was established at the terminus of a 63-mile-long water flume built by California Lumber Company
15 in 1874 (AECOM 2020:28–29). In 1876, California Lumber Company began planning Madera County
16 when the first land plots were put up for auction. The Southern Pacific Railroad’s infrastructure and
17 reach transformed the landscape of the San Joaquin Valley, helping to give rise to towns like
18 Modesto, Merced, Minturn, Borden, and Berenda. In the foothills, mining communities like Buchanan
19 and Grub Gulch thrived (City of Madera 2024).

20 By 1890, Madera was the second-largest city in Fresno County, developing quickly as the railroad
21 distribution point for a number of surrounding towns and a hub of lumber production. In 1893, the
22 California State Legislature established Madera County from a portion of Fresno County north and
23 west of the San Joaquin River. The county was named after its primary city, Madera (i.e., the Spanish
24 word for *lumber*), which was named for its close association with California Lumber Company
25 (AECOM 2020:28–29; City of Madera 2024).

26 **Agricultural Development**

27 Railroad development influenced the locations of some of the first towns in western Madera County
28 as new lines traversed through large agricultural settlements in the mid-nineteenth century (Bean
29 and Rawls 2003:181–182). In the mid to late nineteenth century, wheat was the primary crop in the
30 San Joaquin Valley and elsewhere in California. However, barley production was also widespread, as
31 was cattle and sheep ranching. Farming in the Madera County plains was sustained by dams and
32 weirs put in regional waterways, including Fresno River, Chowchilla River, Cottonwood Creek, and
33 other creeks, rivers, and streams. The Fresno River was the origin of Madera Canal and Irrigation
34 Company, which supplied water to the farms surrounding the county seat and outward (Barcroft
35 1933). In addition to wheat and barley farming, large-scale livestock ranching, lumbering, and
36 mining were major economic and settlement drivers in Madera County from the late nineteenth to
37 twentieth centuries. The construction and continued development of railroad infrastructure
38 provided access to distant markets and boosted wheat production in the San Joaquin Valley, as did
39 advances in plowing technology, such as steam-powered tractors and harvesters (Cabezut-Ortiz
40 1987:37–38; Bean and Rawls 2003:201–202; Clough 1983:25–28).

41 Lumber production played a crucial role in the establishment and early growth of the region around
42 the city of Madera’s election as the county seat. Despite facing challenges like droughts, fires, and
43 economic depressions, lumber production, including the formation of large companies like Madera

1 Sugar Pine Lumber Company, sustained the Madera region’s economy and influenced physical
2 development and settlement for over five decades. However, the economic decline of the Great
3 Depression (1929 to 1941) led to the closure of the lumber industry in the city of Madera. After the
4 lumber industry’s decline, diversified agricultural production again became a driving force in the
5 region’s economy, including various nuts, grapes, and legumes, as well as cattle and chicken
6 ranching (City of Madera 2024; County of Madera 2024).

7 **Madera County Power-Transmission Infrastructure**

8 Demand for electricity in the context of high fuel costs in California during the early twentieth
9 century spurred technological innovation. Hydroelectric power systems were developed as
10 alternatives to steam-generated electricity. In hydroelectric systems, falling water is used to turn
11 electric generators. Landscape conditions in the Sierra Nevada region were particularly well-suited
12 to this technology because streams flowing from the mountains into the Central Valley carry small
13 volumes of water that descend rapidly. These conditions, unlike those conditions typically found in
14 the east, where large volumes of water traveled without significant elevation change, made
15 hydroelectric-power generation feasible. As a result, engineers and entrepreneurs in California
16 became leaders in the field of hydroelectric-power innovation (Williams 1997:171–172).

17 The geographic challenge of transmitting power generated in the Sierra Nevada to urban areas
18 required the development of revolutionary engineering solutions. During the mid-1880s, direct-
19 current technology could only transmit power for approximately 10 miles—transmitting further
20 distances resulted in 40- to 60-percent power losses—and it was not until the development of
21 alternating-current systems that long-distance transmission became realistic (Williams 1997:173).

22 **3.4.3.3 Summary of Known California Environmental Quality Act Historical** 23 **Resources and Unevaluated Resources**

24 SJJPA prepared an HASR to identify historical resources in the Project Footprint. The HASR was
25 prepared as part of the SJJPA’s compliance with CEQA and the Authority’s subsequent compliance
26 with NEPA. All built resources were also evaluated in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section
27 15064.5(a)(2)–(3), using the criteria outlined in PCR Section 5024.1. As part of compliance with
28 NHPA Section 106, the HASR will be submitted to the California State Historical Preservation Office
29 (SHPO) for concurrence with the adequacy of the identification and evaluation findings.

30 The HASR focused on identifying eligible historical resources in the Project Footprint. In the Project
31 Footprint, 34 parcels were vacant or not of historic age (i.e., younger than 45 years old). Two
32 properties in the Project Footprint required evaluation for NRHP/CRHR eligibility: Wilson–Gregg
33 230-kV Transmission Line and 30635 Avenue 12. Eligibility evaluations for Wilson–Gregg 230-kV
34 Transmission Line and 30635 Avenue 12 are included below.

35 **Table 3.4-4** provides a summary of all NRHP/CRHR-eligible and NRHP/CRHR-ineligible resources.
36 Based on the analysis conducted in the HASR, there are no known CEQA historical resources and/or
37 unevaluated resources intersecting the Project Footprint.

1 **Table 3.4-4: Area of Potential Effects Survey Population Summary**

County	Number of Parcels or Linear Resources Per County	NRHP/CRHR -Listed Properties	NRHP/CRHR - Eligible	NRHP/CRHR -Ineligible	CEQA-Only (NRHP/CRHR-Ineligible)	Vacant, Agricultural, or Exempt Parcels
Madera	36	0	0	2	0	34

Source: Survey-result quantifications generated from historical resources surveys and evaluations conducted during 2010 to 2017.

2 **Wilson–Gregg 230-kV Transmission Line**

3 Wilson–Gregg 230-kV Transmission Line, which runs through the Project Footprint, consists of self-
 4 supporting lattice towers, with six projecting arms (three on each side), and six insulators per tower.
 5 Intervening farmland and an asphalt-paved road are between each tower. No additional tower styles
 6 were observed in this area (Google Earth 2024).

7 A previous evaluation, completed by JRP Historical Consulting (Brookshear 2007), determined that
 8 Wilson–Gregg 230-kV Transmission Line does not meet the criteria for the NRHP; however, the
 9 agency determination and subsequent SHPO concurrence were not found during current research.
 10 The previous evaluation found that Wilson–Gregg 230-kV Transmission Line was ineligible under
 11 CEQA Criteria A, B, C, and D.

12 For the Project, Wilson–Gregg 230-kV Transmission Line was evaluated under the *Madera County*
 13 *Power Transmission Infrastructure* historic context in Section 3.9.3.2 of this Environmental Impact
 14 Report, *Precontact, Ethnographic, and Historic Conditions*. Wilson–Gregg 230-kV Transmission Line
 15 does not meet the criteria for listing in the NRHP or CRHR (ICF 2024b: Appendix B).

16 Under NRHP/CRHR Criterion A/1, Wilson–Gregg 230-kV Transmission Line does not have
 17 important associations with historic events, patterns, nor trends of development. The transmission
 18 line was constructed between 1942 and 1946, during a period when San Joaquin Light and Power
 19 Company was merging with Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E). Based on the historic context, 230-kV
 20 lines are significant if they were energized between 1901 and 1931, and this line was energized over
 21 a decade later for 230-kV transmission lines. Furthermore, research did not produce any evidence
 22 that the structure was the site of an important historical event, nor pattern of events that helped
 23 shape the built environment in the area. The structure did not serve as a catalyst for development in
 24 Madera County area or the larger region. As such, Wilson–Gregg 230-kV Transmission Line is not
 25 significant under NRHP/CRHR Criterion A/1.

26 Under NRHP/CRHR Criterion B/2, the structure does not share significant associations with the
 27 lives of persons important to history. Properties that are eligible under this criterion are typically
 28 associated with the productive life of a person. Research did not yield evidence of the structure
 29 being associated with the professional life or activities of key utility leadership in PG&E. As such, the
 30 structure is not significant under NRHP/CRHR Criterion B/2.

31 Under NRHP/CRHR Criterion C/3, Wilson–Gregg 230-kV Transmission Line is not a significant
 32 example of its type, style, or era, it lacks high artistic value, and it is not the work of a master
 33 architect, builder, designer, or engineer. The transmission line and lattice towers are common
 34 examples of transmission-line infrastructure from the twentieth century across California. The

1 transmission line does not embody important, leading-edge engineering that relied on, or allowed
2 for, demonstratable innovations in transmission design, voltage regulation, voltage level, or
3 transmission distance dating to the period(s) of significance. The line does not convey distinctive
4 operational characteristics of utility engineering and design into a region that directly spurred
5 specific aspects of community development. Finally, it does not contribute to the significance of an
6 established or potential historic district (e.g., a wider power-generation system). The transmission
7 line lacks artistic value and is an unremarkable example of its type. Research did not uncover any
8 information regarding its engineer or builder. As such, the structure is not significant under NRHP/
9 CRHR Criterion C/3.

10 Under NRHP/CRHR Criterion D/4, the structure has neither yielded nor is likely to yield important
11 information in prehistory or history. Typical of similar structures, Wilson–Gregg 230-kV
12 Transmission Line does not have the potential to yield important information regarding
13 construction or engineering materials, methods, or technologies used in the 1930s. As such, the
14 structure is not significant under NRHP/CRHR Criterion D/4.

15 **30635 Avenue 12**

16 The property at 30635 Avenue 12 is located approximately 0.18 miles from the Project Footprint on
17 a 5,707,231-square-foot parcel on the northern side of Avenue 12, at the northeastern corner of the
18 intersection of Road 30½ and Avenue 12 near the city of Madera. The building on the property faces
19 south, toward Avenue 12. An unpaved driveway starts off-center at the southern boundary and
20 extends north from Avenue 12, toward the building on the parcel, where it splits into two
21 driveways: the western path encircles the building; and the eastern path winds diagonally toward
22 the northeastern corner of the parcel. Agricultural and institutional uses surround the property.

23 A rectangular, one-story barn clad in vertical wooden shiplap sits west of the center, approximately
24 200 feet north of the parcel's southern boundary. A medium-pitched gable roof with collapsing
25 corrugated metal and a shallow overhang caps the barn. The primary (southern) elevation is
26 arranged into three bays. On the central bay, the centered entrance consists of a pair of wooden
27 sliding doors on upper rails, with small rectangular viewing windows cut out of the doors. East of
28 the entrance, a small, rectangular opening pierces the eastern bay. West of the main entrance, a
29 single-leaf wooden door on the upper rails provides a pedestrian entry to the barn. A covered
30 outdoor area abuts the western elevation of the building, consisting of a wooden shed roof
31 supported by simple wooden poles. The eastern and western side elevations appear to lack openings
32 or fenestration; however, they are not very visible from the public right of way, particularly toward
33 the rear (northern) end of the barn. The northern elevation was not visible from the public right of
34 way.

35 This property was evaluated under the *Agricultural Development* historic context presented in this
36 Environmental Impact Report in Section 3.4.3.2, *Precontact, Ethnographic, and Historic Conditions*.
37 The property at 30635 Avenue 12 does not meet the criteria for listing in the NRHP or CRHR
38 individually or as a contributor to a previously unidentified historic district (ICF 2024b:
39 Appendix B).

40 Under NRHP/CRHR Criterion A/1, the property at 30635 Avenue 12 does not have important
41 associations with historic events, patterns, or trends of development. The property dates to circa
42 1934, which was a period of agricultural growth and expansion in Madera County. Thus, many
43 agricultural properties in the area date to this period, and the property does not exhibit individual
44 significance over other surrounding agricultural properties. Although it features agricultural

1 resources, such as a barn, an irrigation-well system, crop fields, orchards, and pastures, these
2 resources are common and ubiquitous resources individually and together do not represent a
3 cohesive rural-residential agricultural property. The property also lost its circa-1952 residence,
4 which was demolished sometime between 2009 and 2011 and was the sole residential built element
5 of the parcel. Thus, the property no longer serves a residential use. Also, the property is not
6 associated with a significant agricultural innovation nor a particular type of crop in Madera County.
7 Although the property retains its agricultural use, the type of crops harvested has changed a few
8 times throughout its history. The property is not significant under NRHP/CRHR Criterion A/1.

9 Under NRHP/CRHR Criterion B/2, the property at 30635 Avenue 12 does not share significant
10 associations with the lives of persons important to history. Research into publicly available records,
11 including Ancestry.com, newspaper databases, and accessible government records, did not provide
12 evidence that the current owner, Everspring Alliance LP, was a prominent figure in national, state, or
13 local history. Likewise, research did not reveal any associations between the property at 30635
14 Avenue 12 and early settlers, nor with any persons of significance in Madera County, nor is the
15 property associated with any individuals who made discoveries or advancements in farming or
16 agriculture. The property at 30635 Avenue 12 is not significant under NRHP/CRHR Criterion B/2.

17 Under NRHP/CRHR Criterion C/3, the property at 30635 Avenue 12 is not a significant example of
18 its type, style, or era, lacks high artistic value, nor is it the work of a master architect, builder,
19 designer, or engineer. It is currently a common example of a nonresidential agricultural property
20 and exhibits some typical farming-related elements, such as a barn, an irrigation-well system, and
21 the surrounding crop fields, orchards, and pastures. Although the barn is a typical example of a
22 transverse frame barn, the building lacks quality of design and high artistic value. Research yielded
23 no evidence of an architect or builder associated with the property. The property at 30635 Avenue
24 12 is not significant under NRHP/CRHR Criterion C/3.

25 Under NRHP/CRHR Criterion D/4, the property at 30635 Avenue 12 has neither yielded nor is likely
26 to yield important information in prehistory or history. Typical of similar buildings, the property's
27 wood-frame construction does not have the potential to yield important information regarding
28 construction or engineering materials, methods, or technologies used in the 1930s. The property at
29 30635 Avenue 12 is not significant under NRHP/CRHR Criterion D/4.

30 **3.4.4 Impact Analysis**

31 **3.4.4.1 Methods for Analysis**

32 The analysis methodology is based on the regional and site-specific information relevant to the
33 Project. The evaluation of the Project's potential effect on cultural resources in or adjacent to the
34 Project Footprint stems from the pre-contact, ethnographic, and historic contexts, the SSJVIC record
35 search results, NAHC Sacred Land Files results, map review, subsurface sensitivity analysis, and
36 survey results.

37 **3.4.4.2 Thresholds of Significance**

38 CEQA Guidelines Appendix G (14 CCR Section 15000 et seq.) has identified significance criteria to be
39 considered for determining whether a project could have significant impacts on cultural resources.

1 An impact would be considered significant if construction or operation of the Project would have
2 any of the following consequences.

- 3 • Causes a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to
- 4 PRC Section 15064.5;
- 5 • Causes a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource
- 6 pursuant to PRC Section 15064.5; or
- 7 • Disturbs any human remains, including those remains interred outside of dedicated
- 8 cemeteries.

9 **3.4.4.3 Impacts and Mitigation Measures**

10 **Project Construction**

Impact CUL-1	Construction of the Project would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to PRC Section 15064.5.
Level of Impact	No Impact

12 The Project Footprint was surveyed for potential historical resources and evaluated for
13 NRHP/CRHR eligibility. Based on the HASR prepared for the Project, no historical resources are in or
14 directly adjacent to the Project Footprint (ICF 2024a). Given this, no substantial adverse changes in
15 the significance of a historical resource pursuant to PRC Section 15064.5, and there would be no
16 construction impacts related to historical resources.

Impact CUL-2	Construction of the Project would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to PRC Section 15064.5.
Level of Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated

17 A geoarchaeological sensitivity analysis was conducted to determine the potential for the Project to
18 contain buried pre-contact-period archaeological resources. The portion of the Project Footprint
19 north of Cottonwood Creek and south of Avenue 12 consists of Older Pleistocene landforms (i.e.,
20 older than 25,000 Cal BP), and the portion of the Project Footprint extending south of Cottonwood
21 Creek to Avenue 12 consists of Latest Holocene landforms (2000 to 150 Cal BP; Meyer et al. 2010).
22 In the Project Footprint, areas south of Avenue 12 and north of Cottonwood Creek have a low
23 sensitivity for buried archaeological sites, and areas between Cottonwood Creek and Avenue 12
24 have a high sensitivity for buried archaeological sites. No archaeological resources were identified
25 during the intensive pedestrian survey, record search, or Sacred Lands Files search for the Project
26 Footprint.

27 Because of the age of the landforms and geography in the Project Footprint, there is a potential for
28 unknown buried archaeological resources to be encountered during ground-disturbing activities.
29 Historic-period land use, including years of agricultural activity in the Project Footprint, have likely
30 disturbed surficial or near-surficial archaeological deposits; however, this activity does not exclude
31 the potential for encountering unknown buried archaeological deposits.

32 Although there is a low probability of significant surficial or near-surficial pre-contact
33 archaeological resources existing in the Project Footprint, there is a high possibility that unknown

1 buried archaeological resources may be encountered during ground-disturbing activities in
2 Holocene landforms. If archaeological resources were encountered during Project-related ground
3 disturbance, then a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource
4 could occur from its demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration, and the significance of the
5 resource could be materially impaired (PRC Section 15064.5[b][1]). Therefore, construction of the
6 Project would result in a significant impact to unknown buried archaeological resources. However,
7 Mitigation Measure (MM) CUL-1 would ensure that prior to the start of ground-disturbing activities,
8 a Cultural Resources Awareness Training (would be required for all construction personnel working
9 on the Project. In the case of an unanticipated discovery, MM CUL-2 would implement stop-work
10 measures to avoid and reduce impacts on previously unidentified archaeological resources.

11 Implementation of MM CUL-1 and MM CUL-2 would reduce impacts by ensuring construction
12 activities for the Project do not result in the inadvertent destruction of an unknown archaeological
13 resource. After implementation of MM CUL-1 and MM CUL-2, impacts would be less than significant
14 during Project construction.

15 **MM CUL-1: Cultural Resources Awareness Training**

16 The Project will retain a qualified archaeologist to carry out all mitigation measures related to
17 archaeological resources. Prior to the start of any ground-disturbing activities, the SJJPA or its
18 construction contractor will ensure that the qualified archaeologist has conducted Cultural
19 Resources Awareness Training for all construction personnel working on the Project. The training
20 will include an overview of potential cultural resources that could be encountered during ground-
21 disturbing activities to facilitate worker recognition, avoidance, and subsequent immediate
22 notification to the qualified archaeologist for further evaluation and action, as appropriate, and
23 penalties for unauthorized artifact collecting or intentional disturbance of archaeological resources.
24 A sign-in sheet will be completed, retained by the Project construction contractor for the duration of
25 Project construction to demonstrate attendance at the awareness training, and provided to SJJPA
26 upon completion of Project construction.

27 **MM CUL-2: Inadvertent Discovery of Archaeological Resource Procedures**

28 If archaeological resources are discovered during construction, then all construction will
29 immediately stop within 100 feet (30 meters) of the discovery, the location of the discovery will be
30 marked for avoidance, and efforts will be made to prevent inadvertent destruction of the find. The
31 qualified archaeologist (and a Native American-designated representative if the resource is Native
32 American-related) will evaluate the significance of the resources for CRHR eligibility and
33 recommend appropriate treatment measures to SJJPA or its construction contractor. Per CEQA
34 Guidelines Section 15126.4(b)(3)(C), if it is demonstrated that resources cannot be avoided, then
35 the qualified archaeologist will (in coordination with a Native American-designated representative,
36 if the resource is Native American-related) develop additional treatment measures in consultation
37 with SJJPA, which may include data recovery or other appropriate measures. SJJPA will consult with
38 appropriate Native American representatives in determining appropriate treatment for unearthed
39 cultural resources, if the resources are pre-contact, tribal cultural resources, or Native American in
40 nature. The qualified archaeologist will prepare a report documenting evaluation and/or additional
41 treatment of the resource. A copy of the report will be provided to SJJPA. Construction can
42 recommence based on the direction of the qualified archaeologist.

43

Impact CUL-3	Construction of the Project would not disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries.
Level of Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated

1 A review of archival maps and aerial photographs did not identify any dedicated cemeteries in the
2 Project Footprint. The closest cemetery is the Calaveras Cemetery, approximately 1.7 miles west of
3 the Project Footprint. No human remains, including those remains interred outside of dedicated
4 cemeteries, were identified during the pedestrian survey, record searches, or Sacred Lands Files
5 search.

6 Based on archaeological investigation and analysis, there is a low potential for the disturbance of
7 human remains as a result of the Project. In the event that unknown human remains are identified
8 during construction activities, impacts would result in a significant impact. However, any unknown
9 human remains would be required to be treated in accordance with Section 7050.5 of the California
10 Health and Human Safety Code and Section 5097.98 of the PRC, as appropriate. Additionally, MM
11 CUL-3 would require stop-work measures to avoid impacts on previously unidentified human
12 remains.

13 Implementation of MM CUL-3 and compliance with the California Health and Human Safety Code
14 would ensure that the Project would not result in the inadvertent destruction of human remains.
15 After implementation of MM CUL-3, impacts would be less than significant during Project
16 construction.

17 **MM CUL-3: Inadvertent Discovery of Human Remains Procedures**

18 If human remains are uncovered during Project activities, then SJJPA or its construction contractor
19 will immediately halt work, contact the Madera County Coroner to evaluate the remains, and follow
20 the procedures and protocols set forth in PRC Section 15064.5(e). If the County Coroner determines
21 that the remains are Native American in origin, then the NAHC will be notified, in accordance with
22 Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5(c) and PRC Section 5097.98. The NAHC will designate a Most
23 Likely Descendant for the remains per PRC Section 5097.98, and SJJPA or its construction contractor
24 will ensure that the immediate vicinity, according to generally accepted cultural or archaeological
25 standards or practices, where the Native American human remains are located, is not damaged or
26 disturbed by further activity under the Project. SJJPA will discuss and confer, as prescribed in PRC
27 Section 5097.98, with the Most Likely Descendant regarding their recommendation for the
28 disposition of the remains, taking into account the possibility of multiple humans remains.

29 **Project Operations**

30 No historical resources or archaeological resources were identified in or directly adjacent to the
31 Project Footprint. Additionally, there is a low potential for the disturbance of human remains as a
32 result of the Project. Operation of the Project would not involve ground-disturbing activities that
33 would potentially impact historical resources, archaeological resources, or human remains.
34 Therefore, impacts on historical resources, archaeological resources, or human remains would be
35 less than significant during operations.

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