US-95 Rock Slope Protection and Culvert Replacement

Riverside County, California
District 08-Riv-95 (PM 14.00-36.20)
EA 08-1G000/PN 0815000107

Initial Study with

Negative Declaration

Prepared by the
State of California Department of Transportation

Caltrans

March 2019

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General Information About This Document

The California Department of Transportation (Department) has prepared this Initial Study with Negative Declaration for the project located on US-95 in Riverside County, California. The Department is the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The document tells you why the project is being proposed, what alternatives have been considered for the project, how the existing environment could be affected by the project the potential impacts of each of the alternatives, and the avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures. The Draft Initial Study circulated to the public for 30 days between January 16, 2019 and February 18, 2019. No comments were received during this period. Elsewhere throughout this document, a vertical line in the margin indicates a change made since the draft document circulation. Minor editorial changes and clarifications have not been so indicated. Additional copies of this document and the related technical studies are available for review at the Caltrans District 8 Office, 464 West 4th Street, San Bernardino, CA 92401. The document can also be accessed electronically at the following website: http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist8.

For individuals with sensory disabilities, this document is available in Braille, in large print, on audiocassette, or on computer disk. To obtain a copy in one of these alternate formats, please call or write to Caltrans, District 8 Attn: Terri Kasinga, Chief, Public and Media Affairs 464 W. 4th Street, San Bernardino, CA 92401 (909) 383-4646 or call the California Relay Service 1 (800) 735-2929 (TTY), 1 (800) 735-2929 (Voice), or 711.

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STATE OF CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

SCH #:2019011030
08-RIV-95 PM 14/36.20
EA 08-1G000
PN 0815000107

INITIAL STUDY with Negative Declaration

Submitted Pursuant to: (State) Division 13, California Public Resources Code

Project Description
The California Department of Transportation (Department) proposes to restore storm eroded embankments with rock slope protection and replace culverts on US-95 from PM 14 to PM 36.20.

THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
Department of Transportation

3/1/19
Date of Approval

David Bricker
Deputy District Director
District 8 Division of Environmental Planning
California Department of Transportation

The following person(s) may be contacted for additional information concerning this document:
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SCH #: 2019011030

Negative Declaration

Pursuant to: Division 13, Public Resources Code

Project Description

The project area extends along a 22.2-mile stretch between PM 14 and PM 36.20, near the San Bernardino County Line on US-95 in the unincorporated territory of Riverside County, California (Appendix A: Figure 1, *Regional Vicinity Map*). The project spans from approximately 16 miles north of the city of Blythe to Vidal (Appendix A: Figure 2, *Project Layout & Local Vicinity Map*). The Project alignment traverses portions of the following United States Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute topographic quadrangles: Big Maria Mountains SE, Big Maria Mountains NE, Poston, Parker SW, and Vidal, California (Appendix A: Figure 3, *Topographic Map with USGS 7.5-Minute Quadrangle Index*). The project crosses through several Ranges and Townships (Table 1, *Townships, Ranges, and Sections in the Project Area*).

Table 1. Townships, Ranges, and Sections in the Project Area

TRSecOrdinal	MPplss	SecOrdinal	SECTION	TOWNSHIP	RANGE	TR	SecTR	TRSec	SecOrdinalTR	Acres	COMMENT
T01S, R24E, Sec. 17	SBM	17	17	01S	24E	01Sx24E	Sec. 17, T01S, R24E	T01S, R24E, Sec. 17	Sec. 17, T01S, R24E	0.5	
T01S, R24E, Sec. 20	SBM	20	20	01S	24E	01Sx24E	Sec. 20, T01S, R24E	T01S, R24E, Sec. 20	Sec. 20, T01S, R24E	47.7	
T01S, R24E, Sec. 29	SBM	29	29	01S	24E	01Sx24E	Sec. 29, T01S, R24E	T01S, R24E, Sec. 29	Sec. 29, T01S, R24E	36.5	
T01S, R24E, Sec. 32	SBM	32	32	01S	24E	01Sx24E	Sec. 32, T01S, R24E	T01S, R24E, Sec. 32	Sec. 32, T01S, R24E	50.1	
T02S, R23E, Sec. 25	SBM	25	25	02S	23E	02Sx23E	Sec. 25, T02S, R23E	T02S, R23E, Sec. 25	Sec. 25, T02S, R23E	44.6	
T02S, R23E, Sec. 35	SBM	35	35	02S	23E	02Sx23E	Sec. 35, T02S, R23E	T02S, R23E, Sec. 35	Sec. 35, T02S, R23E	20.8	
T02S, R23E, Sec. 36	SBM	36	36	02S	23E	02Sx23E	Sec. 36, T02S, R23E	T02S, R23E, Sec. 36	Sec. 36, T02S, R23E	42.7	
T02S, R24E, Sec. 00	SBM	00	0	02S	24E	02Sx24E	Sec. 0, T02S, R24E	T02S, R24E, Sec. 0	Sec. 00, T02S, R24E	97.9	NOT SECTIONED
T02S, R24E, Sec. 17	SBM	17	17	02S	24E	02Sx24E	Sec. 17, T02S, R24E	T02S, R24E, Sec. 17	Sec. 17, T02S, R24E	44.6	
T02S, R24E, Sec. 18	SBM	18	18	02S	24E	02Sx24E	Sec. 18, T02S, R24E	T02S, R24E, Sec. 18	Sec. 18, T02S, R24E	10.0	
T02S, R24E, Sec. 19	SBM	19	19	02S	24E	02Sx24E	Sec. 19, T02S, R24E	T02S, R24E, Sec. 19	Sec. 19, T02S, R24E	65.3	
T02S, R24E, Sec. 30	SBM	30	30	02S	24E	02Sx24E	Sec. 30, T02S, R24E	T02S, R24E, Sec. 30	Sec. 30, T02S, R24E	0.1	
T03S, R23E, Sec. 02	SBM	02	2	03S	23E	03Sx23E	Sec. 2, T03S, R23E	T03S, R23E, Sec. 2	Sec. 02, T03S, R23E	55.4	
T03S, R23E, Sec. 11	SBM	11	11	03S	23E	03Sx23E	Sec. 11, T03S, R23E	T03S, R23E, Sec. 11	Sec. 11, T03S, R23E	53.4	
T03S, R23E, Sec. 14	SBM	14	14	03S	23E	03Sx23E	Sec. 14, T03S, R23E	T03S, R23E, Sec. 14	Sec. 14, T03S, R23E	51.1	
T03S, R23E, Sec. 23	SBM	23	23	03S	23E	03Sx23E	Sec. 23, T03S, R23E	T03S, R23E, Sec. 23	Sec. 23, T03S, R23E	50.3	
T03S, R23E, Sec. 25	SBM	25	25	03S	23E	03Sx23E	Sec. 25, T03S, R23E	T03S, R23E, Sec. 25	Sec. 25, T03S, R23E	36.0	
T03S, R23E, Sec. 26	SBM	26	26	03S	23E	03Sx23E	Sec. 26, T03S, R23E	T03S, R23E, Sec. 26	Sec. 26, T03S, R23E	14.8	
T03S, R23E, Sec. 35	SBM	35	35	03S	23E	03Sx23E	Sec. 35, T03S, R23E	T03S, R23E, Sec. 35	Sec. 35, T03S, R23E	27.3	
T03S, R23E, Sec. 36	SBM	36	36	03S	23E	03Sx23E	Sec. 36, T03S, R23E	T03S, R23E, Sec. 36	Sec. 36, T03S, R23E	24.5	
T04S, R23E, Sec. 02	SBM	02	2	04S	23E	04Sx23E	Sec. 2, T04S, R23E	T04S, R23E, Sec. 2	Sec. 02, T04S, R23E	50.0	
T04S, R23E, Sec. 11	SBM	11	11	04S	23E	04Sx23E	Sec. 11, T04S, R23E	T04S, R23E, Sec. 11	Sec. 11, T04S, R23E	49.9	
T04S, R23E, Sec. 14	SBM	14	14	04S	23E	04Sx23E	Sec. 14, T04S, R23E	T04S, R23E, Sec. 14	Sec. 14, T04S, R23E	49.4	
T04S, R23E, Sec. 23	SBM	23	23	04S	23E	04Sx23E	Sec. 23, T04S, R23E	T04S, R23E, Sec. 23	Sec. 23, T04S, R23E	50.3	
T04S, R23E, Sec. 25	SBM	25	25	04S	23E	04Sx23E	Sec. 25, T04S, R23E	T04S, R23E, Sec. 25	Sec. 25, T04S, R23E	15.3	
T04S, R23E, Sec. 26	SBM	26	26	04S	23E	04Sx23E	Sec. 26, T04S, R23E	T04S, R23E, Sec. 26	Sec. 26, T04S, R23E	34.8	
T04S, R23E, Sec. 36	SBM	36	36	04S	23E	04Sx23E	Sec. 36, T04S, R23E	T04S, R23E, Sec. 36	Sec. 36, T04S, R23E	40.1	

EA: 1G000 Riv95, PM 14.0 to San Bernardino County line at PM 36.2.
All reported locations and values are approximate.
PLSS data is adjusted in some locations by CTD8RWE, from CT D8 GIS Support, originally sourced from BLM.
R/W boundary data is record data loosely assembled on not enough field survey data to support additional R/W acquisition.

The project consists of restoration of storm-eroded embankments with rock slope protection (RSP) and replacement of culverts on US-95 from PM 14 to PM 36.20. With this project, Caltrans proposes 1) construction of water embankment protection systems with RSP at eight (8) desert wash locations, construction of a concrete apron for drainage purposes and non-erodible concreted RSP at the downstream edge of traveled way (ETW); 2) construction of

concrete aprons at the upstream ETW at RSP locations 2,4, & 8 to prevent undercutting of the Edge of Pavement (EP); 3) install Rumble Strips (RS) along the concrete aprons, to alert drivers of errant vehicles from running off the road; and 4) replace and upgrade 12 existing culverts. Staging areas are will occur at PM 22.6 and PM 26.2.

Determination

This Negative Declaration is included to give notice to interested agencies and the public that it is Caltrans' intent to adopt a Negative Declaration for this project. This does not mean that Caltrans' decision on the project is final. This Negative Declaration is subject to change based on comments received by interested agencies and the public.

Caltrans has prepared an Initial Study for this project and, pending public review, expects to determine from this study that the project would not have a significant effect on the environment for the following reasons.

The project will have no effect on: Aesthetics, Agriculture and Forest Resources, Air Resources, Geology and Soils, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Hydrology and Water Quality, Land Use Planning, Mineral Resources, Noise, Population and Housing, Public Services, Recreation, Transportation and Traffic, and Utilities and Service Systems.

In addition, the project would have no significant effect on Biological and Cultural Resources because the following measures would reduce potential effects to less than significant:

Avoidance and Minimization Efforts

BIO-1 The project has identified two potential Staging Areas and approval of additional staging areas will require the Caltrans Biologist analyze potential project impacts and receive authorization for additional staging areas. Prior to the beginning of construction, the staging areas will be fenced with temporary desert tortoise fence and maintained throughout construction in order to prevent the work areas from extending beyond the approved temporary staging area, and to avoid encroachment into the native desert habitat.

BIO-2 Pre-construction plant surveys will occur prior to the mobilization and commencement of construction by a qualified biologist. The qualified biologist will survey the project impact areas and flag special status plant species for avoidance and to minimize impacts. The qualified biologist will be designated to oversee compliance of all protective measures and will notify the resident engineer and District Biologist if project activities are not compliant. The resident engineer must stop work until corrective actions are taken and protective measures are implemented.

BIO-3 Biological Resource Information Program: An education program will be developed and presented by a qualified biologist to all onsite personnel, who will be in the project limits for longer than 30 minutes, prior to the onset of

ground-disturbing activities. At a minimum, the program will include the following topics: distribution, general behavior, and ecology of the desert tortoise, sensitivity of the species to human activities, legal protection afforded to these species, penalties for violations of federal and state laws, notification procedures by workers or contractors if a tortoise is found in a construction area, and project features designed to reduce the impacts to these species and promote continued successful occupation of the project area. The program will consist of a class presented by a qualified biologist or a video, provided the qualified biologist is present to answer questions. Handout materials will be distributed for workers with important information about the regulated species for future reference and as a reminder of the program's content. Following the education program, the handouts will be posted at all construction field offices and on all information boards, where they will remain throughout the duration of the project. If at any time a desert tortoise is observed in the project area, the Resident Engineer will cease operations immediately and will contact the Caltrans Environmental Stewardship & Monitoring Unit.

BIO-4 Whenever project vehicles are parked outside of a fence that is intended to preclude entry by desert tortoises, workers will check regularly under the vehicle before moving the vehicles or equipment. If a desert tortoise is beneath the vehicle, the worker will notify the qualified biologist. If a qualified biologist is not present on-site, the Resident Engineer or supervisor must notify the Caltrans Biologist. Workers will not be allowed to capture, handle, or relocate tortoises.

BIO-5 Immediately prior to the start of any ground-disturbing activities and prior to the installation of any desert tortoise exclusion fencing, clearance surveys for the desert tortoise will be conducted by the qualified Biologist. The entire project area will be surveyed for desert tortoise and their burrows by a qualified biologist before the start of any ground-disturbing activities according to the 2018 Field Survey Protocol. If burrows are found, they will be examined by the qualified biologist to determine if any desert tortoises are present. If desert tortoises are present at the project site, then Caltrans will consult with US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) to determine the appropriate protective measures.

BIO-6 Temporary exclusion fencing will be installed outlining the perimeter of any construction staging, storage or batch plant areas to prevent entry by desert tortoises into the work site. Exclusion fencing will be installed following USFWS guidelines. The biologist will ensure that desert tortoises cannot pass under, over, or around the fence. The biologist must regularly check the fenced area and notify the Engineer should it become damaged and require repair.

BIO-7 The qualified biologist will inform USFWS and CDFW of any injured or dead tortoises found on site (verbal notification within 24 hours and written notification within 5 days).

BIO-8 The qualified biologist will conduct regular on-site monitoring for the duration of the project and submit monthly monitoring reports for desert tortoise and compliance of protective measures.

BIO-9 Except on maintained public roads designated for higher speeds or within desert tortoise-proof fenced area, driving speed will not exceed 20 miles per hour through potential desert tortoise habitat on unpaved roads.

BIO-10 Litter control measures will be implemented. Litter will be contained in containers to prevent attracting common ravens or other potential predators of the desert tortoise. Workers are prohibited from feeding all wildlife.

CR-1 If buried cultural resources are encountered during construction, it is Caltrans policy that work stop in that area until a qualified archaeologist can evaluate the nature and significance of the find.

CR-2 In the event that human remains are found, the county coroner shall be notified and ALL construction work activities within 50 feet of the discovery shall stop. Pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 5097.98, if the remains are thought to be Native American, the coroner will notify the Most Likely Descendent (MLD). The person who discovered will contact the District 8 Native American Coordinator (DNAC) Gary Jones at (909) 383-7505. Further provisions of PRC 5097.98 are to be followed as applicable.

CR-3 CA-RIV-5546 and SRI-2 shall be designated as Environmentally Sensitive Areas, where all project related activities or inadvertent disturbances shall be prohibited. The designation of Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs) will protect CA-RIV-5546 and SRI-2.

CR-4 Archaeological and tribal monitors shall be present during any construction or preconstruction-related activity in all areas designated as Archaeological Monitoring Areas. In the event that cultural deposits are uncovered, the archaeological monitor shall be empowered to implement protective measures outlined above in CR-1.

David Bricker
Deputy District Director
District 8, Division of Environmental Planning
California Department of Transportation

3/1/19
Date

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Chapter 1 – Introduction

PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND BACKGROUND:

Project Title:	Rock Slope Protection and Culvert Replacement
Lead Agency Name and Address:	California Department of Transportation, District 8 464 West 4th Street San Bernardino, CA 92401-1400
Contact Person and Telephone Number:	Antonia Toledo, MS Senior Environmental Planner Email address: antonia.toledo@dot.ca.gov
Project Location:	US-95 in Riverside County (PM 14-36.20)
Project Sponsor's Name and Address:	California Department of Transportation, District 8 464 West 4th Street San Bernardino, CA 92401-1400
General Plan Description:	According to the Eastern Riverside County Land Use Plan Map, the project area is mapped as primarily Open Space Rural and a portion of the project area is within the Palo Verde Valley Area Plan. According to the plan, most of the land along US-95 is classified as either open space rural or agricultural. The Bristol Mountains Wilderness Area is located close to US-95. Much of the land along US-95 is owned by the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM). There are also Tribal Lands along the route and private unincorporated land. The project is situated in a remote area with few businesses and several small residential communities along the Colorado River not located in the immediate vicinity of the route.
Zoning:	The Colorado River is a major recreational/tourist attraction and a notable economic asset. A special policy area applies to the land adjacent to the river, both northerly and southerly of the City of Blythe.
Description of Project:	The project consists restoration of storm-eroded embankments with rock slope protection (RSP) and replacement of culverts on US-95 from PM 14 to PM 36.2. The scope involves construction of a water embankment protection system, with a concrete apron and RSP, at eight (8) desert wash locations; install Rumble Strips (RS) along the concrete aprons; and replace and upgrade twelve (12) existing culverts. This project will restore this transportation facility to its original condition – prior to damage caused by flash flood events. Installing the improvements as part of one project will limit the number of road closures necessary to address maintenance repairs as they come up.
Surrounding Land Uses and Setting:	The project area extends along a 22.2-mile distance between Post Mile (PM) 14 and PM36.20 near the San Bernardino County Line on US-95 in the unincorporated territory of Riverside County, California (Appendix A, *Regional Vicinity Map.* The project spans

	from approximately 16 miles north of the city of Blythe to Vidal (Appendix A: Figure 2, *Local Vicinity Map*). The Project alignment traverses portions of the following United States Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute topographic quadrangles: Big Maria Mountains SE, Big Maria Mountains NE, Poston, Parker SW, and Vidal, California (Appendix A: Figure 3, *Topographic Map with USGS 7.5-Minute Quadrangle Index*). The project crosses through several Ranges and Townships (Table 1, *Townships, Ranges, and Sections in the Project Area*).
Other Public Agencies Whose Approval is Required:	California Department of Fish & Wildlife, Regional Water Quality Control Board.

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED:

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project. Please see the CEQA checklist for additional information. Any boxes *not* checked represent issues that were considered as part of the scoping and environmental analysis for the project, but for which no adverse impacts were identified; therefore, no further discussion of those issues is in this document.

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

Antonia Toledo, MS
Senior Environmental Planner
District 8, Division of Environmental Planning
California Department of Transportation

3/1/19
Date

Chapter 2 – CEQA Environmental Checklist

08-SBD-40	R125-R154.6	0815000201
Dist.-Co.-Rte.	P.M/P.M.	Project ID#

This checklist identifies physical, biological, social and economic factors that might be affected by the project. In many cases, background studies performed in connection with the projects indicated no impacts. A NO IMPACT answer in the last column reflects this determination. Where a clarifying discussion is needed, the discussion either follows the applicable section in the checklist or is placed within the body of the environmental document itself. The words "significant" and "significance" used throughout the following checklist are related to CEQA—not NEPA—impacts. The questions in this form are intended to encourage the thoughtful assessment of impacts and do not represent thresholds of significance.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
I. AESTHETICS: Would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	☐	☐	☐	☒
II. AGRICULTURE AND FOREST RESOURCES: Would the project:				
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	☐	☐	☐	☒
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))?	☐	☐	☐	☒

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	☐	☐	☐	☒
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
III. AIR QUALITY: Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:				
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non- attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?	☐	☐	☐	☒
IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES: Would the project:				
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 Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☐	☒	☐
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 Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	☐	☐	☒	☐
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?	☐	☐	☒	☐
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	☐	☐	☐	☒

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
V. CULTURAL RESOURCES: Would the project:				
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in §15064.5?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	☐	☐	☐	☒
VI. GEOLOGY AND SOILS: Would the project:				
a) Expose people or structures to 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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	☐	☐	☐	☒
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	☐	☐	☐	☒
iv) Landslides?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	☐	☐	☐	☒
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?	☐	☐	☐	☒
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
VII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS: Would the project:				
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment? b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	Caltrans has used the best available information based to the extent possible on scientific and factual information, to describe, calculate, or estimate the amount of greenhouse gas emissions that may occur related to this project. The analysis included in the climate change section of this document provides the public and decision-makers as much information about the project as possible. It is Caltrans' determination that in the absence of statewide-adopted thresholds or GHG emissions limits, it is too speculative to make a significance determination regarding an individual project's direct and indirect impacts with respect to global climate change. Caltrans remains committed to implementing measures to reduce the potential effects of the project. These measures are outlined in the climate change section that follows the CEQA checklist and related discussions			
VIII. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS: Would the project:				
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	☐	☐	☐	☒
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
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 for people residing or working in the project area?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?	☐	☐	☐	☒
g) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒
h) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?	☐	☐	☐	☒

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
IX. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY: Would the project:				
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned storm water drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?	☐	☐	☐	☒
g) Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?	☐	☐	☐	☒
h) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures which would impede or redirect flood flows?	☐	☐	☐	☒
i) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?	☐	☐	☐	☒
j) Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow	☐	☐	☐	☒
X. LAND USE AND PLANNING: Would the project:				
a) Physically divide an established community?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XI. MINERAL RESOURCES: Would the project:				
a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒
XII. NOISE: Would the project result in:				
a) Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	☐	☐	☐	☒
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 expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	☐	☐	☐	☒
XIII. POPULATION AND HOUSING: Would the project:				
a) Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	☐	☐	☐	☒

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XIV. PUBLIC SERVICES:				
a) Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:	☐	☐	☐	☒
Fire protection?	☐	☐	☐	☒
Police protection?	☐	☐	☐	☒
Schools?	☐	☐	☐	☒
Parks?	☐	☐	☐	☒
Other public facilities?	☐	☐	☐	☒
XV. RECREATION:				
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
XVI. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC: Would the project:				
a) Conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation including mass transit and non-motorized travel and relevant components of the circulation system, including but not limited to intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Conflict with an applicable congestion management program, including, but not limited to level of service standards and travel demand measures, or other standards established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e) Result in inadequate emergency access?	☐	☐	☒	☐

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
f) Conflict with adopted policies, plans or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such facilities?	☐	☐	☐	☒
XVII. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS: Would the project:				
a) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e) 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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?	☐	☐	☐	☒
g) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	☐	☐	☐	☒
XVIII. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE				
a) Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, 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?	☐	☐	☒	☐
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)?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Chapter 3 – Checklist Discussion

I. Aesthetics

a) No Impact. Visual impacts on scenic vistas are not anticipated, as there will be no change to the existing height of roadway or other structural elements thereof. The new shoulders and rumble strips will look the same characteristically as the existing roadway. The improvements will not have a significant impact on a scenic vista or obscure significant views.

b) No Impact. Although US-95 is eligible for the State Scenic Highway System, it is not designated as a state scenic highway (Caltrans 2017) and is not noted in the County of Riverside General Plan as a County-designated Scenic Route. Most of the land along US-95 is undeveloped desert lands or agricultural farmland with the exception of the city of Blythe that has residential communities near the route. The project site does not contain any structures and will not damage any scenic resources or historic buildings.

c) No Impact. The existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings will remain the same as existing conditions; therefore, the project will not substantially degrade the area.

d) No Impact. The project will not implement or create any new sources of light or glare that will adversely affect day or night-time views in the area.

Avoidance, Minimization, and Mitigation Measures

No measures for Aesthetics are proposed.

II. Agriculture and Forest Resources

a) No Impact. According to the California Department of Conservation's Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program, there are farmlands or vacant lands that are mapped as Prime Farmlands, Unique Farmlands, Farmlands of Statewide Importance, or Farmlands of Local Importance but are located to the south, just outside of the project.

b) No Impact. There are no properties within the study area under a Williamson Act contract.

c) No Impact. There are no forest lands, timberlands, or timberland production areas adjacent or within the project site. The project will not conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned Timberland Production.

d) No Impact. The project will not result in the loss or conversion of forest land.

e) No Impact. There are no forest lands, timberlands, or agricultural lands within or adjacent to the project site. The project will not involve changes that will result in the conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use or forest land to non-forest use.

Avoidance, Minimization, and Mitigation Measures

No measures are required for Agriculture and Forest Resources.

III. Air Quality

a) No Impact. California is divided geographically into 15 air basins for the purpose of managing the air resources of the state on a regional basis. Each air basin generally has similar meteorological and geographic conditions throughout. Local districts are responsible for preparing the portion of the SIP applicable within their boundaries.

The project is located in the Mojave Desert Air Basin (MDAB) that is attainment and unclassified for criteria pollutants, Particulate Matter ($PM_{2.5}$) and Ozone (O_3), PM_{10}, Carbon Monoxide (CO), and Nitrogen Dioxide (NO_2), Sulfur Dioxide (SO2) and Lead (Pb) according to the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). The pollutants emissions from the project operations or construction activities will not be of concern in regard to human health. The Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District (MDAQMD) has the responsibility of managing the air resources for the portion of the Basin in which the project is located and is responsible for ensuring compliance with federal and state air quality standards. To achieve this goal, MDAQMD prepares plans for the attainment of air quality standards, as well as maintenance of those standards once achieved.

Per the Air Quality Conformity Checklist, signed on 12/26/2017, this project is exempt per 40 CFR 93.126 under project type: Improve Roadside Safety. The exempt status of the project remains the same from an air quality perspective. Hence, no air quality analysis is needed for this project. Further, transportation air conformity requirements do not apply on this exempt project per EPA Transportation Conformity Rule (1993) even though the project may have federal funding and nexus. The project is listed, as currently proposed, in the region's conforming Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) 2016-2040, Regional Transportation Plan/ Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS), and the 2017 Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP) regional transportation planning documents. The proposed emissions are consistent with applicable air quality plans.

b) No Impact.

Construction

During construction, short-term degradation of air quality may occur due to the release of particulate emissions (airborne dust) generated by excavation, grading, hauling, and other construction-related activities. Emissions from construction equipment are also expected and will include CO, nitrogen oxides (NOx), volatile organic compounds (VOCs), directly emitted particulate matter (PM10 and PM2.5), and toxic air contaminants such as diesel exhaust particulate matter. Ozone is a regional pollutant that is derived from NOx and VOCs in the presence of sunlight and heat.

Site preparation and roadway construction typically involve clearing; cut-and-fill activities; grading, removing, or improving existing roadways; building bridges; and paving roadway surfaces. Construction-related effects on air quality from most highway projects will be greatest during the site preparation phase because most engine emissions are associated with the excavation, handling, and transport of soils to and from the site. These activities could temporarily generate enough PM10,

PM2.5, and small amounts of CO, SO_2, NOx, and VOCs. However, since this project involves restoration of 8 storm-eroded embankments with rock slope protection (RSP) and replacement of 12 culverts it should not be an issue.

Sources of fugitive dust will include disturbed soils at the construction site and trucks carrying uncovered loads of soils. Unless properly controlled, vehicles leaving the site could deposit mud on US-95, which could be an added source of airborne dust after it dries. PM10 emissions will vary from day to day, depending on the nature and magnitude of construction activity and local weather conditions. PM10 emissions will depend on soil moisture, silt content of soil, wind speed, and the amount of equipment operating. Larger dust particles will settle near the source, while fine particles will be dispersed over greater distances from the construction site.

In addition to dust-related PM10 emissions, heavy-duty trucks and construction equipment powered by gasoline and diesel engines will generate CO, SO_2, NOx, VOCs, and some soot particulate (PM10 and PM2.5) in exhaust emissions. Construction activities are not expected to increase traffic congestion in the area, therefore CO and other emissions from traffic will not increase slightly. These emissions will be temporary and limited to the immediate area surrounding the construction site.

SO_2 is generated by oxidation during combustion of organic sulfur compounds contained in diesel fuel. Under California law and ARB regulations, off-road diesel fuel used in California must meet the same sulfur and other standards as on-road diesel fuel (not more than 15 parts per million of sulfur), so SO_2-related issues due to diesel exhaust will be minimal.

Some phases of construction, particularly asphalt paving, may result in short-term odors in the immediate area of each paving site(s). Such odors will quickly disperse to below detectable levels as distance from the site(s) increases.

Most of the construction impacts on air quality are short-term in duration and, therefore, will not result in long-term adverse conditions. Implementation of the standard measures, such as compliance with MDAQMD Rule 403 to reduce on-site fugitive dust, will reduce any air quality impacts resulting from construction activities to no impact.

Operation

Because the project will not increase the number of travel lanes on US-95, no increase in vehicle miles traveled (VMT) will occur as result of project implementation, and traffic volumes will be the same under the Build Alternative and No-Build Alternative. Therefore, the project will not increase emissions for criteria pollutants and their precursors following the construction period. No operational impacts related to violation of air quality standards will occur.

c) No Impact. As discussed above, project construction will generate criteria pollutants and their precursors. However, since the project is in an attainment area, such emissions will be short term and transitory, and fugitive dust will be limited through compliance with MDAQMD Rule 403. No net increase in operational emissions will occur, as traffic volumes will be the same under the Build Alternative and No-Build Alternative. Because project construction will result in short-term generation of emissions, but no increases will occur for project operation, impacts related to a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutants will no impact.

d) No Impact. Although sensitive land uses are located within 500 feet of ARB defined sensitive land uses, no impacts related to exposure of sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentration will occur. California Air Resources Board (CARB) characterizes sensitive land uses as simply as possible by using the example of residences, schools, day care centers, playgrounds, and medical facilities. However, a variety of facilities are encompassed. For example, residences can include houses, apartments, and senior living complexes. Medical facilities can include hospitals, convalescent homes, and health clinics. Playgrounds could be play areas associated with parks or community centers.[1]

e) No Impact. According to the ARB, land uses associated with odor complaints typically include agricultural uses, wastewater treatment plants, food processing plants, chemical plants, composting areas, refineries, landfills, dairies, and fiberglass molding facilities. Because the project will not include any of these types of uses, and no sensitive land uses are located along the project alignment, no impacts will occur.

Avoidance, Minimization, and Mitigation Measures

The following Air Quality measures will be implemented to minimize potential impacts located in Caltrans' provisions in Section 14-9, "Air Quality," of the 2018 Standard Specifications (SSPs) and Special Provisions:

AQ-1 During construction, implement Caltrans' SSPs Sections 14-9.02 (Air Pollution Control), 14-9.03 (Dust Control), and MDAQMD Rule 403.2 (Fugitive Dust Control) to avoid and/or minimize potential impact to air quality.

AQ-2 Implement and follow Erosion Control and Air Quality Best Management Practices (BMPs).

IV. Biological Resources

The information from this section is based on the Natural Environment Study Minimal Impact (NESMI) (Caltrans 2018) that was approved for the project on December 3, 2018.

a, b, c, & d) Less Than Significant Impact. The project is located within the United States Geological Survey (USGS) topographic quadrangle maps, Big Maria Mountains NE, Big Maria Mountains SE, and Vidal with Colorado River to the east of the project site and the Big Maria Mountains to the west. The project limits are mostly undeveloped and support open desert-creosote scrub habitat. The terrain of the Big Maria Mountains varies from gently sloping Alluvial fans (bajadas) to numerous rough, craggy peaks disjointed by steep canyons. The northern boundary lies south of a major drainage known as Big Wash, and the eastern edge parallels US-95 and the Colorado River. The west and south boundaries follow power lines and contours along the base of the mountains.

The biological and physical conditions within the project limits vary to a certain extent, but are mostly characteristic of the flora, fauna, and physical conditions found within the Lower Colorado River

[1] California Environment Protection Agency, California Air Resources Board, Air Quality and Land Use Handbook: A Community Health Perspective (2005), Page 2. www.arb.ca.gov/ch/landuse.htm

Valley, within the Colorado Desert of the Sonoran Desert with the Big Maria Mountains and the Colorado River dominating the landscape. The area is mostly characteristic of creosote and bur sage dominating the valley floors and ascending from the valley and into the bajadas, various subtrees include mesquite, paloverde, desert ironwood, and desert willow. The project limits have a steady downhill slope with the northern project limits at PM 36.2 at an elevation of 550 feet, and the southern project limits at PM 14.0 at an elevation of 350 feet above sea level.

Natural Communities

The Biological Study Area (BSA) is mostly within the Big Wash Watershed with the Big Maria Mountains flowing in southeasterly drainage from the northernmost portions of the project limits at the San Bernardino/Riverside county line (PM 36.2) to the south where Big Wash crosses the BSA at the southernmost portion of the project limits (PM 18.5) and enters flow into the Colorado River. The southernmost portion (PM 14.0) of the project lies within the Palo Verde Valley and is part of the Palo Verde Dam. The Palo Verde Dam is a diversion dam on the Colorado River in La Paz County, Arizona, and Riverside County, California, in the southwestern United States, approximately 9 miles northeast of Blythe. The dam is earthen and rockfill, built solely to divert water into irrigation canals serving the Palo Verde Irrigation District.

The BSA includes undeveloped open space within the Sonoran Desert biome. Dominant vegetation communities within the BSA are consistent with *Larrea tridentata-Ambrosia dumosa* Shrubland Alliance (creosote bush – white burr sage scrub), *Parkinsonia florida-Olneya tesota* Woodland Alliance (Blue palo verde – Ironwood woodland), and *Prosopis glandulosa* Woodland Alliance (Mesquite bosque) with the presence and dominance of each of these habitats varying between individual sites. A few sites had what appeared to be very limited *Pluchea sericea* Shrubland Alliance (Arrowweed thickets) vegetation.

Most of the different individual sites have received varying degrees of disturbance including clearing, trash deposition, and ORV use (including establishment of trails and small "riding courses"). These types of impacts are commonly observed on small sites that are located directly adjacent to well-used transportation corridors such as US-95. The two Project staging areas consist of sites that have been mostly cleared in the past and have continual use by Caltrans Maintenance crews.

Additionally, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) has proposed critical habitat for western yellow-billed cuckoo within the BSA, although the travelled lanes and graded shoulders are highly degraded and will not provide suitable habitat for western yellow-billed cuckoo.

Plants Species

The project is dominated with desert washes mostly flowing in a southeasterly direction, which empty into the Big Wash and eventually into the Colorado River. The project supports dense desert scrub vegetation with minimal human disturbances. Dominant vegetation communities within the BSA are consistent with *Larrea tridentata-Ambrosia dumosa* Shrubland Alliance (creosote bush – white burr sage scrub), *Parkinsonia florida-Olneya tesota* Woodland Alliance (Blue palo verde – Ironwood woodland), and *Prosopis glandulosa* Woodland Alliance (Mesquite bosque) with the presence and dominance of each of these habitats varying between individual sites. Areas of the two Woodland Alliances (both mesquite bosque and blue palo verde-ironwood woodlands) are intermittently present throughout the BSA, mainly on those sites that are associated with larger wash channels. Dominant

perennial plant species detected on-site and in adjacent areas included creosote bush (*Larrea tridentata*), white bursage (*Ambrosia dumosa*), brittlebush (*Encelia farinosa*), blue palo verde (*Parkinsonia florida*), honey mesquite (*Prosopis glandulosa*), ironwood (*Olneya tesota*), catclaw (Senegalia greggii), arrow weed (*Pluchea sericea*), and allscale saltbush (*Atriplex polycarpa*).

Invasive Species
Invasive Species (Executive Order 13112) states that Federal Agencies are not to authorize, fund, or carry out actions that it believes are likely to cause or promote the introduction or spread of invasive species in the United States. All actions related to this project are required to be conducted in accordance with Executive Order 13112.

Animal Species
A California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB), and USFWS Information for Planning and Consultation (IPAC) search was conducted for the BSA and potential sensitive species.

The Focused Desert Tortoise and Burrowing Owl Habitat Assessment, completed in December 2018, determined the project sites are located outside of all designated critical habitats, Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs), Desert Wildlife Management Areas (DWMAs) and desert tortoise recovery units as described in the Revised Desert Tortoise Recovery Plan for the Mojave Population of the Desert Tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*). Two of the project sites (RSP-8 and northern-most staging/storage area), are located approximately 250 feet and over 0.5 mile east of the Chuckwalla to Chemehuevi Tortoise Linkage ACEC respectively. The focused desert tortoise and burrowing owl surveys resulted in negative survey findings.

Additionally, special status biological resources known from the vicinity are considered to be currently absent from the project site based on an overall lack of suitable habitat, or as in the case of the desert tortoise, negative survey findings. In the case of the birds and bats, any of these species could temporarily and/or periodically occur on-site for foraging purposes and/or during migration. Nesting habitat (for most of the birds) and roosting habitat (for all of the bats), however, is lacking from the site and therefore these species, with the exception of a few birds, are considered to be absent from the site for nesting or roosting purposes.

Vertebrate wildlife directly observed and/or detected otherwise during the surveys included a total of 28 species. Three (3) common reptile species were observed on-site during the assessment. These included side-blotched lizard (*Uta stansburiana*), desert iguana (*Dipsosaurus dorsalis*) and gopher snake (*Pituophis catenifer*). The seventeen (17) species of birds observed onsite included, but were not limited to: red-tailed hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*), American kestrel (*Falco sparverius*), ladder-backed woodpecker (*Dryobates scalaris*), common raven (*Corvus corax*), verdin (*Auriparus flaviceps*), rock wren (*Salpinctes obsoletus*), black-tailed gnatcatcher (*Polioptila melanura*), phainopepla (*Phainopepla nitens*) and white-crowned sparrow (*Zonotrichia leucophrys*). The eight (8) mammal species detected on-site included, but were not limited to: desert cottontail (*Sylvilagus audubonii*), round-tailed ground squirrel (*Xerospermophilus tereticaudus*), coyote (*Canis latrans*) and desert woodrat (*Neotoma lepida*).

No direct impacts to other listed animal species are anticipated.

Regional Species and Natural Communities of Concern
The CDFW CNDDB did not identify regional species or natural communities of concern that have the potential to occur within the BSA, thus the project will not affect regional species or natural communities of concern.

A literature review of the CNDDB and IPAC resulted in the identification of (29) special-status biological resources known to occur in the vicinity (within an approximate 1-mile radius) of the project sites. These included: five (5) plants, three (3) vegetation communities, one (1) invertebrate, one (1) fish, one (1) reptile, fifteen (15) birds, and three (3) mammals. Although the locations of the RSP, culvert replacements and staging/storage areas largely within previously disturbed roadside areas adjacent to the existing US-95, there remains a very low potential for some special status biological resources to occur on-site. As a result, implementation of the project is expected to result in a relatively small amount of minor disturbance to primarily disturbed and/or developed roadside areas. Due to a lack of suitable habitat, the majority of the special status biological resources reported from the vicinity of the project site are considered to be absent and are thus not expected to be affected by implementation of the project.

Critical Habitat and Wildlife Movement Corridors
The BSA is not within a Habitat Conservation Plan, a CDFW or a USFWS-designated wildlife movement corridor the; thus, construction of the project will not impede or constraint wildlife movement. Additionally, the BSA is located within proposed USFWS critical habitat for western yellow-billed cuckoo but the project is limited to the travelled lanes, graded shoulders, and temporary staging areas. The project impact areas do not provide suitable habitat and the project will have no impacts to western yellow billed cuckoo.

Habitats and Natural Communities of Special Concern (SSC)
Within the BSA there were no known historical occurrence for habitats and natural communities of special concern as described by the CDFW CNDDB occurrence report. Additionally, the general biological assessment did not identify natural communities of special concern within the BSA and the project is taking place on the existing road. Therefore, Caltrans will not affect habitats or natural communities of concern.

The project crosses several desert washes mostly flowing in a southeasterly direction, which empties into Big Wash and eventually into the Colorado River. The project supports dense desert scrub vegetation with minimal human disturbances and is mostly dominated with creosote bush-white burr sage scrub alliance within the southern project limits and blue paloverde-ironwood woodland alliance within the higher elevation and northern project limits. Survey results indicated no habitats or natural communities of special concern exist within the BSA.

Special Status and Listed Plant Species
The CDFW CNDDB did not identify special status plant species that have the potential to occur within the BSA. The project will not impact suitable habitat for special status plant species given the project is limited to the paved roadway and graded shoulders, thus the project will not affect special status plant species and its habitat.

Listed and Species of Special Concern Status Occurrences
US Fish and Wildlife Services identified southwestern willow flycatcher, yuma clapper rail, desert tortoise, razorback sucker, and proposed critical habitat for western yellow-billed cuckoo that may potentially occur within the BSA. Species with suitable or absent habitat, including a summary of their potential presence within the project impact areas were evaluated in the NESMI. In compliance with the USFWS Programmatic Biological Opinion (PBO) (8-8-10-F-59), issued on November 5, 2013, a streamlined USFWS consultation for desert tortoise is being conducted and will conclude prior to adoption of the final environmental document or project approval. The measures proposed thus far, for protection of the desert tortoise, are primarily based on the USFWS PBO.

The CDFW CNDDB identified six listed and nine special status species that may potentially occur within the BSA which include, western yellow-billed cuckoo, gilded flicker (*Colaptes chrysoides*), desert tortoise, gila woodpecker (*Melanerpes uropygialis*), elf owl (*Micrathene whitneyi*), yuma clapper rail, summer tanger, cave myotis, brown-crested flycatcher, California leaf-nosed bat, yellow-breasted chat, Townsend's big-eared bat, vermillion flycatcher, crissal thrasher, American badger, and pallid bat to have the potential to occur within the project impact areas. Species with suitable or absent habitat, including a summary of their potential presence within the project impact areas were evaluated in the NESMI.

Desert Tortoise and its Critical Habitat Survey Results
USFWS IPAC and CNDDB species lists both identified desert tortoise as a federal and state-threatened species with the potential of occurring within the BSA. The project site is located within the Colorado Desert Recovery Unit as described in the Revised Desert Tortoise Recovery Plan for the Mojave Population of the Desert Tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*). None of the culvert locations are located within designated critical habitat for the desert tortoise or in an Area of Critical Environmental Concern or Desert Wildlife Management Area.

As mentioned earlier, the Focused Desert Tortoise and Burrowing Owl Habitat Assessment completed in December 2018 determined the project sites are located outside of all designated critical habitats, Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs), Desert Wildlife Management Areas (DWMAs) and desert tortoise recovery units as described in the Revised Desert Tortoise Recovery Plan for the Mojave Population of the Desert Tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*). Two of the project sites (RSP-8 and northern-most staging/storage area), are located approximately 250 feet and over 0.5 mile east of the Chuckwalla to Chemehuevi Tortoise Linkage ACEC respectively. The focused desert tortoise and burrowing owl surveys resulted in negative survey findings.

Additionally, special status biological resources known from the vicinity are considered to be currently absent from the project site based on an overall lack of suitable habitat, or as in the case of the desert tortoise, negative survey findings. However, because of the existence of marginally suitable habitat in the project area, Caltrans is assuming presence of the desert tortoise to avoid potential impacts or take.

Wetlands and Other Waters
The project proposes placement of RSP, concrete and shoulder backing where the roadway crosses at desert washes to restore the roadway since the roadway is built at-grade.

The Jurisdictional Delineation (JD) identified 34 jurisdictional drainages totaling 4.42 acres. Several ephemeral drainages traverse the study area and either flow generally west to east before reaching the Colorado River. The drainages typically exhibited unvegetated streambeds with steeply-sloping to vertically-incised banks. The substrate of a majority of the drainages was coarse gravelly sand with cobbles. The streambed of the on-site jurisdictional drainages were largely unvegetated and the banks were dominated by creosote bush (*Larrea tridentata,*), honey mesquite (*Prosopis glandulosa var. torreyana*), smoke tree (*Psorothamnus spinosus*), cheesebush (*Ambrosia salsola*), white bur-sage (*Ambrosia dumosa*), allscale saltbush (*Atriplex polycarpa*), sweetbush (*Bebbia juncae*), fan-leaved tiquilia (*Tiquilia plicata*), button brittlebush (*Encelia frutescens*), rush milkweed (*Asclepias subulate*), brittlebush (*Encelia farinosa*), and catclaw acacia (*Senegalia greggii*). Permanent impacts were assessed for jurisdictional areas where grouted rip-rap will be added and an approximate area of 0.32 acres of Waters of the State will be impacted. Temporary impacts were assessed for a total of 1.2 acres of impacts to Waters of the State.

This project will require 1602 Streambed Alternation Agreement from CDFW, 401 water certification from the RWQCB, and a 404 nationwide permit from USACE. During final design, exact impact areas will be calculated and permits processed.

Section 404 of the Federal Clean Water Act
Dredge and fill activities in USACE jurisdictional waters of the United States require an USACE Permit. Caltrans may be required to file Nationwide Permit #14 Linear Transportation Projects for reestablishing the shoulder backing at the desert washes. Nationwide Permit #14 Linear Transportation Projects allows Caltrans for activities intended for crossings of waters of the United States associated with the construction, expansion, modification, or improvement of linear transportation projects in waters of the United States. For linear transportation projects in non-tidal waters, the discharge cannot cause the loss of greater than 1/2-acre of waters of the United States. For linear transportation projects in tidal waters, the discharge cannot cause the loss of greater than 1/3-acre of waters of the United States. Any stream channel modification, including bank stabilization, is limited to the minimum necessary to construct or protect the linear transportation project; such modifications must be in the immediate vicinity of the project.

Caltrans may apply for Nationwide Permit #14 for placement of material/shoulder backing under the authority of Section 404 of the Clean Water Act if all the construction activities meet all conditions under Nationwide Permit #14.

Section 401 State Water Board Certification of the 2017 Nationwide Permits
The Clean Water Act (CWA) section 401 Water Quality Certification action and General Order (General Order) was issued at the request of USACE on March 19, 2017. This General Order conditionally certifies 14 Nationwide Permits for projects discharging to only waters of the United States. The State Water Board Certified Nationwide Permit #14 Linear Transportation, which allows activities required for crossings of waters of the United States associated with the construction, expansion, modification, or improvement of linear transportation projects in waters of the United States with the condition to provide notification requirements to the Colorado River Basin Water Quality Control Board.

Section 1602 of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife

If the placement of material will be placed within waters of the State under the current California Fish and Game Code Sections 1600-1616, CDFW has authority to regulate work that will substantially divert or obstruct the natural flow—or substantially change or use any material from the bed, channel, or bank—of any river, stream, or lake. CDFW requires a Streambed Alteration Agreement and is applicable to all projects involving state or local government discretionary approvals.

Caltrans will prepare and submit a Section 1602 Notification of Lake or Streambed Alteration for the purpose of reestablishing shoulder backing at the desert washes.

e) No Impact. The Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP) is the closest of such plans, but otherwise there are no such specific policies or ordinances protecting biological resources. Since US-95 is outside of the boundaries of the MSHCP there will be no impact.

f) No Impact. Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs) are designated within California Desert National Conservation Lands (Bureau of Land Management-BLM 2016). These ACECs provide the special management and delivery mechanism where that management is necessary to achieve the overarching conservation goals for the nationally significant ecological, cultural, and scientific values of the California Desert National Conservation Lands. Management decisions within these ACECs will take into account the larger landscape that makes up the California Desert National Conservation Lands that the ACEC falls within.

The BSA is not within a Habitat Conservation Plan, CDFW, or USFWS-designated wildlife corridor and the construction of the project will not impede or constrain wildlife movement. Additionally, the BSA is located within proposed USFWS critical habitat for western yellow-billed cuckoo but the project is limited to the travelled lanes, graded shoulders and temporary staging areas, the project impact areas do not provide suitable habitat and the project will have no impacts to western yellow billed cuckoo.

Project implementation will not conflict with provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan. No impacts are anticipated. This project lies immediately adjacent to critical habitat for desert tortoise. The subsequent protective measures, per the NESMI, must be followed for the desert tortoise along with other species of concern.

Avoidance, Minimization, and Mitigation Measures

To minimize impacts and avoid effects to the special status and listed plant species, the project will implement all applicable Caltrans Best Management Practices (BMPs) in addition to the following measures:

BIO-1 The project has identified two potential Staging Areas and approval of additional staging areas will require the Caltrans Biologist analyze potential project impacts and receive authorization for additional staging areas. Prior to the beginning of construction, the staging areas will be fenced with temporary desert tortoise fence and maintained throughout construction in order to prevent the work areas from extending

beyond the approved temporary staging area, and to avoid encroachment into the native desert habitat.

BIO-2 Pre-construction plant surveys will occur prior to the mobilization and commencement of construction by a qualified biologist. The qualified biologist will survey the project impact areas and flag special status plant species for avoidance and to minimize impacts. The qualified biologist will be designated to oversee compliance of all protective measures and will notify the resident engineer and District Biologist if project activities are not compliant. The resident engineer must stop work until corrective actions are taken and protective measures are implemented.

BIO-3 Biological Resource Information Program: An education program will be developed and presented by a qualified biologist to all onsite personnel, who will be in the project limits for longer than 30 minutes, prior to the onset of ground-disturbing activities. At a minimum, the program will include the following topics: distribution, general behavior, and ecology of the desert tortoise, sensitivity of the species to human activities, legal protection afforded to these species, penalties for violations of federal and state laws, notification procedures by workers or contractors if a tortoise is found in a construction area, and project features designed to reduce the impacts to these species and promote continued successful occupation of the project area. The program will consist of a class presented by a qualified biologist or a video, provided the qualified biologist is present to answer questions. Handout materials will be distributed for workers with important information about the regulated species for future reference and as a reminder of the program's content. Following the education program, the handouts will be posted at all construction field offices and on all information boards, where they will remain throughout the duration of the project. If at any time a desert tortoise is observed in the project area, the Resident Engineer will cease operations immediately and will contact the Caltrans Environmental Stewardship & Monitoring Unit.

BIO-4 Whenever project vehicles are parked outside of a fence that is intended to preclude entry by desert tortoises, workers will check regularly under the vehicle before moving the vehicles or equipment. If a desert tortoise is beneath the vehicle, the worker will notify the qualified biologist. If a qualified biologist is not present on-site, the Resident Engineer or supervisor must notify the Caltrans Biologist. Workers will not be allowed to capture, handle, or relocate tortoises.

BIO-5 Immediately prior to the start of any ground-disturbing activities and prior to the installation of any desert tortoise exclusion fencing, clearance surveys for the desert tortoise will be conducted by the qualified Biologist. The entire project area will be surveyed for desert tortoise and their burrows by a qualified biologist before the start of any ground-disturbing activities according to the 2018 Field Survey Protocol. If burrows are found, they will be examined by the qualified biologist to determine if any desert tortoises are present. If desert tortoises are present at the project site, then Caltrans will consult with US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and California

Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) to determine the appropriate protective measures.

BIO-6 Temporary exclusion fencing will be installed outlining the perimeter of any construction staging, storage or batch plant areas to prevent entry by desert tortoises into the work site. Exclusion fencing will be installed following USFWS guidelines. The biologist will ensure that desert tortoises cannot pass under, over, or around the fence. The biologist must regularly check the fenced area and notify the Engineer should it become damaged and require repair.

BIO-7 The qualified biologist will inform USFWS and CDFW of any injured or dead tortoises found on site (verbal notification within 24 hours and written notification within 5 days).

BIO-8 The qualified biologist will conduct regular on-site monitoring for the duration of the project and submit monthly monitoring reports for desert tortoise and compliance of protective measures.

BIO-9 Except on maintained public roads designated for higher speeds or within desert tortoise-proof fenced area, driving speed will not exceed 20 miles per hour through potential desert tortoise habitat on unpaved roads.

BIO-10 Litter control measures will be implemented. Litter will be contained in containers to prevent attracting common ravens or other potential predators of the desert tortoise. Workers are prohibited from feeding all wildlife.

V. Cultural Resources

a & b) Less Than Significant Impact. Information from this section was drawn from the Historic Property Survey Report (HPSR), Archaeological Survey Report (ASR) and the Finding of Effect (FOE) documents approved for the project by Caltrans in November 2018. Caltrans uses a single process to fulfill both its NHPA Section 106 and CEQA responsibilities.

As discussed in the HPSR and associated documents, Caltrans followed the standard industry practice cultural resources identification and impact analysis practices outlined in the Caltrans Standard Environmental Reference (SER) Volume II. This process involved establishing an Area of Potential Effects (APE) for the Project, conducting background research, performing a cultural resources record search at the California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS) Information Center, conducting a sacred lands file search through the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC), consultation with associated Native American tribes and individuals, and conducting intensive pedestrian field surveys.

As a result of this process, Caltrans identified 26 cultural resources that required evaluation against National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) and California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) Criteria to determine whether they were eligible for listing on the NRHP and/or CRHR. It was determined that three of these cultural resources located in the project APE will be considered NRHP

and CRHR-eligible for the purposes of the project, and are considered to be historical resources for the purposes of CEQA:

- SRI-2: This site consists of a 12-by-12-m lithic scatter composed of nearly 100 quartz flakes. Roughly two-thirds of these flakes are core flakes, with the remainder consisting of angular debris or indeterminate type flakes.
- CA-RIV-5546 (P-33-005817): A complex archaeological site with a trail segment, an intaglio, six possible intaglios, one ceramic concentration, several lithic flaking stations and several scattered artifacts.
- CHL-985 [Desert Training Center (DTC/C-AMA)]: The War Department recognized the need to train troops in conditions to those similar in North Africa. The first commanding officer of the DTC was Major General George S. Patton. The facility trained troops for roughly two years, 1942-1944.

These same three sites, SRI-2, CA-RIV-5546 (P-33-005817), and CHL-985 [Desert Training Center (DTC/C-AMA0] are considered archaeological sites for purposes of §15064.5

The undertaking, and its associated activities, will take place adjacent to CA-RIV-5546 and SRI-2. Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs) and Archaeological Monitoring Areas (AMAs) will be established, for both sites, which will protect the sites in their entirety from project impacts. The ESAs will be monitored during construction by archaeological and Tribal monitors. With the establishment of ESAs, the project will not result in the physical destruction of cultural deposits within the APE associated with either site. Furthermore, with ESAs and AMAs established at and near the locations of the prehistoric sites, inadvertent disturbance to any potentially significant subsurface archaeological deposits will be prevented.

The Desert Training Center/California-Arizona Maneuver Area is an extremely large historic landscape composed of numerous site types (i.e., maneuver areas, divisional camps, small unit training areas, air facilities and crash sites, campsites, ranges, railroad sidings and deposits, hospitals and medical facilities depots, airfields, ranges, bivouacs) and features (i.e., anti-tank ditches, camouflage areas, foxholes, minefields, observation positions, obstacles, refuse scatter and dumps, roads, rock features, rock insignias or cairns, rock walls, slit trenches, tank tracks, and tank traps) spread out over an extensive and discontiguous 18,000-square mile area. While the project APE crosses through the DTC/AMA, there are no elements of the Desert Training Center/California-Arizona Maneuver Area identified within the Project APE. Therefore, the project will have no appreciable impact on the DTC/AMA.

For the purposes of fulfilling its NHPA Section 106 responsibilities, Caltrans consulted with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) regarding its findings for the project. By letter dated January 2, 2019, SHPO concurred with Caltrans finding of No Adverse Effect for the project. Because Caltrans uses a single process for completing both its NHPA Section 106 and CEQA responsibilities, Caltrans used the same documentation (HPSR and associated documents) as the basis for its CEQA determinations. Because the project will not have an impact on the DTC/AMA, and the potential impacts to CA-RIV-5546 and SRI-2 have been avoided through establishment of ESAs and construction Monitoring, Caltrans has determined that the project will result in a less than significant impact on the three Historical Resources in the APE.

Additionally, a request was sent to the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) on August 23, 2017 requesting a Sacred Lands File Search. On October 10, 2017 the NAHC responded with negative results. The NAHC response included a list of tribes culturally affiliated with area that should be contacted.

Initially, Caltrans had determined that the level of Environmental Document was expected to be a Categorical Exemption/Exclusion (CE/CE); however, it was later determined that the level of documentation for compliance under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) must be elevated, requiring consultation under Assembly Bill 52 (AB 52). Subsequently, on April 3, 2018 letters were sent to the following individuals requesting consultation under AB 52:

- Anthony Madrigal, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer, Twenty-Nine Palms Band of Mission Indians
- Mike Darrell Mike, Chairperson, Twenty-Nine Palms Band of Mission Indians
- Dennis Patch, Chairman, Colorado River Indian Tribe
- Timothy Williams, Chairperson, Fort Mojave Indian Tribe
- Charles Wood, Chairperson, Chemehuevi Reservation

On April 20, 2018 a response was received from Mr. Madrigal, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer for the Twenty-Nine Palms Band of Mission Indians, requesting to be a consulting party under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Mr. Madrigal reiterated in his letter that the Twenty-Nine Palms Band of Mission Indians were aware of culturally sensitive areas to the Tribe within or in the vicinity of certain work locations.

On April 30, 2018 a copy of the draft HPSR and associated documents and record search were sent to Mr. Madrigal. On May 9, 2018 a response was received from Sarah Bliss, Twenty-Nine Palms Band of Mission Indians, requesting confirmation regarding the location of two prehistoric cultural resources and confirmation that all work for the project will occur within the Caltrans ROW and will not occur on any tribal land. A response was sent that day confirming the locations of the two prehistoric sites (CA-RIV-5546 and SRI-2) and that all work will be occurring within the Caltrans ROW. No further responses or requests have been received to date. A copy of the HPSR and associated documents were sent on October 4, 2018 to Mr. Madrigal for review to determine whether the Band's concerns had been addressed.

On October 26, 2018 a response was received from the Twenty-Nine Palms Band of Mission Indians Director of the Tribal Historic Preservation Office (THPO) Anthony Madrigal. In the letter Mr. Madrigal stated that after a review of the HPSR the THPO concurred that SRI-2 and CA-RIV-5546 are considered eligible for listing the NRHP. The THPO also concurred that CHL-985 [Desert Training Center (DTC)] is also eligible though no components of the DTC were found within the APE making evaluation not possible for this undertaking. The THPO also recommended that any ESA fencing

should not be removed until the end of construction and approved by the project archaeologist and tribal monitor. The request of the Colorado River Indian Tribes to monitor was noted. In addition, the tribe requested notification if any archaeological resources are discovered during construction. The tribe will be notified of any new resources encountered during construction or construction monitoring.

The Colorado River Tribe responded in a May 4, 2018 letter. Mr. Etsitty, Acting Director of the Tribal Historic Preservation Office for the Colorado River Indian Tribe (CRIT), responded that the Tribe is requesting an informal meeting to discuss the project and are also requesting tribal monitoring for any ground disturbing activities as a condition of project approval. In the letter the tribe also requested that when possible prehistoric resources be avoided when feasible. If not feasible the prehistoric resources should be reburied in a nearby area after consultation with the tribe. The Tribe also requested information regarding monitoring opportunities for the project.

On May 9, 2018 a phone conservation occurred between Mr. Etsitty and Victoria Stosel, Associate Environmental Planner, Archaeologist. Mr. Etsitty expressed concerns that some of the work locations on US-95 were situated within the CRIT Reservation. In response to this concern, a map, showing the right of way line and project locations, was emailed to Mr. Etsitty on May 9, 2018. The map documented that all work was occurring within the Caltrans ROW, and not on tribal land. Mr. Etsitty also expressed concerns regarding sites situated between the Riverside Mountains to the Colorado River (an area that is outside the APE). A brief description of the results of the record search was discussed. All of Mr. Etsitty's comments and concerns were addressed in the HPSR prepared for the project, which was sent to the Tribe on October 4, 2018, along with a letter confirming his request to monitor. No response was received from the Tribe. Following some revisions to the project cultural resources documentation, a final copy of the HPSR and attachments was sent to the CRIT THPO on December 6, 2018. No response has been received to date.

On April 13, 2018 a second consultation letter was sent to the individuals that did not respond to the initial contact letter. No responses from the Fort Mojave Indian Tribe or Chemehuevi Reservation have been received to date.

Through this process, no tribal cultural resources other than those discussed above under Cultural Resources were identified in the APE.

c) No Impact. Based on the work associated with restoration of storm eroded embankments with rock slope protection and replacement of culverts on US-95 all within Caltrans ROW, and the area which was previously disturbed from construction of the existing roadway, it is expected that the project will have no effect on paleontological resources.

d) No Impact. As a result of the robust identification effort discussed above, no human remains have been identified within the project area. Given that the depth of construction is estimated at less than three feet and the area is previously disturbed from construction of the existing roadway, it is

anticipated that implementation of the project will not result in the discovery of or impacts on human remains. In addition, with the implementation of the measures listed below, impacts to potentially undiscovered human remains will be avoided or minimized.

Avoidance, Minimization, and Mitigation Measures

The following standard Caltrans design features (CR-1 & CR-2) and project-specific measures (CR-3 & CR-4) will be included to avoid and/or minimize potential impacts.

CR-1 If buried cultural resources are encountered during construction, it is Caltrans policy that work stop in that area until a qualified archaeologist can evaluate the nature and significance of the find.

CR-2 In the event that human remains are found, the county coroner shall be notified and ALL construction work activities within 50 feet of the discovery shall stop. Pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 5097.98, if the remains are thought to be Native American, the coroner will notify the Most Likely Descendent (MLD). The person who discovered will contact the District 8 Native American Coordinator (DNAC) Gary Jones at (909) 383-7505. Further provisions of PRC 5097.98 are to be followed as applicable.

CR-3 Prior to soil disturbance, CA-RIV-5546 and SRI-2 shall be designated as Environmentally Sensitive Areas, where all project related activities or inadvertent disturbances shall be prohibited.

CR-4 Archaeological and tribal monitors shall be present during any construction or preconstruction-related activity in all areas designated as Archaeological Monitoring Areas. In the event that cultural deposits are uncovered, the archaeological monitor shall be empowered to implement protective measures outlined above in CR-1.

VI. Geology and Soils

a. i & ii) No Impact. None of the project segments are near an Alquist-Priolo Special Studies Zone; therefore, no impacts are anticipated. The project site, however, as most of Southern California, is in a seismically active area. According to the California Division of Mines and Geology (CDMG) Preliminary Fault Activity Map, the nearest recently active faults are within the Riverside County fault zones approximately 60 miles west of the project. These and other faults can generate significant seismic events (greater than 5.0 magnitude).

Compliance with the most current Caltrans procedures regarding seismic design, which is standard practice on all Caltrans projects, is anticipated to avoid or minimize any significant impacts related to seismic ground shaking. Seismic design will also meet city and county requirements under the Uniform Building Code. Therefore, through the incorporation of standard seismic design practices, the project will result in no impact because project construction and operation will have no opportunity to rupture a known earthquake fault or cause seismic shaking.

a. iii) No Impact. The Riverside County General Plan Safety Element (Riverside County 2016) Riverside County Geology (2013) California Geological Survey Map (2008) does not identify any geologic hazards for the project. The project area is rated from low to very high for liquefaction susceptibility according to the Riverside County Geology (2013)/California Geological Survey Map (2008). Compliance with the most current Caltrans procedures regarding seismic design, which is standard practice on all Caltrans projects, is anticipated to avoid or minimize any significant impacts related to liquefaction and seismic risk. Seismic design will also meet city and county requirements under the Uniform Building Code. Therefore, through the incorporation of standard seismic design practices, the project will result in no impact because construction or operation will not cause any seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction.

a. iv) No Impact. Landslides are mass movements of the ground that include rock falls, relatively shallow slumping and sliding of soil, and deeper rotational or transitional movement of soil or rock. Impacts associated with landslides or mudslides are not anticipated. Based on a review of geologic mapping, there will be a low probability for a landslide along the project route. No impacts will occur.

b) No Impact. Grading and grinding during the construction phase of the project will displace soils and temporarily increase the potential for soils to be subject to wind and water erosion. The disturbed soil area is defined by Caltrans as consisting of areas of exposed, erodible soil that are within the construction limits and that result from construction-related activity. Construction site BMPs, which are standard practices for erosion and water quality control, will be used on the project site and will include the use of street sweeping, temporary soil binder, temporary cover for materials storage, and equipment parking at staging areas and side slopes. Fiber rolls and gravel bag berms will be used for materials storage and on the east side edge of the new shoulder during the rainy season during construction. During high wind events, temporary covers will also be used. Construction methods related to water conservation practices, vehicle and equipment cleaning, fueling, and maintenance will be followed.

State jurisdictions require that an approved Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) be prepared for projects that involve greater than one acre of disturbance. A SWPPP specifies BMPs that will minimize erosion and keep all products of erosion from moving off site into receiving waters. Earthwork in the project area will be performed in accordance with the most current edition of the Caltrans Standard Specifications, the project SWPPP, and the requirements of applicable government agencies; therefore, the project will result in less-than-significant impacts.

c) No Impact. The Riverside County General Plan Safety Element (Riverside County 2016) Riverside County Geology (2013) California Geological Survey Map (2008) does not identify any geologic hazards for the project. Any earthwork in the project area will be performed in accordance with the most current edition of the Caltrans Standard Specifications; therefore, the project will result in no impacts.

d) No Impact. The Riverside County General Plan Safety Element (Riverside County 2016) Riverside County Geology (2013) California Geological Survey Map (2008) does not identify any land within the project limits as susceptible to landslides or liquefaction, which implies the absence of expansive soil. Therefore, no impacts are anticipated.

c) No Impact. The project will not affect existing or proposed septic tanks or alternate wastewater disposal systems, nor will the use of septic tanks be involved during construction. Therefore, no impacts will occur.

Avoidance, Minimization, and Mitigation Measures

No measures are proposed for Geology and Soils.

VII. Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Please see Climate Change section, starting on page 41, following the CEQA Checklist responses.

VIII. Hazards and Hazardous Materials

a & b) No Impact. Implementation of the Build Alternative is not expected to result in the creation of any new health hazards or expose people to potential new health hazards, because the project involves restoration of storm eroded embankments with rock slope protection and replacement of culverts. No storage of toxic materials or chemicals will occur, and the project is not anticipated to increase the potential hazardous materials in the project area. The Initial Site Assessment (ISA) Checklist completed for this project on October 10, 2018 determined that the potential for hazardous waste involvement was low.

Aerially Deposited Lead (ADL) from the historical use of leaded gasoline exists along roadways throughout California. If encountered, soil with elevated concentrations of lead as a result of ADL on the state highway system ROW within the limits of the project will be managed under the July 1, 2016, *Aerially Deposited Lead Agreement between Caltrans and the California Department of Toxic Substances.*

This Aerially Deposited Lead Agreement allows such soils to be safely reused within the project limits as long as all requirements of the Aerially Deposited Lead Agreement are met. The ISA Checklist prepared for the project indicated that soils within the project limits are affected by non-hazardous levels of ADL. The soils can be reused without restriction on the project or relinquished to the construction contractor. SSP 7-1.02K, Earth Material Containing Lead, will be included in the Plans, Specifications, and Estimates (PS&E) package for this project along with a Contract Bid Item for Lead Compliance Plan.

Following construction of the project, operations are not expected to result in the creation of any new health hazards or expose people to potential new health hazards because the action involves, restoration of storm eroded embankments with rock slope protection and replacement of culverts. Additionally, no new structures or facilities will be constructed. As such, the project will result in no impacts.

c) No Impact. There are no schools within one-quarter mile of the project site; therefore, no impacts will occur.

d) No Impact. The DTSC EnviroStor database identified two sites near the project: Air Training School and the Blythe AAF BEA Site #1 which are approximately ten miles southwest of US-95 and

the southern end of the project limits. Both sites are far enough away from the project that it will be of no concern for either project construction or operation; therefore, no impacts will occur.

e & f) No Impact. Although the southern end of the project is within sixteen miles of the Blythe Airport and ten miles of W R Byron Airport the project will not result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the area. Additionally, the project will not contain any skyward features that will interfere with any air traffic flight paths or other airport activities. There are no private airstrips near the project. No impacts will occur.

g) No Impact. The project is not anticipated to interfere with any adopted local emergency response plans or emergency evacuation plans. Applicable traffic controls (e.g., flag person, signage), as identified in the Transportation Management Plan (TMP), will be implemented to minimize any potential interference with any adopted emergency response plan or evacuation plan (measure **TRF-1**).

h) No Impact. The project area consists of rural desert flora and fauna, with very limited sources or potential to result in a fire hazard. Further, the project is not located in an urbanized area or adjacent to residences. Therefore, no impacts are expected.

Avoidance, Minimization, and Mitigation Measures

The following measures will be implemented to avoid and/or minimize potential impacts related to hazardous waste residue and aerial deposited lead (ADL):

HAZ-1 During final design, include one or both of the following SSPs in the PS&E package for removal of yellow or white traffic stripes:

- SSP 14-11.12 Remove Yellow Traffic Stripes and Pavement Markings with Hazardous Waste Residue
- SSP 84-9.03C, Remove Traffic Stripes and Pavement Marking Containing Lead

HAZ-2 During final design, SSP 7-1.02K(6)(J) (111) will be added to the PS&E package and Bid Item 070030 for Lead Compliance Plan to avoid and/or minimize potential impacts related to ADL.

IX. Hydrology and Water Quality

a) Less Than Significant Impact. The potential temporary effects of the project on the quality of the water in the area will come from runoff during construction, including erosion. The National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits issued by the RWQCB set limits on discharges, schedules for compliance, special conditions, and monitoring programs. These permits also limit discharges, set water quality standards, and establish a monitoring program of the waste discharge. Permitting of underground storage tanks and cleanup of waste discharge is also enforced by RWQCB. Grading and trenching during the construction of the project will require the limited removal of vegetation and moving of soils. This will temporarily increase the exposure of soils to wind and water erosion and could increase the amount of sediments entering downstream drainages and waterways.

Sediments can adversely affect water quality and negatively affect fish, aquatic plants, and other organisms.

All major reconstruction and new construction within Caltrans' ROW must conform to Caltrans' Statewide NPDES Permit No. CAS000003 and to the General NPDES Permit for Construction Activities No. CAS000002. These permits regulate stormwater and non-stormwater discharges associated with year-round construction activities. In addition to these permits, the Colorado River Basin RWQCB, which has jurisdiction in this area, may have separate project-specific Water Discharge Requirements (WDRs) to protect water quality.

The project contractor will be required to apply stormwater pollution control measures during the entire duration of the project and follow the Water Pollution Control Best Management Practices (BMPs) specified in the approved Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) to minimize impacts on receiving waters. Measures must be incorporated to contain all vehicle loads and avoid any tracking of materials that may fall or blow onto Caltrans ROW. The project contractor will be required to develop, implement, and maintain the following:

A SWPPP conforming to the requirements of:

- Caltrans Specification Section 13, "Water Pollution Control"
- SWRCB Resolution No. 2001-046 (the Sampling and Analytical Procedures [SAP] Plan)
- The Section 402 NPDES Statewide Storm Water Permit
- The General NPDES Permit for Construction Activities

The project will utilize stormwater controls, as required, to minimize the amount of roadway pollution from the project area during construction. Compliance with the NPDES requirements will further reduce such polluting impacts. Projects within Caltrans' ROW are obligated to comply with the latest Caltrans and RWQCB water quality standards relative to the treatment of post-construction stormwater runoff. Determination and implementation of BMPs within the ROW are defined based on the evaluation of existing site constraints, constituents of concern at the receiving waters, soil conditions, and hydraulic conditions. Prior to approval of the final design of the project, applicable post-construction BMPs will be identified to ensure that applicable Caltrans selection and siting criteria have been achieved. Deployment of BMPs will reduce long term water quality impacts due to implementation of the project. Therefore, less-than significant water quality impacts are anticipated.

b) No Impact. The project will be within an area of rural desert without infrastructure or utilities. It is not expected to substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge. The project is not expected to affect the amount of water consumed regionally through increased withdrawals from groundwater sources.

c – f) No Impact.

Temporary

Pollutants of concern during construction include sediments, trash, petroleum products, concrete waste, sanitary waste, and other chemicals.[2] During construction activities, excavated soils will be exposed, and there will be an increase in potential for soil erosion compared to existing conditions. In

[2] Caltrans Statewide Stormwater Management Plan (July 2016).

addition, chemicals, liquid products, and petroleum products may be spilled or leaked during construction and have the potential to be transported via storm runoff into receiving waters. Construction activities as part of the project will disturb soil and increase the potential for soil erosion and suspended particles that can be generated from vehicles operating on the roadway. The disturbed soil area is defined by Caltrans as consisting of areas of exposed, erodible soil that are within the construction limits and that result from construction-related activity.

The project area is not within an MS4 area. An MS4 Area is an area where stormwater discharge is regulated by NPDES Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit issued by the State Water Board. These areas are mainly cities and counties. Construction site BMPs used on the project site will include the use of street sweeping, temporary soil binder, temporary cover for materials storage, and equipment parking at staging area and side slopes. Fiber rolls and gravel bag berms will be used for materials storage and on the east side edge of the new shoulder during the rainy season during construction. During high wind events, temporary covers will also be used. Construction methods related to water conservation practices, vehicle and equipment cleaning, fueling, and maintenance will be followed.

At this stage in project design it is unknown if the project will result in temporary and permanent impacts on jurisdictional drainages; therefore, the project may be required to obtain a Section 401Water Quality Certification and a Section 1602 Streambed Alteration Agreement which could include additional measures to avoid and/or minimize potential impacts.

Permanent
An increase in impervious area will increase the volume of runoff during a storm, which will more effectively transport pollutants to receiving waters. Increases in impervious areas can also cause a decrease in infiltration, can increase the volume of runoff during a storm event, and can lead to changes in receiving waters from erosion and accretion. The increase in volume and velocity of water related to the increase in impervious area, although unknown, is expected to have a very low, nominal impact on the existing drainage system. The anticipated alteration of absorption rates is not considered substantial, due to a less-than substantial replacement ratio of existing landscaping with impermeable road surfaces. According to the Storm Water Data Report the project new impervious surface is .77 acres. No substantial changes in drainage patterns associated with modifications to the highway are anticipated to occur.

The project is not expected to have any significant impacts on water quality with implementation of measures **WQ-1** through **WQ-4**. All stormwater generated within the project limits will be routed into existing overflow areas; the existing, highly permeable granular soils allow for rapid infiltration of runoff from impermeable surfaces. Therefore, a less-than-significant impact will occur as a result of increased runoff, altered drainage patterns, or water quality degradation.

g – i) No Impact. The project will not result in a significant floodplain encroachment, as defined in 23 CFR 650.105. Additionally, the project will not involve the development of housing. The roadway improvements do not have the potential to expose people or property to a substantial risk of loss, injury, or death involving flooding; therefore, no impacts in this regard are expected.

j) No Impact. Due to the distance and height of surrounding terrain, and the distance from the Pacific Ocean and other large bodies of water, potential for inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow is considered very unlikely.

Avoidance, Minimization, and Mitigation Measures

The following standard measures will be included for Hydrology and Water Quality:

WQ-1 Prior to the start of construction, a SWPPP shall be developed by the contractor and approved by the Department to avoid and/or minimize potential impacts to water quality.

WQ-2 The SWPPP control measures shall address the following categories: soil stabilization practices; sediment control practices; sediment tracking control practices; wind erosion control practices; and non-storm water management and waste management and disposal control practices.

WQ-3 The contractor shall be required to comply with water pollution control provisions and SWPPP and conform to the requirements of the Department's Standard Specification Section 7-1.01G "Water Pollution," of the Standard Specifications.

WQ-4 If necessary, soil disturbed areas of the project site will be fully protected using soil stabilization and sediment control BMPs at the end of each day, unless fair weather is predicted.

X. Land Use and Planning

a & b) No Impact. According to the Eastern Riverside County Land Use Plan Map, the project area is mapped as primarily Open Space Rural and a portion of the project area is within the Palo Verde Valley Area Plan. Most of the land along US-95 is classified as either open space rural or agricultural. The Bristol Mountains Wilderness Area is located close to US-95. Much of the land along US-95 is owned by the U.S/. Bureau of Land Management (BLM). There are also Tribal Lands along the route and private unincorporated land. The project is situated in a remote area with few businesses and several small residential communities along the Colorado River not located in the immediate vicinity of the route.

c) No Impact. Project implementation will not conflict with provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan.

Avoidance, Minimization, and Mitigation Measures

No measures are required for Land Use and Planning.

XI. Mineral Resources

a & b) No Impact. No classified or designated mineral deposits of statewide or regional significance are known to occur within the project area. Also, the project is located outside of mineral resource recovery sites; therefore, no impacts are anticipated to occur.

Avoidance, Minimization, and Mitigation Measures

No measures are required Mineral Resources.

XII. Noise

a) No Impact. Although there are several small residential communities along the Colorado River near the alignment, there are no noise-sensitive receptors located within or near the project. The project is not adjacent to or within a community. No construction noise impacts will occur because there are no residences or businesses in the immediate vicinity of the project. Additionally, construction noise will be short-term and intermittent during the 120-day construction period and construction will be conducted in accordance with Caltrans Standard Specifications Section 14.8-02 (measure **NOI-1**) which states the contractor shall comply with all local sound control and noise level rules, regulations, and ordinances that apply to any work performed pursuant to contract.

The project is a Type III Project under 23 CFR 772.7; therefore, Caltrans Engineering determined it is exempt from noise analysis and a noise study report was not required for the project (Memorandum, October 26, 2018). Per 23 CFR 772.7(f) *a highway agency is not required to complete a noise analysis or consider abatement measures.* The project will not expose people to or generate noise levels in excess of standards established in a general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies. There will be no noise impact.

b) No Impact. Any ground-borne noise or vibration will be limited to the 120-day construction period and will be short in duration. Because there is no noise- or vibration-sensitive uses located in the immediate project vicinity and because the project will comply with Caltrans' Standard Specifications as outlined in **NOI-1**, no impacts will occur.

c) No Impact. No receptor locations will experience a substantial increase over their corresponding existing noise levels; therefore, there will be no impact.

d) No Impact. Implementation of the project may result in short-term increased noise levels within the project vicinity due to construction activities. Although some residences are located in the vicinity of the project, there should not be any significant increases in ambient noise levels during construction and will not result in any adverse impacts. Additionally, construction will be conducted in accordance with Caltrans Standard Specifications Section 14.8-02.

e) No Impact. The project is not located within two miles of an airport and there are no habitable structures near the project. Therefore, no noise impacts related to air traffic will occur.

f) No Impact. The project is not located within or in the vicinity of a private airstrip and no habitable structures are proposed as part of the project. Therefore, no noise impacts related to air traffic will occur.

Avoidance, Minimization, and Mitigation Measures

The following Noise measures will be implemented to minimize potential impacts located in Caltrans' provisions in Section 14-8, "Noise Control," of the 2018 Standard Specifications and Special Provisions.

NOI-1 The contractor shall comply with all local sound control and noise level rules, regulations, and ordinances that apply to any work performed pursuant to contract.

NOI-2 Each internal combustion engine, used for any purpose on the job or related to the job, shall be equipped with a muffler or a type recommended by the manufacturer. No internal combustion engine shall be operated on the project without the muffler.

XIII. Population and Housing

a) No Impact. The project is a maintenance project and will not induce 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), and will therefore have no impact.

b & c) No Impact. ROW will not be acquired for this project, as all work will be done within Caltrans' ROW. Accordingly, no residents or businesses will need to be relocated as a result of implementing the Build Alternative. The project will not necessitate the relocation of any existing developments and/or people. Therefore, no impacts will occur.

Avoidance, Minimization, and Mitigation Measures

No measures are required for Population and Housing.

XIV. Public Services

Fire Protection: No Impact. The Riverside County Fire Department provides fire protection in the project vicinity. The project will not affect the level of services needing fire protection.

The project involves maintenance improvements to an existing highway. The project will not result in an increase in population, and therefore will not increase the demand for community services. No fire stations will be acquired or displaced. The project will not induce growth or increase population in the study area or the greater community beyond that previously planned for and will not result in the need for additional fire protection.

Police Protection: No Impact. The Riverside County Sheriff's Department, and CHP, as appropriate, provide police protection in the project vicinity. The project will not affect the level of service along US-95.

Implementation of a construction-period TMP (**TRF-1**), which is prepared for all Caltrans highway projects, will ensure that access is maintained to and from the project area and that the police service providers are notified prior to the start of construction activities; therefore, there are no anticipated impacts.

As mentioned previously, the project will not induce population growth in the area beyond that previously planned for and will not result in the need for additional police protection. No impacts from operation of the project will occur. The improved highway will likely improve emergency access through the project area, which will be a beneficial impact.

Schools: No Impact. No schools are located near the project vicinity. Because the project scope is not population-inducing, it will not result in the need for new or physical expansion of any school.

Parks: No Impact. No state or regional parks border the alignment and will not be affected by either construction or operation of the Build Alternative. No national parks exist that directly border the project limits. The majority of the surrounding land directly to the south of the alignment is owned by BLM. Additionally, no new ROW is expected for this project therefore there is no potential for impacts to parks.

Other Public Facilities: No Impact. There are no public facilities in the immediate project area and, as such, there will be no impacts on public facilities as a result of construction or operation of the project.

Avoidance, Minimization, and Mitigation Measures

No measures are required for Public Services.

XV. Recreation

a & b) No Impact. Project implementation does not have the capacity to generate a substantial increase to any existing neighborhood, regional parks, or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration will occur, nor will it require the construction or expansion of existing recreational facilities.

Avoidance, Minimization, and Mitigation Measures

No measures are required for Recreation.

XVI. Transportation/Traffic

a & b) No Impact. The project is a maintenance project that involves restoration of storm eroded embankments with rock slope protection and replacement of existing culverts. The project will not increase traffic because no new land uses are proposed. The project will accommodate existing traffic demand, but it will not create new demand, directly or indirectly. The project will also not reduce congestion and/or improve the level of service of traffic. The project will not conflict with an applicable congestion management program, including but not limited to level of service standards and travel demand measures, or other standards established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways. No impacts are anticipated.

c) No Impact. Due to the nature and scope of the project, no change in air traffic patterns will result. Accordingly, no impacts are expected to occur in this regard.

d) No Impact. The project will not increase hazards due to a design feature; the current curve and height dimensions will remain the same as existing roadway features.

e) Less Than Significant Impact. Construction activities have the potential to result in temporary, localized, site-specific disruptions during the 120-day construction period. This could lead to an increase in delay times for emergency response vehicles during construction; however, the project will include the preparation and implementation of a TMP (measure **TRF-1**), which will avoid or minimize any potential impacts. Impacts will be less than significant during the construction period.

f) No Impact. The project will not conflict with any adopted policies, plans or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities. Accordingly, no impacts in this regard are expected.

Avoidance, Minimization, and Mitigation Measures

No measures are required for Transportation/Traffic.

XVII. Utility and Service Systems

a) No Impact. Construction of the project will not generate the need for additional wastewater treatment. No impacts will occur.

b) No Impact. Due to the nature and scope of the improvements, project implementation will not require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities. Accordingly, no impacts will occur.

c) Less Than Significant Impact. The project scope involves replacement, and in some cases upgrading, of existing culverts. The overall project scope, however, does not propose development that will require construction of new storm water drainage facilities or further expansion of existing ones. Although, several culverts are being upgraded, impacts related to those expansions are accounted for in the potentially impacted resource areas such as Biological, and Hydrology and Water Quality sections. Therefore, a less than significant impact is anticipated.

d) No Impact. Due to the nature and scope of the improvements, the project will not require a water supply. No impacts will occur.

e) No Impact. The project will not require wastewater treatment. As a result, there will be no impact.

f) No Impact. The project will require the use of a local landfill to dispose of demolition materials during construction. The use of local landfills will be temporary during construction. It is Caltrans' policy to recycle materials whenever possible. The project will be served by a landfill with sufficient capacity to serve its solid waste disposal needs during construction; therefore, there will be no impact.

g) No Impact. The project will be in compliance with all federal, state, and local solid waste statutes and regulations; therefore, there will be no impact.

Avoidance, Minimization, and Mitigation Measures

No measures are required for Utility and Service Systems.

XVIII. Mandatory Findings of Significance

a) Less Than Significant Impact.

Biological Resources
CDFW CNDDB and USFWS IPAC species lists did not identify state or federally listed plant species that may potentially occur within the BSA; therefore, the project will not impact state or federally listed plant species. These lists identified desert tortoise as a federal and state-threatened species with the potential to occur within the BSA. However, none of the culvert locations are located within designated critical habitat for the desert tortoise or in an Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) or Desert Wildlife Management Area (DWMA).

Focused surveys completed in December 2018, for desert tortoise and burrowing owl, resulted in negative findings. Additionally, the project sites are located outside of all designated critical habitats, ACECs, DWMAs, and desert tortoise recovery units.

Although Caltrans has determined the project impacts are minimal, the project is located adjacent to suitable habitat and no physical barriers are present to constrict movement of the desert tortoise. Further, because of the existence of marginally suitable habitat within the project area, Caltrans is assuming presence of the desert tortoise to avoid potential impacts or take. To avoid potential impacts to desert tortoise and biological resources in general, Caltrans will implement measures BIO-1 through BIO-10. Therefore, the potential to degrade the quality of the biological environment is less than significant.

Historical Resources
The HPSR completed for this project concludes that three cultural resources located within the APE will be considered NRHP and CRHR-eligible. SRI-2, CA-RIV-5546 (P-33-005817), and CHL-985 [Desert Training Center (DTC/C-AMA)] are considered to be historical resources for the purposes of CEQA.

The undertaking, and its associated activities, will take place adjacent to CA-RIV-5546 and SRI-2. Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs) and Archaeological Monitoring Areas (AMAs) will be established, for both sites, which will protect the sites in their entirety from project impacts. The ESAs will be monitored during construction by archaeological and Tribal monitors. With the establishment of ESAs, the project will not result in the physical destruction of cultural deposits within the APE associated with either site. Furthermore, with ESAs and AMAs established at and near the locations of the prehistoric sites, inadvertent disturbance to any potentially significant subsurface archaeological deposits will be prevented.

The Desert Training Center/California-Arizona Maneuver Area is an extremely large historic landscape composed of numerous site types and features spread out over an extensive and discontiguous 18,000-square mile area. While the project APE crosses through the DTC/AMA, there

are no elements of the Desert Training Center/California-Arizona Maneuver Area identified within the Project APE. Therefore, the project will have no appreciable impact on the DTC/AMA.

Because measures CR-1 through CR-4 will be implemented, potential impacts to these cultural resources will be less than significant.

b) Less Than Significant Impact. The project's impacts are either temporary and/or avoidable. In the case of temporary impacts, Caltrans standard measures will be implemented to avoid and/or minimize potential impacts. In the case of biological and cultural resources, specific measures will be implemented to minimize potential impacts or avoid impacts altogether. Caltrans project 1G010 on SR 62 PM 124-142 will construct a water embankment protection system with RSP at 10 desert wash locations. A draft environmental document is being prepared for 1G010 and construction activities may overlap at some point during construction of this project. Caltrans will coordinate construction activities to minimize potential impacts to traffic and emergency services. Any potentially significant impacts to resources of concern, created by 1G010, will be mitigated or minimized by specific measures identified by that project.

Therefore, cumulatively considerable impacts will be less than significant.

c) No Impact. Due to the rural character of the area, the project will not have environmental effects that will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly.

Avoidance, Minimization, and Mitigation Measures

No measures are proposed.

Climate Change

Climate change refers to long-term changes in temperature, precipitation, wind patterns, and other elements of the earth's climate system. An ever-increasing body of scientific research attributes these climatological changes to greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, particularly those generated from the production and use of fossil fuels.

While climate change has been a concern for several decades, the establishment of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) by the United Nations and World Meteorological Organization in 1988 has led to increased efforts devoted to GHG emissions reduction and climate change research and policy. These efforts are primarily concerned with the emissions of GHGs generated by human activity, including carbon dioxide (CO_2), methane (CH_4), nitrous oxide (N_2O), tetrafluoromethane, hexafluoroethane, sulfur hexafluoride (SF_6), HFC-23 (fluoroform), HFC-134a (1,1,1,2-tetrafluoroethane), and HFC-152a (difluoroethane).

In the U.S., the main source of GHG emissions is electricity generation, followed by transportation.[3] In California, however, transportation sources (including passenger cars, light duty trucks, other trucks, buses, and motorcycles) are the largest contributors of GHG emissions.[4] The dominant GHG emitted is CO_2, mostly from fossil fuel combustion.

Two terms are typically used when discussing how we address the impacts of climate change: "greenhouse gas mitigation" and "adaptation." Greenhouse gas mitigation covers the activities and policies aimed at reducing GHG emissions to limit or "mitigate" the impacts of climate change. Adaptation, on the other hand, is concerned with planning for and responding to impacts resulting from climate change (such as adjusting transportation design standards to withstand more intense storms and higher sea levels).

Regulatory Setting

This section outlines federal and state efforts to comprehensively reduce GHG emissions from transportation sources.

With the passage of legislation including State Senate and Assembly bills and executive orders, California has been innovative and proactive in addressing GHG emissions and climate change.

Assembly Bill 1493, Pavley Vehicular Emissions: Greenhouse Gases, 2002: This bill requires the California Air Resources Board (ARB) to develop and implement regulations to reduce automobile and light truck GHG emissions. These stricter emissions standards were designed to apply to automobiles and light trucks beginning with the 2009-model year.

Executive Order S-3-05 (June 1, 2005): The goal of this executive order (EO) is to reduce California's GHG emissions to: (1) year 2000 levels by 2010, (2) year 1990 levels by 2020, and (3) 80 percent below year 1990 levels by 2050. This goal was further reinforced with the passage of Assembly Bill 32 in 2006 and SB 32 in 2016.

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[3] https://www.epa.gov/ghgemissions/us-greenhouse-gas-inventory-report-1990-2014
[4] https://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/inventory/data/data.htm

Assembly Bill 32 (AB 32), Chapter 488, 2006: Núñez and Pavley, The Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006: AB 32 codified the 2020 GHG emissions reduction goals as outlined in EO S-3-05, while further mandating that ARB create a scoping plan and implement rules to achieve "real, quantifiable, cost-effective reductions of greenhouse gases." The Legislature also intended that the statewide GHG emissions limit continue in existence and be used to maintain and continue reductions in emissions of GHGs beyond 2020 (Health and Safety Code Section 38551(b)). The law requires ARB to adopt rules and regulations in an open public process to achieve the maximum technologically feasible and cost-effective GHG reductions.

Executive Order S-01-07 (January 18, 2007): This order sets forth the low carbon fuel standard (LCFS) for California. Under this EO, the carbon intensity of California's transportation fuels is to be reduced by at least 10 percent by the year 2020. ARB re-adopted the LCFS regulation in September 2015, and the changes went into effect on January 1, 2016. The program establishes a strong framework to promote the low-carbon fuel adoption necessary to achieve the Governor's 2030 and 2050 GHG reduction goals.

Senate Bill 97 (SB 97), Chapter 185, 2007, Greenhouse Gas Emissions: This bill requires the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) to develop recommended amendments to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines for addressing GHG emissions. The amendments became effective on March 18, 2010.

Senate Bill 375 (SB 375), Chapter 728, 2008, Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection: This bill requires ARB to set regional emissions reduction targets for passenger vehicles. The Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for each region must then develop a "Sustainable Communities Strategy" (SCS) that integrates transportation, land-use, and housing policies to plan how it will achieve the emissions target for its region.

Senate Bill 391 (SB 391), Chapter 585, 2009, California Transportation Plan: This bill requires the State's long-range transportation plan to meet California's climate change goals under AB 32.

Executive Order B-16-12 (March 2012) orders State entities under the direction of the Governor, including ARB, the California Energy Commission, and the Public Utilities Commission, to support the rapid commercialization of zero-emission vehicles. It directs these entities to achieve various benchmarks related to zero-emission vehicles.

Executive Order B-30-15 (April 2015) establishes an interim statewide GHG emission reduction target of 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030 in order to ensure California meets its target of reducing GHG emissions to 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050. It further orders all state agencies with jurisdiction over sources of GHG emissions to implement measures, pursuant to statutory authority, to achieve reductions of GHG emissions to meet the 2030 and 2050 GHG emissions reductions targets. It also directs ARB to update the Climate Change Scoping Plan to express the 2030 target in terms of a million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent ($MMTCO_2e$). Finally, it requires the Natural Resources Agency to update the state's climate adaptation strategy, *Safeguarding California*, every 3 years, and to ensure that its provisions are fully implemented.

Senate Bill 32, (SB 32) Chapter 249, 2016, codifies the GHG reduction targets established in EO B-30-15 to achieve a mid-range goal of 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030.

Environmental Setting

In 2006, the Legislature passed the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (AB 32), which created a comprehensive, multi-year program to reduce GHG emissions in California. AB 32 required ARB to develop a Scoping Plan that describes the approach California will take to achieve the goal of reducing GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020. The Scoping Plan was first approved by ARB in 2008 and must be updated every 5 years. The second updated plan, *California's 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan*, adopted on December 14, 2017, reflects the 2030 target established in EO B-30-15 and SB 32.

The AB 32 Scoping Plan and the subsequent updates contain the main strategies California will use to reduce GHG emissions. As part of its supporting documentation for the updated Scoping Plan, ARB released the GHG inventory for California.[5] ARB is responsible for maintaining and updating California's GHG Inventory per H&SC Section 39607.4. The associated forecast/projection is an estimate of the emissions anticipated to occur in the year 2020 if none of the foreseeable measures included in the Scoping Plan were implemented.

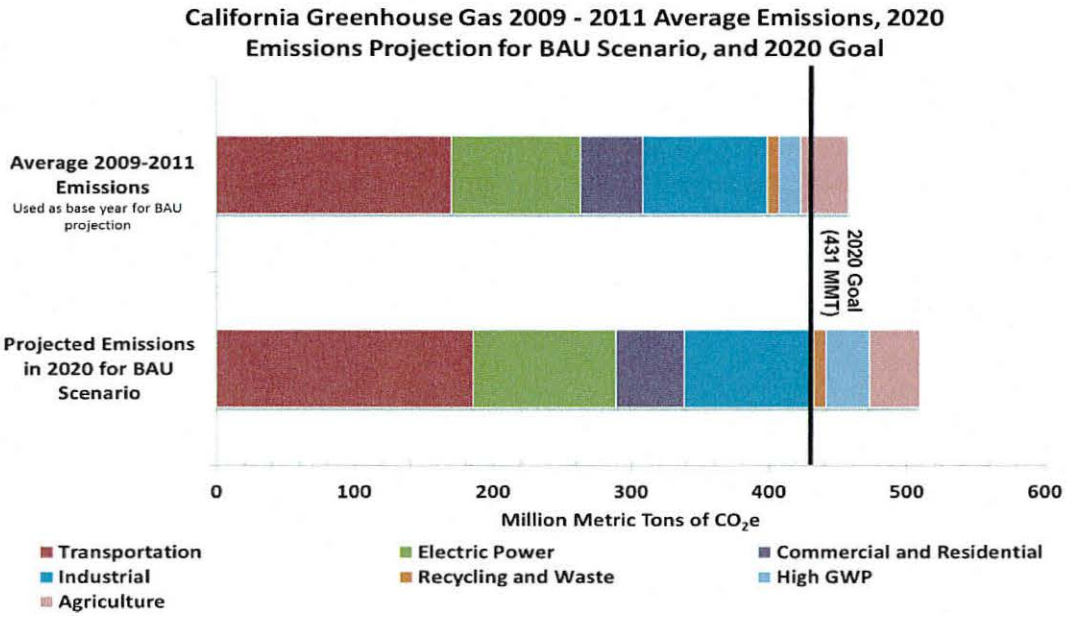
An emissions projection estimates future emissions based on current emissions, expected regulatory implementation, and other technological, social, economic, and behavioral patterns. The projected 2020 emissions provided in Figure 6-1 represent a business-as-usual (BAU) scenario assuming none of the Scoping Plan measures are implemented. The 2020 BAU emissions estimate assists ARB in demonstrating progress toward meeting the 2020 goal of 431 MMTCO2e.[6] The 2017 edition of the GHG emissions inventory (released June 2017) found total California emissions of 440.4 $MMTCO_2e$, showing progress towards meeting the AB 32 goals.

The 2020 BAU emissions projection was revisited in support of the first update to the Scoping Plan (2014). This projection accounts for updates to the economic forecasts of fuel and energy demand as well as other factors. It also accounts for the effects of the 2008 economic recession and the projected recovery. The total emissions expected in the 2020 BAU scenario include reductions anticipated from Pavley I and the Renewable Electricity Standard (30 $MMTCO_2e$ total). With these reductions in the baseline, estimated 2020 statewide BAU emissions are 509 $MMTCO_2e$.

[5] 2018 Edition of the GHG Emission Inventory Released (July 2018): https://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/inventory/data/data.htm

[6] The revised target using Global Warming Potentials (GWP) from the IPCC Fourth Assessment Report (AR4)

Figure 1 2020 Business as Usual (BAU) Emissions Projection 2014 Edition:



https://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/inventory/data/bau.htm

Project Analysis

An individual project does not generate enough GHG emissions to significantly influence global climate change. Rather, global climate change is a cumulative impact. This means that a project may contribute to a potential impact through its *incremental* change in emissions when combined with the contributions of all other sources of GHG.[7] In assessing cumulative impacts, it must be determined if a project's incremental effect is "cumulatively considerable" (CEQA Guidelines Sections 15064(h)(1) and 15130). To make this determination, the incremental impacts of the project must be compared with the effects of past, current, and probable future projects. To gather sufficient information on a global scale of all past, current, and future projects to make this determination is a difficult, if not impossible task.

GHG emissions for transportation projects can be divided into those produced during operations and those produced during construction. The following represents a best faith effort to describe the potential GHG emissions related to the project.

Operational Emissions

The purpose of this project is to reduce the severity and number of run-off-the-road accidents, improve the clear recovery zone, and improve motorist safety by flattening the existing median cross slope. Projects that involve median improvements, such as this project, generally have minimal or no increase

[7] This approach is supported by the AEP: *Recommendations by the Association of Environmental Professionals on How to Analyze GHG Emissions and Global Climate Change in CEQA Documents* (March 5, 2007), as well as the South Coast Air Quality Management District (Chapter 6: The CEQA Guide, April 2011) and the US Forest Service (Climate Change Considerations in Project Level NEPA Analysis, July 13, 2009).

in operational GHG emissions. Because the project will not increase the number of travel lanes on I-40, no increase in VMT will occur as result of project implementation, and traffic volumes will be the same under the Build Alternative and No-Build Alternative. GHG emissions during the construction period (as discussed below) will be unavoidable.

Construction Emissions

Construction GHG emissions will result from material processing, on-site construction equipment, and traffic delays due to construction. These emissions will be produced at different levels throughout the construction phase; their frequency and occurrence can be reduced through innovations in plans and specifications and by implementing better traffic management during construction phases.

In addition, with innovations such as longer pavement lives, improved TMPs, and changes in materials, the GHG emissions produced during construction can be offset to some degree by longer intervals between maintenance and rehabilitation activities.

Construction-period GHG emissions were modeled using the Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District Road Construction Emissions Model, version 8.1.0. Short-term construction activities will result in GHG emissions from fuel combustion associated with off and on-road construction equipment and vehicles, which will result in emissions of 327 metric tons of CO_2-equivalent (CO_2e)[8] over the approximately 4-month construction period.

The project will comply with all requirements of the MDAQMD. In addition, Caltrans Standard Specifications Section 14-9, Air Quality, a part of all construction contracts, requires contractors to comply with all federal, state, regional, and local rules, regulations, and ordinances related to air quality. Measures that reduce vehicle emissions and energy use also reduce GHG emissions. Under avoidance and minimization measure **TRF-1**, a traffic management plan will be implemented to minimize traffic delays during construction.

CEQA Conclusion

While the project will result in a slight increase in GHG emissions during construction, it is anticipated that the project will not result in an increase in operational GHG emissions. While it is Caltrans' determination that in the absence of further regulatory or scientific information related to GHG emissions and CEQA significance, it is too speculative to make a significant determination regarding the project's direct impact and its contribution on the cumulative scale to climate change. Caltrans will be firmly committed to implementing measures to help reduce GHG emissions during construction. These measures are outlined in the following section.

Greenhouse Gas Reduction Strategies

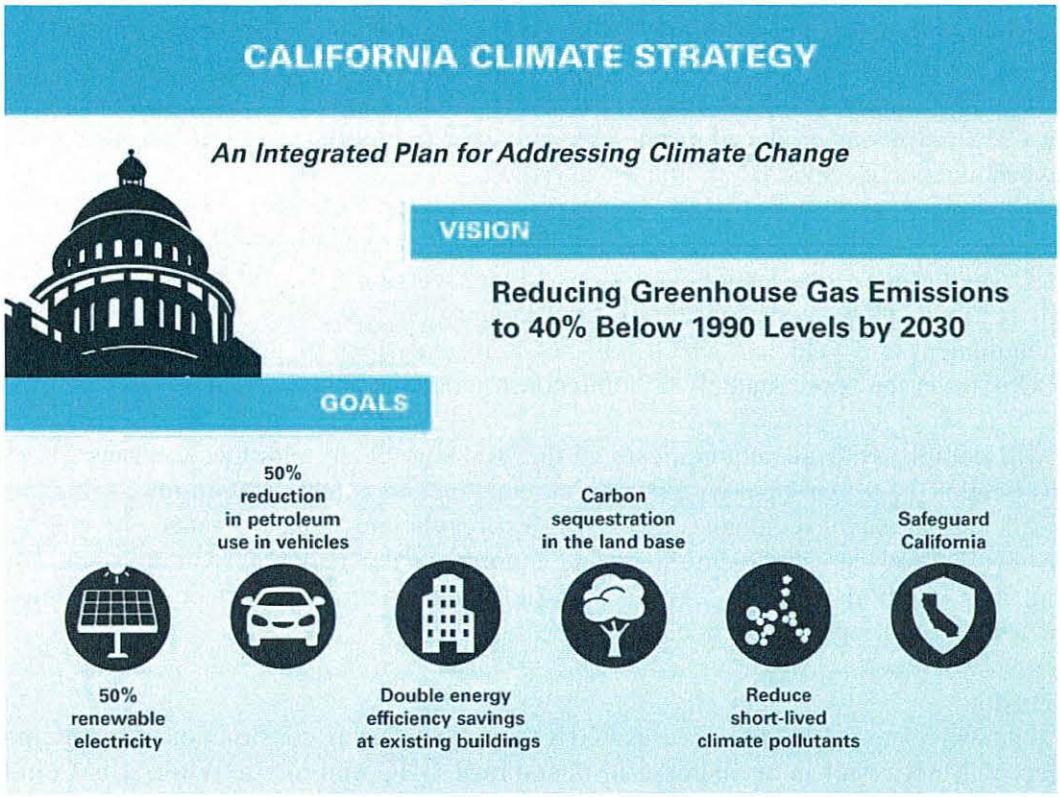
Statewide Efforts

In an effort to further the vision of California's GHG reduction targets outlined an AB 32 and SB 32, Governor Brown identified key climate change strategy pillars (concepts). These pillars highlight the idea that several major areas of the California economy will need to reduce emissions to meet the 2030

[8] Because GHGs differ in how much heat each traps in the atmosphere, and CO_2 is the most important GHG, amounts of other gases are expressed relative to CO_2. Measurements are then summed to yield a total in metric tons of CO_2-equivalent over a given time period. The Road Construction Emissions model calculates only CO_2, methane, and nitrous oxide.

goal. These pillars are (1) reducing today's petroleum use in cars and trucks by up to 50 percent; (2) increasing from one-third to 50 percent our electricity derived from renewable sources; (3) doubling the energy efficiency savings achieved at existing buildings and making heating fuels cleaner; (4) reducing the release of methane, black carbon, and other short-lived climate pollutants; (5) managing farm and rangelands, forests, and wetlands so they can store carbon; and (6) periodically updating the state's climate adaptation strategy, *Safeguarding California*.

Figure 2 The Governor's Climate Change Pillars: 2030 Greenhouse Gas Reduction Goals



The transportation sector is integral to the people and economy of California. To achieve GHG emission reduction goals, it is vital that we build on our past successes in reducing criteria and toxic air pollutants from transportation and goods movement activities. GHG emission reductions will come from cleaner vehicle technologies, lower-carbon fuels, and reduction of vehicle miles traveled. One of Governor Brown's key pillars sets the ambitious goal of reducing today's petroleum use in cars and trucks by up to 50 percent by 2030.

Governor Brown called for support to manage natural and working lands, including forests, rangelands, farms, wetlands, and soils, so they can store carbon. These lands have the ability to remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere through biological processes, and to then sequester carbon in above- and below-ground matter.

Caltrans Activities

Caltrans continues to be involved on the Governor's Climate Action Team as the ARB works to implement EOs S-3-05 and S-01-07 and help achieve the targets set forth in AB 32. EO B-30-15, issued in April 2015, and SB 32 (2016), set a new interim target to cut GHG emissions to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030. The following major initiatives are underway at Caltrans to help meet these targets.

California Transportation Plan (CTP 2040)

The California Transportation Plan (CTP) is a statewide, long-range transportation plan to meet our future mobility needs and reduce GHG emissions. The CTP defines performance-based goals, policies, and strategies to achieve our collective vision for California's future statewide, integrated, multimodal transportation system. It serves as an umbrella document for all the other statewide transportation planning documents.

SB 391 (Liu 2009) requires the CTP to meet California's climate change goals under AB 32. Accordingly, the CTP 2040 identifies the statewide transportation system needed to achieve maximum feasible GHG emission reductions while meeting the state's transportation needs. While MPOs have primary responsibility for identifying land use patterns to help reduce GHG emissions, CTP 2040 identifies additional strategies in Pricing, Transportation Alternatives, Mode Shift, and Operational Efficiency.

Caltrans Strategic Management Plan

The Strategic Management Plan, released in 2015, creates a performance-based framework to preserve the environment and reduce GHG emissions, among other goals. Specific performance targets in the plan that will help to reduce GHG emissions include:

- Increasing percentage of non-auto mode share
- Reducing VMT per capita
- Reducing Caltrans' internal operational (buildings, facilities, and fuel) GHG emissions

Funding and Technical Assistance Programs

In addition to developing plans and performance targets to reduce GHG emissions, Caltrans also administers several funding and technical assistance programs that have GHG reduction benefits. These include the Bicycle Transportation Program, Safe Routes to School, Transportation Enhancement Funds, and Transit Planning Grants. A more extensive description of these programs can be found in *Caltrans Activities to Address Climate Change* (2013).

Caltrans Director's Policy 30 (DP-30) Climate Change (June 22, 2012) is intended to establish department policy that will ensure coordinated efforts to incorporate climate change into departmental decisions and activities.

Caltrans Activities to Address Climate Change (April 2013) provides a comprehensive overview of activities undertaken by Caltrans statewide to reduce GHG emissions resulting from agency operations.

Project-Level GHG Reduction Strategies

The following measures will also be implemented in the project to reduce GHG emissions and potential climate change impacts from the project.

TRF-1 will involve the implementation of a TMP that will reduce delays and related short-term increases in GHG emissions from disruptions in traffic flow. Also, in the event that portable changeable message signs are required as part of the TMP, these signs will be solar-powered and will not involve GHG emissions during use.

Caltrans Standard Specifications Section 14-9, Air Quality, a part of all construction contracts, requires contractors to comply with all federal, state, regional, and local rules, regulations, and ordinances related to air quality. Requirements of the MDAQMD will apply to this project. Requirements that reduce vehicle emissions, such as limits on idling time, may help reduce GHG emissions.

Adaptation Strategies

"Adaptation strategies" refer to how Caltrans and others can plan for the effects of climate change on the state's transportation infrastructure and strengthen or protect the facilities from damage—or, put another way, planning and design for resilience. Climate change is expected to produce increased variability in precipitation, rising temperatures, rising sea levels, variability in storm surges and their intensity, and the frequency and intensity of wildfires. These changes may affect the transportation infrastructure in various ways, such as damage to roadbeds from longer periods of intense heat; increasing storm damage from flooding and erosion; and inundation from rising sea levels. These effects will vary by location and may, in the most extreme cases, require that a facility be relocated or redesigned. These types of impacts to the transportation infrastructure may also have economic and strategic ramifications.

Federal Efforts

At the federal level, the Climate Change Adaptation Task Force, co-chaired by the Council on Environmental Quality, the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP), and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), released its interagency task force progress report on October 28, 2011,[9] outlining the federal government's progress in expanding and strengthening the nation's capacity to better understand, prepare for, and respond to extreme events and other climate change impacts. The report provided an update on actions in key areas of federal adaptation, including: building resilience in local communities, safeguarding critical natural resources such as fresh water, and providing accessible climate information and tools to help decision-makers manage climate risks.

The federal Department of Transportation issued *U.S. DOT Policy Statement on Climate Adaptation* in June 2011, committing to "integrate consideration of climate change impacts and adaptation into the planning, operations, policies, and programs of DOT to ensure that taxpayer resources are invested wisely, and that transportation infrastructure, services and operations remain effective in current and future climate conditions."[10]

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[9] https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/administration/eop/ceq/initiatives/resilience

[10] https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/sustainability/resilience/policy_and_guidance/usdot.cfm

To further the DOT Policy Statement, on December 15, 2014, FHWA issued order 5520 (*Transportation System Preparedness and Resilience to Climate Change and Extreme Weather Events*).[11] This directive established FHWA policy to strive to identify the risks of climate change and extreme weather events to current and planned transportation systems. The FHWA will work to integrate consideration of these risks into its planning, operations, policies, and programs in order to promote preparedness and resilience; safeguard federal investments; and ensure the safety, reliability, and sustainability of the nation's transportation systems.

State Efforts

On November 14, 2008, then-Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger signed EO S-13-08, which directed several state agencies to address California's vulnerability to sea-level rise caused by climate change. This EO set in motion several agencies and actions to address the concern of sea-level rise and directed all state agencies planning to construct projects in areas vulnerable to future sea-level rise to consider a range of sea-level rise scenarios for the years 2050 and 2100, assess project vulnerability and, to the extent feasible, reduce expected risks and increase resiliency to sea-level rise. Sea-level rise estimates should also be used in conjunction with information on local uplift and subsidence, coastal erosion rates, predicted higher water levels, and storm surge and storm wave data.

Governor Schwarzenegger also requested the National Academy of Sciences to prepare an assessment report to recommend how California should plan for future sea-level rise. The final report, *Sea-Level Rise for the Coasts of California, Oregon, and Washington* (Sea-Level Rise Assessment Report)[12] was released in June 2012 and included relative sea-level rise projections for the three states, taking into account coastal erosion rates, tidal impacts, El Niño and La Niña events, storm surge, and land subsidence rates; and the range of uncertainty in selected sea-level rise projections. It provided a synthesis of existing information on projected sea-level rise impacts to state infrastructure (such as roads, public facilities, and beaches), natural areas, and coastal and marine ecosystems; and a discussion of future research needs regarding sea-level rise.

In response to EO S-13-08, the California Natural Resources Agency (Resources Agency), in coordination with local, regional, state, federal, and public and private entities developed *The California Climate Adaptation Strategy* (Dec 2009),[13]which summarized the best available science on climate change impacts to California, assessed California's vulnerability to the identified impacts, and outlined solutions that can be implemented within and across state agencies to promote resiliency. The adaptation strategy was updated and rebranded in 2014 as *Safeguarding California: Reducing Climate Risk* (Safeguarding California Plan).

Governor Jerry Brown enhanced the overall adaptation planning effort by signing EO B-30-15 in April 2015, requiring state agencies to factor climate change into all planning and investment decisions. In March 2016, sector-specific Implementation Action Plans that demonstrate how state agencies are implementing EO B-30-15 were added to the Safeguarding California Plan. This effort represents a multi-agency, cross-sector approach to addressing adaptation to climate change-related events statewide.

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[11] https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/legsregs/directives/orders/5520.cfm

[12] *Sea Level Rise for the Coasts of California, Oregon, and Washington: Past, Present, and Future* (2012) is available at: http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=13389.

[13] http://www.climatechange.ca.gov/adaptation/strategy/index.html

EO S-13-08 also gave rise to the *State of California Sea-Level Rise Interim Guidance Document* (SLR Guidance), produced by the Coastal and Ocean Working Group of the California Climate Action Team (CO-CAT), of which Caltrans is a member. First published in 2010, the document provided "guidance for incorporating sea-level rise (SLR) projections into planning and decision making for projects in California," specifically, "information and recommendations to enhance consistency across agencies in their development of approaches to SLR." [14]

Climate change adaptation for transportation infrastructure involves long-term planning and risk management to address vulnerabilities in the transportation system from increased precipitation, and flooding; the increased frequency and intensity of storms and wildfires; rising temperatures; and rising sea levels. Caltrans is actively engaged in in working towards identifying these risks throughout the state and will work to incorporate this information into all planning and investment decisions as directed in EO B-30-15.

The project is outside the coastal zone and not in an area subject to sea-level rise. Accordingly, direct impacts on transportation facilities due to projected sea-level rise are not expected.

The Permanent Restoration Sub-Program's purpose, which funds this project, is to ensure facilities are permanently restored to their original condition This project accomplishes that but is also upgrading several existing culverts (i.e. bigger diameter to handle more flows) to withstand higher rain intensity events. To the extent feasible, this project is not only restoring the facility to its original condition but also providing improvements through upgrades.

[14] http://www.opc.ca.gov/2013/04/update-to-the-sea-level-rise-guidance-document/

Chapter 4 – Public Involvement & IS Circulation

Early and continuing coordination with the general public and appropriate public agencies is an essential part of the environmental process. It helps planners determine the scope of environmental documentation and the level of analysis required, and to identify potential impacts and avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures and related environmental requirements. Agency consultation and public participation for this project have been accomplished through a variety of formal and informal methods, including Project Development Team (PDT) meetings, coordination with resource agencies and consultation with other individuals and organizations.

4.1 Cultural Resources

A request was sent to the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) on August 23, 2017 requesting a Sacred Lands File Search. On October 10, 2017 the NAHC responded with negative results. The NAHC response included a list of tribes culturally affiliated with area that should be contacted. Pursuant to Assembly Bill 52 (AB 52) letters were sent to the following individuals requesting consultation under AB 52 on April 3, 2018:

- Anthony Madrigal, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer, Twenty-Nine Palms Band of Mission Indians
- Mike Darrell Mike, Chairperson, Twenty-Nine Palms Band of Mission Indians
- Dennis Patch, Chairman, Colorado River Indian Tribe
- Timothy Williams, Chairperson, Fort Mojave Indian Tribe
- Charles Wood, Chairperson, Chemehuevi Reservation

On April 13, 2018 a second consultation letter was sent to the individuals that did not respond to the initial contact letter. No responses from the Fort Mojave Indian Tribe or Chemehuevi Reservation have been received to date.

On April 20, 2018 a response was received from Mr. Madrigal, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer for the Twenty-Nine Palms Band of Mission Indians, requesting to be a consulting party under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Mr. Madrigal reiterated in his letter that the Twenty-Nine Palms Band of Mission Indians were aware of culturally sensitive areas to the Tribe within or in the vicinity of certain work locations.

On April 30, 2018 a copy of the draft HPSR and associated documents and record search were sent to Mr. Madrigal. On May 9, 2018 a response was received from Sarah Bliss, Twenty-Nine Palms Band of Mission Indians, requesting confirmation regarding the location of two prehistoric cultural resources and confirmation that all work for the project will occur within the Caltrans ROW and will not occur on any tribal land. A response was sent that day confirming the locations of the two prehistoric sites (CA-RIV-5546 and SRI-2) and that all work will be occurring within the Caltrans ROW. No further responses or requests have been received to date. A copy of the HPSR and associated documents were sent on October 4, 2018 to Mr. Madrigal for review to determine whether the Band's concerns had been addressed.

On October 26, 2018 a response was received from the Twenty-Nine Palms Band of Mission Indians Director of the Tribal Historic Preservation Office (THPO) Anthony Madrigal. In the letter Mr. Madrigal stated that after a review of the HPSR the THPO concurred that SRI-2 and CA-RIV-5546 are considered eligible for listing the NRHP. The THPO also concurred that CHL-985 [Desert Training Center (DTC)] is also eligible though no components of the DTC were found within the APE making evaluation not possible for this undertaking. The THPO also recommended that any ESA fencing should not be removed until the end of construction and approved by the project archaeologist and tribal monitor. The request of the Colorado River Indian Tribes to monitor was noted. In addition, the tribe requested notification if any archaeological resources are discovered during construction. The tribe will be notified of any new resources encountered during construction or construction monitoring.

The Colorado River Tribe responded in a May 4, 2018 letter. Mr. Etsitty, Acting Director of the Tribal Historic Preservation Office for the Colorado River Indian Tribe (CRIT), responded that the Tribe is requesting an informal meeting to discuss the project and are also requesting tribal monitoring for any ground disturbing activities as a condition of project approval. In the letter the tribe also requested that when possible prehistoric resources be avoided when feasible. If not feasible the prehistoric resources should be reburied in a nearby area after consultation with the tribe. The Tribe also requested information regarding monitoring opportunities for the project.

On May 9, 2018 a phone conservation occurred between Mr. Etsitty and Victoria Stosel, Associate Environmental Planner, Archaeologist. Mr. Etsitty expressed concerns that some of the work locations on US-95 were situated within the CRIT Reservation. In response to this concern, a map, showing the right of way line and project locations, was emailed to Mr. Etsitty on May 9, 2018. The map documented that all work was occurring within the Caltrans ROW, and not on tribal land. Mr. Etsitty also expressed concerns regarding sites situated between the Riverside Mountains to the Colorado River (an area that is outside the APE). A brief description of the results of the record search was discussed. All of Mr. Etsitty's comments and concerns were addressed in the HPSR prepared for the project, which was sent to the Tribe on October 4, 2018, along with a letter confirming his request to monitor. No response was received from the Tribe. Following some revisions to the project cultural resources documentation, a final copy of the HPSR and attachments was sent to the CRIT THPO on December 6, 2018. No response has been received to date.

4.2 Public Agencies

During a conference call with USACOE, held on May 5, 2018, a determination was made concluding the project will not require an individual permit given that impacts are less than 0.5 acre of permanent impacts; and the flows will not be dredged, filled, or modified.

In compliance with the USFWS Programmatic Biological Opinion (PBO) (8-8-10-F-59), issued on November 5, 2013, a streamlined USFWS consultation for desert tortoise is being conducted and will conclude prior to adoption of the final environmental document or project approval. PBO concurrence from USFWS is pending due to the federal government shutdown.

4.3 Public Circulation

The Draft Initial Study with Proposed Negative Declaration (Draft IS-ND) was publicly circulated from January 16, 2019 to February 18, 2019 to solicit comments on the project from the community as well as from elected officials, federal, state, and local agencies. The Draft IS-ND's notice of availability, with opportunity for hearing, was published in the Palo Verde Valley Times on January 16, 2019. A copy of the certification for the Palo Verde Valley Times newspaper notice can be found under Appendix G. A letter dated February 15, 2019 was received from the State Clearinghouse (SCH) containing the SCH# 2019011030. The letter states that no state agencies submitted comments during the circulation period. A copy of the letter can be found under Appendix H. Additionally, no comments were submitted directly to the Department either through the Project-specific e-mail account, the Project Senior, or through regular mail.

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List of Appendices

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Appendix A. Maps

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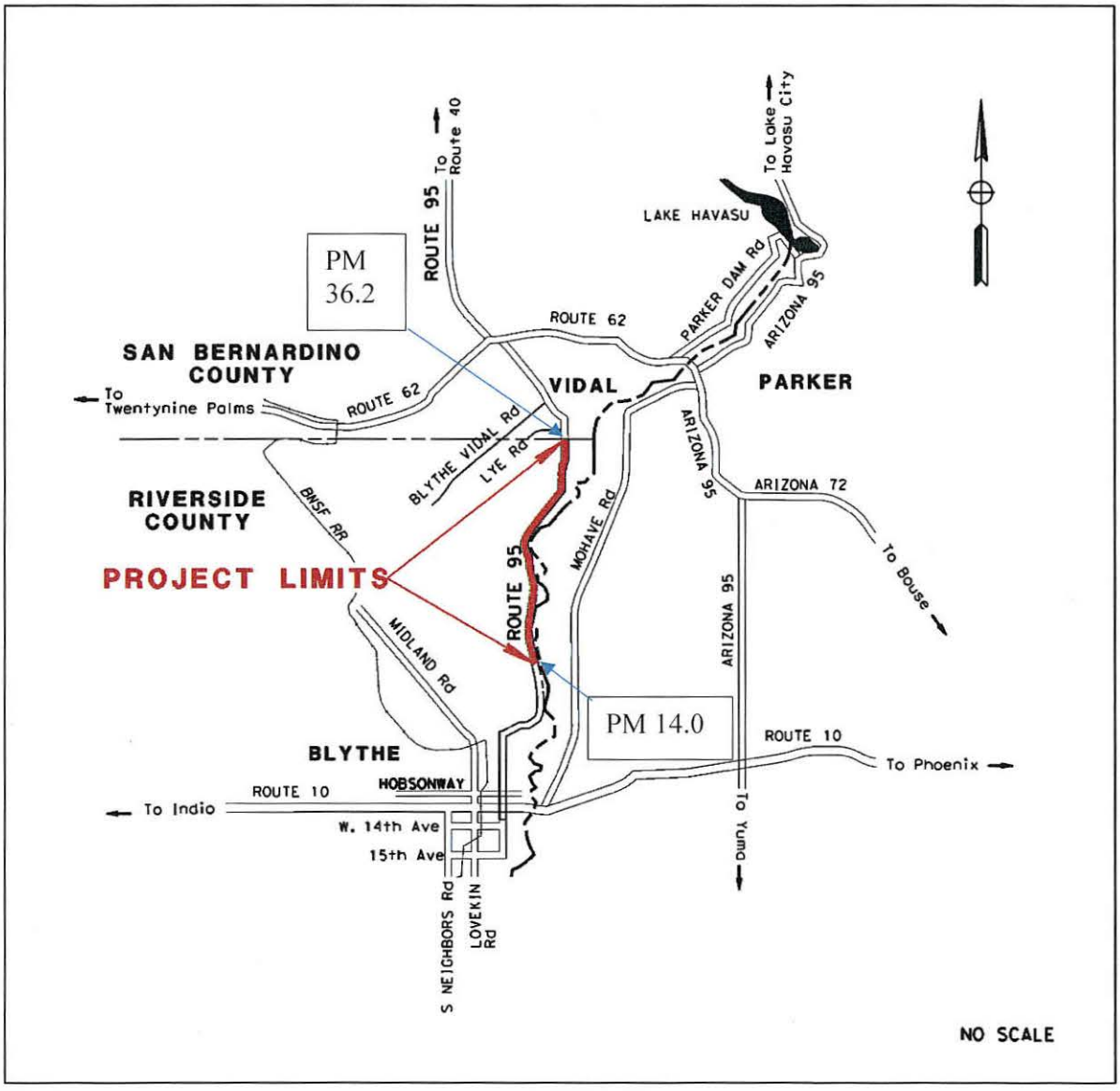
Figure 1. Project Vicinity Map.



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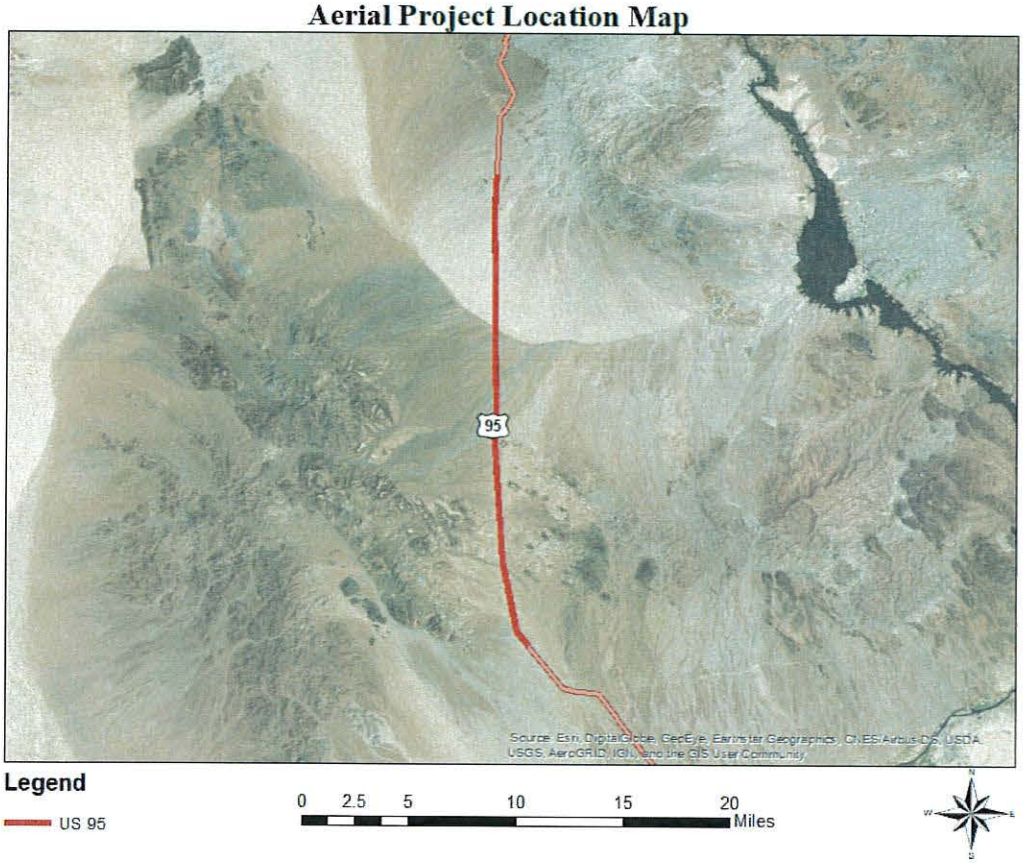

Figure 2. Aerial Project Location Map.

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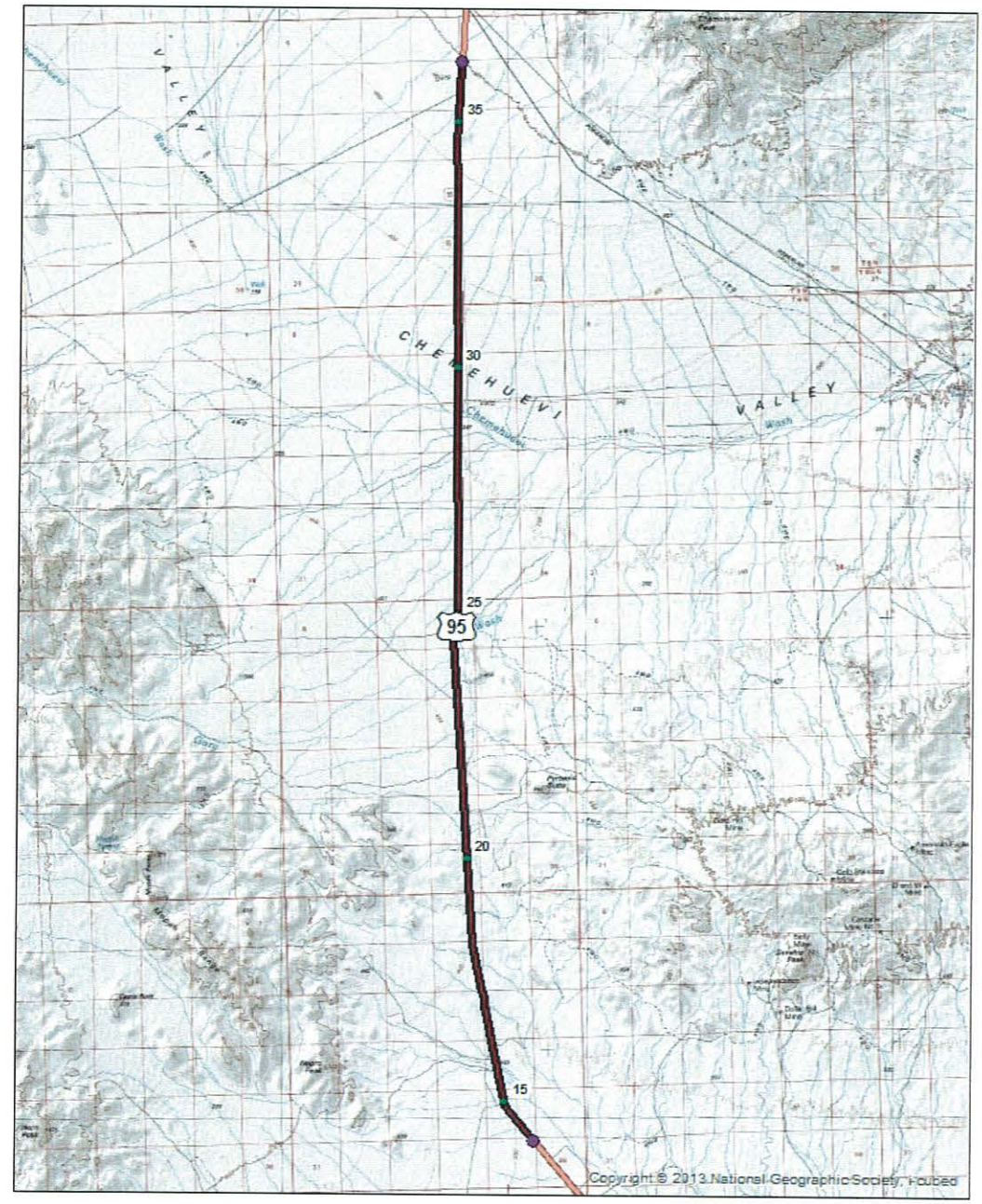
US-95 Rock Slope Protection and Culvert Replacement



Begin & End Postmile
Postmiles (5 miles intervals)
Project Area: 08-Riv-95 (PM 14-36.20)

N
W E
S

0 0.75 1.5 3 4.5 6 Miles

1:174,660

USGS Topographic 7.5-Minute Quadrangle Index

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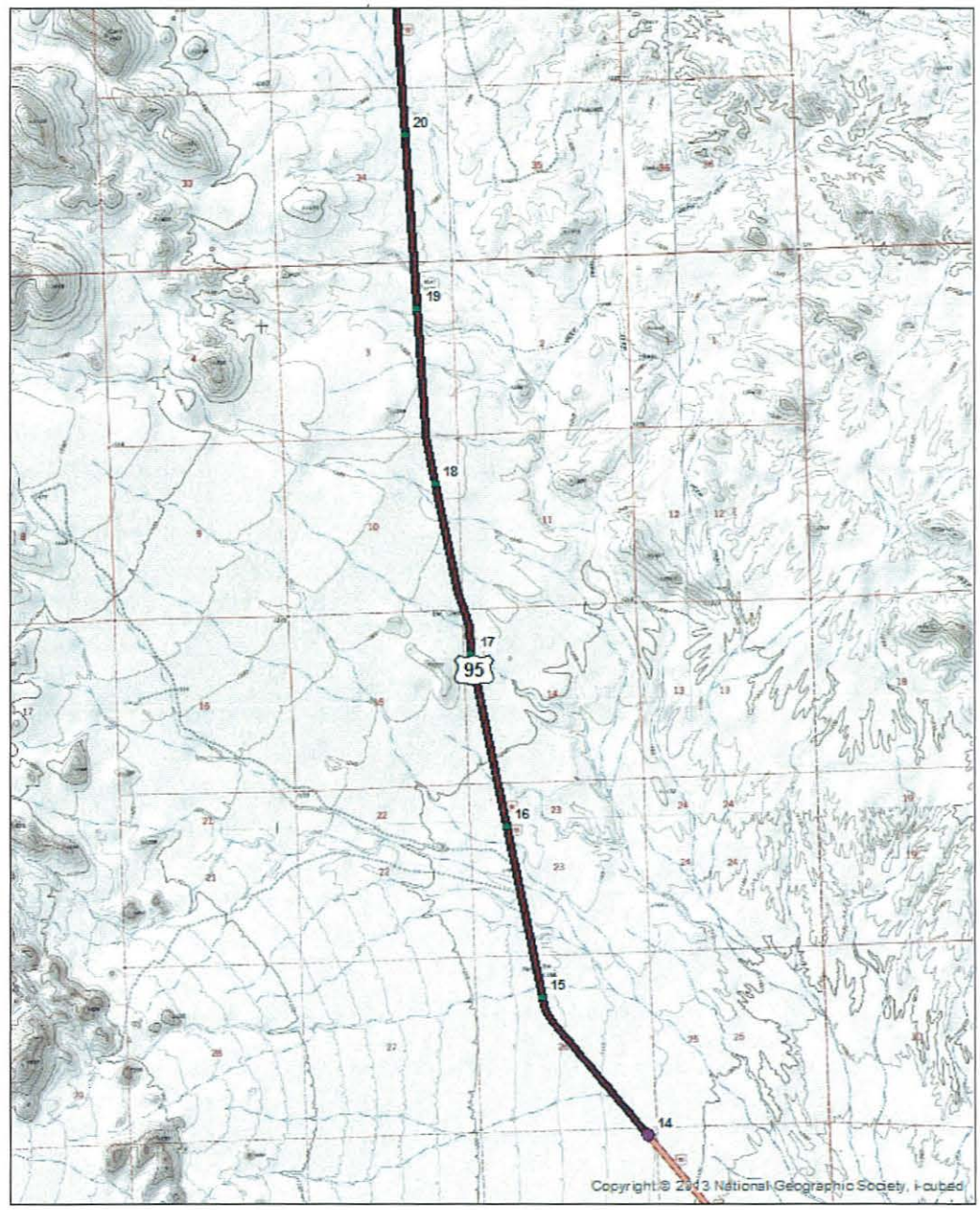
US-95 Rock Slope Protection and Culvert Replacement



End Postmile (36.20)
D8 Postmiles - 1 mile intervals
Project Area: 08-Riv-95 (PM 14-36.20)

N
W
E
S

0 0.2 0.4 0.8 1.2 1.6
Miles
1:49,439

USGS Topographic 7.5-Minute Quadrangle Index

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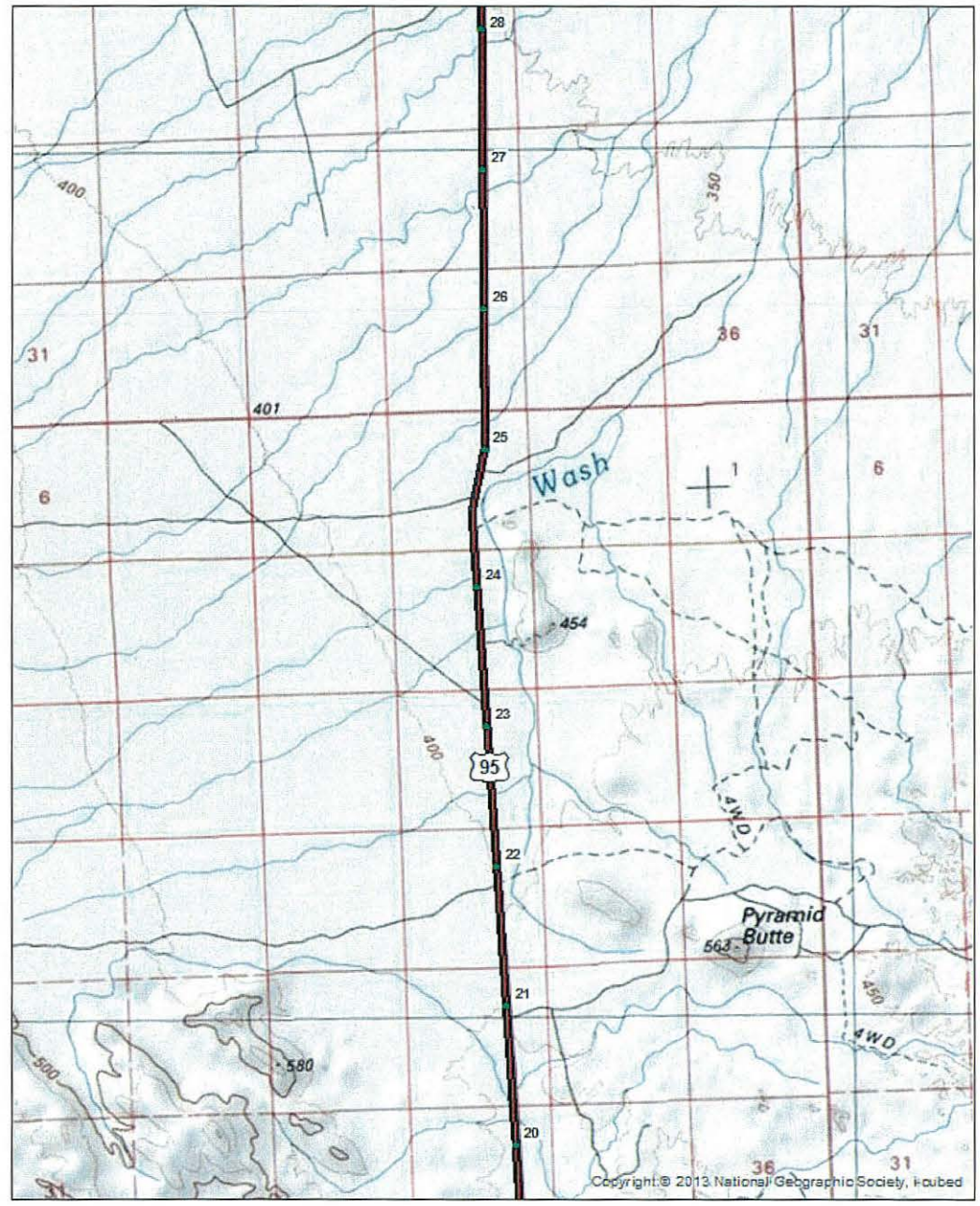
US-95 Rock Slope Protection and Culvert Replacement



End Postmile (36.20)
D8 Postmiles - 1 mile intervals
Project Area: 08-Riv-95 (PM 14-36.20)

N W E S

0 0.25 0.5 1 1.5 2 Miles

1:61,798

USGS Topographic 7.5-Minute Quadrangle Index

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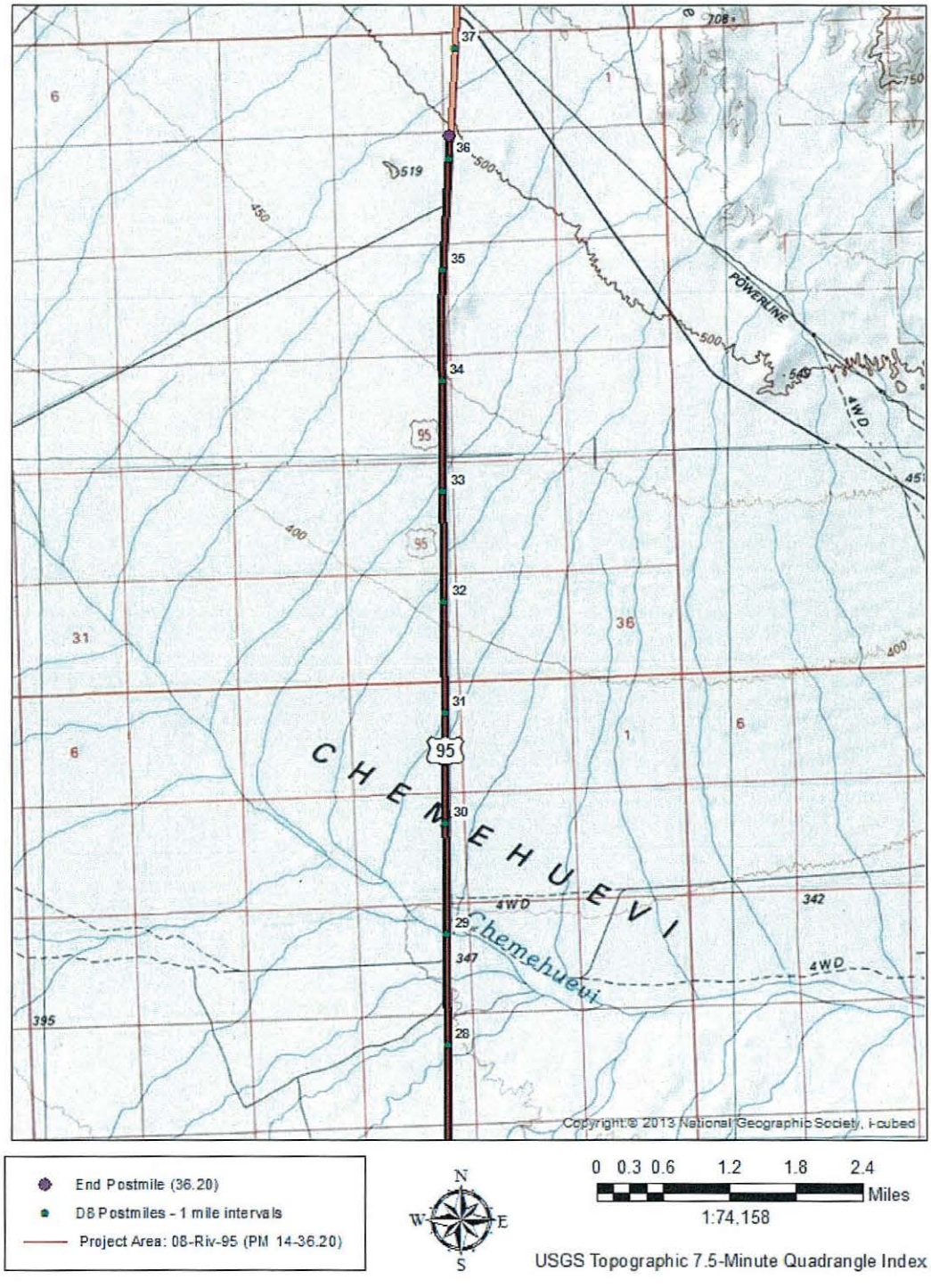
US-95 Rock Slope Protection and Culvert Replacement



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Appendix B. Distribution List

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A public notice of this IS and/or a Notice of Intent to Adopt a Negative Declaration was distributed to federal, state, regional and local agencies, elected officials and utilities and service providers. In addition, all property owners and occupants within a 500-foot radius of the project limits were provided the Notice of Intent.

Agencies and Elected Officials

Mr. Gary McBride
Chief Executive Officer
County of San Bernardino
385 North Arrowhead Avenue, 5th Floor
San Bernardino, CA 92415-0120

Dr. Raymond Wolfe
Executive Director
San Bernardino County Transportation Authority
1170 W. 3rd St., 2nd Floor
San Bernardino, CA 92410

Hon. Curt Hagman Supervisor, District 4
San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors
385 N. Arrowhead Ave., 5th Floor
San Bernardino, CA 92415

Hon. James Ramos Supervisor, District 3
San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors
385 N. Arrowhead Ave., 5th Floor
San Bernardino, CA 92415

Christopher Scott Interim District Director
Office of Assembly Member Jay P. Obernolte
15901 Smoke Tree St., Ste. 125
Hesperia, CA 92346

Hon. Josie Gonzales Supervisor, District 5
San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors
385 N. Arrowhead Ave., 5th Floor
San Bernardino, CA 92401

Bill Webster
Planning & Environmental Coordinator
BLM Needles Field Office
1303 South U.S Hwy 95
Needles, CA 92363

Assembly Member Eduardo Garcia
48220 Jackson Street
Suite A3
Coachella, CA 92236

Hon. Raul Ruiz Congress Member
House of Representatives, California District 36
445 East Florida Ave - 2nd Floor
Hemet, CA 92543

Mr. Tom Baumgarten
Superintendent
Morongo Unified School District
PO Box 1209
Twentynine Palms, CA 92277-0980

Hon. Jean Fuller Senator
California Senate, District 16
7248 Joshua Lane, Ste. B
Yucca Valley, CA 92284

Hon. Robert A. Lovingood Supervisor, District 1
San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors
385 N. Arrowhead Ave., 5th Floor
San Bernardino, CA 92415

Hon. Janice Rutherford Supervisor, District 2
San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors
385 N. Arrowhead Ave., 5th Floor
San Bernardino, CA 92415

Officer Joseph Medina Officer
California Highway Patrol
1916 J Street
Needles, CA 92363

Hon. Jeff Stone Senator
California Senate, District 28
45-125 Smurr St., Suite B
Indio, CA 92201

Hon. Chad Mayes Assembly Member
California State Assembly, District 42
41608 Indian Trail, Suite 1
Rancho Mirage, CA 92270

Mr. Steven Hernandez Chief of Staff
Office of Supervisor V. Manuel Perez
73-710 Fred Waring Dr. Suite 222
Palm Desert, CA 92260

Mr. Dakota Higgins District Director
Office of Congress Member Paul Cook
14955 Dale Evans Pkwy.
Apple Valley Town Hall
Apple Valley, CA 92307

Riverside County Transportation
Commission
4080 Lemon Street, 3rd Floor
Riverside, CA 92501

Ms. Lisa Marin Office Assistant
San Bernardino County Fire - Division 5
6942 Airway Avenue, Suite A
Yucca Valley, CA 92284

Captain Jeff Joling Captain
San Bernardino County Sheriff Department
63665 Twenty Palms Highway
Joshua Tree, CA 92252

City of Blythe
Development Services Department
235 North Broadway
Blythe, CA 92225

Riverside County Fire Dept. Station 43
140 W Barnard Street
Blythe, CA 92225

Captain David Teets
Colorado River Sheriff's Station
260 N. Spring Street
Blythe, CA 92225

California Highway Patrol
430 S Broadway
Blythe, CA 92225

Palo Verde Unified School District
295 N. First Street
Blythe, CA 92225

Mr. George Johnson
County Executive Officer
County Administrative Center
4080 Lemon Street-4th Floor
Riverside, CA 92501

Appendix C. List of Preparers

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The following personnel participated in the preparation of this IS:

California Department of Transportation

Dan Gallagher, AICP Associate Enviromental Planner, Environmental Studies "D"

Victoria Stosel, Associate Environmental Planner, Cultural Studies

Luz Quinell, Associate Environmental Planner, Biological Studies

Bahram Karimi, Associate Enviromental Planner/Paleontologist, Environmental Studies "D"

Lisa Farzana, Civil Engineer /Enviromental Engieering, Environmental Engineering "A"

Meenu Chandan, Civil Engineer/Environmental Engineering, Environmental Engineering "A"

Edison Jaffery, Civil Engineer/Environmental Engineering, Environmental Engineering "A"

Paul Phan, Civil Engineer/Environmental Engineering, Branch Chief; Environmental Engineering "A"

Antonia Toledo, MS Senior Environmental Planner, Branch Chief-Environmental Studies "D"

Kurt Heidelberg, Office Chief, Environmental Planning

Hannah Duarte, Environmental Planner, Environmental Studies "D"

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Appendix D. Title VI Statement

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STATE OF CALIFORNIA—BUSINESS, TRANSPORTATION AND HOUSING AGENCY EDMUND G. BROWN Jr., Governor

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR
P.O. BOX 942873, MS-49
SACRAMENTO, CA 94273-0001
PHONE (916) 654-5266
FAX (916) 654-6608
TTY 711
www.dot.ca.gov

Flex your power!
Be energy efficient!

March 2013

NON-DISCRIMINATION
POLICY STATEMENT

The California Department of Transportation, under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related statutes, ensures that no person in the State of California shall, on the grounds of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, sexual orientation, or age, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity it administers.

For information or guidance on how to file a complaint based on the grounds of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, sexual orientation, or age, please visit the following web page: http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/bep/title_vi/t6_violated.htm.

Additionally, if you need this information in an alternate format, such as in Braille or in a language other than English, please contact the California Department of Transportation, Office of Business and Economic Opportunity, 1823 14th Street, MS-79, Sacramento, CA 95811. Telephone: (916) 324-0449, TTY: 711, or via Fax: (916) 324-1949.

MALCOLM DOUGHERTY
Director

"Caltrans improves mobility across California"

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Appendix E. List of Technical Studies

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1. Natural Environment Study, US-95 Restore Storm Eroded Embankments with Rock Slope Protection and Replace Culverts, Post Mile 14.0-36.2, Riverside County, CA; PN: 08-1500-0107 (EA 1G000) November 2018; Caltrans

2. Historic Property Survey Report and Archaeological Survey Report, US-95 Restore Storm Eroded Embankments with Rock Slope Protection and Replace Culverts Project, Post Mile 14.0-36.2, Riverside County, CA; PN: 08-1500-0107 (EA 1G000) October 2018; Caltrans

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Appendix F. Newspaper Notice

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California Newspaper Service Bureau
Public Notice Advertising Since 1934
Tel 1-800-788-7840 Fax 1-800-474-9444
Local Offices and Representatives in:
Los Angeles, Santa Ana, San Diego, Riverside/San Bernardino,
San Francisco, Oakland, San Jose, Sacramento
Special Services Available in Phoenix

DECLARATION

I am a resident of Los Angeles County, over the age of eighteen years and not a party to or interested in the matter noticed.

The notice, of which the annexed is a printed copy appeared in the:

PALO VERDE VALLEY TIMES

On the following dates:

01/16/2019

I certify (or declare) under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Dated at Los Angeles, California, this

17th day of January 2019

Signature

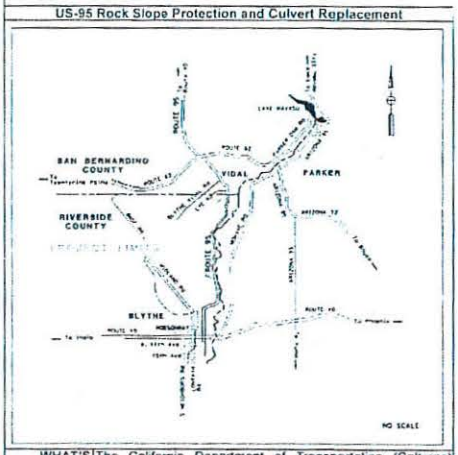
3211413
"The only Public Notice which is justifiable from the standpoint of true economy and the public interest, is that which reaches those who are affected by it"

* A 0 0 0 0 0 0 4 9 6 3 4 6 9 *

Caltrans

PUBLIC NOTICE
Notice of Intent to Adopt Negative Declaration with Opportunity for Public Hearing

US-95 Rock Slope Protection and Culvert Replacement



WHAT'S BEING PLANNED	The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) proposes to restore storm-eroded embankments with rock slope protection and replace culverts on US-95 from PM 14.0 to PM 36.2, near the San Bernardino County Line, in unincorporated territory of Riverside County. The proposed project spans from approximately 16 miles north of the City of Blythe to the community of Vidal. This maintenance project would permanently restore the facility to its original condition.
WHY THIS AD?	Caltrans has studied the effects this project may have on the environment. Our studies show it will not significantly affect the quality of the environment. The report that explains why is called an *Initial Study (with Negative Declaration)*. This notice is to tell you of the preparation of the *Initial Study (with Negative Declaration)* and of its availability for you to read, and to also offer the opportunity to request a public hearing or to provide comments, and the intent to adopt a Negative Declaration.
WHAT'S AVAILABLE?	Maps for the *Initial Study (with Negative Declaration)*, and other project information, are available for review and copying at the following locations: ➢ Palo Verde Valley Library, located at 125 W Chanslor Way, Blythe, CA 92225 Hours of operation: Monday thru Friday: 10 am-5:30 pm; Saturday and Sunday: closed ➢ To view electronic copies of these documents go to: http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist8.
WHERE YOU COME IN	Do you have any comments about processing the project with a Negative Declaration and the *Initial Study*? Do you disagree with the findings of our study as set forth in the Proposed Negative Declaration? Would you care to make any other comments on the project? Would you like a public hearing? Please submit your comments via email to D8.1G000.Comments@dot.ca.gov or in writing, no later than February 18, 2019 to: Antonia Toledo, Senior Environmental Planner California Department of Transportation, District 8 Environmental Studies D 464 West 4th Street, 6th Floor, MS 820 San Bernardino, CA 92401-1400 Please use "US-95 Rock Slope Protection and Culvert Replacement Project" in the subject line of the email. The date we will begin accepting comments is January 16, 2019. Following the public and agency review and comment period, if there are no major comments, and the project is given environmental approval and funding is obtained, Caltrans will proceed with the project's design.
CONTACT	For more information about this project please contact the Caltrans District 8 Office of Public Affairs at (909) 383-4631. For individuals with sensory disabilities, this document can be made available in Braille, in large print, on audiocassette, or on computer disk. To obtain a copy in one of these alternate formats, write to Terri Kasinga, Chief Public and Media Affairs, 464 W 4th Street, San Bernardino, CA 92401 or use the California Relay Service 1-800-735-2929 (TTY to Voice), 1-800-735-2922 (Voice to TTY), 1-800-854-7784 (From or to Speech to Speech), or dial 711. **EA 08-1G000 (PN 08150000107)**

CNS-3211413

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Appendix G. State Clearinghouse Letter

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STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Governor's Office of Planning and Research

State Clearinghouse and Planning Unit

Gavin Newsom
Governor

Kate Gordon
Director

February 15, 2019

Dan Gallagher
California Department of Transportation, District 8
464 W. 4th Street, MS 820
San Bernardino, CA 92401-1400

Subject: US-95 Rock Slope Protection and Culvert Replacement
SCH#: 2019011030

Dear Dan Gallagher:

The State Clearinghouse submitted the above named Negative Declaration to selected state agencies for review. The review period closed on February 14, 2019, and no state agencies submitted comments by that date. This letter acknowledges that you have complied with the State Clearinghouse review requirements for draft environmental documents, pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act.

Please call the State Clearinghouse at (916) 445-0613 if you have any questions regarding the environmental review process. If you have a question about the above-named project, please refer to the ten-digit State Clearinghouse number when contacting this office.

Sincerely,

Scott Morgan
Director, State Clearinghouse

1400 TENTH STREET P.O. BOX 3044 SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95812-3044
TEL 1-916-445-0613 state.clearinghouse@opr.ca.gov www.opr.ca.gov

Document Details Report
State Clearinghouse Data Base

SCH# 2019011030
Project Title US-95 Rock Slope Protection and Culvert Replacement
Lead Agency Caltrans #8

Type Neg Negative Declaration

Description The project is to restore storm eroded embankments with rock slope protection and replace culverts on US-95 from PM 14 to PM 36.20.

Lead Agency Contact

Name Dan Gallagher
Agency California Department of Transportation, District 8
Phone (909) 383-6934 **Fax**
email
Address 464 W. 4th Street, MS 820
City San Bernardino **State** CA **Zip** 92401-1400

Project Location

County Riverside
City Blythe
Region
Lat / Long
Cross Streets US-95 from PM 14-36.20
Parcel No.
Township 1-4S **Range** 23-24E **Section** T1 **Base**

Proximity to:

Highways 1-10
Airports
Railways BNSF
Waterways Colorado River
Schools
Land Use Most of the land along US-95 is classified as either open space rural or agricultural

Project Issues Aesthetic/Visual; Agricultural Land; Air Quality; Archaeologic-Historic; Biological Resources; Geologic/Seismic; Minerals; Noise; Population/Housing Balance; Public Services; Recreation/Parks; Toxic/Hazardous; Traffic/Circulation; Vegetation; Water Quality; Water Supply; Wetland/Riparian; Landuse; Cumulative Effects

Reviewing Agencies Resources Agency; Colorado River Board; Department of Conservation; Department of Fish and Wildlife, Region 6; Cal Fire; Office of Historic Preservation; Department of Parks and Recreation; California Highway Patrol; Regional Water Quality Control Board, Region 7; Native American Heritage Commission; Public Utilities Commission; State Lands Commission; State Water Resources Control Board, Divison of Financial Assistance; State Water Resources Control Board, Division of Drinking Water; Air Resources Board, Transportation Projects

Date Received 01/16/2019 **Start of Review** 01/16/2019 **End of Review** 02/14/2019

Note: Blanks in data fields result from insufficient information provided by lead agency.

Appendix H. Environmental Commitments Record (ECR)

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Date: 03/1/19 **(IS/CE)**

Project Phase:

☒ PA/ED (*DED/FED*)
☐ PS&E Submittal
☐ Construction

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITMENTS RECORD

(Construct Concrete RSP & Replace Culverts)

08-RIV-95
PM 14-36.20
EA 08-1G000
PN 08-0815000107

Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures	Page # in Env. Doc.	Environmental Analysis Source (Technical Study, Environmental Document, and/or Technical Discipline)	Responsible for Development and/or Implementation of Measure	Timing/ Phase	If applicable, corresponding construction provision: • (standard, special, non-standard)	Action(s) Taken to Implement Measure	Measure Completed (Date and Initials)		Remarks	Environmental Compliance YES	Environmental Compliance NO
Cultural Resources											
CR-1: If buried cultural resources are encountered during construction, it is Caltrans policy that work stop within 60 feet until a qualified archaeologist can evaluate the nature and significance of the find.	Pg 28	Standard Measure	RE/Contractor	Construction	Standard Specifications 2018: Section: 14-2.03A Archeological Resources: General.						
CR-2: In the event that human remains are found, the county coroner shall be notified and ALL construction activities within 60 feet of the discovery shall stop. Pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 5097.98, if the remains are thought to be Native American, the coroner will notify the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) who will then notify the Most Likely Descendent (MLD). The person who discovered the remains will contact the District 8 Division of Environmental Planning; Andrew Walters, DEBC: (909) 383-2647 and Gary Jones, DNAC: (909) 383-7505. Further provisions of PRC	Pg 28	Standard Measure	RE/Contractor	Construction	Standard Specifications 2018: Section: 14-2.03A Archeological Resources: General. Health & Safety Code 7050.5 & Public Resource Code 5097						

5097.98 are to be followed as applicable.											
CR-3: Prior to soil disturbance, CA-RIV-5546 and SRI-2 shall be designated as Environmentally Sensitive Areas, where all project related activities or inadvertent disturbances shall be prohibited	Pg 28	Standard Measure	RE/Contractor	Construction	2018 Standard Specifications 16-2.03A TYPE ESA Temporary Fence						
CR-4: Archaeological and tribal monitors shall be present during any construction or preconstruction-related activity in all areas designated as Archaeological Monitoring Areas. In the event that cultural deposits are uncovered, the archaeological monitor shall be empowered to implement protective measures outlined above in CR-1.	Pg 28	Standard Measure	RE/Contractor	Construction	2018 Non-Standard Specifications No. 14-2.03B						
Hazardous Waste/Materials											
HAZ-1: During the final design, include one or both of the following SSPs in the PS&E package for removal of yellow or white traffic stripes:: • SSP 14-11.12 Remove Yellow Traffic Stripes and Pavement Markings with Hazardous Waste Residue • SSP 84-9.03C, Remove Traffic Stripes and Pavement Marking Containing Lead	Pg 31	ISA Checklist 10/10/2018	RE/Contractor	Final Design, Construction							
HAZ-2: During final design, SSP 7-1.02K(6)(J) (iii) will be added to the PS&E package and Bid item 070030 for Lead Compliance Plan to avoid and/or minimize potential impacts related to ADL.	Pg 31	ISA Checklist 10/10/2018	PE	PS&E							
Air Quality											

AQ-1: During construction, implement Caltrans' SSPs Sections 14-9.09 (Air Pollution Control), 14-9.03 (Dust Control), and MDAQMD Rule 403.2 (Fugitive Dust Control) to avoid and/or minimize potential impact to air quality.	Pg 16	Standard Measure	RE/Contractor	Construction	Standard Specifications 2018: Section 14-9: Air Quality						
AQ-2: Implement and follow Erosion Control and Air Quality Best Management Practices (BMPs).	Pg 16	Standard Measure	RE/Contractor	Construction	Standard Specifications 2018: Section 14-9: Air Quality, Section 13: Water Pollution Control and Section 21: Erosion Control.						
Noise											
NOI-1: The contractor shall comply with all local sound control and noise level rules, regulations and ordinances that apply to any work performed pursuant to contract.	Pg 36	Standard Measure	RE/Contractor	Construction	Standard Specifications 2018: Section 14-8: Noise and Vibration						
NOI-2: Each internal combustion engine, used for any purpose on the job or related to the job, shall be equipped with a muffler of a type recommend by the manufacturer. No internal combustion engine shall be operated on the project without the muffler.	Pg 36	Standard Measure	RE/Contractor	Construction	Standard Specifications 2018: Section 14-8: Noise and Vibration.						
Biology											
BIO-1: The project has identified two potential Staging Areas and approval of additional staging areas will require the Caltrans Biologist analyze potential project impacts and receive authorization for additional staging areas. Prior to the beginning of construction, the staging areas will be fenced with temporary desert tortoise fence and maintained throughout	Pg 22-23	IS/ND	Permits Unit	PS&E, Construction							

construction in order to prevent the work areas from extending beyond the approved temporary staging area, and to avoid encroachment into the native desert habitat. The											
BIO-2: Pre-construction plant surveys will occur prior to the mobilization and commencement of construction by a qualified biologist. The qualified biologist will survey the project impact areas and flag special status plant species for avoidance and to minimize impacts. The qualified biologist will be designated to oversee compliance of all protective measures and will notify the resident engineer and District Biologist if project activities are not compliant. The resident engineer must stop work until corrective actions are taken and protective measures are implemented.	Pg 23	IS/ND	Bio Monitor	PS&E, Construction							
BIO-3: Biological Resource Information Program: An education program will be developed and presented by a qualified biologist to all onsite personnel, who will be in the project limits for longer than 30 minutes, prior to the onset of ground-disturbing activities. At a minimum, the program will include the following topics: distribution, general behavior, and ecology of the desert tortoise, sensitivity of the species to human activities, legal protection afforded to these species, penalties for violations of federal and state laws, notification procedures by workers or contractors if a tortoise is found in a construction area, and the project features designed to reduce the impacts to the species and promote continued successful occupation of the project area. The program will consist of a class presented by a qualified biologist or video, provided the qualified biologist is	Pg 23	IS/ND	Bio Monitor	PS&E, Construction							

present to answer questions. Handout materials will be distributed for workers with important information about the regulated species for future reference and as a reminder of the program's content. Following the education program, the handouts will be posted at all construction field offices and on all information boards, where they will remain throughout the duration of the project. If at any time a desert tortoise is observed in the project area, the Resident Engineer will cease operations immediately and will contact the Caltrans Environmental Stewardship & Monitoring Unit.											
BIO-4: Whenever project vehicles are parked outside of a fence that is intended to preclude entry by desert tortoises, workers will check regularly under the vehicle before moving the vehicles or equipment. If a desert tortoise is beneath the vehicle, the worker will notify the qualified biologist. If a qualified biologist is not present on-site, the Resident Engineer or supervisor must notify the Caltrans Biologist. Workers will not be allowed to capture, handle, or relocate tortoises.	Pg 23	IS/ND	Permits Unit	PS&E, Construction							
BIO-5: Immediately prior to the start of any ground-disturbing activities and prior to the installation of any desert tortoise exclusion fencing, clearance surveys for the desert tortoise will be conducted by the qualified Biologist. The entire project area will be surveyed for desert tortoise and their burrows by a qualified biologist before the start of any ground-disturbing activities according to the 2018 Field Survey Protocol. If burrows are found, they will be examined by the qualified biologist to determine if any desert tortoises are present. If desert tortoises are present	Pg 23-24	IS/ND	Bio Monitor	PS&E, Construction							

at the project site, the Caltrans will consult with US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) to determine the appropriate protective measures.											
BIO-6: Temporary exclusion fencing will be installed outlining the perimeter of any construction staging, storage or batch plant areas to prevent entry by desert tortoises into the work site. Exclusion fencing will be installed following USFWS guidelines. The biologist will ensure that desert tortoises cannot pass under, over, or around the fence. The biologist must regularly check the fenced area and notify the Engineer should it become damaged and require repair	Pg 24	IS/ND	RE/Contractor	PS&E, Construction							
BIO-7: The qualified biologist will inform USFWS and CDFW of any injured or dead tortoises found on site (verbal notification within 24 hours and written notification within 5 days).	Pg 24	IS/ND	Bio Monitor	PS&E, Construction							
BIO-8: The qualified biologist will conduct regular on-site monitoring for the duration of the project and submit monthly monitoring reports for desert tortoise and compliance of protective measures.	Pg 24	IS/ND	Bio Monitor	PS&E, Construction							
BIO-9: Except on maintained public roads designated for higher speeds or within desert tortoise-proof fenced area, driving speed will not exceed 20 miles per hour through potential desert tortoise habitat on unpaved roads.	Pg 24	IS/ND	Bio Monitor	PS&E, Construction							
BIO-10: Litter control measures will be implemented. Litter will be contained in containers to prevent attracting common ravens or other potential predators of the desert tortoise.	Pg 24	IS/ND	RE/Contractor/ Bio Monitor	PS&E, Construction							

Workers are prohibited from feeding all wildlife.											
Water Quality											
WQ-1: Prior to the start of construction, a SWPPP for reducing impacts on water quality shall be developed by the contractor and approved by the Department.	Pg 34	IS/ND	RE	During Construction							
WQ-2: The SWPPP control measures shall address the following categories: soil stabilization practices; sediment control practices; sediment tracking control practices; wind erosion control practices; and non-storm water management and waste management and disposal control practices.	Pg 34	IS/ND	RE	During Construction							
WQ-3: The contractor shall be required to comply with water pollution control provisions and SWPPP and conform to the requirements of the Department's Standard Specification Section 7-1.01G "Water Pollution," of the Standard Specifications.	Pg 34	IS/ND	RE	During Construction							
WQ-4: If necessary, soil disturbed areas of the project site will be fully protected using soil stabilization and sediment control BMPs at the end of each day, unless fair weather is predicted.	Pg 34	IS/ND	RE	During Construction							
PERMITS											
Permits include 1600, 401, 404 Nationwide, Programmatic BO	Pg 21-22, 52	IS/ND	Permits Unit	During PS&E							