

DRAFT

**Initial Study and Mitigated
Negative Declaration**

**NID E. George to Lake Wildwood
Backbone Extension Pipeline
Project**

Lead Agency:



**Nevada Irrigation District
1036 West Main Street
Grass Valley, California 95945**

June 2019



ECORP Consulting, Inc.
ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTANTS

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Prepared by:



ECORP Consulting, Inc.
ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTANTS

**2525 Warren Drive
Rocklin, California 95677**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Lead Agency: Nevada Irrigation District

Project Proponent: Nevada Irrigation District

Project Location: The Project is generally located along 5.6 miles of Rough and Ready Highway in Nevada County, California. The proposed alignment begins on the east at the West Drive/Rough and Ready Highway intersection and extends westerly along Rough and Ready Highway and other local roads to the Lake Wildwood Drive/Chaparral Drive intersection on the west. The Project would be constructed within the existing County right-of-way/public roads of the following roadways: Rough and Ready Highway, Rough and Ready Road, Riffle Box Road, Minnow Lane, and Lake Wildwood Drive. Empty Diggins Lane and Bosa Drive are not County roads and will require easement acquisition. There are two non-roadway segments: one at the west end of Riffle Box Road and one just east of Minnow Lane (along a fire road) that will require an easement.

Project Description:

The Project is located along the Rough and Ready Highway and other roads in Nevada County, California (see Figure 2-1 *Project Alignment* and Figure 2-2 *Project Overview* -sheets 1 through 8). The project spans an approximately 5.6-mile linear alignment that has two sections where it deviates from the roadway and extends across private land. Below is the total alignment and approximate section lengths:

- Along Rough and Ready Highway from West Drive (easternmost Project boundary) to Rough and Ready Road (approximately 2.5 miles).
- From Rough and Ready Highway, the Project continues west along Rough and Ready Road to Riffle Box Road (approximately 1.75 miles).
- The Project continues approximately 460 feet west along Riffle Box Road. At this point Riffle Box Road then makes a sharp turn north; however, the Project alignment continues east, cross country approximately 830 feet, where it rejoins Rough and Ready Road.
- The Project then continues west 209 feet, where it turns south onto Empty Diggins Lane
- From the intersection of Rough and Ready Road and Empty Diggins Lane, the Project continues southwest along Empty Diggins Road to Bosa Drive (approximately 0.3 mile).
- The Project then turns north on Bosa Drive and continues approximately 0.3 mile to a private driveway.
- The Project follows the private driveway west approximately 90 feet to where the driveway makes a turn to the south. The Project would continue along the driveway approximately 500

feet, to where it joins Minnow Way. This area is to be improved as a fire lane by Lake Wildwood HOA.

- The Project then follows Minnow Way approximately 475 feet west to Lake Wildwood Drive.
- At the intersection of Lake Wildwood and Minnow Way, the Project turns north along Lake Wildwood Drive.
- The Project follows Lake Wildwood Drive approximately 0.3 mile north to Chaparral Drive, where it ends at the westernmost boundary.

Alternative Alignment

In addition to the proposed Project, this Initial Study also evaluates an alternative pipeline segment (Alternative Segment). The Alternative Segment is shown in Figure 2-2, Sheet 8 and is located near the western end of the proposed alignment on property owned by the Lake Wildwood Homeowner's Association.

The Alternative Segment begins on the east at Empty Diggins Road and extends southwesterly along an existing dirt road approximately 525 feet. From that point, the Alternative Segment turns north, continuing along an existing dirt road for an additional 1,270 feet until it ties back into the proposed alignment at the western terminus of Bosa Drive. If selected this alternative would replace the 0.30 mile Bosa Drive segment which would eliminate the need for excavation/cuts in existing road pavement and minimize related traffic delays associated with construction.

Pipeline Details

The majority of the Project would be constructed within existing roadways, except where it would cross private property between Riffle Box Road and Rough and Ready Road near Empty Diggins Lane. Another short segment would cross private property just east of Minnow Lane within a private driveway. Appurtenances such as fire hydrants, Pressure Reducing Valve Stations, and service lines and meter boxes would be placed on the shoulder of the road at the adjacent property lines. Stub-outs for future pipeline extensions would also be installed.

Public Review Period: June 7, 2019 – July 7, 2019

Mitigation Measures Incorporated into the Project to Avoid Significant Effects:

Air Quality

Mitigation Measure AQ-1 applies to both the proposed Project and Alternative Segment 1.

AQ-1: The following ozone precursor-reduction measures shall be implemented by the Project construction contractor during construction activities:

- All off-road equipment (portable and mobile) shall meet or be cleaner than Tier 2 engine emission specifications. Note that all off-road equipment must meet all applicable state and federal requirements.

- Emissions from onsite construction equipment shall comply with NSAQMD Regulation II, Rule 202, Visible Emissions.
- Idling times shall be minimized either by shutting equipment off when not in use or reducing the maximum idling time to five minutes when not in use (as required by California airborne toxics control measure Title 13, Section 2485 of CCR). Clear signage shall be provided for construction workers at all access points.
- All construction equipment shall be maintained and properly tuned in accordance with manufacturers' specifications.
- Existing power sources (e.g., power poles) or clean fuel generators shall be utilized rather than temporary power generators (i.e. diesel generators), where feasible.

Biological Resources

BIO-1: Conduct Pre-Construction Nesting Bird Surveys

Mitigation Measure BIO-1 applies to all segments of the proposed Project and Alternative 1.

Conduct a pre-construction nesting bird survey of all suitable habitat on the Project within 14 days prior to commencement of construction during the nesting season (February 1-August 31). Surveys should be conducted within 300 feet of the Project for nesting raptors, and 100 feet of the Project for nesting songbirds. If active nests are found, a no-disturbance buffer around the nest shall be established. The buffer distance shall be established by a biologist in consultation with CDFW or the CEQA lead agency. The buffer shall be maintained until the fledglings are capable of flight and become independent of the nest tree, to be determined by a qualified biologist. Once the young are independent of the nest, no further measures are necessary. Pre-construction nesting surveys are not required for construction activity outside the nesting season.

BIO-2: Conduct Pre-Construction Special Status Plant Surveys

Mitigation Measures BIO-2 applies to construction activities within the future fire lane segment, the Non-Roadway Segment and PRV station improvements locations within the AGI areas. Surveys are valid three years for annual plant dominated communities and five years for tree and shrub dominated communities so multiple segments can be surveyed during one year to cover multiple years of construction.

- The Project Applicant shall retain a biologist to perform a special-status plant survey according to USFWS, CDFW, and CNPS protocol. Surveys should be timed according to the blooming period for target species and known reference populations, if available.
- If no special-status plants are found, no further measures pertaining to special-status plants are necessary.
- If special-status plant species are found, avoidance zones may be established around plants to clearly demarcate areas for avoidance. Avoidance measures and buffer distances may vary

between species and the specific avoidance zone distance will be determined in coordination with appropriate resource agencies (CDFW and/or USFWS).

- If special-status plant species are found and avoidance of the species is not possible, then additional measures such as seed collection and/or translocation may be developed in consultation with the appropriate agencies.
- The USFWS generally considers plant survey results valid for approximately three years. Therefore, follow-up surveys may be necessary if Project implementation occurs after this three-year window.

BIO-3: Conduct Special Status Amphibian Surveys

Mitigation Measure BIO-3 applies to AGI areas 1, 2 and 5 and Creeks 1, 2 and 3 as shown on Figure 4-1.

The following measures are recommended to minimize potential impacts to foothill yellow-legged frog and California red-legged frog:

- The Project Applicant shall retain a biologist to conduct a pre-construction survey of mapped aquatic resources within 72 hours of the start of construction activities adjacent to those resources. Surveys are only needed for aquatic resources that contain water when construction commences.
- If no special-status amphibians are detected during the surveys, no further measures are needed.
- If special-status amphibians are detected, additional measures may be developed in consultation with CDFW to avoid impacts to this species. Measures may include preconstruction surveys and/or monitors present during construction activities in and adjacent to suitable aquatic habitat.

The installation of BMPs to prevent impacts to aquatic resources will also serve as a physical barrier to prevent the movement of these species into the construction area.

The surveys for foothill yellow-legged frog, California red-legged frog, and northern western pond turtle can be conducted concurrently.

BIO-4: Worker Environmental Awareness Training (WEAP)

Mitigation Measure BIO-4 applies to all segments of the proposed Project and Alternative 1.

Provide workers with Worker Environmental Awareness Training (WEAP) to familiarize them with the biology of the species and environmental compliance measures related to their protection.

BIO-5: Conduct Special Status Reptile Surveys

Mitigation Measure BIO-5 applies to AGI areas 1, 2 and 5 and Creeks 1, 2 and 3 as shown on Figure 4-1.

The following measure is recommended to minimize potential impacts to northern western pond turtle:

- The Project Applicant shall retain a biologist to conduct a pre-construction survey of mapped aquatic resources within 72 hours the start of construction activities adjacent to those resources. Surveys are only needed for aquatic resources that contain water when construction commences
- If no special-status reptiles are detected during the surveys, no further measures are needed.

If special-status amphibians are detected, additional measures may be developed in consultation with CDFW to avoid impacts to this species. Measures may include preconstruction surveys and/or monitors present during construction activities in and adjacent to suitable aquatic habitat

The surveys for foothill yellow-legged frog, California red-legged frog, and northern western pond turtle can be conducted concurrently.

BIO-6: Conduct Special Status Bat Surveys

Mitigation Measure BIO-6 applies only to the non-roadway section when trees will be removed, or limbs will be trimmed or directly/physically disturbed by construction equipment.

To the extent feasible, potential bat roosting habitat (e.g., tree) removal would occur outside of the maternity season, generally considered March 1 to September 30.

- Trees proposed for trimming or removal should be inspected for recent bat use by a qualified bat specialist no more than seven days prior to disturbance.
- If a maternity roost is located, whether solitary or colonial, that roost will remain undisturbed until September 15 or a qualified and approved biological monitor has determined the roost is no longer active.
- Tree trimming/removal should occur in the late afternoon or evening when it is closer to the time that bats would normally arouse.
- Prior to removal/trimming, each tree will be shaken gently and several minutes should pass before felling trees or limbs to allow bats time to arouse and leave the tree.
- Trees will be removed in pieces rather than felling an entire tree.

BIO-7: Permits (not anticipated)

If for any reason it is determined that any Project work will impact one or more aquatic features, the following measures are recommended to minimize potential impacts:

- A permit authorization to fill waters under Section 404 of the federal CWA (Section 404 Permit) must be obtained from USACE prior to discharging any dredged or fill materials into any Waters of the U.S. Mitigation measures will be developed as part of the Section 404 Permit to ensure no net loss of wetland function and values. Mitigation for impacts to Waters of the U.S. would be negotiated through the permitting process.
- A Water Quality Certification or waiver pursuant to Section 401 of the CWA must be obtained for Section 404 permit actions.

- If impacts to CDFW-jurisdictional features and riparian habitat are anticipated, a Notification shall be made to CDFW in order to obtain a 1602 Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement prior to work being conducted in those areas.

BIO-8: Oak Tree Impacts

Mitigation Measure BIO-8 applies to the non-roadway segment of the project (approximately 830 feet between Riffle Box Way and Rough and Ready Road) as shown on Figure 2-2 (sheet 2).

The following measures are recommended to minimize potential impacts to oak trees:

- Pursuant to Senate Bill 1334 (Oak Woodlands Protection Act), the Project should comply with the Nevada County Tree Ordinance. The Project should avoid impacts to oak trees where feasible. If oak trees will be removed, an arborist survey (of the non-roadway segment) will be prepared upon completion of detailed construction plans. Based on the arborists survey, an oak tree mitigation and restoration plan shall be developed that includes onsite enhancements and potential off-site mitigation alternatives to compensate for loss of oak trees.
- Excavating and/or trenching within the drip-line of trees (or a distance of half the drip-line, outside of the drip-line) should be avoided whenever practicable. However, if unavoidable, any authorized cut or fill occurring within the drip-line of any preserved tree should be supervised by an ISA Certified Arborist.
- Any and all exposed roots shall be covered with a protective material during construction.
- Native tree replacement shall be used to mitigate the removal of native trees within the area, subject to approval by the County.
- Procedures and protocols for tree preservation and protection shall comply with standards established by the County.
- Oak trees required to be planted as a condition of construction would be maintained after completion of construction as described in the Nevada County Tree Preservation and Protection Ordinance.

Cultural Resources

CUL-1: Worker Awareness Training

Mitigation Measure CUL-1 applies to all segments of the proposed Project and Alternative 1.

A consultant and construction worker tribal cultural resources awareness brochure and training program for all personnel involved in ground-disturbing activities will be developed prior to construction commencing. The program will include relevant information regarding sensitive tribal cultural resources, including applicable regulations, protocols for avoidance, and consequences of violating State laws and regulations. The worker cultural resources awareness program will also describe appropriate avoidance and minimization measures for resources that have the potential to be located in the project area and will outline what to do and whom to contact if any potential archaeological resources or artifacts are

encountered. The program will also underscore the requirement for confidentiality and culturally-appropriate treatment of any find of significance to Native Americans and behaviors, consistent with Native American tribal values.

CUL-2: Avoid and minimize impacts to previously unknown Tribal Cultural Resources

Mitigation Measure CUL-2 applies to all segments of the proposed Project and Alternative 1.

If any cultural resources, such as structural features, unusual amounts of bone or shell, artifacts, human remains, or architectural remains are encountered during the initial inspection or during any subsequent construction activities, work shall be suspended within 100 feet of the find, and the construction supervisor shall immediately notify the NID representative. If the find includes human remains, then the NID shall immediately notify the Nevada County Coroner and the procedures in Section 7050.5 of the California Health and Safety Code and, if applicable, Section 5097.98 of the Public Resources Code, shall be followed. If the discovery is reasonably associated with Native American culture, the NID shall coordinate any necessary investigation of the discovery with a UAIC tribal representative and a qualified archaeologist approved by the District. As part of the site investigation and resource assessment, the NID shall consult with appropriate parties to develop, document, and implement appropriate management recommendations, should potential impacts to the resources be found by the NID to be significant. Nothing in this measure prohibits the District from considering any comments from other culturally-affiliated Native American tribes that volunteer information to the NID during its investigation. Possible management recommendations could include documentation, data recovery, or (if deemed feasible by the NID) preservation in place. The contractor shall implement any measures deemed by NID staff to be necessary and feasible to avoid, minimize, or mitigate significant effects to the cultural resources, such as the use of a Native American Monitor whenever work is occurring within 100 feet of the discovery of Native American resources, if deemed appropriate by the NID.

Geology and Soils

GEO-1: Sedimentation and Erosion Control Measures

Mitigation Measure GEO-1 applies to all segments of the proposed Project and Alternative 1.

In compliance with the requirements of the State General Construction Activity Storm Water Permit, NID shall obtain coverage under the current Construction General Permit (2009-0009-DWQ) and prepare a SWPPP that incorporates measures or comparable BMPs, which describes the site, erosion and sediment controls, means of waste disposal, implementation of approved local plans, control of postconstruction sediment and erosion control measures and maintenance responsibilities, and non-storm water management controls. NID shall require all construction contractors to retain a copy of the approved SWPPP at the Project site and implement the SWPPP. Additionally, the SWPPP shall ensure that all storm water discharges are in compliance with all current requirements of the Construction General Permit (2009-009-DWQ).

PALEO-1: Discovery of Unknown Resources

Mitigation Measure PALEO-1 applies to all segments of the proposed Project and Alternative 1.

If any paleontological resources (i.e., fossils) are found during proposed Project construction, construction shall be halted immediately in the subject area and isolate the area using orange or yellow fencing until NID is notified and the appropriate regulatory agency clears the area for future work. A qualified paleontologist shall be retained to evaluate the find and recommend appropriate treatment of the inadvertently discovered paleontological resources. If NID resumes work in a location where paleontological remains have been discovered and cleared, NID will have a paleontologist onsite to confirm that no additional paleontological resources are in the area.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

HAZ-1: Dust Control

Mitigation Measure NOA-1 applies to all segments of the proposed Project and Alternative 1.

If ultramafic rock is exposed to the air, then the following procedures must be put into effect. Water support, in the form of a water truck or mobile storage tank, will be used in regular intervals to keep the open earth area wet and dust free. Proper signage noting the possibility of NOA and required PPE will be posted in the area. PPE including coveralls and respirators will be worn by all workers in the area. These procedures will be followed as long as ultramafic rock is exposed and can be unfollowed when the rock is again covered with fill.

Best Management Practices (BMP)

In addition to the above listed mitigation measures, NID will implement the following BMPs as a part of the Project to minimize and avoid impacts on environmental resources. NID contractors will implement the BMPs in a timely manner.

1. **Designate the Work Area.** Construction activities shall be limited to a designated work area (including the work corridor and staging area). The work area will be clearly identified on the construction drawings and will be staked and flagged prior to initiation of construction activities. Additionally, aquatic resources within the construction area will be fenced (with high visibility orange fencing) prior to construction activities within the area.
2. **Identify Underground Utilities.** The Underground Service Alert will be contacted 48 hours prior to construction to allow underground utilities to identify the location of their underground facilities and reduce the possibility of interruption in utility services.
3. **Cover Open Trenches.** All open trenches shall be filled or covered each night to avoid entrapment of wildlife or hazards to pedestrians and cars.
4. **Implement Temporary Erosion Control.** If adverse weather conditions threaten the transport of disturbed soils offsite, temporary erosion control measures shall be immediately installed. Soil disturbance shall cease if weather conditions worsen and increase the likelihood of transporting soil offsite

5. **Minimize Tree Impacts.** Where possible, minimize or avoid removal of mature trees during construction. Any activities that may occur in the drip line of trees shall be minimized to the extent possible, in accordance with the exclusion fencing.
6. **Limit Construction Hours.** Restrict construction to daytime hours between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. on weekdays and Saturdays. Construction work on holidays recognized by NID will be avoided when practical.
7. **Minimize Construction Equipment Noise.** Ensure that all construction equipment has sound-control devices no less effective than those provided on the original equipment. No equipment will have an unmuffled exhaust system.
8. **Minimize Construction Noise and Advise of Construction Activities.** Implement appropriate additional noise-reducing measures, including but not limited to the following:
 - a. Changing the location of stationary construction equipment,
 - b. Shutting off idling equipment,
 - c. Rescheduling construction activity, and
 - d. Notifying nearby residents 48 hours in advance of construction work with roadside signage
9. **Minimize Risk of Upset.** To reduce potential contamination by spills, no refueling, storage, servicing, or maintenance of equipment will be performed within 50 feet of sensitive environmental resources. No refueling or servicing will be done without absorbent materials or drip pans underneath to contain spilled fuel. Any fluids drained from the machinery during servicing will be collected in leak-proof containers and taken to an appropriate disposal or recycling facility. If such activities result in spillage or accumulation of a product on the soil, the contaminated soil will be assessed and disposed of properly. Under no circumstances will contaminated soils be added to a spoils pile.
10. **Safe Handling of Hazardous Materials.** All maintenance materials (i.e., oils, grease, lubricants, antifreeze, and similar materials) will be stored at offsite staging areas. If these materials are required during field operations, they will be placed in a designated area away from site activities and sensitive resources.
11. **Prepare and Implement a Fire Suppression and Control Plan.** NID will require the construction contractor to coordinate with the local fire chief and Nevada County to ensure a fire control plan is prepared and implemented to reduce the risk of fires during construction of the Proposed Project. The fire prevention and control plan will include requirements for onsite extinguishers; roles and responsibilities of NID, the contractor; specification for fire suppression equipment and other critical fire prevention and suppression items.
12. **Minimize Air Quality Impacts.** Construction equipment exhaust emissions shall not exceed Northern Sierra Air Quality Management District (NSAQMD) Visible Emissions limitations.
13. **No Open Burning.** No open burning of removed vegetation shall occur. Vegetative materials should be chipped and disposed of properly.
14. **Restore Temporarily Disturbed Areas.** NID's past practice is to return construction areas to "equal to or better than condition".

15. **Adhere to NSAQMD adopted Rules and Regulations.** Construction shall comply with the BMPs set out in the NSAQMD regulations. All grading operations will be suspended if fugitive dust exceeds dust control regulation limitations.
17. **Prepare and Implement a Construction Traffic Management Plan.** As necessary, NID will require the contractor(s) to prepare a Traffic Control Plan in accordance with California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and/or Nevada County requirements and professional engineering standards prior to construction. The Traffic Control Plan could include the following requirements:
 - a. Emergency services access to local land use shall be maintained at all times for the duration of construction activities. Local emergency service providers shall be informed of proposed construction activities and identified haul routes.
 - b. Access for local land uses including residential driveways, commercial properties, and agricultural lands during construction activities shall be maintained.
 - c. Adequate provisions will be made for the protection of the traveling public. All traffic control, including devices and personnel requirements, will be consistent with the current State of California Manual of Traffic Controls for Construction and Maintenance Work Areas.
 - d. Roads that are damaged by construction will be restored to pre-construction conditions where feasible by NID or its contractor. This may include repaving, retraveling or grading disturbed areas. NID shall document road conditions pre-construction to provide a basis for restoration.

**Administrative Draft Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration
E. George to Lake Wildwood Backbone Extension Pipeline Project**

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AB	Assembly Bill
APE	Area of Potential Effect
AQMP	Air Quality Management Plan
BMPs	Best Management Practices
CalEEMod	California Emissions Estimator Model
Caltrans	California Department of Transportation
CARB	California Air Resources Board
CDFW	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CH ₄	Methane
CO	Carbon Monoxide
CO ₂	Carbon Dioxide
CO ₂ e	Carbon Dioxide Equivalent
CO Plan	Federal Attainment Plan for Carbon Monoxide
CRHR	California Register of Historic Places
CWA	California Water Act
DTSC	Department of Toxic Substances Control
EIC	Eastern Information Center
EIR	Environmental Impact Report
USEPA	Environmental Protection Agency
FEIR	Final Environmental Impact Report
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FIRM	Flood Insurance Rate Map
GHGs	Greenhouse Gases
LSTs	Localized Significance Thresholds
MBTA	Migratory Bird Treaty Act
MLD	Most Likely Descendent
MMT	Million Metric Tons
MND	Mitigated Negative Declaration
MSHCP	Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan
MTCO ₂ eq	Metric Tons of Carbon Dioxide Equivalent
NAHC	Native American Heritage Commission
ND	Negative Declaration
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
N ₂ O	Nitrous Oxide
NO _x	Nitrogen Oxides
NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
OHV	Off-Highway Vehicle
OPR	California Office of Planning and Research
PM ₁₀ and PM _{2.5}	Particulate Matter
RCPG	Regional Comprehensive Plan and Guide
ROG	Reactive Organic Gases
RTP	Regional Transportation Plan
RWQCB	Regional Water Quality Control Board
USACE	United States Army Corps of Engineers
SCAG	Southern California Association of Governments

SCAQMD	South Coast Air Quality Management District
SCS	Sustainable Communities Strategy
SIP	State Implementation Plan
SP	Service Population
SoCAB	South Coast Air Basin
SR	State Route
SRA	Sensitive Receptor Area
SWPPP	Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan
SWRCB	State Water Resources Control Board

SECTION 1.0 BACKGROUND

1.1 Summary

Project Title/Purpose:	NID Elizabeth George to Lake Wildwood Backbone Extension Pipeline Project (Proposed Project or Project). The Project would construct and operate a potable water pipeline connection between the Elizabeth George Water Treatment Plant (E. George WTP) and the Lake Wildwood WTP and will serve as a backup water source to the Lake Wildwood area.
Lead Agency Name and Address:	Nevada Irrigation District (NID) 1036 West Main Street Grass Valley, California 95945
Contact Person and Phone Number:	Tonia M. Tabucchi Herrera, PE, Senior Engineer (530) 273-6185
Project Location:	<p>The Project is generally located along 5.6 miles of Rough and Ready Highway in Nevada County, California. The proposed alignment begins on the east at the West Drive/Rough and Ready Highway intersection and extends westerly along Rough and Ready Highway and other local roads to the Lake Wildwood Drive/Chaparral Drive intersection on the west. The Project would be constructed within existing right-of-way along the following roads: Rough and Ready Highway, Rough and Ready Road, Riffle Box Road, Minnow Lane, and Lake Wildwood Drive. Empty Diggins Lane and Bosa Drive are not County roads and will require easement acquisition. There are two segments that leave public road right-of-way. One at the west end of Riffle Box Road (Non-Roadway Segment) and one just west of Bosa Drive (Future Fire Lane Segment).</p> <p>The proposed project includes an Alternative Alignment on the western end. The Alternative Alignment is an approximately 1,500 foot-long private non-paved roadway located southwest of the proposed project Empty Diggins Lane segment immediately east of the Lake Wildwood subdivision.</p>
General Plan Designation:	Rural Commercial (RC) , Rural 5 acre (RUR-5), Neighborhood Commercial (NC), Urban Medium Density Res (UMD), Business Park (BP), Public (PUB), Rural 10 acre (RUR-10)
Zoning:	Residential Agricultural – 3 acre minimum (RA-3), Neighborhood Commercial (C1), Medium Density (R2), General Agricultural – 5 acres (AG-5)

1.2 Introduction

Nevada Irrigation District (NID) is the Lead Agency for the Proposed Project and this Initial Study. The Initial Study has been prepared to identify and assess the anticipated environmental impacts of the Proposed Project. This document has been prepared to satisfy the CEQA (Public Resources Code, [PRC] Section 21000 et seq.) and State CEQA Guidelines (14 CCR 15000 et seq.). CEQA requires that all state and local government agencies consider the environmental consequences of Projects over which they have discretionary authority before acting on those Projects. A CEQA Initial Study is generally used to determine which CEQA document is appropriate for a Project (Negative Declaration, Mitigated Negative Declaration [MND], or Environmental Impact Report [EIR]).

1.3 Environmental Setting

The proposed project is in Nevada County which is situated in the Sierra Nevada foothills, approximately 60 miles northeast of Sacramento (See Figure 1-1 *Project Location and Vicinity*). The climate is Mediterranean, with hot, dry summers and cool, rainy winters. Nevada County lies within the Yuba River watershed. The eastern most point of the Project alignment is approximately 2,400 feet above mean sea level (AMSL), while the westernmost point is approximately 1,500 feet AMSL.

Most of the proposed alignment occurs in a rural setting along 2-lane roads. According to the Nevada County General Plan, land use is dominated by designated Forest and Rural lands. These make up more than 80 percent of land in the County. While the Project would take place primarily within existing roadways, most of the surrounding lands are designated as Rural (See Figure 1-2 *Representative Site Photographs*).

The source water used by the Lake Wildwood Water Treatment Plant (WTP) originates in Deer Creek and flows through the Scott's Flat and Lower Scott's Flat reservoirs, then through the Newtown Canal to the Lake Wildwood WTP. Raw water diverted from the Newtown canal is conveyed through a pipeline to the raw water ponds at the WTP site, located 1/2 mile west of Lake Wildwood (HDR 2017). The Project would provide a system connection between the E. George WTP and the Lake Wildwood WTP and will serve as a backup water source to the Lake Wildwood area. The E. George WTP is located northwest of the Project on Banner Mountain (Nevada City) and has a capacity of 18 million gallons per day.



Figure 1-1. Project Location and Vicinity
 2018-174 NID - E George to Lake Wildwood Backbone



Photo 1: Intersection of Rough and Ready Highway and Bitney Springs Road facing West



Photo 2: Approx. 10144 Bonanza Way, facing West down Rough and Ready Highway



Photo 3: Approx. 13128 Rough and Ready Highway, facing West



Photo 4: Riffle Box Road Facing West towards Rough and Ready Road

SECTION 2.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

2.1 Project Background, Purpose and Need

NID is located in northern California and includes a service area bounded by the Yuba River on the north, the Yuba/Nevada County Line on the west, the cities of Lincoln and Auburn on the south, and (just west of) Bitney Springs Road on the east. NID supplies water for irrigation, municipal, domestic, and industrial uses through an extensive reservoir and canal system and network of WTPs. NID treated water service areas are in and around Grass Valley and Nevada City, Banner Mountain, the Glenbrook Basin, Loma Rica, Alta Sierra, Lake of the Pines, Penn Valley, Lake Wildwood, Smartsville, and North Auburn.

The Lake Wildwood community treated water demand is currently served solely by the existing Lake Wildwood WTP. The existing WTP was built in stages as potable water demand increased and as a result some components are more than 40 years old. The WTP has historically met the water demands within its service area; however, during peak demand periods, the plant operates near maximum capacity, which does not allow for future system growth or operational redundancy. According to the *Lake Wildwood Water Treatment Plant Capacity Study and Options Analysis Final Report* (HDR 2017), the WTP is reaching the end of its useful life and soon will not be able to meet future demands; many components will require upgrades or replacement.

To address future demand and reliability concerns within the Lake Wildwood WTP service area, the Proposed Project would construct a new system intertie consisting of mostly 16 or 20 inch pipe, primarily within existing road right-of-way to link the Lake Wildwood WTP and distribution system with the E. George WTP distribution system located on Banner Mountain. This intertie would provide a second source of treated water supply to the Wildwood WTP service area for both supplemental and emergency needs. Pipeline construction would allow NID to continue to utilize the existing Lake Wildwood WTP while planning for its future replacement and would also increase water supply reliability to new and existing customers.

The proposed Project would also allow properties along the pipeline route access to treated water service. The intertie pipeline would be sized to also serve variance parcels or water line extension requests. A variance is a parcel that is not or will not be in the foreseeable future adjacent to a treated water line.

2.2 Project Characteristics

2.2.1 Proposed Pipeline Alignment

The Project is located along the Rough and Ready Highway and other nearby roads in Nevada County, California (See Figure 2-1 *Project Alignment* and Figure 2-2 *Project Overview -sheets 1 - 8*). The Project spans approximately 5.6 linear miles and is located primarily within existing road right-of-way. The proposed alignment is described in detail below from east-west:

- Along Rough and Ready Highway from West Drive (easternmost Project boundary) to Rough and Ready Road (Figure 2-2, Sheets 1 through 4, approximately 2.5 miles).

- From Rough and Ready Highway, the Project continues west along Rough and Ready Road to Riffle Box Road (Figure 2-2, Sheets 4 through 7, approximately 1.75 miles).
- The Project continues approximately 460 feet west along Riffle Box Road. At this point, Riffle Box Road makes a sharp turn north; however, the Project alignment leaves the existing Riffle Box Road right-of-way and continues east "cross country," approximately 830 feet, where it rejoins Rough and Ready Road right-of-way. This portion of the alignment is referred to as the Cross-County Segment (Figure 2-2, Sheet 7).
- The Project continues west on Rough and Ready Road approximately 210 feet where it turns south onto Empty Diggins Lane (Figure 2-2, Sheet 7)
- From the intersection of Rough and Ready Road and Empty Diggins Lane, the Project continues southwest along Empty Diggins Lane to Bosa Drive (Figure 2-2, Sheets 7 and 8, approximately 0.3 miles).
- The Project then turns north and then west on Bosa Drive and continues approximately 0.3 mile to an unpaved private drive/fire access easement (Figure 2-2, Sheet 8).
- The Project follows the private driveway/fire access easement approximately 600 feet west where it joins Minnow Way. This portion of the alignment is referred to as the Fire Access Easement Segment (Figure 2-2, Sheet 8).
- The Project then follows Minnow Way approximately 475 feet west to Lake Wildwood Drive (Figure 2-2, Sheet 8).
- At the intersection of Lake Wildwood and Minnow Way, the Project turns north along Lake Wildwood Drive (Figure 2-2, Sheet 8).
- The Project follows Lake Wildwood Drive approximately 0.3 mile north to Chaparral Drive, where it ends (Figure 2-2, Sheet 8 - westernmost boundary).

2.2.2 Pipeline Details

Pipeline and Underground Improvements

The Project would install approximately 5.6 miles of new 16 or 20-inch underground pipe for most of the alignment. Excavation depth would generally be five to six feet. However, due to site and subsurface conditions, deeper excavation (not to exceed 10 feet) may be required where pipe crosses under existing culverts or other utilities. Within Lake Wildwood Drive, it is anticipated that the new pipeline would parallel existing lines. The pipeline would normally operate at approximately 30-150 pounds per square inch (PSI) (standard pressure design for NID). However, the design allows for a service pressure up to 200 PSI if needed. Pipeline appurtenances would include fire hydrants (every 1,000 feet minimum), service lines and meter boxes, paddle markers, and stub outs for future water line extensions. Except for fire hydrants and Pressure Reducing Value (PRV) stations, these facilities would be placed underground along the pipeline alignment road shoulder at the adjacent property lines.

Above Ground Improvements – Pressure Relieving Value Stations

Certain sections of the pipeline alignment have been identified for Above Ground Improvements (AGI) associated with five proposed Pressure Reducing Valve (PRV) stations. AGIs may be entirely above ground or in underground vaults (or some combination) and would require an easement or purchase outside existing County ROW. AGIs would primarily be reserved for PRV stations but may also accommodate the pipeline improvements described above (fire hydrants, sub outs for future service lines and meter boxes). Typically, NID installs Cla-Val pressure reducing valves to meet fire flow and high flow demands, while a smaller parallel Cla-Val would be installed to meet lower domestic demands. Each valve station would have pressure relief valve as a safety for the system. The valve stations would have the ability to drain, as well as dissipate the pressure relief water, for maintenance purposes. Any relief or drain water produced would be directed into various roadside drainages or NID canals.

The five proposed AGI areas are identified in Figure 2-1 and 2-2 and described briefly below. NID is also considering replacement of an existing PRV at the western end of the project as described below under AGI-X.

- **AGI-X:** Located near the existing Star Motel. This existing PRV may require replacement at some location within AGI Area 1 near the existing Star Motel PRV.
- **AGI-1:** Located near the intersection of Hard Rock Road (Figure 2-2, Sheet 2). A new PRV could be on either the north or south side of existing county ROW. It is possible that an existing Public Utility Easement could be utilized since there are phone and power lines in the area.
- **AGI-2:** Located between Bonanza Road and Ranch Road (Figure 2-2, Sheet 3). This AGI Area is constrained by topography and road curves. Any AGI in this area would avoid cutting into a hillside or building “above” the roadway. If the PRV can be accommodated near Ranch Road where the shoulder is wider, it would be installed in a vault instead of above ground.
- **AGI-3:** Located near the intersection of Secession Lane (Figure 2-2, Sheet 4). It is most likely the new PRV would be located near the Country Store or Fire Department but could be located anywhere within the identified AGI area.
- **AGI-4:** Located approximately 300 feet west of the Rough and Ready Road/Empty Diggins Lane intersection (Figure 2-2, Sheet 7). The new PRV would be located on either side of Riffle Box Road.
- **AGI-5:** Located at the west end of Minnow Way (Figure 2-2, Sheet 8). The new PRV would be located somewhere within AGI area 5.

Limits of Work and Construction Staging

NID typically uses 25 feet for easement acquisition for linear pipeline projects per NID easement guidelines. Where the proposed alignment is within existing roads, construction limits could include the existing road right-of-way (ROW) and, where adjacent or overlapping NID easements exist, work limits may be extended up to an additional 25 feet beyond ROW (depending on easement location).

Temporary staging would occur where the ROW limits allow. If necessary, larger staging areas may be used. These sites would be surveyed by a qualified biologist if not paved, graveled, or in a currently disturbed area.

Pipeline Segments Proposed Outside Existing Easements or Road Right-of-Way

As discussed above, the Project would be constructed primarily within existing road ROW and utility easements, with two exceptions. The Exceptions occur on the Project's western end and include a non-roadway segment and future fire lane segment. The non-roadway segment is shown on Figure 2-2 Sheet 7 and includes an approximately 880-foot section through unimproved land between Riffle Box Road and Rough and Ready Road. The future fire lane segment is shown in Figure 2-2 sheet 8 and includes an approximately 682-foot section that would follow an existing unpaved private driveway/fire access easement between Bosa Drive and the terminus of Minnow Way. Property acquisition or new easements would be required in these areas.

Project Schedule and Construction Equipment

Due to the relatively long length of the new pipeline, it is not practical to construct in a single dry season. Therefore, it is anticipated that the Project would be phased over a five-year construction period with approximately one mile of pipeline installed per year. Estimates place construction beginning in 2020 and completing in 2025 and will likely be split between five and seven phases.

Typical construction equipment would include:

- Asphalt grinder (for excavation of the t-trench within paved roadways)
- 1-2 excavators (such as Case CX210)
- 1-2 Dump trucks (3-axel, 10 wheel)
- 2 crew trucks, loader (such as Volvo L60)
- Sub surface boring machine (for installation of service lines depending on the terrain)
- 1 Paving machine
- Micro resurfacing and road restriping equipment
- Rock trenching machine
- Generators
- Air Compressors
- Water Truck
- Traffic control

Construction equipment would be operated eight to ten hours per day, intermittently with an estimated eight to ten construction personnel (including foreman and operators). Construction hours will be limited to 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Traffic Control

During each construction phase, temporary signage would be placed at each end of the construction zone notifying the public of the work zone and controlled traffic conditions. During construction within road right-of-way, traffic control flaggers and temporary signage and/or traffic cones/barriers would be used. Project areas are assumed to be held to one lane open along the Rough and Ready Highway segment of the project. From the intersection of Rough and Ready Highway and Rough and Ready Road to the western end of the project some segments include narrow travel lanes and restricted shoulders. In these areas the travel lane will be limited with flaggers and traffic control routing traffic around construction activities. Wait times may be temporarily increased (depending on roadway size) with hold times up to 20 minutes. Night work is not anticipated at this time.

Alternative Segment

In addition to the proposed Project, this Initial Study also evaluates an alternative pipeline segment (Alternative Segment). The Alternative Segment is shown in Figure 2-2, Sheet 8 and is located near the western end of the proposed alignment on property owned by the Lake Wildwood Homeowner's Association.

The Alternative Segment begins on the east at Empty Diggins Road and extends southwesterly along an existing dirt road approximately 525 feet. From that point, the Alternative Segment turns north, continuing along an existing dirt road for an additional 1,270 feet until it ties back into the proposed alignment at the western terminus of Bosa Drive. If selected this alternative would replace the 0.30-mile Bosa Drive segment which would eliminate the need for excavation/cuts in existing road pavement and minimize related traffic delays associated with construction.

2.3 Regulatory Requirements, Permits, and Approvals

The following approvals and regulatory permits would be required for implementation of the proposed Project:

- Project and CEQA document approval, NID Board
- Encroachment permit (for work within County ROW), Nevada County Public Works
- Easement Acquisition (for the Future Fire Lane Segment and Non-Roadway Segments, any AGI areas that extend outside existing easements, right-of-ways, and for the Alternative Segment should it be selected.)
- Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP)

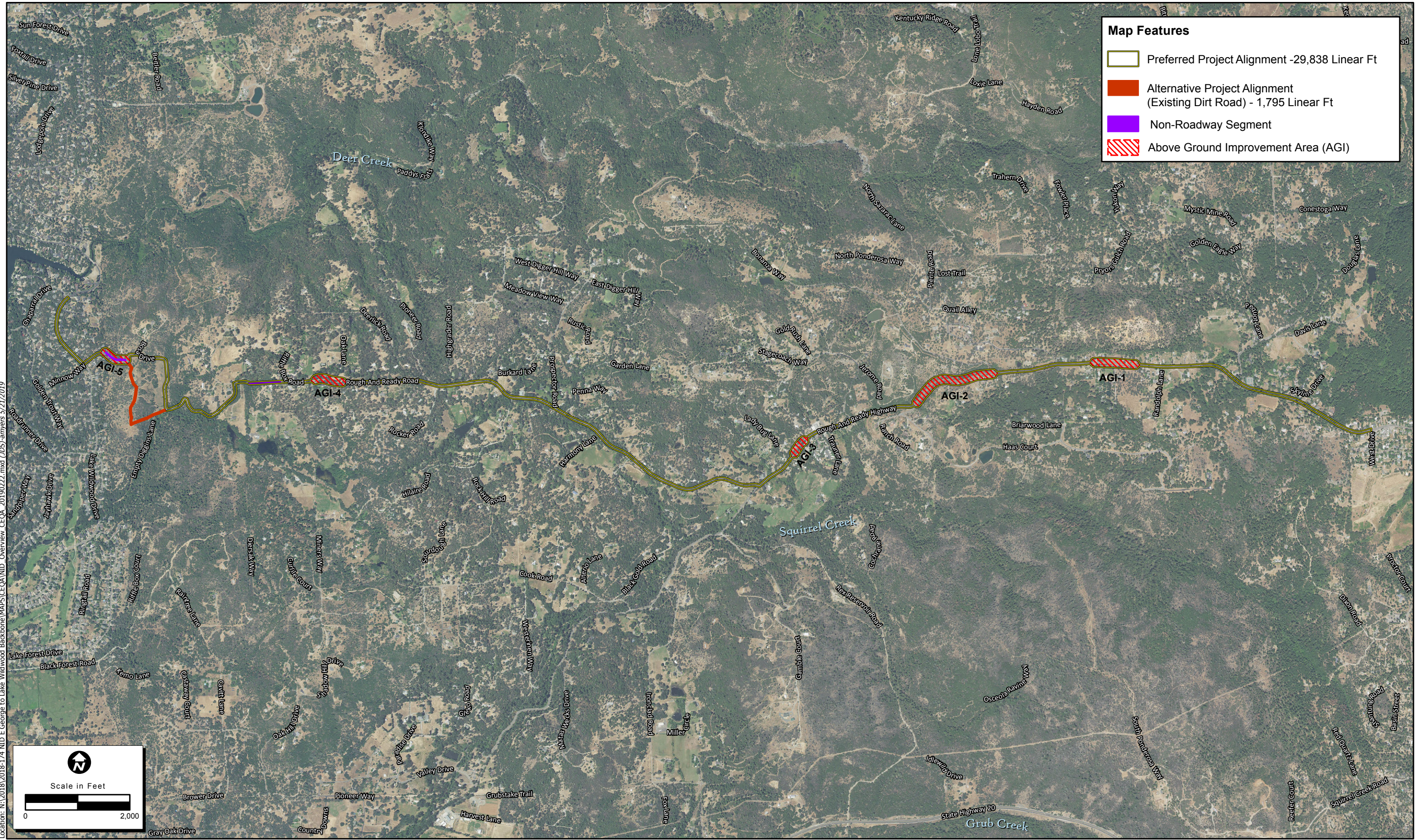
2.4 Best Management Practices (BMPs)

NID will implement the following BMPs as a part of the Project to minimize and avoid impacts on environmental resources. NID contractors will implement the BMPs in a timely manner.

1. **Designate the Work Area.** Construction activities shall be limited to a designated work area (including the work corridor and staging area). The work area will be clearly identified on the construction drawings and will be staked and flagged prior to initiation of construction activities.

2. **Identify Underground Utilities.** The Underground Service Alert will be contacted 48 hours prior to construction to allow underground utilities to identify the location of their underground facilities and reduce the possibility of interruption in utility services.
3. **Cover Open Trenches.** All open trenches shall be filled or covered (traffic bearing in roadways) each night to avoid entrapment of wildlife or hazards to the public.
4. **Implement Temporary Erosion Control.** If adverse weather conditions threaten the transport of disturbed soils offsite, temporary erosion control measures shall be immediately installed. Soil disturbance shall cease if weather conditions worsen and increase the likelihood of transporting soil offsite.
5. **Minimize Tree Impacts.** Where possible, minimize or avoid removal of mature trees during construction. Any activities that may occur in the drip line of trees shall be minimized to the extent possible, in accordance with the exclusion fencing.
6. **Limit Construction Hours.** Restrict construction to daytime hours between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. on weekdays and Saturdays. Construction work on holidays recognized by NID will be avoided when practical.
7. **Minimize Construction Equipment Noise.** Ensure that all construction equipment has sound-control devices no less effective than those provided on the original equipment. No equipment will have an unmuffled exhaust system.
8. **Minimize Construction Noise and Advise of Construction Activities.** Implement appropriate additional noise-reducing measures, including but not limited to the following:
 - a. Changing the location of stationary construction equipment,
 - b. Shutting off idling equipment,
 - c. Rescheduling construction activity, and
 - d. Notifying nearby residents 48 hours in advance of construction work with roadside signage
9. **Minimize Risk of Upset.** To reduce potential contamination by spills, no refueling, storage, servicing, or maintenance of equipment will be performed within 50 feet of sensitive environmental resources. No refueling or servicing will be done without absorbent materials or drip pans underneath to contain spilled fuel. Any fluids drained from the machinery during servicing will be collected in leak-proof containers and taken to an appropriate disposal or recycling facility. If such activities result in spillage or accumulation of a product on the soil, the contaminated soil will be assessed and disposed of properly. Under no circumstances will contaminated soils be added to a spoils pile.
10. **Safe Handling of Hazardous Materials.** All maintenance materials (i.e., oils, grease, lubricants, antifreeze, and similar materials) will be stored at offsite staging areas. If these materials are required during field operations, they will be placed in a designated area away from site activities and sensitive resources.
11. **Prepare and Implement a Fire Suppression and Control Plan.** NID will require the construction contractor to coordinate with the local fire chief and Nevada County to ensure a fire control plan is prepared and implemented to reduce the risk of fires during construction of the Proposed Project. The fire prevention and control plan will include requirements for onsite extinguishers; roles and responsibilities of NID, the contractor; specification for fire suppression equipment and other critical fire prevention and suppression items.

12. **Minimize Air Quality Impacts.** Construction equipment exhaust emissions shall not exceed Northern Sierra Air Quality Management District (NSAQMD) Visible Emissions limitations.
13. **No Open Burning.** No open burning of removed vegetation shall occur. Vegetative materials should be chipped and disposed of properly.
14. **Restore Temporarily Disturbed Areas.** NID's past practice is to return construction areas to "equal to or better than previous condition".
15. **Adhere to NSAQMD Adopted Rules and Regulations.** Construction shall comply with the BMPs set out in the NSAQMD regulations. All grading operations will be suspended if fugitive dust exceeds dust control regulation limitations.
16. **Prepare and Implement a Construction Traffic Management Plan.** As necessary, the NID will require the contractor(s) to prepare a Traffic Control Plan in accordance with California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and/or Nevada County requirements and professional engineering standards prior to construction. The Traffic Control Plan could include the following requirements:
 - a. Emergency services access to local land use shall be maintained at all times for the duration of construction activities. Local emergency service providers shall be informed of proposed construction activities and identified haul routes.
 - b. Access for local land uses including residential driveways, commercial properties, and agricultural lands during construction activities shall be maintained.
 - c. Adequate provisions will be made for the protection of the traveling public. All traffic control, including devices and personnel requirements, will be required by the current State of California Manual of Traffic Controls for Construction and Maintenance Work Areas.
 - d. Roads that are damaged by construction will be restored to pre-construction conditions where feasible by NID or its contractor. This may include repaving, retraveling or grading disturbed areas. NID shall document road conditions pre-construction to provide a basis for restoration.



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Map Date: 5/21/2019
 Photo Source: 2016, NAIP

Map Features

- Preferred Project Alignment -29,838 Linear Ft
- Alternative Project Alignment (Existing Dirt Road) - 1,795 Linear Ft
- Non-Roadway Segment
- Above Ground Improvement Area (AGI)

Scale in Feet


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Figure 2-1. Project Alignment
 2018-174 NID - E George to Lake Wildwood Backbone

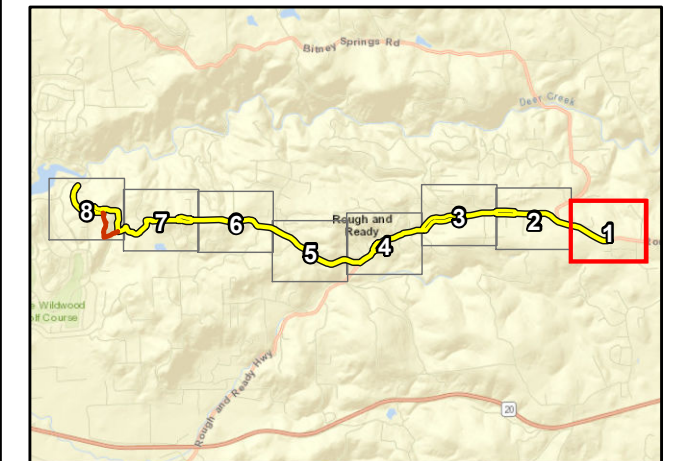


**Figure 2-2
Project Overview
(Sheet 1 of 8)**

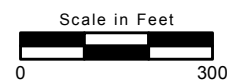
Map Features

 Preferred Project Alignment - 29,838 Linear Feet

Service Layer Credits: Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, USGS, Intermap, INCREMENT P, NRCan, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), Esri Korea, Esri (Thailand), NGCC, (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community





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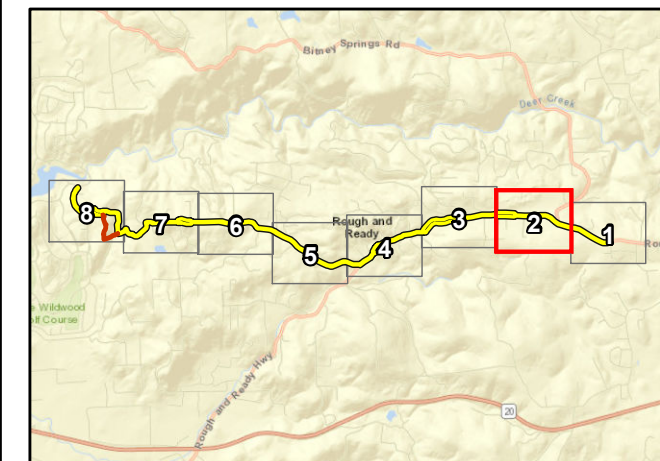
**Figure 2-2
Project Overview
(Sheet 2 of 8)**

Map Features

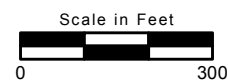
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-  Feet Above Ground Improvements (AGI)



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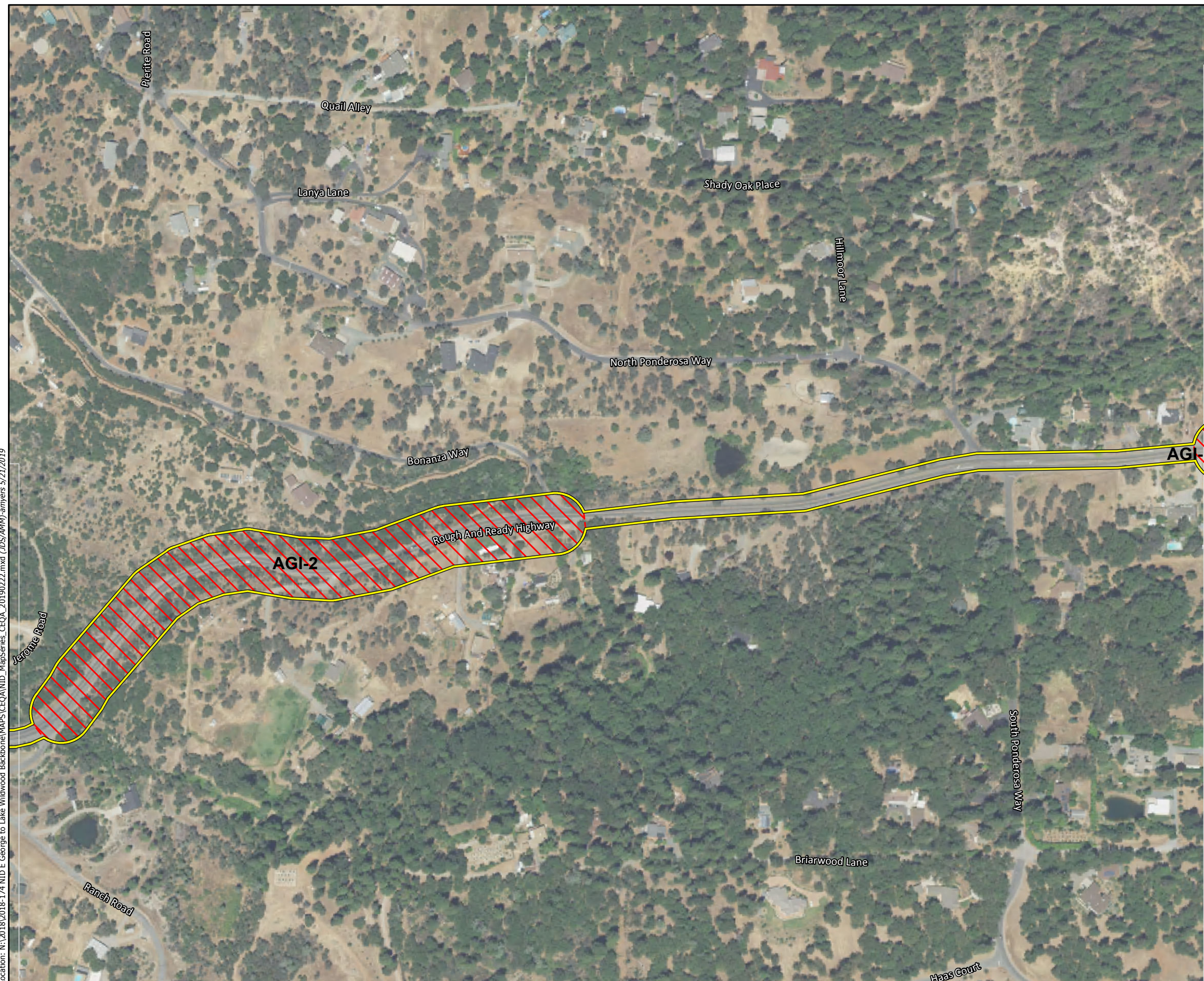
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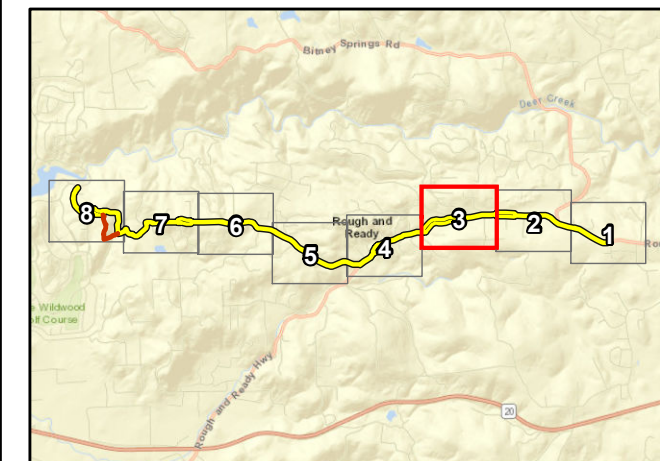
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Project Overview
(Sheet 3 of 8)**

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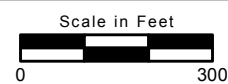
-  Preferred Project Alignment - 29,838 Linear
-  Feet Above Ground Improvements (AGI)



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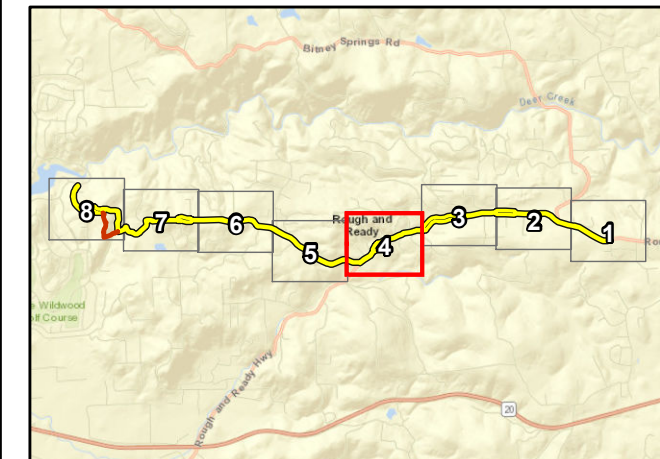
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Project Overview
(Sheet 4 of 8)**

Map Features

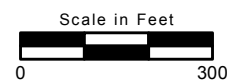
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-  Feet Above Ground Improvements (AGI)



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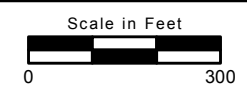
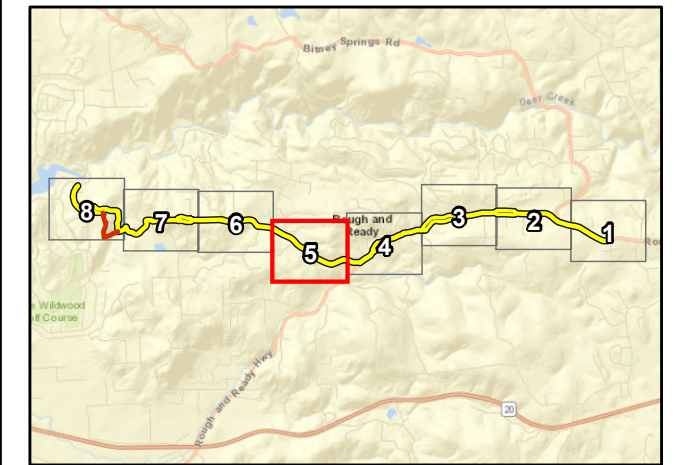
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**Figure 2-2
Project Overview
(Sheet 5 of 8)**

Map Features

Preferred Project Alignment - 29,838 Linear Feet

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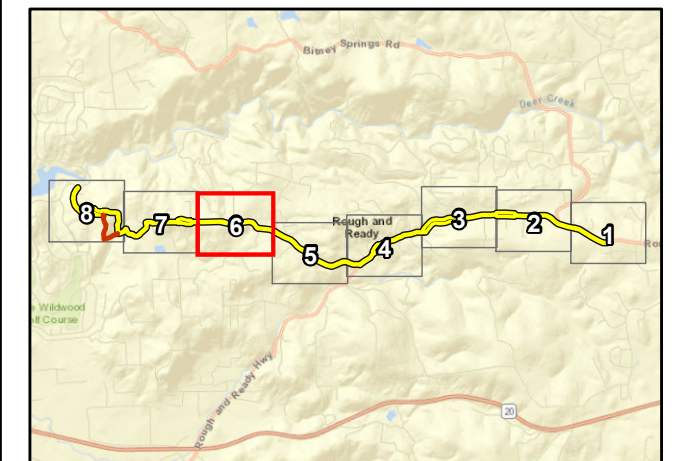
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Project Overview
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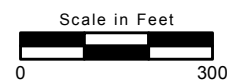
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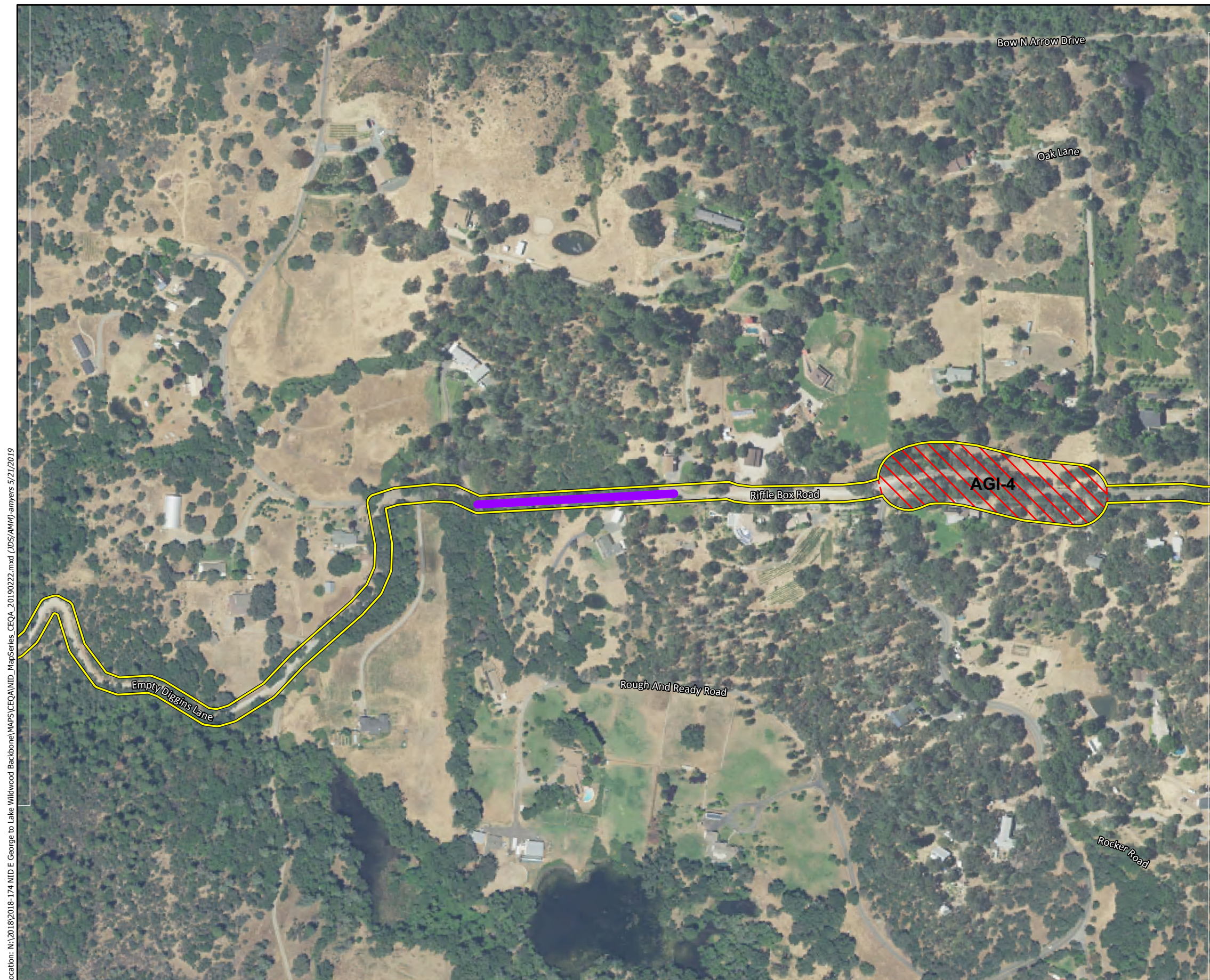
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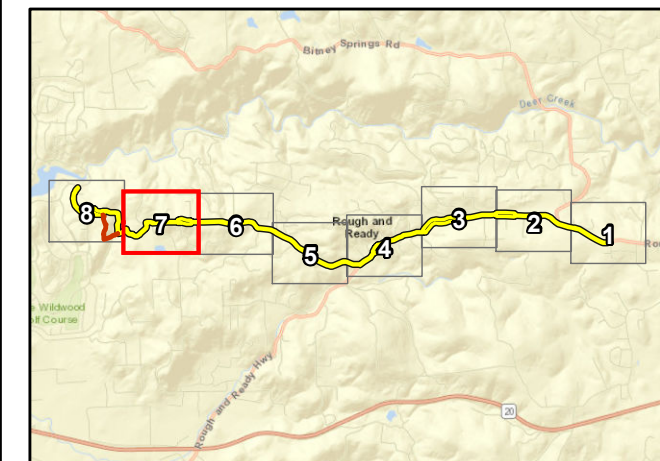
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Project Overview
(Sheet 7 of 8)**

Map Features

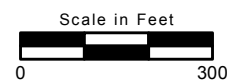
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-  Non-Roadway Segment
-  Above Ground Improvements (AGI)



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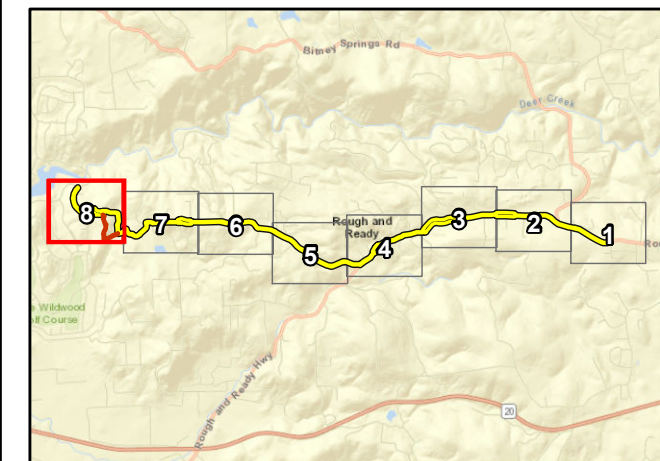
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Project Overview
(Sheet 8 of 8)**

Map Features

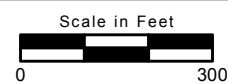
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-  Alternative Project Alignment - 1,795 Linear Feet
-  Non-Roadway Segment
-  Above Ground Improvements (AGI)



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SECTION 3.0 ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED AND DETERMINATION

3.1 Environmental Factors Potentially Affected

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aesthetics | <input type="checkbox"/> Hazards/Hazardous Materials | <input type="checkbox"/> Recreation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture and Forestry Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Hydrology/Water Quality | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation/Traffic |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Air Quality | <input type="checkbox"/> Land Use and Planning | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tribal Cultural Resources |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Biological Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Mineral Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Utilities and Service Systems |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cultural Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Noise | <input type="checkbox"/> Wildfire |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Energy | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Paleontological Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Mandatory Findings of Significance |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Geology and Soils | <input type="checkbox"/> Population and Housing | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Greenhouse Gas Emissions | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Services | |

Determination

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

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

I find that although the Project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

I find that the Project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.

I find that the Project MAY have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.

I find that although the Project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the Project, nothing further is required.

W. Scott Miller, Board President, Division III,
Nevada Irrigation District

Date

SECTION 4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Aesthetics

The aesthetics section discusses the potential impacts of the proposed Project to aesthetic resources within the Project area. Aesthetic resources refer to the natural and scenic viewsheds that define a region. The regulatory setting describes applicable laws and regulations administered the local governing body that aim to preserve aesthetic resources. The environmental setting provides general information of the scenic and aesthetic resources of the proposed Project area, and finally, the impact analysis evaluates the potential impacts of the proposed Project on those resources.

4.1.1 Environmental Setting/ Visual Characteristics of the Project Area

The proposed project is located in a rural residential area of Nevada County. The project area is generally forested and large pine and cedar trees shield most residential views of the roadway. The proposed project will construct a new pipeline primarily within roadway ROW within a rural community. The pipeline would be underground, however PRV stations and fire hydrants would be placed above ground, and therefore, would be visible. The pipeline crosses through a rural residential area. Construction activities will be visible to residents and roadway travelers. There are many large trees and shrubs along the side of the road that shield residential views of the roadways and would continue to shield views of most above ground features, i.e. fire hydrants, which are relatively small and tend to blend in with the road environment. Above ground PRVs will look like small buildings or garden sheds.

4.1.2 Regulatory Setting

Nevada County General Plan

As a jurisdiction with equal authority, NID is exempt from the following goals and policies within the Nevada County General Plan. However, NID aims to comply with applicable goals and policies outlined in the General Plan.

The following goals and policies regarding scenic resources are set forth in the Conservation Element of the Nevada County General Plan:

Objective 2.14: Encourage protection and enhancement of the natural scenic beauty of this County in support of the tourist trade.

Objective 15.2: Promote and provide for the continued diversity and sustainability of the forest resources including timber, watersheds, wildlife habitat, aesthetics and recreation.

Goal 18.1: *Promote and provide for aesthetic design in new development which reflects existing character.*

Goal 18.2: *Protect and preserve important scenic resources.*

Objective 18.2: Develop standards to protect scenic resources and viewsheds.

State Scenic Highways

The California Scenic Highway Program protects and enhances the scenic beauty of California’s highways and adjacent corridors. A highway can be designated as scenic based on how much natural beauty can be seen by users of the highway, the quality of the scenic landscape, and if development impacts the enjoyment of the view (Caltrans 2019). The proposed project is not located along a roadway segment designated as a State Scenic Highway.

4.1.3 Aesthetics (I) Environmental Checklist and Discussion

Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

No Impact. The proposed project is located along Rough and Ready Highway as well as connecting rural surface streets. Based on review of the Caltrans State Scenic Highway List and the Nevada County General Plan, no officially designated scenic vistas or scenic land units were identified within the project site (Caltrans 2019, Nevada County 1996). Therefore, the project would not have an impact on Scenic Vistas.

Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

No Impact. As stated above, according to Caltrans’ list of designated Scenic Highways and the Nevada County General Plan, the Proposed Project is not located near or within a state scenic highway and therefore would not damage designated scenic resources, including but not limited to trees, outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway. Therefore, no impacts are anticipated, and no specific mitigation measures are required.

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Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
c) In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point). If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Less than Significant Impact. Construction of the Proposed Project would result in short-term impacts to the existing visual character and quality of the Project area. Construction activities would require the use of heavy equipment and storage of materials in staging areas. During construction, excavated areas, stockpiled soils, and other materials would temporarily contribute to degradation of the scenic quality/visual landscape. Depending on location, in some instances offsite views of project construction would be at least partially screened by existing roadside trees and shrubs. Furthermore, once construction is complete temporarily disturbed areas would be restored consistent with *BMP 14 (Restore Temporarily Disturbed Areas)* and all construction-related equipment and materials removed. Therefore, temporary construction impacts to the existing visual character/quality would be less than significant and no mitigation is required.

The pipeline would be placed underground. A minor amount of pipeline related facilities, such as PRV Stations, fire hydrants, meter boxes and other pipeline related control facilities, would be located above ground and visible from on- and offsite locations. It is not uncommon for this type of utility infrastructure to be located within ROW along roads and within public view. In addition, implementation of **BMPs 5 and 14** would further reduce impacts to less than significant. No mitigation is required.

Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
d) Would the project create a new source of substantial light or glare, which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

No Impact. The Project would not create a new source of substantial light or glare. The Project does not include the addition of reflective surfaces and implementation of **BMP 6** would ensure no night work or lighting associated with construction would occur. The pipeline itself would be located underground and above ground structures would be relatively small and not reflective. Therefore, the Project would not create a new source of light or glare and there would be no impact.

4.1.4 Mitigation Measures

No significant impacts were identified, and no mitigation measures are required.

4.1.4 Alternative Segment

Temporary construction activities would be mostly screened by intervening vegetation and topography, or be located too distant to be visible from public viewing locations. No above-ground improvements are proposed within the Alternative Segment and, because it follows an existing dirt road, tree removal would not be required. The following NID standard BMPs, 5 and 14, would be applied to the project including the Alternative Segment.

Similar to the Proposed Project, the Alternative Segment is not located near or within a state scenic highway, would not damage designated scenic resources or scenic vistas, and would not introduce reflective surfaces as all improvements would be underground. Similar to the Proposed Project, with implementation of proposed BMPs, aesthetic impacts of the Alternative Segment would remain less than significant and would not require additional analysis.

4.2 Agriculture and Forestry Resources

4.2.1 Environmental Setting

Nevada County produced more than \$23 million in agricultural products in 2017, a 12 percent increase over the previous year (Nevada County 2017). Of this production, the top five highest grossing sectors were cattle, timber, pasture/rangeland, vegetables, and wine grapes, respectively. The Nevada County Farm Bureau has more than 400 local members. There are no agricultural lands along the project corridor; however, a few parcels have grazing livestock and private crops.

4.2.2 Regulatory Setting

California Important Farmland Inventory System and Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program

The California Department of Conservation (DOC) sponsors the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program. Important Farmland maps classify land into one of eight categories, which are defined as follows (DOC 2019):

- **Prime Farmland** – land that has the best combination of features for the production of agricultural crops.
- **Farmland of Statewide Importance** – land other than Prime Farmland that has a good combination of physical and chemical features for the production of agricultural crops.
- **Unique Farmland** – land of lesser quality soils used for the production of the state’s leading agricultural cash crops.
- **Farmland of Local Importance** – land that is of importance to the local agricultural economy.
- **Grazing Land** – land with existing vegetation that is suitable for grazing.

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- **Urban and Built-up Lands** – land occupied by structures with a density of at least one dwelling unit per 1.5 acres, or approximately 6 structures to a 10-acre parcel. This land is used for residential, industrial, commercial, institutional, public utility structures, and other developed purposes.
- **Land Committed to Nonagricultural Use** – vacant areas; existing lands that have a permanent commitment to development but have an existing land use of agricultural or grazing lands.
- **Other Lands** – land that does not meet the criteria of the remaining categories.

Williamson Act Contracts

The California Land Conservation Act of 1965, commonly known as the Williamson Act, enables local governments to enter into agreements with private land owners to restrict parcels for agricultural or related open space use. In return, landowners receive property tax assessments that are based on farming and open space uses instead of full market value. The Open Space Subvention Act of 1971 has historically provided local governments an annual subvention (subsidy) of forgone property tax revenues from the state; however, these payments have been suspended since 2009 due to revenue shortfalls in recent years. (DOC 2016). Western Nevada County has very little Williamson Act land and the project site and surrounding area has none.

4.2.3 Agriculture and Forestry Resources (II) Environmental Checklist and Discussion

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

No Impact. The Proposed Project alignment transects areas dominated by Rural and Estate land uses. According to Nevada County’s important farmland data, no Prime, Unique, or Farmland of Statewide Importance is located within the Project area (CDC 2018). The properties within the Proposed Project alignment are designated as Urban and Built-Up Land, or Other Land. Following the installation of the pipeline, the construction corridor will be returned to pre-construction conditions. No impact would occur and no mitigation measures are required.

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

No Impact. As described previously in item a), the majority of the Proposed Project alignment will be built within the existing roadway designated as Urban and Built-Up Land or Other Land. The Cross Country Segment is the only portion of the proposed Project not located within paved right-of-way or dirt road. However, according to DOC maps, none of the project site involves land that is either zoned for agricultural use or has a Williamson Act Contract. Therefore, no impact would occur and no mitigation measures are required.

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
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))?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

No Impact. The Proposed Project alignment does not transect properties zoned for forest land management as defined in PRC § 12220(g), Timberland (owned by the federal government), or Timberland Production as defined in PRC § 4526 and Government Code § 51104. As such the proposed Project would not conflict with existing zoning codes. No impact would occur, and no mitigation is required.

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

No Impact. See discussion under item c). No impact would occur.

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Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

No Impact. See discussion under item a) and c), the Proposed Project would not result in the conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest. No impact would occur and no mitigation measures are required.

4.2.3 Mitigation Measures

No significant impacts were identified, and no mitigation measures are required.

4.2.5 Alternative Segment

All Alternative Segment improvements would be underground. Similar to the proposed Project, the Alternative Segment would result in no impact to agriculture and forestry resources. No mitigation is required.

4.3 Air Quality

This subsection of the Initial Study is based on the *E. George to Lake Wildwood Backbone Extension Pipeline Project Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Assessment* (2019) completed by ECORP (see Appendix A).

4.3.1 Environmental Setting

The Project site is located in western Nevada County and in the Mountain Counties Air Basin (MCAB). The MCAB consists of nine counties or portions of counties stretching from Plumas County on the north to Mariposa County on the south. The NSAQMD is the local agency for air quality planning with authority over air pollutant sources. To assist local jurisdictions in the evaluation of air quality impacts, the NSAQMD has published a guidance document for the preparation of the air quality portions of environmental documents that includes thresholds of significance to be used in evaluating land use proposals.

Nevada County exhibits large variations in terrain and consequently exhibits large variations in climate, both of which affect air quality. The western portions of Nevada County slope relatively gradually with deep river canyons running from southwest-northeast toward the crest of the Sierra Nevada range. East of the divide, the slope of the Sierra is steeper, but river canyons are relatively shallow. The warmest areas in Nevada County are found at the lower elevations along the county's west side, while the coldest average temperatures are found at the highest elevations.

The prevailing wind direction over the county is westerly. However, the terrain of the area has a great influence on local winds, so that wide variability in wind direction can be expected. Afternoon winds are generally channeled up-canyon, while nighttime winds generally flow down-canyon. Winds are, in general, stronger in spring and summer and weaker in fall and winter. Periods of calm winds and clear skies in fall and winter often result in strong, ground-based inversions forming in mountain valleys. These layers of very stable air restrict the dispersal of pollutants, trapping these pollutants near the ground, representing the worst conditions for local air pollution occurring in the county. Regional airflow patterns have an effect on air quality patterns by directing pollutants downwind of sources. Localized meteorological conditions, such as light winds and shallow vertical mixing, and topographical features, such as surrounding mountain ranges, create areas of high pollutant concentrations by hindering dispersal. An inversion layer is produced when a layer of warm air traps cooler air close to the ground. Such temperature inversions hamper dispersion by stratifying contaminated air near the ground.

Both the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) and the California Air Resources Board (CARB) have established ambient air quality standards for common pollutants. These ambient air quality standards are levels of contaminants representing safe levels that avoid specific adverse health effects associated with each pollutant. The ambient air quality standards cover what are called "criteria" pollutants because the health and other effects of each pollutant are described in criteria documents. The six criteria pollutants are ozone (O₃) (O₃ precursor emissions include nitrogen oxide (NO_x) and reactive organic gases (ROGs)), carbon monoxide (CO), particulate matter (PM), nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), sulfur dioxide (SO₂), and lead. Areas that meet ambient air quality standards are classified as attainment areas, while areas that do not meet these standards are classified as nonattainment areas. The Nevada County portion of the MCAB is designated as a nonattainment area for the federal O₃ standard and is also a nonattainment area for the state standards for O₃ and coarse particulate matter (PM₁₀).

4.3.2 Air Quality (III) Environmental Checklist and Discussion

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

No Impact. As part of its enforcement responsibilities, the USEPA requires each state with nonattainment areas to prepare and submit a State Implementation Plan (SIP) that demonstrates the means to attain the federal standards. The SIP must integrate federal, state, and local plan components and regulations to identify specific measures to reduce pollution in nonattainment areas, using a combination of performance standards and market-based programs. Similarly, under state law, the California Clean Air Act requires an air quality attainment plan to be prepared for areas designated as nonattainment with regard to the federal and state ambient air quality standards. Air quality attainment plans outline emissions limits and control measures to achieve and maintain these standards by the earliest practical date.

As previously mentioned, the Project site is located within the Nevada County portion of the MCAB, which is under the jurisdiction of the NSAQMD. The NSAQMD is required, pursuant to the federal Clean Air Act, to reduce emissions of criteria pollutants for which Nevada County is in nonattainment. In order to reduce such emissions, the NSAQMD drafted the 2018 Western Nevada County Planning Area Ozone Attainment Plan (2018 Ozone Attainment Plan) and the 2018 Reasonably Available Control Technology SIP for Western Nevada County (RACT SIP). These air quality planning documents represent the regional blueprints for achieving air quality standards and healthy air in western Nevada County, focusing on available, proven, and cost-effective alternatives to traditional strategies. The Ozone Attainment Plan and RACT SIP rely on forecasts of ROG and NO_x emissions (ozone precursors) in Nevada County. Criteria for determining consistency with these air quality planning documents are defined by the following indicators:

- **Consistency Criterion No. 1:** The Proposed Project would not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the Project region is nonattainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors).
- **Consistency Criterion No. 2:** The Proposed Project would not exceed the population growth assumptions in the air quality plans relied upon to develop pollutant forecasts.

Consistency Criterion No. 1 refers to the California ambient air quality standards and the national ambient air quality standards. As described under Item b) below, the Project would not exceed the short-term construction or long-term operational thresholds and thus would not violate any air quality standards (see **Table 4.3-1**). The Project would be consistent with the first criterion.

Concerning Consistency Criterion No. 2, air quality planning documents contains air pollutant reduction strategies and demonstrate that the applicable ambient air quality standards can be achieved within the time frames required under federal law. Growth projections from local general plans adopted by local municipalities are used to develop regional growth forecasts that are used to develop future air quality forecasts for the Ozone Attainment Plan and RACT SIP. In terms of the second criterion, the Project does not include development of new housing or employment centers and would not induce population or employment growth. Rather, the Project seeks enhanced water conveyance. Therefore, the Project would not affect local plans for population growth and the Proposed Project would be considered consistent with the population, housing, and employment growth projections utilized in the preparation of the Ozone Attainment Plan and RACT SIP.

For these reasons, the Proposed Project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of the Ozone Attainment Plan or RACT SIP. No impact would occur.

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
b) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. By its very nature, air pollution is largely a cumulative impact. No single project is sufficient in size, by itself, to result in nonattainment of ambient air quality standards. Instead, a project’s individual emissions contribute to existing cumulatively significant adverse air quality impacts. NSAQMD thresholds have also been used to determine air quality impacts in this analysis. If a project’s individual emissions exceed its identified significance thresholds, the project would be cumulatively considerable. Projects that do not exceed significance thresholds would not be considered cumulatively considerable.

As previously described, the NSAQMD has published a guidance document for the preparation of the air quality portions of environmental documents that includes thresholds of significance to be used in evaluating land use proposals. Thresholds of significance are based on a source’s projected impacts and are a basis from which to apply mitigation measures. The NSAQMD has developed a tiered approach to significance levels: the NSAQMD considers emissions in excess of Level C thresholds to have a significant air quality impact. In cases when predicted emissions are projected to be below the Level C thresholds but exceeding the Level A thresholds (thereby placing Project-related air quality impacts at Level B), the Project would be considered potentially significant, subject to emission-reducing mitigation measures. Implementation of appropriate mitigation specific to the pollutant exceeding Level A thresholds would reduce Level B air quality impacts to a less than significant level.

The Proposed Project’s air quality impacts are attributable to construction activities. Construction-generated emissions are temporary and short-term but have the potential to represent a significant air quality impact. Three basic sources of short-term emissions would be generated through construction of the Proposed Project: operation of the construction vehicles (i.e., excavators, trenchers, dump trucks), the creation of fugitive dust during excavation, and the use of asphalt or other oil-based substances during paving activities. Construction activities such as roadway demolition and excavation operations, construction vehicle traffic, and wind blowing over exposed soils would generate exhaust emissions and fugitive particulate matter emissions that affect local air quality at various times during construction. Effects would be variable depending on the weather, soil conditions, the amount of activity taking place, and the nature of dust control efforts. The dry climate of the area during the summer months creates a high potential for dust generation. Construction activities would be subject to NSAQMD Rule 226, which requires that construction projects take reasonable precautions to prevent the emissions of fugitive dust, such as using water or chemicals, where possible, for control of dust during the clearing of land and other construction activities.

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Construction-generated emissions associated with the Proposed Project were calculated using the CARB-approved California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod), version 2016.3.2 computer program, which is designed to model emissions for land use development projects, based on typical construction requirements. See *Appendix A* for more information regarding the construction assumptions, including construction equipment and duration, used in this analysis. Predicted maximum daily construction-generated emissions for the Proposed Project are summarized in **Table 4.3-1**. Construction-generated emissions are short-term and of temporary duration, lasting only as long as construction activities occur, but would be considered a significant air quality impact if the volume of pollutants generated exceeds the NSAQMD’s Level C thresholds of significance.

Table 4.3-1. Construction-Related Emissions						
Construction Year	Pollutant (pounds per day)					
	ROG	NO_x	CO	SO₂	PM₁₀	PM_{2.5}
Construction Year One	5.13	54.34	34.11	0.09	6.51	2.78
Construction Year Two	4.88	50.28	33.60	0.09	6.35	2.62
Construction Year Three	4.20	41.74	32.24	0.09	5.95	2.26
Construction Year Four	3.73	35.23	31.05	0.09	5.66	1.99
Construction Year Five	3.68	33.97	31.02	0.09	5.61	1.94
<i>NSAQMD Level A Significance Threshold</i>	25	25	-	-	80	-
Exceed NSAQMD Level A Threshold?	No	Yes	No	No	No	No
<i>NSAQMD Level C Significance Threshold</i>	137	137	-	-	137	-
Exceed NSAQMD Level C Threshold?	No	No	No	No	No	No

Source: CalEEMod version 2016.3.2. Refer to Appendix A for Model Data Outputs.

Notes: Building construction, paving, and painting assumed to occur simultaneously. Emission estimates account for the soil during each year of construction with 1,027 truck trips annually, as well as the hauling of demolished asphalt each year of construction with 333 truck trips annually.

As previously stated, the NSAQMD has developed a tiered approach to significance levels. Specifically, the NSAQMD considers emissions in excess of Level C thresholds to have a significant air quality impact. In cases when predicted emissions are projected to be below the Level C thresholds but exceeding the Level A thresholds (thereby placing Project-related air quality impacts at Level B), the Project would be considered potentially significant, subject to emission-reducing mitigation measures. Implementation of appropriate mitigation specific to the pollutant type exceeding Level A thresholds would reduce Level B air quality impacts to a less than significant level.

Based on the modeling conducted, estimated short-term daily emissions for all pollutants associated with Project construction are below the NSAQMD-recommended Level C significance threshold of 137 pounds per day. However, NO_x emissions would exceed the Level A significance threshold of 25 pounds day. As previously described, projects estimated to exceed Level A significance thresholds must apply emission-appropriate mitigation measures. According to the NSAQMD, implementation of emission-appropriate mitigation measures would reduce Level B air quality impacts to a less than significant level. Thus, **Mitigation Measure AQ-1** is recommended. **Mitigation Measure AQ-1** is derived from the NSAQMD’s recommended mitigations in order to address generated NO_x emissions. Implementation of **Mitigation**

Measure AQ-1 and as well as **BMPs 12, 13 and 15** will reduce Level B air quality impacts to a less than significant level.

Once completed, the Project would be limited to a 5.6-mile-long water pipeline. The Proposed Project will not include the provision of new permanent stationary or mobile sources of emissions, and therefore, by its very nature, will not generate quantifiable air quality emissions from Project operations. The Project does not propose any buildings and therefore no permanent source or stationary source emissions. Once the Project is completed, there will be no resultant increase in automobile trips to the area because the water pipeline will not require daily visits. While it is anticipated that the Project would require intermittent maintenance to be conducted by NID staff, such maintenance would be minimal requiring a negligible amount of traffic trips on an annual basis. Impacts in this regard would be less than significant.

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Less Than Significant Impact. Sensitive receptors are defined as facilities or land uses that include members of the population that are particularly sensitive to the effects of air pollutants, such as children, the elderly, and people with illnesses. Examples of these sensitive receptors are residences, schools, hospitals, and daycare centers. CARB has identified the following groups of individuals as the most likely to be affected by air pollution: the elderly over age 65, children under age 14, athletes, and persons with cardiovascular and chronic respiratory diseases such as asthma, emphysema, and bronchitis.

Construction-Generated Air Contaminants

Construction-related activities would result in temporary, short-term Project-generated emissions of diesel particulate matter (DPM) from the exhaust of off-road, heavy-duty diesel equipment for site preparation (e.g., excavation); soil hauling truck traffic; paving; and other miscellaneous activities. For construction activity, DPM is the primary toxic air contaminant (TAC) of concern. Particulate exhaust emissions from diesel-fueled engines (i.e., DPM) were identified as a TAC by CARB in 1998. The potential cancer risk from the inhalation of DPM, as discussed below, outweighs the potential for all other health impacts (i.e., non-cancer chronic risk, short-term acute risk) and health impacts from other TACs. Accordingly, DPM is the focus of this discussion.

Based on the emission modeling conducted the maximum construction-related annual emissions of fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) exhaust, considered a surrogate for DPM, would be 2.05 pounds per day (see Attachment A of *Appendix A*) during construction activity, PM_{2.5} is considered a surrogate for DPM because more than 90 percent of DPM is less than 1 microgram in diameter and therefore is a subset of particulate matter under 2.5 microns in diameter (i.e., PM_{2.5}), according to CARB. Most PM_{2.5} derives from combustion, such as use of gasoline and diesel fuels by motor vehicles. Furthermore, even during the most intense month of construction, emissions of DPM would be generated from different locations on

the Project site, rather than a single location, due to the nature of the Project site spanning 5.6 miles in length along existing ROWs.

The dose to which receptors are exposed is the primary factor used to determine health risk (i.e., potential exposure to TAC emission levels that exceed applicable standards). Dose is a function of the concentration of a substance or substances in the environment and the duration of exposure to the substance. Dose is positively correlated with time, meaning that a longer exposure period would result in a higher exposure level for any exposed receptor. Thus, the risks estimated for an exposed individual are higher if a fixed exposure occurs over a longer period of time. According to the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment), health risk assessments, which determine the exposure of sensitive receptors to TAC emissions, should be based on a 70-, 30-, or 9-year exposure period; however, such assessments should be limited to the period/duration of activities associated with the Proposed Project. Consequently, an important consideration is the fact that construction of the Proposed Project is anticipated to last less than five years and thus would not span the minimum duration of exposure from which to calculate health risk. Additionally, construction activity would not be continuous during this five-year period, yet instead would be limited to the dry season months. Day-to-day basic construction activity would span eight to ten hours as opposed to throughout the entire day.

Therefore, considering the relatively low mass of DPM emissions that would be generated during even the most intense season of construction, the fact that construction would not last as long as the minimum duration of exposure from which to calculate health risk, and the relatively short duration that construction activities would occur at a single location along the 5.6-mile-long site, construction-related TAC emissions would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial amounts of air toxics. This is a less than significant impact.

Operational Air Contaminants

Operation of the Proposed Project would not result in the development of any substantial sources of air toxics. There are no stationary sources associated with the operations of the Project. Nor would the Project attract mobile sources that spend long periods queuing and idling at the site. Therefore, the Project would not be a source of TACs and there would be no impact as a result of the Project during operations.

Carbon Monoxide Hot Spots

It has long been recognized that CO exceedances are caused by vehicular emissions, primarily when idling at intersections. Concentrations of CO are a direct function of the number of vehicles, length of delay, and traffic flow conditions. Under certain meteorological conditions, CO concentrations close to congested intersections that experience high levels of traffic and elevated background concentrations may reach unhealthy levels, affecting nearby sensitive receptors. Given the high traffic volume potential, areas of high CO concentrations, or "hot spots," are typically associated with intersections that are projected to operate at unacceptable levels of service during the peak commute hours. However, transport of this criteria pollutant is extremely limited, and CO disperses rapidly with distance from the source under normal meteorological conditions. Furthermore, vehicle emissions standards have become increasingly more stringent in the last 20 years. Currently, the CO standard in California is a maximum of 3.4 grams per

mile for passenger cars (requirements for certain vehicles are more stringent). With the turnover of older vehicles, introduction of cleaner fuels, and implementation of control technology on industrial facilities, CO concentrations in the Project vicinity have steadily declined.

Accordingly, with the steadily decreasing CO emissions from vehicles, even very busy intersections do not result in exceedances of the CO standard. Although not within Nevada County, the analysis prepared for CO attainment in the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) 1992 Federal Attainment Plan for Carbon Monoxide in Los Angeles County can be used to demonstrate the potential for CO exceedances. The SCAQMD CO hot spot analysis was conducted for four busy intersections in Los Angeles County during the peak morning and afternoon time periods. The intersections evaluated included Long Beach Boulevard and Imperial Highway (Lynwood), Wilshire Boulevard and Veteran Avenue (Westwood), Sunset Boulevard and Highland Avenue (Hollywood), and La Cienega Boulevard and Century Boulevard (Inglewood). The busiest intersection evaluated was at Wilshire Boulevard and Veteran Avenue, which has a traffic volume of approximately 100,000 vehicles per day. The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority evaluated the level of service in the vicinity of the Wilshire Boulevard/Veteran Avenue intersection and found it to be level of service (LOS) E at peak morning traffic and LOS F at peak afternoon traffic (LOS E and F are the two least efficient traffic LOS ratings). Even with the inefficient LOS and volume of traffic, the CO analysis concluded that there was no violation of CO standards (SCAQMD 1992).

The Project is not anticipated to generate any trips following completion of the pipeline. Because the Proposed Project would not increase traffic volumes at any intersection to more than 100,000 vehicles per day, there is no likelihood of the Project traffic exceeding CO values. For the reasons stated, this impact is less than significant.

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Less than Significant Impact. Typically, odors are regarded as an annoyance rather than a health hazard. However, manifestations of a person’s reaction to foul odors can range from psychological (e.g., irritation, anger, or anxiety) to physiological (e.g., circulatory and respiratory effects, nausea, vomiting, and headache).

With respect to odors, the human nose is the sole sensing device. The ability to detect odors varies considerably among the population and overall is quite subjective. Some individuals have the ability to smell minute quantities of specific substances; others may not have the same sensitivity but may have sensitivities to odors of other substances. In addition, people may have different reactions to the same odor; in fact, an odor that is offensive to one person (e.g., from a fast food restaurant) may be perfectly acceptable to another. It is also important to note that an unfamiliar odor is more easily detected and is more likely to cause complaints than a familiar one. This is because of the phenomenon known as odor

fatigue, in which a person can become desensitized to almost any odor and recognition only occurs with an alteration in the intensity.

Quality and intensity are two properties present in any odor. The quality of an odor indicates the nature of the smell experience. For instance, if a person describes an odor as flowery or sweet, the person is describing the quality of the odor. Intensity refers to the strength of the odor. For example, a person may use the word "strong" to describe the intensity of an odor. Odor intensity depends on the odorant concentration in the air. When an odorous sample is progressively diluted, the odorant concentration decreases. As this occurs, the odor intensity weakens and eventually becomes so low that the detection or recognition of the odor is quite difficult. At some point during dilution, the concentration of the odorant reaches a detection threshold. An odorant concentration below the detection threshold means that the concentration in the air is not detectable by the average human.

During construction, the Proposed Project presents the potential for generation of objectionable odors in the form of diesel exhaust in the immediate vicinity of the site. However, these emissions are short-term in nature and will rapidly dissipate and be diluted by the atmosphere downwind of the emission sources. Additionally, odors would be localized and generally confined to the construction area.

Implementation of the Proposed Project would not result in the introduction of any new processes that are considered to have a high odor-generation potential. This impact is less than significant.

4.3.3 Mitigation Measures

Mitigation Measure AQ-1 applies to both the proposed Project and Alternative Segment 1.

AQ-1: The following ozone precursor-reduction measures shall be implemented by the Project construction contractor during construction activities:

- All off-road equipment (portable and mobile) shall meet or be cleaner than Tier 2 engine emission specifications. Note that all off-road equipment must meet all applicable state and federal requirements.
- Emissions from onsite construction equipment shall comply with NSAQMD Regulation II, Rule 202, Visible Emissions.
- Idling times shall be minimized either by shutting equipment off when not in use or reducing the maximum idling time to five minutes when not in use (as required by California airborne toxics control measure Title 13, Section 2485 of CCR). Clear signage shall be provided for construction workers at all access points.
- All construction equipment shall be maintained and properly tuned in accordance with manufacturers' specifications. All equipment shall be checked by a certified mechanic and determined to be running in proper condition prior to operation.
- Existing power sources (e.g., power poles) or clean fuel generators shall be utilized rather than temporary power generators (i.e. diesel generators), where feasible.

4.3.4 Alternative Segment

The Alternative Segment is located near the western end of the proposed alignment, approximately 500 feet southwest of the proposed alignment, as shown in Figure 2-2, Sheet 8. The Alternative Segment begins on the eastern end at Empty Diggings Lane where it leaves paved road ROW and follows an existing dirt road for approximately 0.30 mile before tying back into Empty Diggings Lane on the west.

The Alternative Segment would replace an equal-distant segment of pipeline as under the proposed alignment, and construction equipment and timing would be the same. The Alternative Segment would also be subject to **Mitigation Measure AQ-1** as well as **BMPs 12, 13 and 15**. Therefore, selection and implementation of the Alternative Segment in conjunction with the proposed project would result in less-than-significant air quality impacts.

4.4 Biological Resources

This section summarizes the Biological Resources Assessment completed by ECORP Consulting in April 2019 (see appendix B for full report)

4.4.1 Environmental Setting

The Project is located within unincorporated Nevada County, California. The topography of the Project area is hilly, generally trending upslope from west-east, at elevations ranging from 1,320-2510 feet AMSL. The Project area is located in the Sierra Nevada Foothill Subregion of the Sierra Nevada floristic region of California (Baldwin et. al. 2012). The average winter low temperature in the vicinity of the Project Area is 33.1°F and the average summer high temperature is 84.5°F. Average annual precipitation is approximately 53.7 inches, which falls as rain (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration [NOAA] 2019)

Vegetation Communities and Land Cover Types

Vegetation communities were identified within the Project Area based on the classification system presented in the Manual of California Vegetation (Sawyer et al. 2009). Vegetation communities identified within the Project Area include blue oak woodland, valley oak woodland, interior live oak woodland, foothill pine woodland, and wedgeleaf ceanothus chaparral. In addition to these vegetation communities, several other land cover types occur within the Project Area that do not strictly follow the Manual of California Vegetation's nomenclature. These include annual grassland, rural residential, and developed areas. It should be noted that the pipeline, except for a short segment near the western end, would be within existing roadways. Detailed descriptions of vegetation associated with vegetation communities and aquatic resources within the Project Area, which includes the ROW along the roads, are provided in Appendix B.

Wildlife

Wildlife species observed within the Project Area during the 2019, reconnaissance surveys include western gray squirrel (*Sciurus griseus*), striped skunk (*Mephitis mephitis*), California mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus californicus*), Anna's hummingbird (*Calypte anna*), double-crested cormorant (*Phalacrocorax auritus*), turkey vulture (*Cathartes aura*), acorn woodpecker (*Melanerpes formicivorus*), black phoebe (*Sayornis*

nigricans), California scrub-jay (*Aphelocoma californica*), common raven (*Corvus corax*), oak titmouse (*Baeolophus inornatus*), bushtit (*Psaltriparus minimus*), white-breasted nuthatch (*Sitta carolinensis*), ruby-crowned kinglet (*Regulus calendula*), western bluebird (*Sialia mexicana*), house finch (*Haemorhous mexicanus*), and lesser goldfinch (*Spinus psaltria*),.

Soils

According to the Web Soil Survey (NRCS 2019a), 11 soil units, or types, have been mapped within the Project Area.

- TuD - Trabuco-Rock outcrop complex, 15 to 20 percent slopes;
- TrC – Trabuco loam, 5 to 15 percent slopes;
- TuE – Trabuco-Rock outcrop complex, 30 to 50 percent slopes;
- BrD – Boomer-Rock outcrop complex, 5 to 30 percent slopes
- ScE – Secca-Rock outcrop complex, 2 to 50 percent slopes
- Ao – Alluvial land, clayey
- Pr- Placer diggings
- AfB – Aiken loam, 2 to 9 percent slopes
- AfC – Aiken loam, 9 to 15 percent slopes
- AfD -Aiken loam, 15 to 30 percent slopes
- AgD – Aiken cobbly loam, 2 to 30 percent slopes

Two of the above soil types contain hydric components (Ao) Alluvial land, clayey and (Pr) Placer diggings (NRCS 2019b)

Potential Waters of the U.S.

Approximately 0.503 acre of aquatic features occur within the Study Area (**Table 4.4-1**). Wetlands within the Study Area include marsh, seasonal wetland, and seasonal wetland swale. Other waters include creek, ditch, ephemeral drainage, and intermittent drainage (see **Figure 4-1 sheets 1 through 8**).

Table 4.4-1 Aquatic Resources	
Type	Acreage¹
Wetlands	
Marsh	0.044
Seasonal Wetland	0.043
Seasonal Wetland Swale	0.028
Other Waters	
Creek	0.334
Ditch	0.022
Ephemeral Drainage	0.003
Intermittent Drainage	0.028
Total	0.503

¹Acreages represent a calculated estimation and are subject to modification following the USACE verification process.

Marsh

Marshes are wetlands that are continuously inundated or saturated throughout the year and are dominated by emergent hydrophytic plants. Marshes are wet due to accumulation of incidental rainfall, surface runoff, and/or shallow groundwater. One marsh was mapped in eastern end Study Area. The majority of marshes within the Study Area Emergent vegetation within this marsh is dominated by broadleaf cattail (*Typha latifolia*).

Seasonal Wetland

Seasonal wetlands are ephemeral wet due to accumulation of surface runoff and rainwater within low-lying areas. One seasonal wetland occurs along Empty Diggins Lane on the western end of the Study Area, and one occurs to the north of Rough and Ready Highway in the central portion of the Study Area. The seasonal wetlands are dominated by Himalayan blackberry (*Rubus armeniacus*).

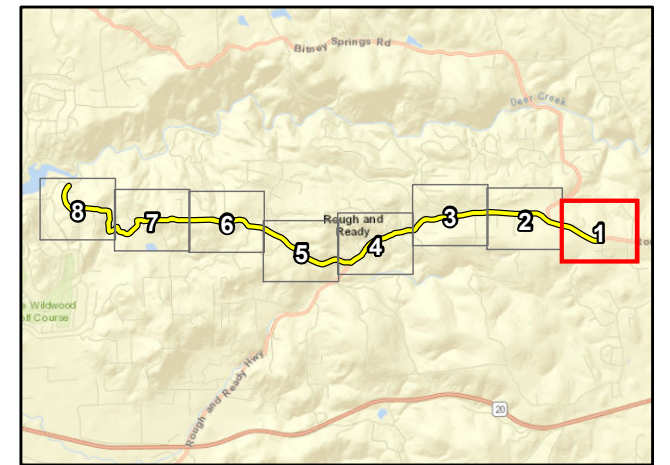


**Figure 4-1.
Aquatic Resource Assessment
(Sheet 1 of 8)**

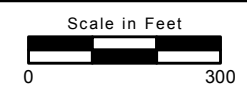
Map Features
 Preferred Project Alignment - 47.09 acres

Wetland Type	Total Acres
Creek	0.334
Ditch	0.022
Ephemeral Drainage	0.003
Intermittent Drainage	0.028
Marsh	0.044
Seasonal Wetland	0.043
Seasonal Wetland Swale	0.033
Grand Total	0.508

Service Layer Credits: Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, USGS, Intermap, INCREMENT P, NRCan, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), Esri Korea, Esri (Thailand), NGCC, (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community



Location: N:\2018\2018-174 NID - E George to Lake Wildwood Backbone\MAPS\CEQA\NID_MapSeries_CEQA_ARA_Detail_20190326.mxd (JDS/AMM)-armyers 4/30/2019



**Figure 4-1.
Aquatic Resource Assessment
(Sheet 2 of 8)**

Map Features

 Preferred Project Alignment - 47.09 acres

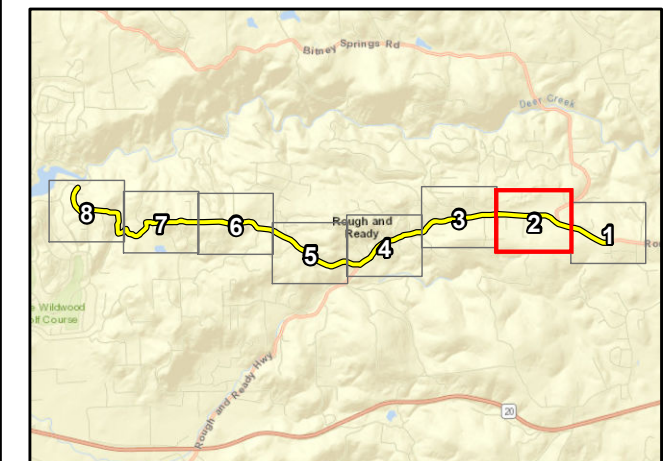
Wetland Type

 Ditch

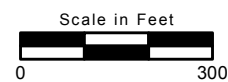
 Marsh



Service Layer Credits: Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, USGS, Intermap, INCREMENT P, NRCan, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), Esri Korea, Esri (Thailand), NGCC, (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community



Location: N:\2018\2018-174 NID - E George to Lake Wildwood Backbone\MAPS\CEQA\NID_MapSeries_CEOA_ARA_Detail_20190326.mxd (JDS/AMM)-armyers 4/30/2019



**Figure 4-1.
Aquatic Resource Assessment
(Sheet 3 of 8)**

Map Features

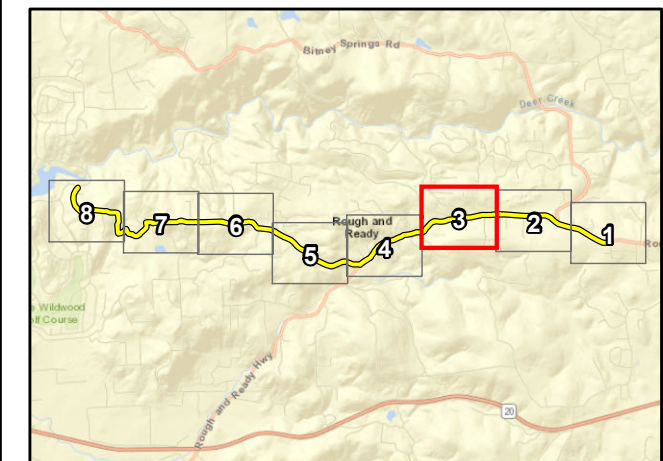
 Preferred Project Alignment - 47.09 acres

Wetland Type

 Creek



Service Layer Credits: Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, USGS, Intermap, INCREMENT P, NRCan, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), Esri Korea, Esri (Thailand), NGCC, (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community



Location: N:\2018\2018-174 NID - E George to Lake Wildwood Backbone\MAPS\CEQA\NID_MapSeries_CEQA_ARA_Detail_20190326.mxd (JDS/AMM)-armyers 4/30/2019




**Figure 4-1.
Aquatic Resource Assessment
(Sheet 4 of 8)**

Map Features

 Preferred Project Alignment - 47.09 acres

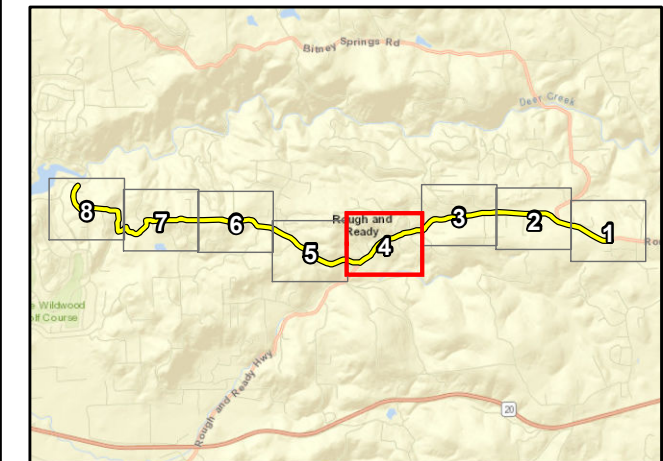
Wetland Type

 Creek

 Seasonal Wetland



Service Layer Credits: Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, USGS, Intermap, INCREMENT P, NRCan, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), Esri Korea, Esri (Thailand), NGCC, (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community



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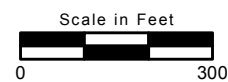
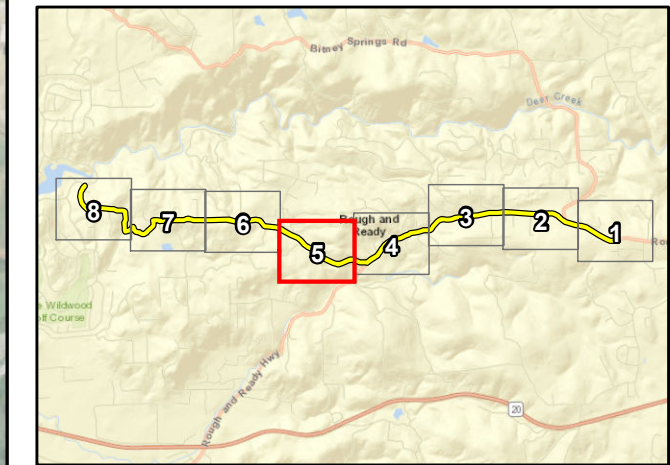




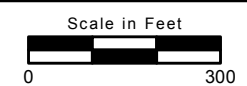
Figure 4-1.
Aquatic Resource Assessment
(Sheet 5 of 8)

- Map Features**
- Preferred Project Alignment - 47.09 acres
- Wetland Type**
- Ditch

Service Layer Credits: Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, USGS, Intermap, INCREMENT P, NRCan, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), Esri Korea, Esri (Thailand), NGCC, (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community



Location: N:\2018\2018-174 NID - E George to Lake Wildwood Backbone\MAPS\CEQA\ARA_MapSeries_CEOA_ARA_Detail_20190326.mxd (JDS/AMM)-armyers 4/30/2019




**Figure 4-1.
Aquatic Resource Assessment
(Sheet 6 of 8)**

Map Features

 Preferred Project Alignment - 47.09 acres

Wetland Type

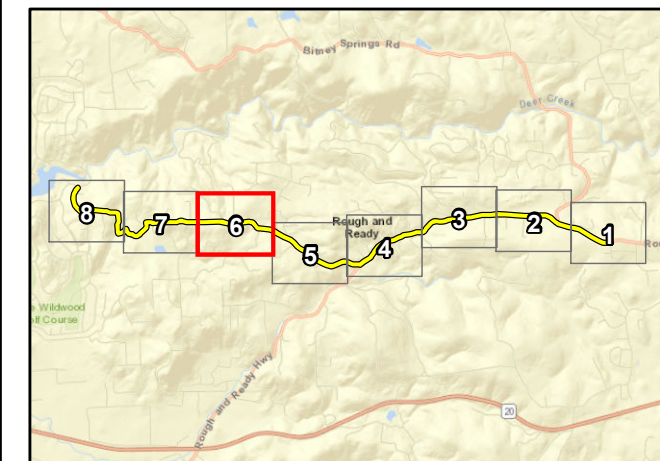
 Ditch

 Ephemeral Drainage



Location: N:\2018\2018-174 NID - E George to Lake Wildwood Backbone\MAPS\CEQA\NID_MapSeries_CEQA_ARA_Detail_20190326.mxd (JDS/AMM)-armyers 4/30/2019


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**Figure 4-1.
Aquatic Resource Assessment
(Sheet 7 of 8)**

Map Features

 Preferred Project Alignment - 47.09 acres

 Cross Country Segment

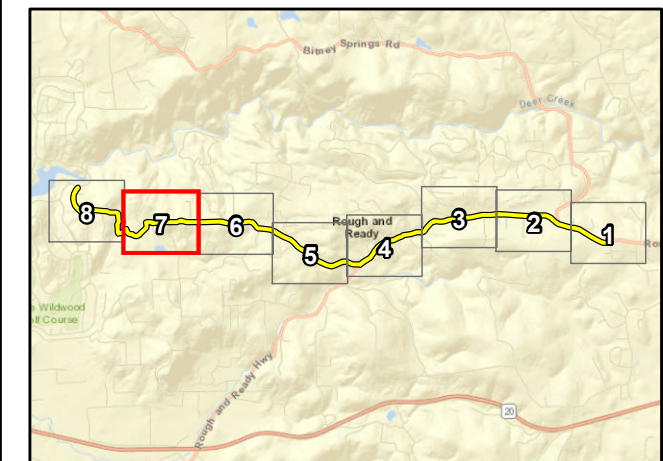
Wetland Type

 Intermittent Drainage

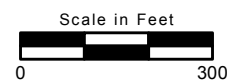
 Seasonal Wetland



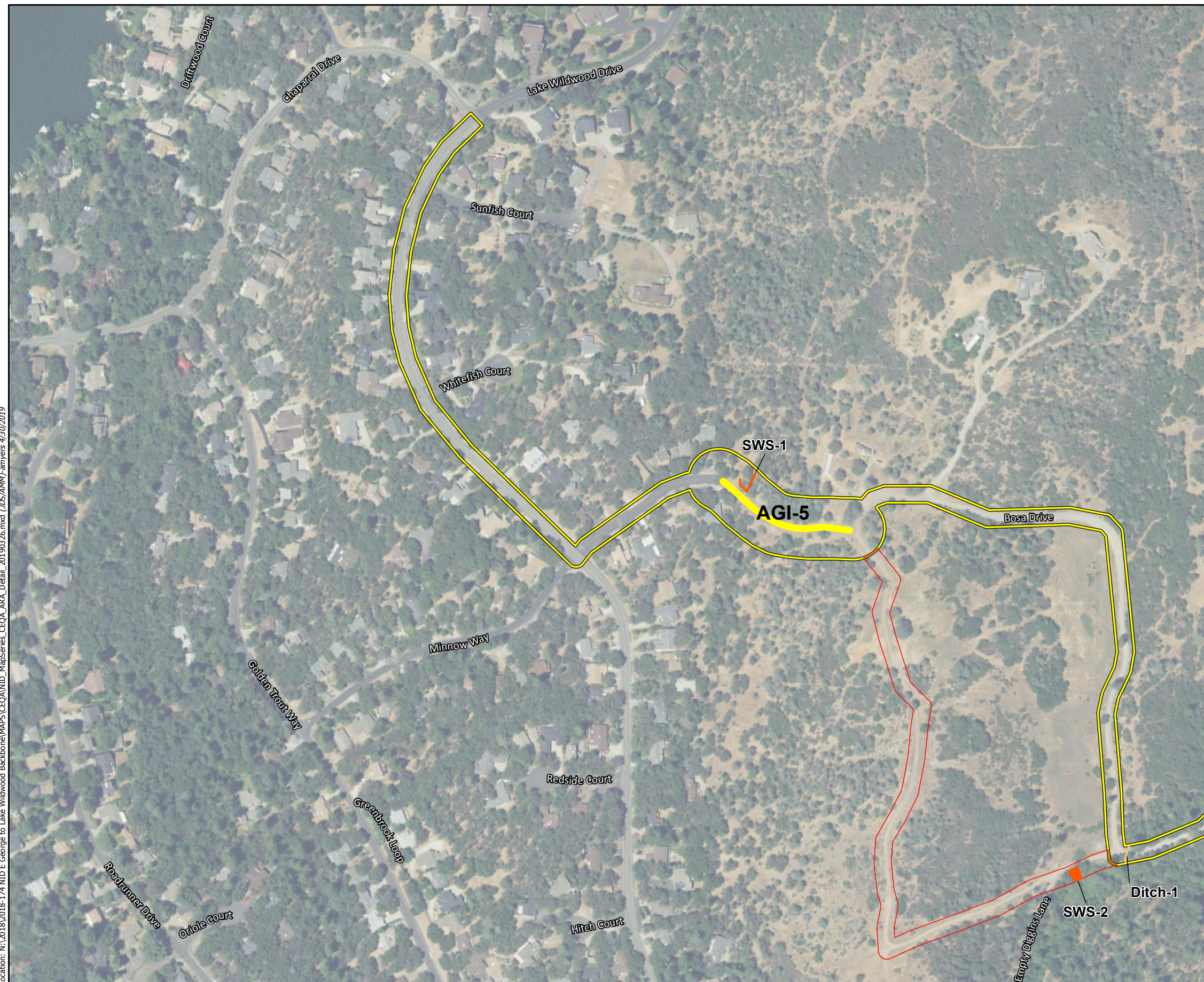
Service Layer Credits: Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, USGS, Intermap, INCREMENT P, NRCan, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), Esri Korea, Esri (Thailand), NGCC, (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community



Location: N:\2018\2018-174 NID - E George to Lake Wildwood Backbone\MAPS\CEQA\NID_ManSeries_CEOA_ARA_Detail_20190326.mxd (JDS/AMM)-amyers 4/30/2019



**Figure 4-1.
Aquatic Resource Assessment
(Sheet 8 of 8)**



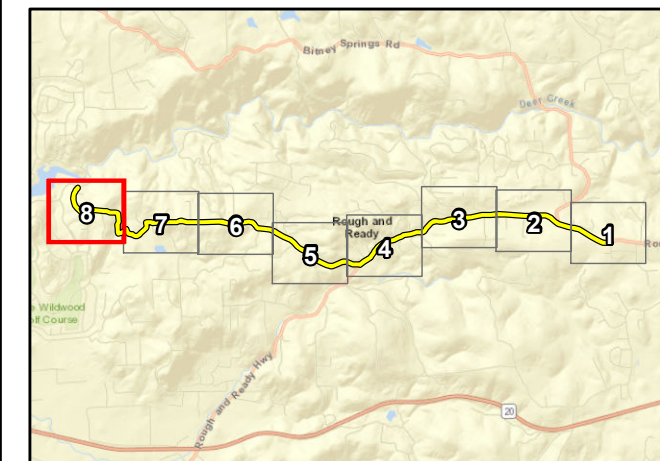
Map Features

- Preferred Project Alignment - 47.09 acres
- Alternative Project Alignment - 2.24 acres
- Fire Access Easement Segment

Wetland Type

- Ditch
- Seasonal Wetland Swale

Service Layer Credits: Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, USGS, Intermap, INCREMENT P, NRCan, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), Esri Korea, Esri (Thailand), NGCC, (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community



Location: N:\2018\2018-174 NID E George to Lake Wildwood Backbone\MAPS\CEQA\NID_MapSeries_CEQA_ARA_Detail_20190326.mxd (JDS/AMM)-armyers 4/30/2019



Seasonal Wetland Swale

Seasonal wetland swales are generally linear wetland features that convey precipitation runoff and support a predominance of hydrophytic vegetation, but do not exhibit an ordinary high-water mark (OHWM). These are typically inundated for short periods during and immediately after rain events, but usually maintain soil saturation for longer periods during the wet season. There are two seasonal wetland swales on the western end of the Study Area. One is dominated by iris-leaved rush (*Juncus xiphioides*) and spinyfruit buttercup (*Ranunculus muricatus*). The other is dominated by rush (*Juncus* sp.) and an overstory of arroyo willow (*Salix lasiolepis*).

Creek

Creeks are linear features that exhibit a bed and bank, OHWM, and flow intermittently or continuously throughout the year. One creek (actually a creek-like portion of the historic Rough and Ready ditch) occurs within the Study Area where it crosses Rough and Ready Highway at several locations. The creek also parallels Rough and Ready Highway for a short distance east of the town of Rough and Ready.

Ditch

Ditches are linear, constructed features designed to transport water. There are four ditches that cross the Study Area at various locations. These features are roadside drainage ditches and portions of historic irrigation canals. These features were unvegetated within the Study Area.

Intermittent Drainage

Ephemeral drainages are linear features that exhibit a bed and bank and an OHWM. These features are typically seasonal in nature and convey both surface runoff and are fed by groundwater. The intermittent drainage onsite occurs along Empty Diggins Lane. It is dominated by Himalayan blackberry and is beneath an overstory of interior live oak.

Ephemeral Drainage

Ephemeral drainages are linear features that exhibit a bed and bank and an OHWM. These features typically convey runoff for short periods of time during and immediately following rain events and are not influenced by groundwater sources at any time during the year. There is one ephemeral drainage that crosses the Study Area. This ephemeral drainage is unvegetated within the Study Area.

4.4.2 Methods

Literature Review

Prior to conducting the field portion of the assessment, the following species lists were queried to determine the special-status species that had been documented within or in the vicinity of the site (Attachment A):

- CDFW CNDDDB for the "Rough and Ready, California", "Grass Valley, California" and the ten surrounding 7.5-minute USGS quadrangles (CDFW 2019).

- USFWS Resource Report List Federal Endangered and Threatened Species that may be affected by work conducted in the Project Area (USFWS 2018a).
- CNPS electronic Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants of California for the "Rough and Ready, California", "Grass Valley, California" and the ten surrounding 7.5-minute USGS quadrangles (CNPS 2019).

Additional background information was reviewed regarding the documented or potential occurrence of special-status species within or near the site from the following sources:

- The Status of Rare, Threatened, and Endangered Plants and Animals of California 2000-2004 (California Department of Fish and Game [CDFG] 2005)
- California Bird SSC (Shuford and Gardali 2008)
- Amphibian and Reptile SSC in California (Thompson et al.2016)
- Mammalian SSC in California (Williams 1986)
- California's Wildlife, Volumes I-III (Zeiner, et al. 1988, 1990a, 1990b)
- A Guide to Wildlife Habitats of California (Mayer and Laudenslayer Jr., eds. 1988)

Site Reconnaissance and Field Survey

On March 13, 2019 ECORP biologists conducted a reconnaissance survey of the Project Area for biological resources. The Project Area was surveyed by vehicle and on foot using a the mapping program ArcGIS Collector on an iPad paired with an Arrow Global Positioning System unit accurate to less than one meter. The biological survey area was the project alignment plus a ¼ mile buffer on each side.

During the general site reconnaissance, special attention was given to those portions of the site with the potential to support special-status species and sensitive habitats. The following biological information was collected:

- Vegetation communities and land cover types;
- Aquatic Resources
- Plant and animal species directly observed;
- Animal evidence;

In addition, soil types were identified using the NRCS Web Soil Survey (NRCS 2018a), and wetland designations were provided from the National Wetland Inventory (USFWS 2018b).

Special-Status Plants

A total of 34 special-status plant species were identified as having the potential to occur in the Project Area based on the literature review (Table 1 in Appendix B). However, upon further analysis and after the 2019 site visits, 20 species were considered to be absent from the site due to the lack of suitable habitat

or because the Project Area is outside the known range of the species. No further discussion of these species is provided in this analysis. The remaining 14 species that have the potential to occur within the Project Area are: Sanborn's onion, True's manzanita, Sierra foothills brodiaea, Stebbins' morning-glory, chaparral sedge, Brandegees' clarkia, pine hill flannelbush, Butte County fritillary, finger rush, dubious pea, Humboldt lily, Bacigalupi's yampah, cedar crest popcornflower, brownish beaked-rush. A description of each of these species can be found in Appendix B.

Special-Status Mammals

A total of six special-status mammal species were identified as having the potential to occur within the Project Area based on the literature review (Table 1 in Appendix B). However, upon further analysis and after the site visit, two of these species were considered to be absent from the Project Area. No further discussion of these species is provided in this analysis. The remaining four species that have the potential to occur within the Project Area are: Townsend's big-eared bat, western red bat, hoary bat, and Yuma myotis. A description of each of these species can be found in Appendix B.

Special Status Invertebrates

A total of two special-status invertebrate species were identified as having potential to occur in the Project Area based on the literature review (Table 1 in Appendix B). However, upon further analysis and after the site visit, both species are considered absent. No further discussion of these species are provided within this assessment.

Special Status Fish

A total of three special-status fish species were identified as having potential to occur in the Project Area based on the literature review (Table 1 in Appendix B). However, upon further analysis and after the site visit, all of the species are considered absent from the Project Area due to the lack of suitable habitat. No further discussion of these species is provided within this assessment.

Special Status Amphibians

A total of two special-status amphibians (foothill yellow-legged frog and California red-legged frog) were identified as having potential to occur in the Project Area based on the literature review (Table 1 in Appendix B). A description of each of these species can be found in Appendix B.

Special Status Reptiles

A total of two special-status reptiles (western pond turtle and Blainville's horned lizard) were identified as having potential to occur in the Project based on the literature review (Table 1 in Appendix B). A description of each of these species can be found in Appendix B.

Special Status Birds

A total of 23 special-status bird species were identified as having the potential to occur within the Project Area based on the literature review (Table 1 in Appendix B). However, upon further analysis and after the site visit, 17 of these species were considered to be absent from the Project Area. No further discussion of

these species is provided in this analysis. The remaining six species that have the potential to occur within the Project Area are: Cooper’s hawk, Nuttall’s woodpecker, olive-sided flycatcher, yellow-billed magpie, Oak titmouse, and Yellow-breasted chat. A description of each of these species can be found in Appendix B.

4.4.3 Biological Resources (IV) Environmental Checklist and Discussion

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation.

Special Status Birds and MBTA-Protected Birds

The majority of proposed project would be constructed within the existing paved road right-of-way and therefore would not result in direct impacts to special status species or their habitats. However suitable nesting habitat for six special-status birds (Cooper’s hawk, Nuttall’s woodpecker, olive-sided flycatcher, yellow-billed magpie, oak titmouse, and yellow-breasted chat) is present adjacent the entire pipeline alignment. Should special status birds be present, construction or other work-related activities could result in harassment to nesting individuals and may temporarily disrupt foraging activities, which would be considered a potentially significant impact. Implementation of **Mitigation Measure BIO-1** would reduce this impact to less than significant. Mitigation Measure BIO-1 applies to all segments of the proposed Project and Alternative Alignment and will be conducted prior to each new construction season.

In addition to the above-listed special-status birds, all native birds, including raptors, are protected under the California Fish and Game Code and the federal MBTA. Implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-1 would ensure appropriate protections and reduce potential impacts to less-than-significant levels.

Special Status Plants

The majority of proposed project would be constructed within the existing paved road right-of-way and therefore would not result in direct impacts to special status plants or their habitats. However, construction ground disturbance will be required along the future fire lane, the non-roadway segment and within a portion of all AGI areas. Implementation of **Mitigation Measure BIO-2**, would reduce these impacts to less than significant. Mitigation Measures BIO-2 applies to construction activities within the Fire Access Easement Segment, the non-roadway segment and all AGI areas where improvements are proposed.

Special Status Amphibians

There is suitable aquatic habitat within the Study Area for two special-status amphibians, foothill yellow-legged frog and California red-legged frog. The location of aquatic habitats that could support these species is shown in **Figure 4-1 Aquatic Resource Assessment**. As shown, aquatic resources exist adjacent to the paved right-of-way at three locations along the pipeline alignment, including a seasonal wetland and two intermittent drainages along the south side of Empty Diggins Lane just south of Rough and Ready Road (**Figure 4-1, sheet 7**), and two creek crossings of Rough and Ready Highway (**Figure 4-1, sheet 4**). In addition, three of the Above Ground Improvement (AGI) areas contain suitable aquatic habitat. AGI-1 contains marsh and ditch habitat (**Figure 4-1, sheet 2**), AGI-2 contains approximately 1,400 feet of creek along the north side of Rough and Ready Road (**Figure 4-1, sheet 3**), and AGI-5 contains a seasonal wetland swale (**Figure 4-1, Sheet 8**). While no direct impacts to these species is anticipated due to construction activities within paved right-of-way, there is potential for indirect impacts to suitable amphibian habitat. There is also potential for direct impacts to foothill yellow-legged frog and California red-legged frog and their habitats should improvements occur within the identified AGI area aquatic features. This is a potentially significant impact. Implementation of **Mitigation Measure BIO-3 and BIO-4** would reduce this impact to less than significant. Mitigation Measure BIO-3 applies to AGI areas 1, 2 and 5 and Creeks 1, 2 and 3 as shown on **Figure 4-1**. Mitigation Measure BIO-4 applies to all segments of the proposed Project and Alternative Alignment and will be conducted prior to each new construction season.

Special Status Reptiles

Suitable aquatic and upland habitat for two special-status reptile, northern western pond turtle and Blainville's horned lizard, is present within the Study Area.

While no direct impacts to northern western pond turtle is anticipated due to construction activities within the road alignment, there is potential for indirect impacts to suitable habitat within aquatic resources adjacent to the construction. Implementation of **Mitigation Measure BIO-5** would reduce this impact to less than significant.

Mitigation Measure BIO-5 applies to AGI areas 1, 2 and 5 and Creeks 1, 2 and 3 as shown on Figure 4-1.

Given the nature of the Project activities, there are no anticipated impacts to Blainville's horned lizard. However, given the low potential for an individual to enter a construction area from adjacent chaparral habitat, it is recommended that workers receive WEAP training to familiarize them with the biology of Blainville's horned lizard and environmental compliance measures related to their protection.

Special Status Mammals

Suitable habitat for four special-status mammal species including Townsend's big-eared bat, western red bat, hoary red bat, and Yuma myotis is present within the Study Area.

All potential special-status mammal species are bats. The following mitigation measure is recommended for special-status bat species:

Project construction could result in direct permanent impacts to natural vegetation communities and trees (within the non-roadway segments where trees are to be removed) that provide potentially suitable roosts sites for special-status bats (e.g., trees). Project construction could also result in indirect impacts to nesting birds and bats due equipment noise and general activity in close proximity the trees and vegetation. Implementation of **Mitigation Measure BIO-6** will reduce impact to a less than significant level. Mitigation Measure BIO-6 applies to all segments of the proposed Project and Alternative Alignment and will be conducted prior to each new construction season.

Special Status Birds and MBTA-Protected Birds

Suitable habitat for six special-status birds is present within the Study Area. These include Cooper’s hawk, Nuttall’s woodpecker, olive-sided flycatcher, yellow-billed magpie, oak titmouse, and yellow-breasted chat. If present, construction or other work-related activities could result in harassment to nesting individuals and may temporarily disrupt foraging activities.

In addition to the above-listed special-status birds, all native birds, including raptors, are protected under the California Fish and Game Code and the federal MBTA. As such, implementation of **Mitigation Measure BIO-1** would reduce impacts to a less than significant level. Mitigation Measure BIO-1 applies to all segments of the proposed Project and Alternative Alignment and will be conducted prior to each new construction season.

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

No Impact. Based on site-specific field surveys, the Proposed Project Area is not located in the vicinity of riparian habitat, along an established stream, in an established associated riparian forest, or any other sensitive natural community, as identified in local or regional plans, policies or regulations. Therefore, due to the absence of riparian habitat in the Project Area, no impact would occur.

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. A total of 0.503 acre of aquatic features were identified within the Study Area. It is not anticipated that the Project will result in impacts to any aquatic resources. There are six places where aquatic resources cross the alignment, five within the planned alignment and one within the alternative alignment (see **Figure 4-1**). In each case the aquatic resource passes through a culvert at a depth sufficient to be unaffected by the installation of the proposed pipeline, with the possible exception of the seasonal wetland swale that crossed the alternative alignment. In this case it may be possible to avoid impacts to this feature by raising the level of the road or using jack and bore techniques.

Appropriate BMPs, such as high visibility fencing (**BMP 1**) and the implementation of **GEO-1** will be implemented to prevent any sedimentation from entering aquatic resources within or adjacent to areas in which work is occurring. If the project is not able to avoid impacts to the features, implementation of **Mitigation Measure BIO-7** would be required to reduce impacts to a less than significant level.

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

No Impact. Based on site-specific field surveys and findings within the BRA, there are no anticipated impacts to wildlife movement/corridors related to this Project.

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Less than Significant with Mitigation. There are woodlands and forest communities that support oak trees throughout the Study Area, but only one portion (approximately 830 feet between Riffle Box Way and Rough and Ready Road) where impacts to vegetation are anticipated. There is potential for impacts to oak trees, including removal, in this portion. Implementation of **Mitigation Measure BIO-8** as well as **BMP 5** will reduce impacts to a less than significant level. Mitigation Measure BIO-8 applies to the cross country segment (approximately 830 feet between Riffle Box Way and Rough and Ready Road) as shown on **Figure 2-2 (sheet 2)**.

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

No Impact. The Proposed Project is not located in and area covered by a Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan. Therefore, no impact would occur.

4.4.4 Mitigation Measures

BIO-1: Conduct Pre-Construction Nesting Bird Surveys

Mitigation Measure BIO-1 applies to all segments of the proposed Project and Alternative 1.

Conduct a pre-construction nesting bird survey of all suitable habitat on the Project within 14 days prior to commencement of construction during the nesting season (February 1-August 31). Surveys should be conducted within 300 feet of the Project for nesting raptors, and 100 feet of the Project for nesting songbirds. If active nests are found, a no-disturbance buffer around the nest shall be established. The buffer distance shall be established by a biologist in consultation with CDFW or the CEQA lead agency. The buffer shall be maintained until the fledglings are capable of flight and become independent of the nest tree, to be determined by a qualified biologist. Once the young are independent of the nest, no further measures are necessary. Pre-construction nesting surveys are not required for construction activity outside the nesting season.

BIO-2: Conduct Pre-Construction Special Status Plant Surveys

Mitigation Measures BIO-2 applies to construction activities within the future fire lane segment, the Non-Roadway Segment and PRV station improvements locations within the AGI areas. Surveys are valid three years for annual plant dominated communities and five years for tree and shrub dominated communities so multiple segments can be surveyed during one year to cover multiple years of construction.

- The Project Applicant shall retain a biologist to perform a special-status plant survey according to USFWS, CDFW, and CNPS protocol. Surveys should be timed according to the blooming period for target species and known reference populations, if available.
- If no special-status plants are found, no further measures pertaining to special-status plants are necessary.
- If special-status plant species are found, avoidance zones may be established around plants to clearly demarcate areas for avoidance. Avoidance measures and buffer distances may vary between species and the specific avoidance zone distance will be determined in coordination with appropriate resource agencies (CDFW and/or USFWS).

- If special-status plant species are found and avoidance of the species is not possible, then additional measures such as seed collection and/or translocation may be developed in consultation with the appropriate agencies.
- The USFWS generally considers plant survey results valid for approximately three years. Therefore, follow-up surveys may be necessary if Project implementation occurs after this three-year window.

BIO-3: Conduct Special Status Amphibian Surveys

Mitigation Measure BIO-3 applies to AGI areas 1, 2 and 5 and Creeks 1, 2 and 3 as shown on Figure 4-1.

The following measures are recommended to minimize potential impacts to foothill yellow-legged frog and California red-legged frog:

- NID shall retain a biologist to conduct a pre-construction survey of mapped aquatic resources within 72 hours of the start of construction activities adjacent to those resources. Surveys are only needed for aquatic resources that contain water when construction commences.
- If no special-status amphibians are detected during the surveys, no further measures are needed.
- If special-status amphibians are detected, additional measures may be developed in consultation with CDFW to avoid impacts to this species. Measures may include preconstruction surveys and/or monitors present during construction activities in and adjacent to suitable aquatic habitat.

The installation of BMPs to prevent impacts to aquatic resources will also serve as a physical barrier to prevent the movement of these species into the construction area.

The surveys for foothill yellow-legged frog, California red-legged frog, and northern western pond turtle can be conducted concurrently.

BIO-4: Worker Environmental Awareness Training (WEAP)

Mitigation Measure BIO-4 applies to all segments of the proposed Project and Alternative 1.

Provide workers with Worker Environmental Awareness Training (WEAP) to familiarize them with the biology of the species and environmental compliance measures related to their protection.

BIO-5: Conduct Special Status Reptile Surveys

Mitigation Measure BIO-5 applies to AGI areas 1, 2 and 5 and Creeks 1, 2 and 3 as shown on Figure 4-1.

The following measure is recommended to minimize potential impacts to northern western pond turtle:

- The NID shall retain a biologist to conduct a pre-construction survey of mapped aquatic resources within 72 hours the start of construction activities adjacent to those resources. Surveys are only needed for aquatic resources that contain water when construction commences.
- If no special-status reptiles are detected during the surveys, no further measures are needed.

If special-status amphibians are detected, additional measures may be developed in consultation with CDFW to avoid impacts to this species. Measures may include preconstruction surveys and/or monitors present during construction activities in and adjacent to suitable aquatic habitat.

The surveys for foothill yellow-legged frog, California red-legged frog, and northern western pond turtle can be conducted concurrently.

BIO-6: Conduct Special Status Bat Surveys

Mitigation Measure BIO-6 applies only to the non-roadway segment when trees will be removed, or limbs will be trimmed or directly/physically disturbed by construction equipment.

To the extent feasible, potential bat roosting habitat (e.g., tree) removal would occur outside of the maternity season, generally considered March 1 to September 30.

- Trees proposed for trimming or removal should be inspected for recent bat use by a qualified bat specialist no more than seven days prior to disturbance.
- If a maternity roost is located, whether solitary or colonial, that roost will remain undisturbed until September 15 or a qualified and approved biological monitor has determined the roost is no longer active.
- Tree trimming/removal should occur in the late afternoon or evening when it is closer to the time that bats would normally arouse.
- Prior to removal/trimming, each tree will be shaken gently and several minutes should pass before felling trees or limbs to allow bats time to arouse and leave the tree.
- Trees will be removed in pieces rather than felling an entire tree.

BIO-7: Permits (not anticipated)

If for any reason it is determined that any Project work will impact one or more aquatic features, the following measures are recommended to minimize potential impacts:

- A permit authorization to fill waters under Section 404 of the federal CWA (Section 404 Permit) must be obtained from USACE prior to discharging any dredged or fill materials into any Waters of the U.S. Mitigation measures will be developed as part of the Section 404 Permit to ensure no net loss of wetland function and values. Mitigation for impacts to Waters of the U.S. would be negotiated through the permitting process.
- A Water Quality Certification or waiver pursuant to Section 401 of the CWA must be obtained for Section 404 permit actions.
- If impacts to CDFW-jurisdictional features and riparian habitat are anticipated, a Notification shall be made to CDFW in order to obtain a 1602 Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement prior to work being conducted in those areas.

BIO-8: Oak Tree Impacts

Mitigation Measure BIO-8 applies to the non-roadway segment of the project (approximately 830 feet between Riffle Box Way and Rough and Ready Road) as shown on Figure 2-2 (sheet 2).

The following measures are recommended to minimize potential impacts to oak trees:

- Pursuant to Senate Bill 1334 (Oak Woodlands Protection Act), the Project should comply with the Nevada County Tree Ordinance. The Project should avoid impacts to oak trees where feasible. If oak trees will be removed, an arborist survey (of the non-roadway segment) will be prepared upon completion of detailed construction plans. Based on the arborists survey, an oak tree mitigation and restoration plan shall be developed that includes onsite enhancements and potential off-site mitigation alternatives to compensate for loss of oak trees.
- Excavating and/or trenching within the drip-line of trees (or a distance of half the drip-line, outside of the drip-line) should be avoided whenever practicable. However, if unavoidable, any authorized cut or fill occurring within the drip-line of any preserved tree should be supervised by an ISA Certified Arborist.
- Any and all exposed roots shall be covered with a protective material during construction.
- Native tree replacement shall be used to mitigate the removal of native trees within the area, subject to approval by the County.
- Procedures and protocols for tree preservation and protection shall comply with standards established by the County.
- Oak trees required to be planted as a condition of construction would be maintained after completion of construction as described in the Nevada County Tree Preservation and Protection Ordinance.

4.4.4 Alternative Segment

The Alternative Segment is located near the western end of the proposed alignment, approximately 500 feet southwest of the proposed alignment, as shown in Figure 2.2-2, Sheet 8. The Alternative Segment begins on the eastern end at Empty Diggings Lane, where it leaves the paved road ROW and follows an existing dirt road for approximately 0.30 mile before tying back into Empty Diggings Lane on the west. The Alternative Segment would replace an equal-distant segment of pipeline as under the proposed alignment, and construction equipment and timing would be the same. The Alternative Segment would also be subject to **Mitigation Measure BIO-1 – BIO-8**. Therefore, selection and implementation of the Alternative Segment in conjunction with the proposed project would result in less-than-significant impact with mitigation incorporated.

4.5 Cultural Resources

A Cultural Resources Inventory Report was prepared by ECORP Consulting, Inc. (ECORP 2013b, Appendix C) for the Proposed Project to determine if cultural resources were present in or adjacent to the Project and assess the sensitivity of the Project area for undiscovered or buried cultural resources. The cultural context of the Project area including regional and local prehistory, ethnography, and regional and Project area histories can be found in the report in Appendix C. and is summarized below. This section is based on the findings of the Cultural Resources Inventory Report.

4.5.1 Environmental Setting

Nevada County was one of the richest gold mining regions in the world. During the Gold Rush, placer mining took place along the rivers and streambeds. Mining camps became established towns, many of which still exist today. The early camps were inhabited by placer miners and laborers and were dubbed with whimsical names such as Rough and Ready, You Bet, Little York, Blue Tent, French Corral, Eureka, Humbug, and San Juan (Brower 2006). Gold mining following quartz veins and hydraulic (placer) mining for gold focused worldwide attention on Nevada County from the 1850s through the 1880s (Brower 2006).

It was not until after the 1848 discovery of gold in Coloma at Sutter's Mill that the Grass Valley area was first settled. The word of the Gold Rush brought prospective miners throughout the country into California. One of the first miners in the Grass Valley area was David Stump, who traveled from Oregon with two other prospectors in search of gold in El Dorado County. On their way to El Dorado, Stump and his colleagues began mining along Wolf Creek and were the first to find placer deposits within the creek. However, the gold was exhausted quickly and the men moved on to other regions. A year later in 1849, a group of emigrants led by Dr. Saunders built a cabin on Badger Hill on the eastern side of Grass Valley, and soon after, other parties came and established the town of Grass Valley. Early settlers included H. H. Cummings, who built four cabins along Boston Ravine, which became the central settlement of the town (Clark 1976; Hoover et al. 1966; Thompson and West 1880).

Rough and Ready was one of the first mining towns to be established in Nevada County. A group of men, self-named the Rough and Ready Company, traveled to the area in 1849 under the leadership of Captain A. A. Townsend, who had once served under General Zachary Taylor (whose nick-name was "Old Rough and Ready") during the Mexican War. The Rough and Ready Company came to mine the gold in the hills discretely, but soon more people came to join the gold diggings and, by the early 1850s, Rough and Ready had more than 300 substantial frame buildings. The town aspired to be the County seat of the newly-established (in 1851) Nevada County, and was promoted by organizations such as the Masons and the Oddfellows benevolent associations. However, Nevada City was designated the County seat. Rough and Ready declined in the 1860s after the easily-mined gold was exhausted and following devastating fires in the town in 1856 and 1859 (Kyle 2002).

Roads

In the Project Area specifically, early roads provided access to mines and diggings. The majority of Gold Rush miners were transients, and they were on the move to find the next big strike at any camp, river, or

stream. Early roads were no more than unimproved trails originally blazed by Native Americans and big game such as deer. These were inadequate for heavy traffic and wagons. This led to road improvements and bridge construction to clear a path to the mining camps, paid for by collecting tolls from travelers (Brower 2006).

Cultural Resources

The analysis of cultural resources was based on a records and literature search conducted at the North Central Information Center (NCIC) of the California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS) at California State University-Sacramento on March 4, 2019 (NCIC search #NEV-19-16; provided as Attachment A). The purpose of the records search was to determine the extent of previous surveys within a 0.5-mile (800-meter) radius of the proposed Project location, and whether previously documented pre-contact or historic archaeological sites, architectural resources, or traditional cultural properties exist within this area.

In addition to the official records and maps for archaeological sites and surveys in Nevada County, the following historic references were also reviewed: Historic Property Data File for Nevada County (OHP 2012); *The National Register Information System website* (National Park Service [NPS] 2019); *Office of Historic Preservation, California Historical Landmarks website* (OHP 2019); *California Historical Landmarks* (OHP 1996 and updates); *California Points of Historical Interest* (OHP 1992 and updates); *Directory of Properties in the Historical Resources Inventory* (OHP 1999); *Caltrans Local Bridge Survey* (Caltrans 2018a); *Caltrans State Bridge Survey* (Caltrans 2018b); and *Historic Spots in California* (Kyle 2002).

Historic maps reviewed include the following:

- 1867 Bureau of Land Management (BLM) General Land Office (GLO) Plat Map, Township 16 North, Range 7 East
- 1867 BLM GLO Plat Map, Township 16 North, Range 8 East
- 1950 USGS Rough and Ready, California (7.5-minute scale) quad
- 1949 (photorevised 1955) Rough and Ready, California (7.5-minute scale) quad
- 1949 Grass Valley, California (7.5-minute scale) quad
- 1950 Grass Valley, California (7.5-minute scale) quad
- 1949 (photorevised 1973) Rough and Ready, California (7.5-minute scale) quad
- 1949 (photorevised 1977) Rough and Ready, California (7.5-minute scale) quad
- 1998 (photorevised 2002) Grass Valley, California (7.5-minute scale) quad

Historic aerial photos taken in 1947 as well as modern aerial photos from 1998, 2005, 2009, 2010, 2012, and 2014 were also reviewed for any indications of property usage, built environment, or road alignment changes.

In addition to the record search, ECORP contacted the California Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) on March 4, 2019 to request a search of the Sacred Lands File for the APE (Attachment B). This search will determine whether or not Sacred Lands have been recorded by California Native American tribes within the APE, because the Sacred Lands File is populated by members of the Native American community who have knowledge about the locations of tribal resources. In requesting a search of the Sacred Lands File, ECORP solicited information from the Native American community regarding tribal cultural resources, but the responsibility to formally consult with the Native American community lies exclusively with the federal and local agencies under applicable state and federal law.

On March 13 and April 12, 2019, ECORP subjected the APE to an intensive pedestrian survey under the guidance of the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Identification of Historic Properties* (NPS 1983) using transects at 15-meter intervals (Figure 2). ECORP expended 2 1/2 person-days in the field. At that time, the ground surface was examined for indications of surface or subsurface cultural resources. The general morphological characteristics of the ground surface were inspected for indications of subsurface deposits that may be manifested on the surface, such as circular depressions or ditches. Whenever possible, the locations of subsurface exposures caused by such factors as rodent activity, water or soil erosion, or vegetation disturbances were examined for artifacts or for indications of buried deposits. No subsurface investigations or artifact collections were undertaken during the pedestrian survey.

All cultural resources encountered during the survey were recorded using Department of Parks and Recreation 523-series forms approved by the California OHP. The resources were photographed, mapped using a handheld Global Positioning System receiver, and sketched as necessary to document their presence. Isolates were recorded with a Primary Record and Location Map, while sites were recorded with a Primary Record, Archaeological Site Record, Location Map, Sketch Map, and any other pertinent forms.

4.5.2 Cultural Resources (V) Environmental Checklist and Discussion

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to §15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

No Impact. Twenty-two previous cultural resource investigations have been conducted within 0.5-mile of the property, covering approximately 15 percent of the total area surrounding the property within the records search radius. These studies revealed the presence of historic-period sites, including orchards and sites associated with historic-period mining activities. The previous studies were conducted between 1972 and 2015 and vary in size from 100 square feet to 335 acres. The results of the records search indicate that less than 5 percent of the property has been previously surveyed for cultural resources; these surveys were conducted at different times as many as 30 years ago under obsolete standards. Therefore, a pedestrian survey of the APE was warranted under current (2014) U.S. Army Corps of Engineers standards and protocols.

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The records search also determined that six historic-period cultural resources are located within 0.5-mile of the Project Area. Of these, none are believed to be associated with Native American occupation of the vicinity; all six are historic-period sites associated with early Euro-American ranching and mining activities. No resources have been previously recorded in the Project Area.

The *Office of Historic Preservation's Directory of Properties, Historic Property Data File for Nevada County* (dated April 5, 2012) did not include any resources within 0.5 mile of the Project Area (OHP 2012).

The National Register Information System (NRIS, NPS 2019) failed to reveal any eligible or listed properties within the Project Area. The nearest National Register property is NRIS#75000543, Mount St. Mary's Academy & Convent added to the register in 1974, which is 2.5 miles southeast of the Project Area.

Resources listed as *California Historical Landmarks* (OHP 1996) and by the OHP (OHP 2019) were reviewed on March 5, 2019. The Project Area alignment runs through the town of Rough and Ready, Landmark #294, which was one of the principal towns of Nevada County during the 1850s. The plaque is located at the corner of Mt. Rose Road and Rough and Ready Highway. No buildings or features of the town are located within the Project Area; the plaque denoting the town's landmark status is 20 feet north of the Project Area alignment.

According to PRC 5024.1(d), all State Historic Landmarks numbered 770 and above will be considered formally eligible for inclusion on the CRHR. All other numbers were reviewed and evaluated individually by the State Historical Resources Commission (SHRC) and listed on the CRHR if appropriate. Rough and Ready is not listed on the CRHR, which means the SHRC determined it was not eligible for listing. Therefore, the Town of Rough and Ready is not considered an Historical Resource under CEQA.

The Caltrans Bridge Local and State Inventories (Caltrans 2018a, 2018b) did not list any historic bridges in or within 0.5 mile of the Project Area.

The review of historical aerial photographs and maps of the Project Area provides information on the past land uses of the Project Area and potential for buried archaeological sites. Based on this information, it is apparent that the Project Area was initially used as a roadway to transport people and supplies via stagecoach and eventually by automobile. However, despite decades of development, the Project Area is still a rural community with few structures and services located along the roadways. The agricultural land that was once present along the roadways in the Project Area in the 1950s has been developed with single-family residences. According to the map review, Lake Wildwood was created in the 1970s and houses were then built around the lake. Rough and Ready Highway/Road has been improved over the years, but the alignment remains similar to the original 1867 alignment.

ECORP surveyed the Project Area for cultural resources on March 13, 2019 and surveyed the 0.38-mile linear alternative on April 12, 2019. Ground visibility along the road shoulders was approximately 80 percent. There were low-lying grasses and shrubs growing parallel to the roadway mixed with oak and pine forest. Rural residences and businesses were also present and spaced intermittently along the road alignment. The alternative alignment was overgrown with patches of grasses, wildflowers, and small shrubs, and ground visibility was over 50 percent due to alluvial erosion having exposed surface soils.

As a result of the survey, one historic-period road segment and four historic-period water conveyance systems were identified. However; resources EGLW-001, EGLW-002, EGLW-003, EGLW-004, and EGLW-005 have been evaluated as not eligible for the NRHP and CRHR and are therefore not considered to be Historical Resources under CEQA or historic properties under Section 106 of the NHPA. Therefore, the Project would not impact an historical resource. The survey also found that the town of Rough and Ready is a historic resource. The only area that may impact the town in in the location of AGI-1. However, the project and placement of AGI-1 has been designed to avoid impacting town or properties.

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. Due to the presence of alluvium along the creeks and waterways near the Project Area, including Deer Creek and Squirrel Creek, and given the likelihood of pre-contact archaeological sites to be located along perennial waterways, there exists the potential for buried pre-contact archaeological sites in the Project Area. Although there are no known archaeological resources located within the Project alignment, there always remains the potential for ground-disturbing activities to expose previously unrecorded cultural resources. Therefore, implementation of **Mitigation Measure CUL-1** would be required to reduce potential adverse impacts to Less than Significant.

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. There are no known burial sites located within the Project area; however, there is always a potential that ground-disturbing activities will expose previously unknow human remains. Therefore, implementation of **Mitigation Measure CUL-1** would be required to reduce potential adverse impacts to Less than Significant.

4.5.3 Mitigation Measures

CUL-1: Worker Awareness Training

Mitigation Measure CUL-1 applies to all segments of the proposed Project and Alternative 1 and reflects the agreement between NID and United Auburn Indian Community (UAIC) pursuant to Sections 21080.3.2(b)(1) and 21082.3(d)(1).

A consultant and construction worker tribal cultural resources awareness brochure and training program for all personnel involved in ground-disturbing activities will be developed prior to construction commencing. The program will include relevant information regarding sensitive tribal cultural resources,

including applicable regulations, protocols for avoidance, and consequences of violating State laws and regulations. The worker cultural resources awareness program will also describe appropriate avoidance and minimization measures for resources that have the potential to be located in the project area and will outline what to do and whom to contact if any potential archaeological resources or artifacts are encountered. The program will also underscore the requirement for confidentiality and culturally-appropriate treatment of any kind of significance to Native Americans and behaviors, consistent with Native American tribal values.

TCR-2: Avoid and minimize impacts to previously unknown Tribal Cultural Resources

Mitigation Measure CUL-2 applies to all segments of the proposed Project and Alternative 1 and reflects the agreement between NID and United Auburn Indian Community (UAIC) pursuant to Sections 21080.3.2(b)(1) and 21082.3(d)(1).

If any cultural resources, such as structural features, unusual amounts of bone or shell, artifacts, human remains, or architectural remains are encountered during the initial inspection or during any subsequent construction activities, work shall be suspended within 100 feet of the find, and the construction supervisor shall immediately notify the NID representative. If the find includes human remains, then the NID shall immediately notify the Nevada County Coroner and the procedures in Section 7050.5 of the California Health and Safety Code and, if applicable, Section 5097.98 of the Public Resources Code, shall be followed. If the discovery is reasonably associated with Native American culture, the NID shall coordinate any necessary investigation of the discovery with a UAIC tribal representative and a qualified archaeologist approved by the NID. As part of the site investigation and resource assessment, the NID shall consult with appropriate parties to develop, document, and implement appropriate management recommendations, should potential impacts to the resources be found by the NID to be significant. Nothing in this measure prohibits the NID from considering any comments from other culturally-affiliated Native American tribes that volunteer information to the NID during its investigation. Possible management recommendations could include documentation, data recovery, or (if deemed feasible by the NID) preservation in place. The contractor shall implement any measures deemed by NID staff to be necessary and feasible to avoid, minimize, or mitigate significant effects to the cultural resources, such as the use of a Native American Monitor whenever work is occurring within 100 feet of the discovery of Native American resources, if deemed appropriate by the NID.

4.5.4 Alternative Segment

Although there are no known cultural resources located within the alternative segment, there always remains the potential for ground-disturbing activities to expose previously unrecorded cultural resources. Therefore, implementation of **Mitigation Measure CUL-1** would be required to reduce potential adverse impacts to less than significant.

4.6 Energy

Energy consumption is analyzed in this Initial Study due to the potential direct and indirect environmental impacts associated with the Project. Such impacts include the depletion of nonrenewable resources (i.e., oil, natural gas, coal) during the construction phases.

4.6.1 Environmental Setting

Energy Consumption

Electricity use is measured in kilowatt-hours (kWh), and natural gas use is measured in therms. Vehicle fuel use is typically measured in gallons (e.g., of gasoline or diesel fuel), although energy use for electric vehicles is measured in kWh. The energy source germane to the Proposed Project includes vehicle fuel necessary for construction activities. While electricity would be consumed for the pumping of water, this consumption is driven (attributable to) by the end users of the water.

Total equipment fuel consumption associated with off-road construction equipment in Nevada County from 2014 to 2018 is shown in **Table 4.6-1**. As shown, on- and off-road fuel consumption have increased in the County since 2014.

Year	Off-Road Fuel Consumption (gallons)
2018	1,486,940
2017	1,326,637
2016	1,171,768
2015	1,005,290
2014	911,430

Source: CARB 2014

4.6.2 Energy (VI) Environmental Checklist and Discussion

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Less than Significant Impact. The impact analysis focuses on the source of energy relevant to the Proposed Project: the equipment-fuel necessary for Project construction. Addressing energy impacts requires an agency to make a determination as to what constitutes a significant impact. There are no established thresholds of significance, statewide or locally, for what constitutes a wasteful, inefficient, and unnecessary consumption of energy for a proposed land use project. For the purpose of this analysis, the

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amount of fuel necessary for Project construction is calculated and compared to that consumed in Nevada County.

The amount of total construction-related fuel use was estimated using ratios provided in the Climate Registry's General Reporting Protocol for the Voluntary Reporting Program, Version 2.1. Energy consumption associated with the Proposed Project is summarized in **Table 4.6-2**.

Table 4.6-2. Proposed Project Energy and Fuel Consumption		
Energy Type	Annual Energy Consumption (gallons)	Percentage Increase Countywide (%)
<i>Off-Road Equipment Fuel Consumption</i>		
Construction Year One	33,103	2.2
Construction Year Two	33,005	2.2
Construction Year Three	33,005	2.2
Construction Year Four	32,808	2.2
Construction Year Five	32,709	2.1

Source: Climate Registry 2016. See Appendix B.

As shown in **Table 4.6-2**, the Project's gasoline fuel consumption during the construction period is estimated to be 33,103 gallons of fuel during the first year of construction, which would increase the annual construction-related gasoline fuel use in the County by 2.2 percent during that year. Similarly, Project construction would increase annual construction-related gasoline fuel use each of the five years of anticipated construction by approximately 2.2 percent. As such, Project construction would have a nominal effect on local and regional energy supplies, especially over the long term. Additionally, construction equipment fleet turnover and increasingly stringent state and federal regulations on engine efficiency combined with state regulations limiting engine idling times and require recycling of construction debris, would further reduce the amount of transportation fuel demand during Project construction. For these reasons, it is expected that construction fuel consumption associated with the Project would not be any more inefficient, wasteful, or unnecessary than other similar development projects of this nature. This impact would be less than significant.

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Less than Significant Impact. Nevada County does not have a plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency. As discussed under Item a) the energy and fuel consumption related to this Project would be minimal. For these reasons, this impact would be less than significant.

4.6.3 Mitigation Measures

No significant impacts were identified, and no mitigation measures are required.

4.6.4 Alternative Segment

The Alternative Segment is located near the western end of the proposed alignment, approximately 500 feet southwest of the proposed alignment, as shown in **Figure 2.2-2, Sheet 8**. Because the Alternative Segment would replace an equivalent segment of pipeline as under the proposed alignment, related energy impacts would be substantially the same and would not require additional analysis or mitigation.

4.7 Geology and Soils

4.7.1 Environmental Setting

The proposed Project site is within Nevada County and can be categorized by gently rolling topography which forms the western foothills of the Sierra Nevada. The proposed Project site is located between 1,500 to 2,400 feet in elevation.

Regional Seismicity and Fault Zones

Fault activity in the Project vicinity is minimal: the Giant Gap Fault, with evidence of late Quaternary movement (between 12,000 and 700,000 years ago), is located approximately nine miles east of the Project area (CGS 2010). Several other late Quaternary and older faults occur within approximately 20 miles of the Project area, including the Wolf Creek Fault Zone, Spenceville Fault, Deadman Fault, Bear Mountains Fault Zone, Maidu Fault, and several pre-Quaternary (greater than 1.6 million years ago) fault traces associated with these faults zones (CGS 2010). The Cleveland Hill Fault is the nearest principal fault with historic displacement, within the last 200 years, identified and mapped pursuant to the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Zoning Act and is located approximately 35 miles northwest of the Project area.

Western Nevada County is characterized as having a low level of earthquake hazard and is distant from known, active faults (CGS 2019).

Liquefaction, a process in which the soil behaves like a liquid, can damage buildings, roads, and pipelines through uneven settlement of the soil and the soils loss of structural support capabilities (USGS 2019). In order for liquefaction to occur, there must be loose granular sediment that is saturated and there must be strong ground shaking (USGS 2008). The low ground shaking potential of the site and well-drained cohesive soils over bedrock minimize the potential for liquefaction.

The risk of landslides in Nevada County is generally low, and moderate at worst, due to the prevalence of igneous and metamorphic bedrock overlain by relatively shallow cohesive soils. Areas susceptible to slides include steep topography, past hydraulic mining, and precipitation in large amounts (Nevada County Master Environmental Inventory 1995).

Soils

According to the Web Soil Survey (NRCS 2019a), 11 soil units, or types, have been mapped within the Project Area):

- TuD - Trabuco-Rock outcrop complex, 15 to 20 percent slopes;
- TrC – Trabuco loam, 5 to 15 percent slopes;
- TuE – Trabuco-Rock outcrop complex, 30 to 50 percent slopes;
- BrD – Boomer-Rock outcrop complex, 5 to 30 percent slopes
- ScE – Secca-Rock outcrop complex, 2 to 50 percent slopes
- Ao – Alluvial land, clayey
- Pr- Placer diggings
- AfB – Aiken loam, 2 to 9 percent slopes
- AfC – Aiken loam, 9 to 15 percent slopes
- AfD -Aiken loam, 15 to 30 percent slopes
- AgD – Aiken cobbly loam, 2 to 30 percent slopes

Two of the above soil types contain hydric components (Ao) Alluvial land, clayey and (Pr) Placer diggings (NRCS 2019b).

4.7.2 Regulatory Setting

4.7.3 Nevada County General Plan

The Nevada County General Plan contains goals and policies to control erosion, including:

Goal 12.1: *“Minimize adverse impacts of grading activities, loss of soils and soil productivity”. Specifically, the county enforces a Grading Code (Section L-V Article 19 of the Nevada County Land Use and Development Code) with the scope of “...sets forth rules and regulations to control excavation, grading and earthwork construction, including fills and embankments; establishes standards of required performance in preventing or minimizing water quality impacts from storm water runoff; establishes the administrative procedure for issuance of permits; and provides for approval of plans and inspection of grading construction, drainage, and erosion and sediment controls at construction sites” (Sec L-V 19.2A).*

Section L-V 19.14: *Establishes standards for erosion control, including the requirements for preparing erosion control plans. However, per Government Code Section 53091, the County’s Zoning and Building Codes are not applicable to the project, since the project is for the transmission of water.*

Paleontological Resources

A paleontological database search of the paleontology locality and specimen collection records for the Project Area and surrounding area (0.5 mile radius) was done on the University of California Museum of Paleontology website in April 2019. The search did not result in any recorded resources within the project area.

4.7.4 Geology and Soils (VII) Environmental Checklist and Discussion

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Directly or indirectly cause substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iv) Landslides?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Less than Significant. i) There are no Alquist-Priolo mapped zones or faults within the Project area. The closest active fault is approximately 30 miles south of the Project area. The Project does not include construction of structures for human occupancy and would not subject people or structures to adverse effects due to rupture of a known fault. The Foothills Fault system is approximately 10 miles south of the Project site; however, the fault has not been active in more than 130,000 years (California Geological Survey [CGS] 2019). Therefore, impacts are considered less than significant.

ii) The proposed Project area is susceptible to low ground shaking associated with a major earthquake on nearby active faults, in which slight to moderate damage to ordinary structures and negligible damage to well designed and constructed structures is possible. NID will consider any existing geotechnical survey information for the proposed Project area in design and construction of the facilities to withstand potential seismic ground shaking. Therefore, impacts are considered less than significant.

iii) Soils underlying the facility are generally shallow (under six feet to bedrock), well-drained, sloped, and not likely susceptible to liquefaction. Furthermore, the site is not susceptible to strong ground shaking necessary for liquidation to occur. Therefore, impacts are considered to be less than significant.

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iv) The proposed Project area is located in an area of Nevada County where soils are generally shallow dense igneous and metamorphic bedrock, and the potential for landslides is low (Nevada County 2012). Therefore, impacts are considered less than significant.

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. BMPs are included as part of the SWPPP prepared for the Proposed Project and would be implemented to manage erosion and the loss of topsoil during construction-related activities (see *Hydrology and Water Quality (4.10) Environmental Checklist and Discussion*). Soil erosion impacts would be reduced to a less than significant impact.

Near surface soils of the Project area were mapped by the NRCS as being various types of loam and bedrock (NRCS 2019b). The majority of the Proposed Project would be installed within the existing roadway and the roadway would be restored to existing surface area conditions. During ground disturbance activities, **Mitigation Measure GEO-1** as well as **BMPs 4** and **14** would be implemented to minimize the potential for erosion due to soil exposure. The contractor is required to prepare a SWPPP that would be reviewed by the RWQCB. With the implementation of **Mitigation Measure GEO-1**, the proposed Project would not result in substantial soil erosion or loss of topsoil. Therefore, impacts are considered less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Less than Significant Impact. The proposed Project is located on relatively shallow and well-drained soils underlain by dense bedrock. These soils, and the bedrock, are inherently stable, generally not susceptible to landslide or lateral spreading, and are not likely susceptible to subsidence or liquefaction. Therefore, impacts are considered less than significant.

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Less than Significant Impact. The proposed Project involves the construction of a water pipeline. Given that expansive soil material is encountered throughout California, they are generally addressed through standardized foundation engineering practices. The proposed Project will be constructed in compliance with applicable UBC regulation and other County and state requirements. Therefore, this impact is considered less than significant.

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

No Impact. The Project involves the construction of a water transmission pipeline. No wastewater will be produced as a part of the Project. Moreover, on-site wastewater treatment and disposal is not a necessary component of the Project. Therefore, no impact would occur.

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Less than significant with mitigation incorporated. There are no known significant paleontological sites or deposits within the Project area and the closest recording is more than 13 miles away (UMPC 2019). The majority of the area is currently either a paved or gravel roadway. It is unlikely that the Project will encounter paleontological resources during construction; however, the possibility of uncovering unknown resources does exist. Therefore, **Mitigation Measure PALEO-1** is required to reduce impacts to a less than significant level.

4.7.5 Mitigation Measures

GEO-1: Sedimentation and Erosion Control Measures

Mitigation Measure GEO-1 applies to all segments of the proposed Project and Alternative 1.

In compliance with the requirements of the State General Construction Activity Storm Water Permit, NID shall obtain coverage under the current Construction General Permit (2009-0009-DWQ) and prepare a SWPPP that incorporates measures or comparable BMPs, which describes the site, erosion and sediment controls, means of waste disposal, implementation of approved local plans, control of postconstruction sediment and erosion control measures and maintenance responsibilities, and non-storm water management controls. NID shall require all construction contractors to retain a copy of the approved SWPPP at the Project site and implement the SWPPP. Additionally, the SWPPP shall ensure that all storm water discharges are in compliance with all current requirements of the Construction General Permit (2009-009-DWQ).

PALEO-1: Discovery of Unknown Resources

Mitigation Measure PALEO-1 applies to all segments of the proposed Project and Alternative 1.

If any paleontological resources (i.e., fossils) are found during proposed Project construction, construction shall be halted immediately in the subject area and isolate the area using orange or yellow fencing until NID is notified and the appropriate regulatory agency clears the area for future work. A qualified paleontologist shall be retained to evaluate the find and recommend appropriate treatment of the inadvertently discovered paleontological resources. If NID resumes work in a location where paleontological remains have been discovered and cleared, NID will have a paleontologist onsite to confirm that no additional paleontological resources are in the area.

4.7.6 Alternative Segment

The Alternative Segment is located near the western end of the proposed alignment, approximately 500 feet southwest of the proposed alignment, as shown in Figure 2.2-2, Sheet 8. Similar to the proposed Project, the Alternative Segment has the potential for soil erosion and/or the loss of topsoil and impacts to paleontological resources which is considered a potentially significant impact. This impact can be mitigated to less than significant by implementing **Mitigation Measure GEO-1** and **PALEO-1**.

4.8 Greenhouse Gas Emissions

This subsection of the Initial Study is based on the *E. George to Lake Wildwood Backbone Extension Pipeline Project Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Assessment* (2019) prepared by ECORP (see Appendix A).

4.8.1 Environmental Setting

Greenhouse gases (GHGs) are released as byproducts of fossil fuel combustion, waste disposal, energy use, land use changes, and other human activities. This release of gases, such as carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), nitrous oxide (N₂O), and chlorofluorocarbons, creates a blanket around the earth that allows light to pass through but traps heat at the surface, preventing its escape into space. While this is a

naturally occurring process known as the greenhouse effect, human activities have accelerated the generation of GHGs beyond natural levels. The overabundance of GHGs in the atmosphere has led to an unexpected warming of the earth and has the potential to severely impact the earth’s climate system.

Each GHG differs in its ability to absorb heat in the atmosphere based on the lifetime, or persistence, of the gas molecule in the atmosphere. CH₄ traps more than 25 times more heat per molecule than CO₂, and N₂O absorbs 298 times more heat per molecule than CO₂. Often, estimates of GHG emissions are presented in carbon dioxide equivalents (CO₂e). Expressing GHG emissions in CO₂e takes the contribution of all GHG emissions to the greenhouse effect and converts them to a single unit equivalent to the effect that would occur if only CO₂ were being emitted.

4.8.2 Greenhouse Gas Emissions (VIII) Environmental Checklist and Discussion

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Less than Significant. The Proposed Project’s GHG-related impacts are attributable to construction activities. Construction-related activities that would generate GHG emissions include worker commute trips, haul trucks carrying supplies and materials to and from the Project site, and off-road construction equipment (e.g., dozers, loaders, excavators).

Construction-generated emissions associated with the Proposed Project were calculated using the CARB-approved CalEEMod computer program. The NSAQMD does not promulgate thresholds for GHG emissions. Therefore, Project GHG emissions were compared with the thresholds established in Placer County. As with Nevada County and the Project site, Placer County is located within the MCAB and therefore mass emission thresholds of significance developed in that county are appropriate. The air pollution control officer in Placer County promulgates a construction-related GHG numeric, bright-line threshold of 10,000 metric tons of CO₂e annually.

Table 4.8-1 illustrates the specific construction-generated GHG emissions that would result from construction of the Project.

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Table 4.8-1. Construction-Related Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Emissions Source	CO₂e (Metric Tons/ Year)
Construction Year One	336
Construction Year Two	335
Construction Year Three	335
Construction Year Four	333
Construction Year Five	332
Total Combined Construction	1,671
<i>Significance Threshold</i>	<i>10,000</i>
Exceed Significance Threshold?	No

Source: CalEEMod version 2016.3.2. Refer to **Attachment B** for Model Data Outputs.

Notes: Building construction, paving, and painting assumed to occur simultaneously. Emission estimates account for the hauling of 8,213 cubic yards of soil during each year of construction with 1,027 truck trips annually, as well as the hauling of 3,459 tons of demolished asphalt each year of construction with 333 truck trips annually.

As shown in **Table 4.8-1**, Project construction would result in the generation of approximately 1,671 metric tons of CO₂e over the course of construction. GHG emissions would remain below the annual significance threshold during each year of Project construction. Once construction is complete, the generation of these GHG emissions would cease.

In terms of operational GHG emissions, the Proposed Project involves the construction of an approximately 5.6-mile-long water pipeline. The Proposed Project will not include the provision of new permanent stationary or mobile sources of emissions, and therefore, by its very nature, will not generate quantifiable GHG emissions from Project operations. The Project does not propose any buildings and therefore no permanent source or stationary source emissions. Once the Project is completed, there will be no resultant increase in automobile trips to the area because the water pipeline will not require daily visits. While it is anticipated that the Project would require intermittent maintenance to be conducted by NID staff, such maintenance would be minimal requiring a negligible amount of traffic trips on an annual basis. This impact is less than significant.

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Less than Significant Impact. Nevada County does not currently have an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for reducing GHG emissions. The Proposed Project would not conflict with any adopted plans, policies, or regulations adopted for reducing GHG emissions. As identified above, Project-generated GHG emissions would not surpass GHG significance thresholds, which were prepared to comply with California GHG reduction goals. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not conflict with California GHG reduction goals.

4.8.3 Mitigation Measures

No significant impacts were identified, and no mitigation measures are required.

4.8.4 Alternative Segment

The Alternative Segment is located near the western end of the proposed alignment, approximately 500 feet southwest of the proposed alignment, as shown in **Figure 2.2-2, Sheet 8**. Because the Alternative Segment would replace an equidistant segment of pipeline as under the proposed alignment, related air quality impacts would be substantially the same and would not require additional analysis or mitigation.

4.9 Hazards and Hazardous Materials

4.9.1 Environmental Setting

A hazardous material is defined by the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA), Department of Toxic Substance Control (DTSC), as a material that poses a significant present or potential hazard to human health and safety or the environment if released because of its quantity, concentration, or physical or chemical characteristics (26 CCR 25501). For the purpose of this section, hazardous materials include materials currently located onsite as a part of the natural environment or as a result of past activities.

Federal Regulations

The principal federal regulatory agency responsible for the safe use and handling of hazardous materials is the USEPA. Two key federal regulations pertaining to hazardous wastes are described below. Other applicable federal regulations are contained primarily in Titles 29, 40, and 49 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

State Regulations

California regulations are equal to or more stringent than federal regulations. The USEPA has granted the State of California primary oversight responsibility to administer and enforce hazardous waste management to ensure that hazardous wastes are handled, stored, and disposed of properly to reduce risks to human health and the environment. Several key laws pertaining to hazardous wastes are discussed below.

All hazardous materials are currently regulated and controlled by CalEPA in a manner that minimizes risks of spills or accidents. Any hazardous materials used in the construction, start-up, or operations of the proposed project, such as diesel for equipment, will be handled according to current practices. The potential for construction and operation related impacts from hazardous materials are discussed below.

Naturally Occurring Asbestos (NOA)

Asbestiform minerals belonging to the serpentine or amphibole mineral groups are found in many areas throughout California and are abundant in the Sierra foothills. They are commonly exposed near faults within ultramafic or serpentine rock. Activity in areas with asbestos-containing rock or soil may create dust emissions containing asbestos fibers, especially when bedrock is exposed to the air. All types of asbestiform minerals are considered hazardous with no safe exposure level established for non-

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occupational exposures. Though exposure to low levels of asbestos for short periods of time is thought to pose minimal risk, asbestos fibers can penetrate body tissues and remain in the lung or abdominal areas for a long time (Placer County APCD 2014).

4.9.2 Hazards and Hazardous Materials (IX) Environmental Checklist and Discussion

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. Temporary construction activities associated with the proposed Project will involve the transport and use of limited quantities of miscellaneous hazardous substances including gasoline, diesel fuel, hydraulic fluid, solvents, and oils. These chemicals would be brought to the Proposed Project site, as well as transported along the roadways. Federal and state laws regulate the handling, storage, and transport of these and other hazardous materials, as well as the mechanisms to respond and clean up any spills along local and regional roadways. Chemicals required to be onsite will be handled by the contractor in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local regulations for hazards substances. Although the risk is low, implementation of **BMPs 9 and 10** would reduce potential impacts related to hazardous materials transport, use, or disposal. Therefore, potential impacts are considered less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Less than Significant Impact. As discussed above, temporary construction activities associated with the proposed Project would involve the transport and use of hazardous materials. Additionally, while there are no previous findings of NOA in the Rough and Ready or Lake Wildwood areas, there are NOA deposits within western Nevada County (Clinkenbeard and Van Gosen 2011). NOA is successfully kept in the ground by keeping fill on top of ultramafic bedrock. The Project will prevent potential NOA from becoming airborne in two ways. First, the Project will be done in stages/segments, with one segment fully completed before trenching on another segment begins. This prevents prolonged exposure of uncovered earth in multiple areas, not allowing the wind to entrain the soil. Second, with implementation of **HAZ-1** as well as adherence to **BMPs 3, 9, 10, and 15** would reduce impacts to a less than significant impact.

Would the Project:

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

Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
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<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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No Impact. The proposed Project is not expected to emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous materials within 1/4 mile of an existing or proposed school. The closest school to the proposed Project Area is Margaret Scotten Elementary School, located approximately two miles away from the Project site. Furthermore, the proposed Project does not involve operational activities that would result in hazardous emissions. Operation would involve conveyance of treated water. Therefore, no impacts would occur.

Would the Project:

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?

Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
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<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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No Impact. A review of the USEPA hazardous materials sites database did not identify the Project Area as a known hazardous materials site. Therefore, no impact would occur.

Would 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 result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?

Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
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<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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No Impact. The Proposed Project site is not located within an airport land use plan area (Nevada County Transportation Commission 2007). The Proposed Project is located within 6.5 miles of the Nevada County Air Park, which is classified as B-1, meaning it generally accommodates aircraft less than 12,500 pounds and with a 49 foot wingspan. The Project is not located within two miles of a public or public use airport. Therefore, no impact would occur.

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Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Less than Significant Impact. The Proposed Project is not expected to interfere with emergency access. Adherence to **BMPs 6 and 17** will ensure adequate emergency access and minimize interference with normal traffic flows. Therefore, impact to emergency access is less than significant.

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Less than Significant Impact The proposed Project site is in a forested setting surrounded by vegetation, trees, and shrubs. The Project is located within a very high/high risk fire zone (California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection [CAL FIRE] 2019) for state and local responsible areas. The risk of fire is a concern especially during the typically hot, dry summer season. Equipment used during trenching, grading and other construction activities may generate sparks that could ignite dry vegetation on or adjacent to the construction area and cause wild land fires in the area. The proposed Project is in the jurisdiction of the Nevada County Consolidated Fire District. The closest station to the Project is Rough and Ready Fire Station located at 14506 Rough and Ready Highway, Rough and Ready, California. As a part of the Project design, NID has adopted Environmental Commitments. Adherence to **BMP 11** listed in Section 2.1 would reduce the risk of wildland fire within the Project area. Additionally, as discussed in section 4.20 (Wildfire) the Proposed Project is intended to provide water for domestic use, fire protection, and emergency supplies in an area that currently relies on individual wells. The Project also includes the installation of new fire hydrants along the shoulder of the roadway at a minimum of every 1,000 feet. The Project would not require installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure as the pipeline would be entirely underground. Therefore, the Propose Project would not expose people or structures to wildland fires risks and impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

HAZ-1: Dust Control

Mitigation Measure HAZ-1 applies to all segments of the proposed Project and Alternative 1.

If ultramafic rock is exposed to the air, then the following procedures must be put into effect. Water support, in the form of a water truck or mobile storage tank, will be used in regular intervals to keep the open earth area wet and dust free. Proper signage noting the possibility of NOA and required PPE will be

posted in the area. PPE including coveralls and respirators will be worn by all workers in the area. These procedures will be followed as long as ultramafic rock is exposed and can be unfollowed when the rock is again covered with fill.

4.8.4 Alternative Segment

Because the Alternative Segment would replace an equivalent segment of pipeline as under the proposed alignment, related hazard impacts would be substantially the same and would require implementation of **NOA-1** as well as be subject to the same BMPs. Therefore, no additional analysis or mitigation is required.

4.10 Hydrology and Water Quality

4.10.1 Environmental Setting

Site Hydrology and On-Site Drainage

The California Department of Water Resources (DWR) does not have any data on the ground water quality in the sub-basin where the Proposed Project is located. Groundwater supplied from the fractured rock sources of the Sierra Nevada are highly variable in terms of water quantity and water quality due to the many confined and unconfined groundwater layers (DWR 2003). The groundwater in the Sierra foothills has the potential for encountering uranium- and radon-bearing rock or sulfide mineral deposits containing heavy metals (DWR 2003).

The Project is in the South Yuba Fork of the Yuba River Watershed. Squirrel Creek flows to Lake Wildwood south of the Project. Deer Creek is the nearest flowing water north of the Project site, but the project does not come near this creek.

4.10.2 Regulatory Setting

Clean Water Act

The Clean Water Act (CWA) (33 USC § 1251-1376), as amended by the Water Quality Act of 1987, is the major Federal legislation governing water quality. The objective of the CWA is "to restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the Nation's waters." Sections of the Act relevant to this Project are as follows:

- Sections 303 and 304 provide for water quality standards, criteria, and guidelines.
- Section 401 (Water Quality Certification) requires an applicant for any Federal permit that proposes an activity, which may result in a discharge to waters of the United States to obtain certification from the state that the discharge will comply with other provisions of the Act.
- Section 402 establishes the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES), a permitting system for the discharge of any pollutant (except for dredged or fill material) into waters of the United States. This permit program is administered by the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) and is discussed in detail below.

- Section 404 establishes a permit program for the discharge of dredged or fill material into waters of the United States. This permit program is jointly administered by the United States Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) and the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

Federal Anti-Degradation Policy

The Federal Anti-degradation Policy is part of the CWA (Section 303(d)) and is designed to protect water quality and water resources. The policy directs states to adopt a statewide policy that includes the following primary provisions: (1) existing in-stream uses and the water quality necessary to protect those uses shall be maintained and protected; (2) where existing water quality is better than necessary to support fishing and swimming conditions, that quality shall be maintained and protected unless the state finds that allowing lower water quality is necessary for important local economic or social development; and (3) where high-quality waters constitute an outstanding national resource, such as waters of national and state parks, wildlife refuges, and waters of exceptional recreational or ecological significance, that water quality shall be maintained and protected.

Porter Cologne Water Quality Control Act

The State of California established the SWRCB, which oversees the nine RWQCBs, through the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act (Porter-Cologne). Through the enforcement of the Porter Cologne Act, the SWRCB determines the beneficial uses of the waters (surface and groundwater) of the State, establishes narrative and/or numerical water quality standards, and initiates policies relating to water quality. The SWRCB and, more specifically, the RWQCB, is authorized to prescribe Waste Discharge Requirements (WDRs) for the discharge of waste, which may impact the waters of the State. Furthermore, the development of water quality control plans, or Basin Plans, are required by Porter-Cologne to protect water quality.

NPDES Program - Construction Activity

The NPDES program regulates municipal and industrial storm water discharges under the requirements of the CWA. California is authorized to implement a statewide storm water discharge permitting program, with the SWRCB as the permitting agency. This permit regulates discharges from construction sites and Linear Underground Projects (LUPs) that disturb one acre or more of total land area. By law, all storm water discharges associated with construction activity where clearing, grading, and excavation results in soil disturbance must comply with the provisions of this NPDES Construction General permit. The permitting process requires the development and implementation of an effective Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). The project applicant must submit a Notice of Intent to the SWRCB to be covered by a NPDES permit and prepare the SWPPP prior to the beginning of construction. The SWPPP must include best management practices (BMPs) to reduce pollutants to the maximum extent practicable. Implementation of the SWPPP starts with the commencement of construction and continues until the Project area is stabilized. Upon completion of the project, the applicant must submit a Notice of Termination to the SWRCB to indicate that construction is completed.

4.10.3 Hydrology and Water Quality (X) Environmental Checklist and Discussion

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the Project:				
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. Construction of the Proposed Project would result in soil disturbance that would temporarily increase the hazard of erosion and sedimentation. Additionally, maintenance of equipment entails the use of hazardous materials such as gasoline and engine oil, and if spilled could contaminate runoff and surface waters in the Proposed Project area vicinity. Discharge of sediment or hazardous material into the storm water system or to surface waters during construction could result in violation of water quality standards and poses a risk of having a potentially significant impact. Although there are no drainages within the immediate Project vicinity there is potential for construction related runoff; implementation of **BMPs 4, and 9** (listed in Section 2.1) along with **Mitigation Measure GEO-1** will minimize the potential for contaminants to enter nearby drainages as a result of construction activity, thereby reducing impacts to less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the Project:				
b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Less than Significant Impact. Implementation of the Proposed Project would reduce stress on the local groundwater table as existing residential properties would have the future opportunity to connect to the water distribution pipeline instead of extracting from individuals wells. Additionally, the Project would not interfere with groundwater recharge resulting in groundwater loss. Trenching depth will be approximately five to six feet deep and it is highly unlikely that the installed pipeline would impact groundwater flows. The Proposed Project would not require the use of groundwater during construction or operation. Therefore, impacts are considered less than significant.

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Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner that would:				
i) result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site;	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ii) substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or offsite;	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iii) create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iv) impede or redirect flood flows?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The Proposed Project will not substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area. Project construction could temporarily alter drainage patterns during trenching activities; however, consistent with **BMPs 4, and 14** listed in Section 2.1, all disturbed areas will be restored to pre-existing conditions and no new impermeable materials will be added. **Mitigation Measure GEO-1** would minimize the potential to create new or additional runoff of soil during trenching. Therefore, Project impacts would be considered less than significant with mitigation incorporated. Additionally, project-related grading, trenching, and other earthwork resulting in soil disturbance could temporarily alter minor drainage patterns and increase the hazard of erosion and sedimentation. Implementation of **Mitigation Measure GEO-1** would minimize the potential for the Proposed Project to substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, reducing impacts to less than significant.

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

No Impact. The proposed Project is not located in an area at risk for tsunami, seiche zones, or project inundation and would therefore have no impact to increase risk to these hazards. No mitigation necessary.

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Less than Significant Impact. The proposed Project could provide additional sources of polluted runoff during construction in the event of an unanticipated spill. Implementation of BMPs listed in Section 2.1 for spill prevention and containment as well as **Mitigation Measure GEO-1** would minimize the potential for polluted runoff due to the Project. Therefore, the Project’s impact will be less than significant impact.

4.10.4 Mitigation Measures

GEO-1: Sedimentation and Erosion Control Measure. See description in Section 4.7.3.

4.10.4 Alternative Segment

The Alternative Segment is located near the western end of the proposed alignment, approximately 500 feet southwest of the proposed alignment, as shown in Figure 2.2-2, Sheet 8. The Alternative Segment would have the same hydrology and water quality concerns and potential impacts as the Proposed Project and would be subject to the same **BMPs (4 and 9)** listed in Section 2.1) and **Mitigation Measure GEO-1**. No additional mitigation is required.

4.11 Land Use and Planning

4.11.1 Environmental Setting

Nevada County’s total land area is approximately 958 square miles. Of that total land area, 70 percent is privately owned while 30 percent is public lands (Nevada County General Plan 2016). The three most common land uses within the county are Forest, Rural, and Open Space, respectively. Approximately 265 square miles of land in Nevada County is owned by the federal Government for the Tahoe National Forest, operated by the U. S. Forest Service. Nevada County is home to the following unincorporated (Legacy) communities: Penn Valley, Rough and Ready, North San Juan, Washington, and Soda Springs.

The Project corridor takes place mostly within the existing roadway, except for two sections that will be constructed across private property within a rural residential community. The proposed Project would be located near the Rough and Ready and Penn Valley communities.

According to the Nevada County General Plan, the project corridor is location majority within Rural 5 acre (RUR-5) designation. On the very western end of the project there are a few parcels designated as Rural 10 acres (RUR-10) and Planned Residential Community (PRC) within the Lake Wildwood neighborhood.

4.11.2 Regulatory Setting

As a jurisdiction with equal authority, NID is exempt from following goals and policies within the Nevada County General Plan. However, NID aims to comply with those goals and policies outlined in the General Plan.

The General Plan sets several goals and policies to guide development and protection of water infrastructure. This proposed Project seeks to increase the reliability and efficiency of this infrastructure. The Proposed Project will comply with the goals and policies of the Chapter 1: Land Use, Chapter 11: Water Element, and Chapter 16: Agriculture Element of the Nevada County General Plan. These goals are as follows:

Objective 1.4: Encourage future improvements of public and private facilities/services to that which will enhance the specific character and lifestyle of rural regions.

GOAL 11.1: *Identify, protect and manage for sustainable water resources and riparian habitats.*

Policy 11.2: Encourage the protection of resources which produce water for domestic and agricultural consumption.

Policy 16.15b: Encourage the Nevada Irrigation District and the Nevada County Resource Conservation District in their efforts to implement water conservation and greater efficiency of water use by agricultural as well as urban users through measures such as continued efforts to line existing canals

4.11.3 Land Use and Planning (XI) Environmental Checklist and Discussion

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Physically divide an established community?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Less than Significant Impact. The Proposed Project consists of the construction of a potable water pipeline. The proposed pipeline alignment would follow the existing roadways in already established rural neighborhoods. The Proposed Project would not physically divide an established community. A less than significant impact would occur and no mitigation is required.

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
b) Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Less than Significant Impact. The Proposed Project involves the construction of a new water pipeline in order to increase the availability of water to NID customers. As described previously in Section 4.11.1 *Environmental Setting*, the Proposed Project alignment is located within the existing roadways. The Proposed Project is consistent with Nevada County's plans and policies; and therefore, the Proposed Project would not conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy or regulation. A less than significant impact would occur, and no mitigation is required.

4.11.4 Mitigation Measures

No significant impacts were identified, and no mitigation measures are required.

4.10.4 Alternative Segment

The Alternative Segment is located near the western end of the proposed alignment, approximately 500 feet southwest of the proposed alignment, as shown in Figure 2.2-2, Sheet 8. The Alternative Segment would result in similar less-than-significant land use and planning impacts. No mitigation is required.

4.12 Mineral Resources

4.12.1 Environmental Setting

The Surface Mining and Reclamation Act (SMARA) of 1975 requires all cities and counties to incorporate the mapped mineral resource designations approved by the State Mining and Geology Board, in their General Plans. These designations categorize land as Mineral Resource Zones (MRZ-1 through MRZ-4) and are defined below.

The State-mandated SMARA requires the identification and classification of mineral resources in areas within the state subject to urban development or other irreversible land uses that could otherwise prevent the extraction of mineral resources. MRZs are classified by the State Geologist by analyzing associated geologic and economic factors without regard to current land use or ownership (DOC 2013). There are four general classifications (MRZ-1 through MRZ-4) based upon the State Geologist's determination of identified mineral resource significance and are defined below:

- MRZ-1 "Areas of No Mineral Resource Significance", wherein geologic information indicates no significant mineral deposits are present;
- MRZ-2 "Areas of Identified Mineral Resource Significance," are areas that contain Identified mineral resources;
- MRZ-3 "Areas of Undetermined Mineral Resource Significance," are areas of undetermined mineral resource significance; and
- MRZ-4 "Areas of Unknown Mineral Resource Significance", are areas of unknown mineral resource potential.

There are numerous known mineral resources throughout Nevada County including gold, copper, silver, lead, and iron, among others.

4.12.2 Mineral Resources (XII) Environmental Checklist and Discussion

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Less than Significant Impact. The majority of the Proposed Project alignment is classified as MRZ-1 by the County, with the eastern portion of the alignment classified as MRZ-3 (Nevada County). As defined above in 4.12.1 Environmental Setting, MRZ-1 zones are areas of no mineral significance, while MRZ-3 are zones with unknown mineral significance. Although potential mineral resources may exist within the Proposed Project alignment, construction and operation of the Proposed Project within existing road ROWs does not preclude the extraction of these mineral resources. Therefore, implementation of the Proposed Project would not result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource. A less than significant impact would occur and no mitigation is required.

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Less than Significant Impact. The Proposed Project alignment is not located within a current locally important mineral resource recovery site and it has not been historically mined (Nevada County). As described in item a), the Proposed Project alignment is classified as MRZ-1 and MRZ-3 by Nevada County; however, it has not been delineated within the general plan or other land use plans as a locally-important mineral resource recovery site. As such, a less than significant impact would occur. No mitigation is required.

4.12.3 Mitigation Measures

No significant impacts were identified, and no mitigation measures are required.

4.10.4 Alternative Segment

The Alternative Segment is located near the western end of the proposed alignment, approximately 500 feet southwest of the proposed alignment, as shown in Figure 2.2-2, Sheet 8. The Alternative Segment would result in similar less-than-significant impacts on mineral resources. No mitigation is required.

4.13 Noise

This subsection of the Initial Study is sourced from the *E. George to Lake Wildwood Backbone Extension Pipeline Project Noise Impact Assessment (2019)* prepared by ECORP (see *Appendix D*).

4.13.1 Environmental Setting

Noise Fundamentals

Noise is generally defined as sound that is loud, disagreeable, or unexpected. The selection of a proper noise descriptor for a specific source is dependent on the spatial and temporal distribution, duration, and fluctuation of the noise. The noise descriptors most often encountered when dealing with traffic, community, and environmental noise include the average hourly noise level (in L_{eq}) and the average daily noise levels/community noise equivalent level (in L_{dn} /Community Noise Equivalent Level [CNEL]).

Noise can be generated by a number of sources, including mobile sources, such as automobiles, trucks, and airplanes, and stationary sources, such as construction sites, machinery, and industrial operations. The rate depends on the ground surface and the number or type of objects between the noise source and the receiver. Mobile transportation sources, such as highways, and hard and flat surfaces, such as concrete or asphalt, have an attenuation rate of 3.0 decibels (dBA) per doubling of distance. Soft surfaces, such as uneven or vegetated terrain, have an attenuation rate of about 4.5 dBA per doubling of distance from the source. Noise generated by stationary sources typically attenuates at a rate of approximately 6.0 to 7.5 dBA per doubling of distance from the source.

Sound levels can be reduced by placing barriers between the noise source and the receiver. In general, barriers contribute to decreasing noise levels only when the structure breaks the "line of sight" between the source and the receiver. Buildings, concrete walls, and berms can all act as effective noise barriers. Wooden fences or broad areas of dense foliage can also reduce noise but are less effective than solid barriers.

Sensitive Noise Receptors

Noise-sensitive land uses are generally considered to include those uses where noise exposure could result in health-related risks to individuals, as well as places where quiet is an essential element of their intended purpose. Residential dwellings are of primary concern because of the potential for increased and prolonged exposure of individuals to both interior and exterior noise levels. Additional land uses such as parks, historic sites, cemeteries, and recreation areas are considered sensitive to increases in exterior noise levels. Schools, churches, hotels, libraries, and other places where low interior noise levels are essential are also considered noise-sensitive land uses.

The Project site is located in a rural residential area. The nearest noise-sensitive land use receptor are single-family residences adjacent to the 5.6-mile-long Project corridor.

4.13.2 Regulatory Setting

Construction activities in Nevada County are exempt from County noise standards per Municipal Code Section L-II 4.1.7 (Noise). Nevada County exempts construction-generated noise from standards because construction noise is temporary, short-term, intermittent in nature, and would cease on completion of the Project.

4.13.3 Noise (XIII) Environmental Checklist and Discussion

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Result in generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Less than Significant Impact. The Proposed Project’s noise-related impacts would be attributable to construction activities. Construction noise associated with the Proposed Project would be temporary and would vary depending on the nature of the activities being performed. Noise generated would primarily be associated with the operation of off-road equipment for onsite construction activities as well as construction vehicle traffic on area roadways. Construction noise typically occurs intermittently and varies depending on the nature or phase of construction (e.g., building construction, paving). Noise generated by construction equipment, including earth movers, material handlers, and portable generators, can reach high levels. Typical operating cycles for these types of construction equipment may involve one or two minutes of full power operation followed by three to four minutes at lower power settings. Other primary sources of acoustical disturbance would be random incidents, which would last less than one minute (such as dropping large pieces of equipment or the hydraulic movement of machinery lifts). During construction, exterior noise levels could negatively affect sensitive receptors in the vicinity of the construction site.

Table 4.13-1 indicates the anticipated noise levels of construction equipment expected to be employed during Project construction. The average noise levels presented in **Table 4.13-1** are based on the quantity, type, and acoustical use factor for each type of equipment that is anticipated to be used.

Table 4.13-1. Maximum Noise Levels Generated by Construction Equipment

Type of Equipment	Maximum Noise (L_{max}) at 50 Feet (dBA)	Maximum 8-Hour Noise (L_{eq}) at 50 Feet (dBA)
Dozer	81.7	77.7
Excavator	80.7	76.7
Generator	80.6	77.6
Boring Machine	83.0	80.0
Paver	77.2	74.2
Paving Machine	89.5	82.5
Roller	80.0	73.0
Tractor	84.0	80.0
Dump Truck	76.5	72.5
Concrete Pump Truck	81.4	74.4
Welder	74.0	70.0

Source: Federal Highway Administration, Roadway Construction Noise Model (FHWA-HEP-05-054), dated January 2006.

Nearby noise-sensitive land uses consist of residences directly adjacent to the 5.6-mile-long Project corridor. As depicted in **Table 4.13-1**, noise levels generated by individual pieces of construction equipment typically range from approximately 70.0 to 82.5 dBA L_{eq} at 50 feet, and thus adjacent residential land uses could be exposed to temporary and intermittent noise levels beyond 82.5 dBA L_{eq} with L_{max} events even louder.

As stated previously, construction activities in Nevada County are exempt from County noise standards per Municipal Code Section L-II 4.1.7 (Noise). Nevada County exempts construction-generated noise from standards because construction noise is temporary, short term, intermittent in nature, and would cease on completion of the Project. Additionally, construction would occur throughout the Project corridor and would not be concentrated at one point. Additionally, implementation of **BMPs 6-8** would further reduce noise impact associated with construction of the Project. Therefore, noise associated with construction activities would not conflict with County noise standards. This impact is less than significant.

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
b) Result in generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Excessive groundborne vibration impacts result from continuously occurring vibration levels. Increases in groundborne vibration levels attributable to the Proposed Project would be associated with short-term construction-related activities. Construction on the Project site would have the potential to result in varying degrees of temporary groundborne vibration, depending on the specific construction equipment used and the operations involved. Ground vibration generated by construction equipment spreads through the ground and diminishes in magnitude with increases in distance.

Construction-related ground vibration is normally associated with impact equipment such as pile drivers, jackhammers, and the operation of some heavy-duty construction equipment, such as dozers and trucks. It is noted that pile drivers would not be necessary during Project construction. Vibration decreases rapidly with distance and it is acknowledged that construction activities would occur throughout the Project corridor and would not be concentrated at a point closest to sensitive receptors. Groundborne vibration levels associated with anticipated Project construction equipment are summarized in

Table 4.13-2.

Table 4.13-2. Vibration Source Amplitudes for Construction Equipment	
Equipment Type	Peak Particle Velocity at 25 Feet (inches per second)
Loaded Trucks	0.076
Rock Breaker	0.082
Jackhammer	0.035
Small Bulldozer	0.003
Tractor	0.003

Source: Federal Transit Administration (FTA) 2018; Caltrans 2004

Nevada County does not regulate vibration associated with construction; however, a discussion of construction vibration is included for full disclosure purposes. For comparison purposes, the Caltrans (2004) recommended standard of 0.2 inches per second peak particle velocity with respect to the prevention of structural damage for older residential buildings is used as a threshold. This is also the level at which vibrations may begin to annoy people in buildings.

It is acknowledged that construction activities would occur throughout the linear Project corridor and would not be concentrated at any one point. The nearest structures of concern are residences adjacent to the 5.6-mile-corridor along the Project site boundary.

Based on the vibration levels presented in **Table 4.13-2**, ground vibration generated by heavy-duty equipment would not be anticipated to exceed approximately 0.076 inches per second peak particle velocity at 25 feet. Construction activities would need to employ the use of loaded trucks at 12 feet from an older structure in order to achieve a vibration rate of 0.2 inches per second peak particle velocity. Since construction activities would occur throughout the Project corridor and would not be concentrated at a point closest to residential structures, it is not expected that equipment would operate within 12 feet of a residential building for a sustained amount of time. Implementation of **BMPs 6-8** would reduce noise impacts associated with construction of the Project. This impact is considered less than significant.

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
c) For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

There are no public airports within two miles of the Project site. Limberlost Ranch Airport, a private facility, is located approximately 1.6 miles southwest of the site at the closest. Given its distance from the Project site and low level of air traffic, operation of this airport would not expose Project construction workers to excessive noise levels.

4.13.4 Mitigation Measures

No significant impacts were identified, and no mitigation measures are required.

4.13.4 Alternative Segment

The Alternative Segment is located near the western end of the proposed alignment, approximately 500 feet southwest of the proposed alignment, as shown in Figure 2.2-2, Sheet 8. As indicated in the above discussion, Nevada County exempts construction-generated noise from standards because construction noise is temporary, short term, intermittent in nature, and would cease on completion of the Project. Additionally, construction would occur throughout the Project corridor and would not be concentrated at one point. Implementation of **BMPs 6-8** would reduce noise impact associated with construction of the Project. Therefore, noise associated with construction activities would not conflict with County noise standards. This impact is less than significant and no further discussion or mitigation is required.

4.14 Population and Housing

4.14.1 Environmental Setting

The Proposed Project alignment spans a distance of approximately 5.6 miles, transecting the Rough and Ready community area of Nevada County, California. According to the 2010 U.S. Census, Nevada County has a population of approximately 99,000 people. A total of 443 new housing units were constructed in the County between 2009 and January 2014, or approximately 88 units per year (Nevada County General Plan 1996, 2010). While 443 were built during this time, the County has estimated that approximately 3,000 were needed. More than 65 percent of the population resides in unincorporated communities within the County.

4.14.2 Regulatory Setting

Nevada County General Plan

The Nevada County General Plan (1996, 2010) includes the following specific objectives and policies that are applicable to the proposed Project as it relates to population and housing:

Objective 1.6: Maintain a land use pattern based upon criteria that establish the amount of land use types necessary to meet the needs of the population/employment levels, while recognizing the unique character of each Community Region.

Policy 1.22: The General Plan shall provide for population densities in the respective land use designation based upon the maximum number of dwelling units or persons per acre for the minimum parcel area per dwelling.

GOAL RC-8.1: *Decrease governmental constraints and streamline the processing of housing development to expedite development of affordable housing and reduce the costs of development without compromising other General Plan objectives.*

GOAL RC-8.2 *Mitigate non-governmental constraints on the maintenance, improvement, and development of housing to the extent possible.*

GOAL HD-8.1 *To provide for a variety of housing types by tenure and price in all residential areas for all income segments, special needs groups, and the County's workforce for both existing Nevada County residents, as well as potential future residents, commensurate with the Regional Housing Need Allocation (RHNA) Plan and the County's quantified objectives.*

GOAL HD-8.3 *Ensure that appropriate types and higher density housing development are directed to Community Regions and Rural Centers.*

4.14.3 Population and Housing (XIV) Environmental Checklist and Discussion

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

No Impact. The Project would provide a second and/or alternate sources of treated water in the event of a failure at the Lake Wildwood WTP. This treated water service includes drinking, fire protection, and emergency supplies. Upon completion of the Proposed Project, the Project Area would be returned to existing conditions. Implementation of the Proposed Project would upgrade existing deficient

infrastructure and would not induce growth but would serve to improve potable water service to existing properties and businesses along the corridor. The project would allow the opportunity for existing properties to tie into the new pipeline, removing the need for individual well use. This action is not a part of this project, but would be available sometime after construction through direct coordination with NID and at the expense of the individual property owner. Furthermore, minimal operation and maintenance of the pipeline would be required, which would be handled by existing maintained crews and would not require additional employment. No impact would occur, and no mitigation is required.

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
b) Displace substantial numbers of people or existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

No Impact. As described above, the proposed pipeline would be placed primarily within the roadway alignment and would not involve properties outside the roadway ROW except for limited supporting infrastructure. The Proposed Project alignment would not displace any existing housing; therefore, no impact would occur and no mitigation is required.

4.14.4 Mitigation Measures

No significant impacts were identified, and no mitigation measures are required.

4.14.4 Alternative Segment

The Alternative Segment is located near the western end of the proposed alignment, approximately 500 feet southwest of the proposed alignment, as shown in Figure 2.2-2, Sheet 8. The Alternative Segment would also have no impact on population and housing. No mitigation is required.

4.15 Public Services

4.15.1 Environmental Setting

Public services are typically fire protection, park facilities, public utility, schools, sewer, and water infrastructure in addition to those provided by Nevada County and any state and/or federal agencies.

Fire

Fire protection is provided by the Joint Operating Agreement (JOA) including the Grass Valley Fire Department, Nevada City Fire Department and Nevada County Consolidated Fire Department. The JOA operates as a Boundary Drop/Closest resource response plan, under which the closest fire engine to an incident will be dispatched or multiple engines can be dispatched for larger incidents, regardless of jurisdiction. The three agencies are the only departments in the County operating under this agreement and over time have evolved into a very codependent system (NCCF Strategic Plan).

The closest fire station to the Project are is the Rough and Ready Volunteer Fire Station located at 14506 Rough and Ready Highway, Rough and Ready, California 95975. This station, in conjunction with the JOA, is responsible for any fire-related emergencies within the Project area.

Police

The Nevada County Sheriff's Office (Sheriff) provides law enforcement services to the unincorporated areas of Nevada County, including the Rough and Ready community area. There are no schools or parks in the proposed Project area. Devere Mautino, Condon Park, and Western Gateway are the closest parks to the Project. NID supplies water for irrigation, municipal, domestic, and industrial purposes for the western region of Nevada County. For additional information regarding the Public Service and Facilities in Nevada County in the Proposed Project area please refer to Chapter 3, Public Facilities and Services, of the Nevada County General Plan (Nevada County 1996).

The Project area falls under the jurisdiction of the Sherriff, who is responsible for police protection and public safety in the vicinity of the Project area. The nearest location of law enforcement services provided by the Grass Valley Police Department located at 129 South Auburn Street, Grass Valley, California 95945.

Schools

There are 12 school districts within Nevada County. The Project site is located in both the Grass Valley School District and the Penn Valley Union Elementary School District. The nearest schools are the Pleasant Valley Elementary (northwest of the Project) and Margaret G. Scotten Elementary (southeast of the Project), both of which are approximately two to three miles from the Project site.

4.15.2 Regulatory Setting

The proposed Project area lies within Nevada County and, although NID is a jurisdiction with authority equal to Nevada County and is not subject to Nevada County General Plan requirements, NID aims to comply with such requirements, to the extent feasible.

The Nevada County General Plan (1996, 2008) includes the following specific objectives and policies that are applicable to the proposed Project as it relates to Public Services. The Safety Element of the Nevada County General Plan addresses a wide range of issues related to human health and safety, including emergency preparedness. The Public Facilities and Services Element addresses the changing public facility and services needs of Nevada County and provides guidance for their logical and timely extension to keep pace with County growth. These elements contain the following applicable goals and objectives:

Objective 3.2: Ensure that the capacity, availability, financing, and capability of public services and facilities are sufficient to meet levels of service requirements for development.

Objective 3.2: Develop and operate public facilities in environmentally sound way.

Objective SF-10.6.1: Maintain appropriate levels of safety and protection services and facilities on land and water for both Community and Rural Regions.

Goal FP-10.7: *Enhance fire safety and improve fire protection effectiveness through infrastructure and service improvements.*

4.15.3 Public Services (XV) Environmental Checklist and Discussion

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fire Protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Police Protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Schools?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other Public Facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Less than Significant. The Proposed Project involves the installation of a new water line and would not result in the need for additional government facilities or utilities. The Proposed Project would increase available water for fire flows and would include the installation of hydrants at a minimum of every 1,000 feet along the roadway. Therefore, the Project would have a less than significant impact on fire protection, police protection, schools, parks, or other public facilities in the proximity of the Project area. No public facilities would be made unavailable during construction activities.

4.15.4 Mitigation Measures

No significant impacts were identified, and no mitigation measures are required.

4.15.5 Alternative Segment

The Alternative Segment is located near the western end of the proposed alignment, approximately 500 feet southwest of the proposed alignment, as shown in Figure 2.2-2, Sheet 8. The Alternative Segment would also have less-than-significant public service impacts. No mitigation is required.

4.16 Recreation

4.16.1 Environmental Setting

The proposed Project is located in the vicinity of Rough and Ready, approximately four miles northwest of Grass Valley within Nevada County. The County provides an array of recreational opportunities, ranging from public parks with recreational facilities to uninhabited forest lands. Public parks and recreational facilities within the county include ski areas and resorts, golf courses, swimming and exercise facilities, off road motor vehicle areas, and campgrounds. Recreational, non-motor trails are found throughout the County and provide opportunities for hiking, mountain biking, and horseback riding. Additionally, the Nevada County Master Bicycle Plan aims to improve pedestrian and bicycle travel within the urbanized areas of the County.

4.16.2 Recreation (XVI) Materials Checklist

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

No Impact. The Proposed Project area does not directly impact any parks or recreation facilities. The closest recreational area is the Rough and Ready Ditch trail and the Wildflower Ridge Trail located approximately 1.5 miles west of the Project site. The Proposed Project would not increase the use of existing recreational areas, nor would it require the construction of recreational facilities. Therefore, no impacts would occur.

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
b) Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities, which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

No Impact. The Proposed Project does not involve recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities. Therefore, no adverse physical effect on park and recreational facilities would occur. No impact would occur.

4.16.3 Mitigation Measures

No significant impacts were identified, and no mitigation measures are required.

4.16.4 Alternative Segment

The Alternative Segment is located near the western end of the proposed alignment, approximately 500 feet southwest of the proposed alignment, as shown in Figure 2.2-2, Sheet 8. The Alternative Segment would similarly have no impact on recreation. No mitigation is required.

4.17 Transportation

4.17.1 Environmental Setting

The Project is located in eastern Nevada County and is located in a rural residential area between Lake Wildwood and Grass Valley along Rough and Ready Highway and Road and connecting local streets. According to the Nevada County General Plan, roadways within the County are grouped into road and street classifications that share similar function, purpose, and importance in the roadway network. Those groupings are as follows:

- a. Interstate Highways and Freeways – Limited access highways carrying regional and interstate traffic (e.g., Interstate 80 and the Golden Center Freeway);
- b. Principal Arterials – Roadways carrying some regional traffic and connecting the major population centers within the County (e.g., State Routes 49 and 20);
- c. Minor Arterials – Roadways providing primary access from freeways and principal arterials to major origins and destinations (e.g., Brunswick Road and Donner Pass Road);
- d. Collector (Major and Minor) – Streets connecting arterials to local roads (e.g., East Bennett Street and Alta Sierra Drive);
- e. Locals – Streets providing primary access to individual properties (e.g., Jones Bar Road and Hobart Mills Road); and
- f. Regional Emergency Access – Roadways providing emergency access between arterial or collector roads but are not needed by the County for general circulation purposes.

The main roads on which the Project construction equipment and truck trips would occur are Rough and Ready Highway, Highway 20, and Ridge Road. According to the County General Plan, Rough and Ready Highway is considered a Minor Arterial, Highway 20 is considered a Principal Arterial, and Ridge Road is considered a collector. The Project involves installation of water infrastructure within minor arterials, locals, and emergency access roadways. Construction activities would normally occur on weekdays, excluding holidays, between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.

**Administrative Draft Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration
E. George to Lake Wildwood Backbone Extension Pipeline Project**

4.17.2 Transportation (XVII) Environmental Checklist and Discussion

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Conflict with a program plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Less than Significant Impact. The Proposed Project would not permanently alter existing roadways, nor would it add to the current circulation system. In addition, the Project does not involve a change in land use or affect transportation policies. Construction of the proposed Project would result in a temporary lane closures and increase in truck trips on the local streets in order to deliver materials and machinery to the site. Additionally, there will also be a limited number of vehicle trips from the work crew just outside of the construction work hours (between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.). However, the temporary increase in trips from Project related vehicles and trucks is not expected to substantially affect load or capacity of the local road system. Furthermore, local roads are generally narrow, and access may be temporarily restricted (down to one lane) during construction periods as equipment is using the roadways. Implementation of included **BMPs 6, 14, and 17** would require a traffic management plan restoration of roadway to pre-construction conditions thereby reducing impacts to a less than significant level.

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
b) Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

No Impact. The Proposed Project would not alter the transportation system in a way that would create additional miles traveled. The Proposed Project would have a temporary impact to existing traffic patterns during construction activities if lane closures or detours are necessary, but these impacts would be short term and the roadway would be restored to its current use and condition once construction is complete. Implementation of **BMPs 6, 14, and 17** would further reduce impacts to a less than significant level.

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
c) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The Project does not include any new design features on roadways, and therefore; would not result in any increased hazards due to design features. Project construction would require the transportation of heavy

machinery and light trucks on the roads described above. The truck equipment trips and roadway usage would be temporary and the frequency minimal and located at or within close proximity to the Project site. Implementation of **BMPs 3 and 17** would ensure that the Proposed Project does not substantially increase hazards along the roadway.

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
d) Result in inadequate emergency access?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The Proposed Project is not expected to interfere with emergency access. Implementation of included **BMPs (6, 14, and 17)** will ensure adequate emergency access and interference with normal traffic flows to be minimal. Therefore, impact to emergency access is less than significant.

4.17.3 Alternative Segment

The Alternative Segment is located near the western end of the proposed alignment, approximately 500 feet southwest of the proposed alignment, as shown in Figure 2.2-2, Sheet 8. The Alternative Segment would be constructed along an existing dirt road outside existing public roadways. Therefore, it would avoid construction impacts to the local road network. There would be no impact. No mitigation is required.

4.18 Tribal Cultural Resources

This section describes the affected environment and regulatory setting for Tribal Cultural Resources (TCRs) in the project area. The following analysis of the potential environmental impacts related to TCRs is derived primarily from the following sources:

- California Native American Heritage Commission Sacred Lands File Search, March 4, 2019
- Cultural Resource Inventory and Evaluation Report, Elizabeth George to Lake Wildwood Backbone Extension Project by ECORP Consulting, Inc. (2019)
- Ethnographic overview of the Nisenan by Wilson and Towne (1978)
- Confidential AB-52 tribal consultation record with the United Auburn Indian Community

4.18.1 Environmental Setting

Ethnographic, Religious, And Cultural Context

The project area is in the central portion of the territory occupied by the Penutian-speaking Nisenan. Nisenan inhabited the drainages of the Yuba, Bear, and American rivers, and also the lower reaches of the Feather River, extending from the east banks of the Sacramento River on the west to the mid to high elevations of the western flank of the Sierra Nevada to the east (Wilson and Towne 1978). The territory extended from the area surrounding the current City of Oroville on the north to a few miles south of the American River in the south. The Sacramento River bounded the territory on the west, and in the east, it

extended to a general area located within a few miles of Lake Tahoe. A brief overview is provided herein; a more detailed context is provided in the cultural resources technical study (ECORP 2019).

As a language group, Nisenan (meaning “from among us” or “of our side”) are members of the Maiduan Family of the Penutian stock and are generally divided into three groups based on dialect differences: the Northern Hill (mountain) Nisenan in the Yuba River drainage; the Valley Nisenan along the Sacramento River; and the Southern Hill (foothills) Nisenan along the American River (Kroeber 1925; Wilson and Towne 1978). Lineage groups were important political and economic units that combined to form tribelets, which were the largest sociopolitical unit identified for Nisenan (Wilson and Towne 1978).

Nisenan practiced seasonal migration, a subsistence strategy involving moving from one area or elevation to another to harvest plants, fish, and hunt game. The availability of resources influenced the location of Nisenan permanent villages, since they acquired a proportion of their food resources from the general area surrounding them (Wilson and Towne 1978). Other essential and critical food resources were obtained during the summer, when small base camps were established at higher altitudes in proximity to a water source. Individuals would stage expeditions to acquire natural, faunal, and plant resources from these camps (Wilson and Towne 1978).

Trade was important with goods traveling between the coast and valleys up into the Sierra Nevada mountains and beyond to the east. Coastal items like shell beads, salmon, salt, and Foothill pine nuts were traded for resources from the mountains and farther inland, such as bows and arrows, deer skins, and sugar pine nuts. In addition, obsidian was imported from the north (Wilson and Towne 1978).

Flaked and ground stone tools were common among the Nisenan and included knives, arrow and spear points, club heads, arrow straighteners, scrapers, rough cobble and shaped pestles, bedrock mortars, grinding stones (metates), pipes, charms, and short spears (Wilson and Towne 1978). Nisenan used baskets for a variety of tasks, including storage, cooking, serving and processing foods, traps, cradles, hats, cages, seed beaters, and winnowing trays. Basket manufacturing techniques included both twining and coiling, and baskets were decorated with a variety of materials and designs (Wilson and Towne 1978).

The Spanish arrived on the central California coast in 1769 and began exploring the region. In 1833 a deadly epidemic (probably malaria) swept through the Sacramento Valley and had a devastating effect on Nisenan populations. Entire villages were lost, and surviving Nisenan retreated into the hills. Captain John Sutter settled in Nisenan territory in 1839, and through force and persuasion he coerced most of the remaining Valley Nisenan to be on peaceful terms (Wilson and Towne 1978). The discovery of gold, however, led to their territory being overrun within a matter of a few years. James Marshal’s 1848 gold discovery was in the middle of Nisenan territory, and thousands of miners were soon living in the area. This dynamic led to widespread killing, destruction, and persecution of the Nisenan and their culture. The few survivors were relegated to working in agriculture, logging, ranching, or domestic pursuits (Wilson and Towne 1978).

A few people still practiced Nisenan customs through the turn of the twenty-first century. Despite the hardships on their people through the past few centuries, many modern Native American populations participate in pan-Indian activities and celebrations. Nisenan descendants continue to be active in social

movements and organizations that seek to improve the Native American situation in the dominant America culture.

4.18.2 Regulatory Setting

Assembly Bill 52

Effective July 1, 2015, Assembly Bill 52 (AB 52) amended CEQA to require that: 1) a lead agency provide notice to those California Native American tribes that requested notice of projects proposed by the lead agency; and 2) for any tribe that responded to the notice within 30 days of receipt with a request for consultation, the lead agency must consult with the tribe. Topics that may be addressed during consultation include TCRs, the potential significance of project impacts, type of environmental document that should be prepared, and possible mitigation measures and project alternatives.

Pursuant to AB 52, Section 21073 of the Public Resources Code defines California Native American tribes as “a Native American tribe located in California that is on the contact list maintained by the NAHC for the purposes of Chapter 905 of the Statutes of 2004.” This includes both federally and non-federally recognized tribes.

Section 21074(a) of the Public Resource Code defines TCRs for the purpose of CEQA as:

- 1) Sites, features, places, cultural landscapes (geographically defined in terms of the size and scope), sacred places, and objects with cultural value to a California Native American tribe that are either of the following:
 - a. included or determined to be eligible for inclusion in the California Register of Historical Resources; and/or
 - b. included in a local register of historical resources as defined in subdivision (k) of Section 5020.1; and/or
 - c. a resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Section 5024.1 for the purposes of this paragraph, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.

Because criteria a and b also meet the definition of a Historical Resource under CEQA, a TCR may also require additional consideration as a Historical Resource. TCRs may or may not exhibit archaeological, cultural, or physical indicators.

Recognizing that California tribes are experts in their tribal cultural resources and heritage, AB 52 requires that CEQA lead agencies provide tribes that requested notification an opportunity to consult at the commencement of the CEQA process to identify TCRs. Furthermore, because a significant effect on a TCR is considered a significant impact on the environment under CEQA, consultation is used to develop appropriate avoidance, impact minimization, and mitigation measures.

Summary of Tribal Consultation

AB52 consultation requirements went into effect on July 1, 2015 for all projects that have not already published a Notice of Intent to Adopt a Negative Declaration or Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND), or published a Notice of Preparation of an EIR (Section 11 [c]). At the time the Nevada Irrigation District (NID) was ready to initiate CEQA review, it had received written requests to receive project notices from three California Native American Tribes, who identified themselves as being traditionally and culturally affiliated with the lands subject to NID jurisdiction: Colfax Todds Valley Consolidated Tribe (September 28, 2017), Nevada City Rancheria (October 05, 2017), and the United Auburn Indian Community (UAIC) (December 04, 2015).

On March 04, 2019, NID determined that it had a complete project description and they were ready to begin review under CEQA. NID mailed notification letters to each of the three tribes on March 06, 2019. In accordance with PRC Section 21080.3.1(d) of the Public Resources Code (PRC), responses to the offer to consult were requested by April 5, 2019. No response was received from Nevada City Rancheria; therefore, no consultation occurred.

Colfax Todds Valley Consolidated Tribe responded via email on March 19, 2019 asking only for a copy of the cultural technical report for the project but not requesting consultation. On March 19, 2019, NID responded with a map of the project, additional project information, and an offer to meet, if requested. On May 08, 2019, ECORP transmitted a digital copy of the confidential report to the tribe for review. No further correspondence from the tribe was received as of the time of the release of this CEQA document.

The UAIC responded via email on April 4, 2019 requesting formal consultation, copies of the cultural resources study, records search results, and requesting adoption of suggested mitigation measures. On April 24, 2019 NID responded to UAIC via email with a letter formally initiating consultation pursuant to PRC Section 21080.3.1 (e). NID also sent a copy of the letter certified mail to UAIC. Consultation with UAIC was carried out within the context of compliance with AB 52 and is discussed below.

NID sent a letter dated April 24, 2019 formally initiating consultation via email and via certified mail to Melodi McAdams, Cultural Resources Supervisor for UAIC. The email included a link to the confidential Cultural Resources Inventory and Evaluation Report (ECORP 2019) prepared for the Project, which included a synopsis of the records search results. The letter included a suggested date for a meeting between UAIC and NID.

On May 01, 2019, Ms. McAdams responded via email thanking NID for the cultural resources report and the invitation for the meeting. She indicated that a search of UAIC's Tribal Historical Resources Information System came up negative and that although UAIC does not have any TCRs recorded in the Project Area, the tribe had concern for the potential for inadvertent discovery of TCRs based on the length of the Project and the proximity to waterways. They provided suggested mitigation measures and asked NID to incorporate them into the environmental document for the Project.

On May 02, 2019, NID sent an email response to UAIC with attached mitigation measures to address unanticipated discovery of TCRs and worker awareness training that it would incorporate into the environmental document, and it concluded consultation pursuant to PRC Sections 21080.3.2(b)(1) and

21082.3(d)(1). On May 03, 2019, NID sent an official letter certified mail concluding consultation to Ms. McAdams at UAIC. Certified mail receipts indicate the letter was received on May 06, 2019.

Tribal Cultural Resources Evaluation

Information about potential impacts to TCRs was drawn from: 1) the results of a search of the Sacred Lands File of the NAHC; 2) existing ethnographic information about pre-contact lifeways and settlement patterns; 3) information on archaeological site records obtained from the California Historical Recourse Information System; and 4) tribal consultation with the UAIC.

Sacred Lands File Search

A search of the NAHC Sacred Lands File was requested on March 4, 2019. The NAHC responded on March 13 that the sacred lands file search was negative. The NAHC included a list of suggested tribal representatives to contact who may have more information. The UIAC and Colfax Todd's Valley were on the list of contacts, and these individual tribes were offered an opportunity for formal consultation. A summary of the consultation was provided above.

Ethnographic Information

The ethnographic information reviewed for the project, including ethnographic maps (Wilson and Towne 1978), identified the closest Nisenan settlement as *Tsekankan*, located southwest of Nevada City approximately one mile north of the Project Area. Other settlements in the vicinity include *Hi'et*, located about two miles northeast of the Project Area, and the village of *Kayanpaskan* is mapped approximate three miles north of the Project Area. Further, settlements are located along the South Fork Yuba River four miles north of the Project Area.

Archaeological Site Records

Approximately 15 percent of the area within a 0.5-mile radius surrounding the Project Area has been subject to cultural surveys and no pre-contact archaeological sites have been previously recorded in the vicinity. In addition, a complete survey and inventory by ECORP Consulting (2019) resulted in no Native American sites within the project area. Additional information about cultural resources can be found in Chapter 4.5 of this CEQA document.

Tribal Consultation Results

Consultation with UAIC indicated there were no known TCRs within the Project Area, but that there is a possibility of inadvertent discovery of TCRs due to the Project Area's proximity to waterways. NID agreed to adopt mitigation measures concerning the inadvertent discovery of TCRs and worker awareness training for TCRs into this CEQA document.

In accordance with Section 21082.3(c)(1) of the Public Resources Code, "... information, including, but not limited to, the location, description, and use of the tribal cultural resources, that is submitted by a California Native American tribe during the environmental review process shall not be included in the environmental document or otherwise disclosed by the lead agency or any other public agency to the public, consistent with subdivision (r) of Section 6254 of, and Section 6254.10 of, the Government Code,

and subdivision (d) of Section 15120 of Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations, without the prior consent of the tribe that provided the information.” Therefore, specific information about tribal cultural resources is not included in this CEQA document and remains within a confidential administrative record and not available for public disclosure without written permission from the tribe.

Conclusions

The searches of the Sacred Lands File by the NAHC did not identify TCRs or sacred lands within or immediately adjacent to the Project Area. The ethnographic record for the area indicates that all known village or settlements are one more or more away from the Project Area. Archaeological surveys failed to yield any Native American sites within the project area. Consultation with UAIC indicated no known TCRs within the Project Area.

4.18.3 Standards of Significance

Significance Criteria

AB 52 established that a substantial adverse change to a TCR has a significant effect on the environment. In assessing substantial adverse change, NID must determine whether or not the project will adversely affect the qualities of the resource that convey its significance. The qualities are expressed through integrity. Integrity of a resource is evaluated with regard to the retention of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association [CCR Title 14, Section 4852(c)]. Impacts are significant if the resource is demolished or destroyed or if the characteristics that made the resource eligible are materially impaired [CCR Title 14, Section 15064.5(a)]. Accordingly, impacts to a TCR would likely be significant if the project negatively affects the qualities of integrity that made it significant in the first place. In making this determination, NID need only address the aspects of integrity that are important to the TCR’s significance.

No TCRs were identified within the project area and therefore, the Project will not result in a significant impact to known TCRs.

4.18.4 Tribal Cultural Resources (XVIII) Environmental Checklist and Discussion

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code Section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:				
i) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code Section 5020.1(k), or	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
ii) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American Tribe.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

No TCRs were identified within the proposed project area. The proposed project would not cause a substantial adverse action to a known TCR. Impacts to unknown TCRs that may be discovered during project construction would be less than significant with the incorporation of Mitigation Measures **CUL-1** (worker awareness training) and **CUL-2** (unanticipated discovery measures).

No significant impacts were identified, and no mitigation measures are required.

4.18.5 Mitigation Measures

4.18.6 Alternative Segment

The Alternative Segment is located near the western end of the proposed alignment, approximately 500 feet southwest of the proposed alignment, as shown in Figure 2.2-2, Sheet 8. No TRCs were identified for either alternative. As stated above impacts to unknown TRCs may occur during construction; however, implementation of CUL-1 would reduce impacts to less than significant.

4.19 Utilities and Service Systems

4.19.1 Environmental Setting

Water Service

Residential, industrial, and commercial water in Western Nevada County is primarily supplied by NID, the City of Grass Valley and Nevada City (within City limits). The major source of water supply is the upper reservoirs of the South and Middle Yuba River. Outside of NID and the City service areas, water needs are met through individual groundwater wells or small water systems.

Once the pipeline is installed, existing landowners along the corridor, who are not connected to a public water system, can work with NID to install a new pipeline within their vicinity.

Wastewater

Wastewater services in Nevada County are provided by the Nevada County Sanitation District Number 1. There are 10 zones within the Sanitation District with facilities that collect and treat 1,245,000 gallons of wastewater each day. The Sanitation District provides sewer service to 5,230 accounts in western Nevada County.

Solid Waste

The Nevada County Solid Waste division oversees garbage disposal, recycling services and transfer station operations throughout Nevada County. The trash from western Nevada County is taken from the McCourtney Road Transfer Station, and the rural transfer stations in North San Juan and the Town of Washington, to Lockwood Regional landfill in Sparks, Nevada.

4.19.2 Utilities and Service Systems (XIX) Environmental Checklist and Discussion

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Less than Significant Impact. The proposed Project involves extension of a treated water pipeline and would not result in the increased generation of wastewater or exceed treatment requirements. Therefore, impacts are considered less than significant.

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

No Impact. The Proposed Project involves the construction of a new pipeline. The new pipeline would provide a connection between the E. George WTP and the Lake Wildwood WTP and distribution system. The Project itself would not create the need for water use, NID would not be expanding their service area, but would be providing necessary infrastructure to accommodate existing customers and service areas (see Figure 4-2 NID Service Area). Existing residents are on well and will be provided the opportunity to coordinate with NID for connection to the new pipeline if they choose; however, these connections are not a part of this project and will be evaluated as applicable on an individual basis. Therefore, impacts are considered less than significant.

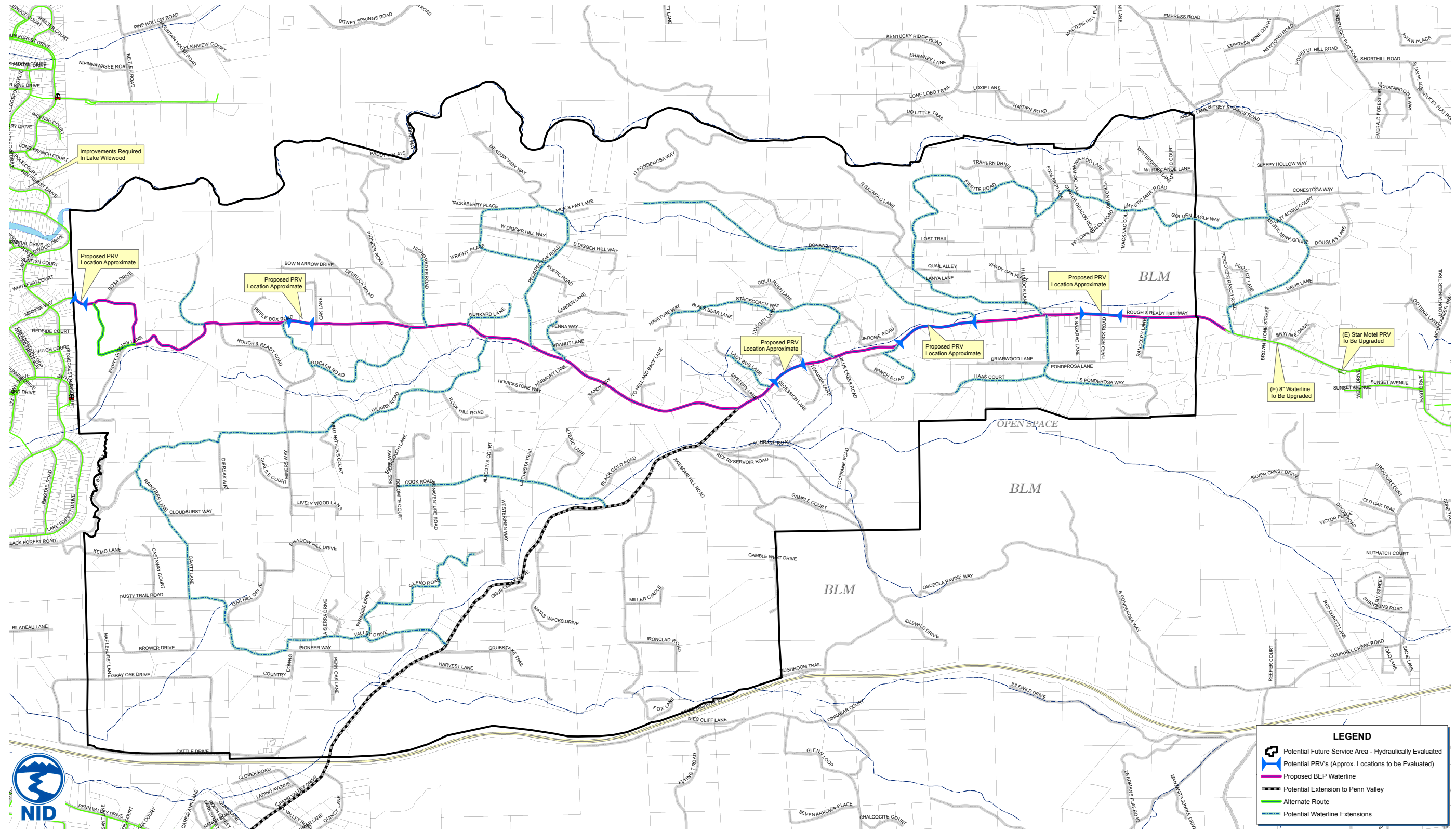
Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
c) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider, which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

No Impact. The Proposed Project involves the extension of an existing pipeline and will have no effect on the capacity of the existing wastewater treatment facility. Therefore, no impact will occur.

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
d) Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Less than Significant Impact. Construction activities associated with the Proposed Project are not expected to generate substantial amounts of solid waste that will need to be disposed of at a landfill. Organic waste from grubbing or grading/excavating within the non-roadway segment will be transferred to the appropriate solid waste handling facility. Nevada County has three main transfer stations that accept solid waste for a fee: McCourtney Road Transfer Station and Recycling Center, North San Juan Transfer Station, and Washington Transfer Station. The McCourtney Road Transfer Station and Recycling Center is the only location that will accept wood (untreated) and yard waste.

Location: N:\2018\2018-174 NID E George to Lake Wildwood Backbone\MAPS\CEQA\NID_ServiceArea_Graphic_20190521.mxd (AMM) -armyers 5/21/2019



Map Date: 5/21/2019
Source: Nevada Irrigation District

Figure 4-2. NID Service Areas

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Less than Significant Impact. The California Integrated Waste Management (CIWM) Act requires every county to adopt an Integrated Waste Management Plan that describes county objectives, policies, and programs relative to waste disposal, management, sources reduction, and recycling. Nevada County has implemented a Green Procurement and Sustainable Practice policy that is consistent with the CIWM Act. The disposal of solid waste due to construction activities will comply with all federal, state, and local statutes and regulations. Impacts to solid waste statues and regulations will be less than significant.

4.19.3 Mitigation Measures

No significant impacts were identified, and no mitigation measures are required.

4.19.4 Alternative Segment

The Alternative Segment is located near the western end of the proposed alignment, approximately 500 feet southwest of the proposed alignment, as shown in Figure 2.2-2, Sheet 8. The Alternative Segment would similarly have less-than-significant public utility impacts. No mitigation is required.

4.20 Wildfire

4.20.1 Environmental Setting

According to the Nevada County General Plan, wildfires are the County’s single largest risk for human life and financial loss. The County has many policies and plans in place to help offset this risk to land and residences by preventative efforts and rapid response to wildland threats.

Generally, the fire season extends from early spring to late fall. Fire conditions arise from a combination of hot weather, an accumulation of vegetation, and low moisture content in the air. These conditions, when combined with high winds and years of drought, increase the potential for wildfire to occur.

The County is protected by multiple fire protection agencies, including eight local fire districts, one water district, two City fire departments, CAL FIRE, the BLM, and the US Forest Service (USFS). In Western Nevada County, the following fire districts and departments provide fire protection services for the cities and unincorporated areas of the County:

- Grass Valley City Fire Department
- Higgins Fire Protection District
- Nevada City Fire Department

- Nevada County Consolidated Fire District
- North San Juan Fire Protection District
- Ophir Hill Fire Protection District
- Peardale-Chicago Park Fire Protection District
- Penn Valley Fire Protection District
- Rough and Ready Fire Protection District
- Washington County Water District

CAL FIRE provides wildland fire protection services on private, non-federal lands for the purpose of life, property and resource protection. USFS and BLM provide wildland fire protection services on federal lands in Federal Responsibility Areas for watershed and resource protection. Some areas are also identified as Local Responsibility Areas, including those within the cities of Grass Valley and Nevada City, as well as the area under the jurisdiction of the Truckee Fire Protection District. Various agreements between the fire protection agencies enable cooperative fire protection services. The Grass Valley Emergency Command Center, a cooperative facility between the USFS and CAL FIRE, provides emergency dispatching services through cooperative agreements with all the fire districts and cities within Nevada County.

4.20.2 Regulatory Setting

The County General Plan has several goals, polices, and programs of the Safety Element. Below is the applicable wildfire goal and associate policies:

Goal EP-10.1: *Provide a coordinate approach to hazards and disaster response preparedness.*

Policy EP-10.1.1: Ensure a coordinated, interagency program for disaster preparedness that will facilitate federal and state disaster assistance by planning for the reduction of the effects of natural hazards.

Policy EP-10.1.4: Provide for adequate evacuation routes in areas of high fire hazard, high potential for dam failure, earthquake, seiches, avalanche, flooding or other natural disaster.

Goal FP-10.7: *Enhance fire safety and improve fire protection effectiveness through infrastructure and service improvements.*

Policy FP-10.7.4: Research the feasibility of a countywide rural fire protection water system that provides a cost-effective, adequate water supply.

Policy FP-10.7.6: Encourage the upgrading of facilities within existing fire protection districts and encourage the expansion of existing districts where warranted by the population density allowed under the General Plan.

According to the map of Fire Hazard Severity Zones for Nevada County on the CAL FIRE website, the project site is in an area considered to be at High to Very High risk of fire severity (CAL FIRE 2019). While this may be of concern, because the project would be constructing a water pipeline within existing roadways to convey water to this area, the project would be maintained according to CAL FIRE standards.

4.20.3 Wildfire (XX) Environmental Checklist and Discussion

	Yes	No
Is the Project:		
Located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as high fire hazard severity zones?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Yes. The proposed project is located in a State Responsibility Area (SRA) classified as High and Very High risk.

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

a) Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. The Proposed project may require lane closures during construction. Project areas are assumed to be held to one lane open along the Rough and Ready Highway segment of the project. From the intersection of Rough and Ready Highway and Rough and Ready Road to the western end of the project some segments include narrow travel lanes and restricted shoulders. In these areas the travel lane will be limited with flaggers and traffic control routing traffic around construction activities. Wait times may be temporarily increased (depending on roadway size).

Implementation of **BMP 17** would reduce impacts to emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan to a less than significant level.

b-d) Less than Significant Impact/No Impact. Although the Proposed project is located in an SRA classified as High and Very High, the Proposed Project does not exacerbate an existing condition by the addition of structures, machinery, people, or recreational opportunities that would encourage the use of flammable materials or create situations that could lead to increase fire risk. The Proposed Project is intended to provide water for domestic use, fire protection, and emergency supplies in an area that currently relies on individual wells. The Project also includes the installation of new fire hydrants along the shoulder of the roadway at a minimum of every 1,000 feet. The Project would not require installation or maintenance of associated structures or buildings that would increase fire risk. In addition, the pipeline would be entirely underground. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not exacerbate wildfire risks and impacts would be less than significant.

4.20.3 Alternative Segment

The Alternative Segment is located near the western end of the proposed alignment, approximately 500 feet southwest of the proposed alignment, as shown in **Figure 2.2-2, Sheet 8**. The Alternative Segment would not increase fire risk above the proposed alignment and would not require any additional mitigation.

4.21 Mandatory Findings of Significance

4.21.1 Mandatory Findings of Significance (XXI) Environmental Checklist and Discussion

Does the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

As described in *Section 3.4 Biological Resources* of this document, biological resources on the site that could be affected by the proposed Project include special-status plants and wildlife resources, oak trees, and possibly waters of the U.S.

Recommended avoidance and minimization mitigation, such as required pre-construction surveys, WEAP training, disturbance buffers, BMPs, and alignment designed to avoid sensitive resources are included to ensure all potential impacts are mitigated to less than significant levels.

The Project will not cause a significant change to the quality of the environment. The majority of the pipeline will be installed within the existing ROW with only a few sections being cross country and the staging areas will take place in previously disturbed areas along the pipeline alignment. Potential impacts to surrounding biological resources will be temporary and the Proposed Project will not significantly alter existing conditions. Additionally, no waters or wetland are anticipated to be impacted by the Proposed Project area; however, to ensure that erosion and sedimentation during storm events are minimized, BMPs shall be installed during construction and left in place post construction until disturbed areas have re-established.

The Proposed Project will not substantially reduce fish habitat or wildlife species density. In addition, the Project will not substantially reduce wildlife habitat for species. Sediment control measure will be taken to minimize impacts to surrounding drainages. The majority of the Project is located on already developed or disturbed land.

As indicated in Section 3.5, Cultural Resources of this document, a full accounting of all potential cultural resources located within the APE was achieved through a records search and reconnaissance level field survey. The survey confirmed that the ground surface within the APE has been previously disturbed and developed. No potentially significant cultural resources were identified as a result of our efforts. Based on the negative results of the current investigation, as well as four previous studies within the APE, it is considered unlikely that there are intact cultural deposits within the APE. No further cultural resources study is warranted unless the design of the proposed Project changes. There is the possibility, although very remote, that subsurface archaeological deposits or human remains may exist in the APE, as archaeological sites and/or human remains may be buried with no surface manifestation.

If any cultural resources or human remains are encountered during construction, all construction activities will be halted, and a professional archeologist shall be consulted. These mitigation measures will reduce the potential impacts to less than significant levels.

Does the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
b) 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)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

According to Nevada County (2019), two projects are planned within three miles of the Proposed Project. These projects include Moore Tentative Parcel Map application the Western Gateway Bike Park. The Moore Tentative Parcel Map application proposed to divide a 128.15-acre parcel into four residential parcels and a designated Remainder. The subject property, previously part of a larger holding called “Kenny Ranch”, is designated in the County General Plan as Planned Development (PD). The General Plan

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designation forecasted 22 acres of Community Commercial, five acres of Business Park, 18 acres of Rural and 215 acres of Residential with Open Space as the remainder of acreage. The Western Gateway Bike Park Project will extend the existing Western Gateway Park with the addition of a designated bike park. Bike Park element would be located in the western part of the Park with the closest features being a minimum of 80 feet from the Park’s western property line. Trails/tracks would range from 18 to 36 inches wide.

Both the Moore and Western Gateway Bike Park projects have been approved but have not yet been developed. It is unlikely that either of these projects will be constructed within the same schedule as the Proposed Project thus, because construction will not be simultaneous, the projects would not cause a cumulatively considerable impact to traffic, noise, dust, or other resources when considered in conjunction with the proposed Project.

Does the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
c) Have environmental effects that will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

As discussed throughout this document, the Proposed Project operation would not include uses that would result in substantial adverse effects on human beings.

Potential impacts to human beings include increase in ambient noises during construction and increases in particulate matter (dust) in the air during construction. Both impacts are considered temporary and will be mitigated through incorporation of mitigation measures and BMPs. Specifically, to the extent feasible, construction activities will be limited to daylight or normal working hours to mitigate disturbance from temporary increases in noise during construction. The monitoring, mitigation and reporting program shall be followed to ensure compliance with said measures. In addition, the Project provides the option for treated water to properties that are currently only served by individual wells or local water systems.

Direct and indirect impacts to human beings would be less than significant with the implementation of mitigation measures and BMPs listed in this Initial Study.

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SECTION 7.0 LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix A – Air Quality/Climate Change Technical Report

Appendix B – Biological Resources Assessment

Appendix C – Cultural Resources Assessment (**CONFIDENTIAL**) – **NOT INCLUDED FOR PUBLIC CIRCULATION**

Appendix D – Noise Assessment

