The Old Road over Santa Clara River and the Southern Pacific Transportation Company Bridge, et al. Project

LOS ANGELES COUNTY, CALIFORNIA
DISTRICT 7 – LA – BRLS-5953(601) & STPL-5953(682)

Draft Environmental Impact Report/ Environmental Assessment

Prepared by the
California Department of Transportation
and Los Angeles County Department of Public Works

The environmental review, consultation, and any other actions required by applicable federal environmental laws for this project are being, or have been, carried out by California Department of Transportation pursuant to 23 United States Code 327 and the Memorandum of Understanding dated May 27, 2022, and executed by Federal Highway Administration and California Department of Transportation.

February 2024

General Information About This Document

What is in this document:

California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), as assigned by Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), has prepared this Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment (EIR/EA), which examines the potential environmental impacts of the alternatives being considered for The Old Road over Santa Clara River and the Southern Pacific Transportation Company Bridge, et al. Project (proposed project) located in Los Angeles County, California. Caltrans is the lead agency under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Los Angeles County Public Works is the lead agency for the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The document explains why the project is being proposed, what alternatives have been considered for the project, and how the existing environment could be affected by the project. It also describes the potential impacts of each of the alternatives, and proposed avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures.

What you should do:

Please read this Draft EIR/EA.

The document is available to download at the Los Angeles County Public Works website at: https://pw.lacounty.gov/pmd/TheOldRoad-over-SantaClaraRiver/

Should a hardcopy be required, it may be provided upon request via the contact provided below. A hardcopy will be available at Los Angeles County Public Works Headquarters (900 S. Fremont Ave. Alhambra, CA 91803)

Attend a public meeting in person or virtually on: March 14, 2024

We would like to hear what you think. If you have comments about the proposed project, please attend and submit your comments at the public meeting and/or send your written comments to Los Angeles County Public Works by the deadline. Send comments via postal mail to: Los Angeles County Public Works, Attn: Ebigalle Voigt, 900 S Fremont Ave, Alhambra, CA 91803 or via email to theoldroadeir@pw.lacounty.gov (preferred).

Be sure to send comments by the deadline: April 11, 2024

What happens next:

After comments are received from the public and reviewing agencies, Caltrans, as assigned by FHWA, may: (1) give environmental approval to the proposed project, (2) do additional environmental studies, or (3) abandon the project. If the project is given environmental approval and funding is obtained, LACPW could design and construct all or part of the project.

Alternative formats:

For individuals with sensory disabilities, this document can be made available in Braille, in large print, on audiocassette, or on computer disk. To obtain a copy in one of these alternate formats, please call or write to Ebigalle Voigt, 900 S Fremont Ave, Alhambra, CA 91803 or via email to evoigt@dpw.lacounty.gov.

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SCH No. 2023030209
BRLS-5953(601) &
STPL-5953(682)

The Old Road over Santa Clara River and the Southern Pacific Transportation Company Bridge, et al. Project would widen and improve The Old Road between Henry Mayo Drive and Magic Mountain Parkway in northern Los Angeles County.

DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT/ ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Submitted Pursuant to: (State) Division 13, California Public Resources Code
(Federal) 42 USC 4332(2)(C)

The California Department of Transportation
and
Los Angeles County Public Works

Cooperating Agencies: United States Fish and Wildlife Service, United States Army Corps of Engineers
Responsible Agencies: California Transportation Commission, California Department of Fish and Wildlife

February 26, 2024
Date

Kelly Ewing-Toledo
District 7 Deputy Director
Division of Environmental Planning
California Department of Transporation
NEPA Lead Agency

February 26, 2024
Date

Hank Fung
Transportation Planning and Programs Division
Los Angeles County Public Works
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The following persons may be contacted for more information about this document:

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Summary

NEPA Assignment

California participated in the "Surface Transportation Project Delivery Pilot Program" (Pilot Program) pursuant to 23 USC 327, for more than five years, beginning July 1, 2007, and ending September 30, 2012. MAP-21 (P.L. 112-141), signed by President Obama on July 6, 2012, amended 23 USC 327 to establish a permanent Surface Transportation Project Delivery Program. As a result, the Department entered into a Memorandum of Understanding pursuant to 23 USC 327 (NEPA Assignment MOU) with FHWA. The NEPA Assignment MOU became effective October 1, 2012, and was renewed on May 27, 2022, for a term of ten years. In summary, the Department continues to assume FHWA responsibilities under NEPA and other federal environmental laws in the same manner as was assigned under the Pilot Program, with minor changes. With NEPA Assignment, FHWA assigned and the Department assumed all of the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) Secretary's responsibilities under NEPA. This assignment includes projects on the State Highway System and Local Assistance Projects off the State Highway System within the State of California, except for certain categorical exclusions that FHWA assigned to the Department under the 23 USC 326 CE Assignment MOU, projects excluded by definition, and specific project exclusions.

Joint NEPA/CEQA Document

The project is subject to federal, as well as Los Angeles County and state environmental review requirements because the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works proposes the use of federal funds from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and/or the project requires an approval from FHWA. Project documentation, therefore, has been prepared in compliance with both the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The Los Angeles County Department of Public Works is the project proponent and the lead agency under CEQA. FHWA's responsibility for environmental review, consultation, and any other actions required by applicable Federal environmental laws for this project are being, or have been, carried out by Caltrans pursuant to 23 United States Code Section 327 (23 USC 327) and the Memorandum of Understanding dated May 27, 2022, and executed by FHWA and Caltrans. With NEPA Assignment, FHWA assigned and the Department assumed all of the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) Secretary's responsibilities under NEPA. This assignment includes projects on the State Highway System and Local Assistance Projects off the State Highway System within the State of California, except for certain categorical exclusions that FHWA assigned to the Department under the 23 USC 326 CE Assignment MOU, projects excluded by definition, and specific project exclusions.

Some impacts determined to be significant under CEQA may not lead to a determination of significance under NEPA. Because NEPA is concerned with the significance of the project as a whole, often a "lower level" document is prepared for NEPA. One of the most common joint document types is an Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment (EIR/EA).

After receiving comments from the public and reviewing agencies, a Final EIR/EA will be prepared. The Los Angeles County Department of Public Works and the Department may prepare additional environmental and/or engineering studies to address comments. The Final EIR/EA will include responses to comments received on the Draft EIR/EA and will identify the preferred alternative. If the decision is made to approve the project, a Notice of Determination will be published for compliance with CEQA, and the Department will decide whether to issue a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) or require an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

for compliance with NEPA. A Notice of Availability (NOA) of the FONSI will be sent to the affected units of federal, state, and local government, and to the State Clearinghouse in compliance with Executive Order 12372.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Los Angeles County Public Works (LACPW) proposes to implement The Old Road over Santa Clara River and the Southern Pacific Transportation Company Bridge (SPT Co.) Bridge, et al. Project (proposed project), in Los Angeles County, California. Caltrans is the lead agency responsible for the NEPA, and LACPW is the lead agency under the CEQA for review and approval.

The proposed project is located within a variable 140 to 160-foot-wide ROW that runs in a north/south direction, parallel to I-5 through the Santa Clarita Valley. The roadway's southern terminus is the junction of San Fernando Road and Sierra Highway in Los Angeles County; the northerly terminus is roughly at Oak Court in the unincorporated community of Castaic (north of Lake Hughes Road). Major intersections along The Old Road within the project limits include Sky View Lane, Rye Canyon Road, the I-5 southbound ramps, Henry Mayo Drive, and the State Route (SR) 126 overcrossing.

The approximately 2-mile segment of the proposed project is in the unincorporated community of Stevenson Ranch in the northern part of Los Angeles County, as well as the City of Santa Clarita. Thus, the project area is subject to the policies in the Los Angeles County General Plan and the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan, which are components of the Los Angeles County General Plan. The project area also is subject to policies in the City of Santa Clarita General Plan. The land use within the project corridor is primarily commercial, with industrial areas to the north, and residential areas to the south and west of the project area.

The proposed project is considering one Build Alternative and a No-Build Alternative. The Build Alternative consists of reconstruction and widening of The Old Road, replacement of two bridges, reconstruction and widening of Rye Canyon Road, and reconstruction and widening of Sky View Lane, including reconfiguration of its intersection with The Old Road. Bicycle lanes, raised medians, sidewalks, and barriers to separate pedestrians from the travel way would also be constructed. Fiber optic communication along The Old Road would be installed and utilities would be relocated as needed. Reconstruction of existing drainage facilities and catch basins, as well as and construction of new drainage facilities and catch basins would be completed as needed.

The purpose of the proposed project is to address deficiencies within the project area and improve the adjacent roadway system. The adjacent roadway system includes the connecting roads and intersections to the Old Road. The purpose of the project is to relieve congestion, increase regional roadway capacity to accommodate the expected future traffic growth projections, enhance traffic and road safety, upgrade structural safety, and meet jurisdictional goals and policies for the project area. Current intersections and traffic demand in the proposed project area meet or exceeds roadway capacity for many of the arterial roadways. Substantial increases in traffic demand are anticipated over the next few years based on projected growth in the area. The Old Road over the Santa Clara River Bridge is currently not high enough to allow the volume of water of a LACPW Capital Flood event (defined as a 50-year burned and bulked storm) to pass under it, and the bridge currently is classified as Structurally Deficient per FHWA standards for seismic, flood, and highway design.

Other alternatives were considered but eliminated as they did not meet the proposed project's purpose and need. These alternatives are discussed in Section 1.3.4 below.

Project Impacts

Table S-1 summarizes and compares the effects of Alternative 1, the Build Alternative, and Alternative 2, the No-Build Alternative. The proposed project features and avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures to reduce the effects of the Build Alternative are also presented. A complete description of potential effects and recommended measures is provided in the specific sections of Chapters 2 and 3.

Table S-1: Summary of Impacts, Project Features, Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

Affected Resource	Potential Impact: No-Build Alternative	Potential Impact: Build Alternative	Project Features, Avoidance, Minimization, or Mitigation Measures
Existing and Future Land Use	None.	The Build Alternative design would require some right-of-way (ROW) acquisitions. It would avoid impacts on existing built land uses to the extent practicable and during final design, efforts would be undertaken to further minimize construction and operation impacts on existing and planned land uses.	**COM-1**: Maintain access and parking throughout construction. Before construction, LACPW would reconfigure access and parking to residential and commercial lots, to allow continued availability of that parking and access.
Consistency with State, Regional, and Local Plans and Programs	The No-Build Alternative is inconsistent with various goals and policies shown in Table 2-3, Consistency with Plans and Policies, including the SCAG FTIP, Connect SoCal, SCREMP, and 2012 County of Los Angeles Bicycle Master Plan.	None. The Build Alternative would be generally consistent with applicable plans and policies.	None.
Parks and Recreational Facilities	None.	None. The Build Alternative would include an extension of the Multi-Use Trail and would construct Class IV bike lanes, pedestrian pathways, and an equestrian trail, which would improve connectivity and increase recreational opportunities in the area. Construction activities would not restrict access to Six Flags Magic Mountain. No other	None.

Affected Resource	Potential Impact: No-Build Alternative	Potential Impact: Build Alternative	Project Features, Avoidance, Minimization, or Mitigation Measures
		park or recreation areas are in the immediate proposed project area; therefore, no impacts on parks and recreation would occur.	
Farmlands	None.	None. Under the Build Alternative, improvements to The Old Road would occur in areas designated as Prime and Unique Farmland. As shown in Table 2-4, Alternative 2 would result in impacts to Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, and Grazing Land as a result of partial acquisitions on those parcels. However, Potential impacts to farmland would be 1.08 acres of farmland conversion to a transportation use. This land is not currently utilized as farmland, and there are no future plans to utilize it for agricultural uses. The property owner, Newhall Land and Farming Company, intends to develop these parcels into a housing tract development known as Entrada North (Los Angeles County Tentative Tract Map Number [No.] 071377).	None.
Growth	None.	None. The Build Alternative improvements are not expected to influence travel behavior, trip patterns, or the attractiveness of some areas to development over others. This alternative would not remove an impediment to growth because it would	None.

Affected Resource	Potential Impact: No-Build Alternative	Potential Impact: Build Alternative	Project Features, Avoidance, Minimization, or Mitigation Measures
		not provide an entirely new public facility.	
Community Character and Cohesion	None.	None. The Build Alternative would be built along an existing transportation corridor and would not divide existing neighborhoods/communities. In addition, the Build Alternative would not result in adverse impacts being predominately borne by a minority or low-income population, nor would adverse impacts be appreciably more severe to these populations.	None.
Relocations and Real Property Acquisition	None.	Under the Build Alternative, temporary construction, permanent drainage, and roadway ROW easements would be required on portions of several properties within the proposed project boundaries. A summary of the APNs, street address, current owner, current occupant or land use, and ROW acquisition type of each parcel within the proposed project boundaries is shown in Table 2-11. At this preliminary stage of Build Alternative design, the Build Alternative is anticipated to require one full property acquisition; partial property acquisitions from 13 properties; and 20 temporary construction easements to accommodate roadway widening. All property owners and tenants will be made aware of any potential impacts to businesses and all businesses would be able to remain open during	**REL-1:** Where acquisition is unavoidable, the provisions of the Uniform Act and the 1987 Amendments, as implemented by the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Regulations for Federal and Federally Assisted Programs adopted by USDOT (March 2, 1989) and where applicable, the California Public Park Preservation Act of 1971, will be followed. An appraisal of the affected property will be obtained, and an offer for the full appraisal will be made. **REL-2:** Advance notice would be provided to property owners and business owners on the proposed project construction schedule to minimize disruptions.

Affected Resource	Potential Impact: No-Build Alternative	Potential Impact: Build Alternative	Project Features, Avoidance, Minimization, or Mitigation Measures
		Build Alternative construction. The actual impacts to properties will be determined during the Build Alternative's final design phase. The Build Alternative would require the full acquisition of one vacant parcel and partial acquisitions from vacant, public utility, and commercial/industrial properties. Adverse impacts as a result of relocations and property acquisition are anticipated, and the property owner would be compensated for its loss in the property under the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970. Throughout the proposed project area, TCEs would be needed for construction access and staging. No residential or commercial properties would be displaced, and no relocation of residential units would be required with implementation of the Build Alternative.	
Environmental Justice	None.	None. The Build Alternative would not cause disproportionately high and adverse effects on any minority or low-income populations in accordance with the provisions of EO 12898.	None.
Utilities/Emergency Services	None.	All utility service and emergency services/access will be maintained during construction. It would not result in long-term effects to utilities or emergency services. No impacts would occur on emergency services under the Build Alternative.	**COM-2:** Provision will be made for motorist information (i.e., existing changeable message signs [CMSs], portable CMSs, stationary ground mounted signs). **COM-3:** Incorporation of traffic circulation construction strategies will be implemented (i.e., lane closure restrictions during

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		Utilities within the proposed project boundary include electrical poles and cables, gas lines, oil lines, communication lines, water lines, and sanitation lines. Utilities that are currently located overhead would be placed underground. Where possible, some utility lines would be preserved in place and encased in concrete, while others would be relocated. The contractor would make the final determination during construction. Utility relocations would not exceed a maximum depth of 30 feet and would not go outside of the footprint of the existing ROW. LACPW would keep residents, businesses, community facilities, the surrounding community, and any service providers in the affected area informed about the proposed project construction schedule and traffic-affected areas, following traffic notification procedures.	holidays and special local events, closure of secondary streets during construction to allow quick construction and reopening, lane modification to maintain the number of lanes needed, allowing night work and extended weekend work, maintaining business access, and maintaining pedestrian and bicycle access). **COM-4:** Implementation of alternate and detour routes strategies, and street/intersection improvements will occur (e.g., widening, pavement rehabilitation, removal of median), to provide added capacity to handle detour traffic; signal improvements; make adjustments in signal timing, and/or signal coordination to increase vehicle throughput, improve traffic flow, and optimize intersection capacity; set restrictions at intersections and roadways necessary to reduce congestion and improve safety; and enforce parking restrictions on alternate and detour routes during work hours to increase capacity, reduce traffic conflicts, and improve access. **COM-5:** Close coordination will occur with utility service providers and emergency service providers, and a public outreach program will be implemented to minimize impacts on surrounding communities.
Traffic and Transportation/Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities	None.	The Build Alternative would widen The Old Road from Magic Mountain Parkway north to Henry Mayo Drive near the SR-126/I-5 interchange and	As discussed in Section 2.2.9, AMMs COM-2 through COM-4 would be implemented to reduce or eliminate temporary effects on traffic and emergency

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		replace two bridges along The Old Road (one over Santa Clara River and another over Union Pacific Railroad [UPRR] tracks). The Build Alternative would also include an extension of the existing Multi-Use Trail, which would include bike lanes, a paved pedestrian path, and an equestrian trail. The widening of Rye Canyon is assumed to have been completed by 2026 as part of the Build Alternative; therefore, the Build conditions reflect widenings of the Old Road and Rye Canyon Road. The proposed project would not alter the alignment of The Old Road or any other roadways. However, temporary impacts to traffic would occur during construction of the proposed project.	services. Once operational, the proposed project would improve traffic flow and, therefore, enhance emergency access in the area. As such, impacts would be less than significant with mitigation.
Visual/Aesthetics	None.	There would be short-term and temporary impacts to visual resources during the construction of the Build Alternative. Construction activities including removing existing vegetation, construction equipment, staging areas, and materials; and the construction site itself would have adverse effects on the visual environment for some viewer groups. Construction is anticipated to occur during the day. Any nighttime activities would be limited, but it would be necessary to provide construction lighting at night that could potentially add new sources of light and glare for residents and	**VIS-1**: Directional lighting aimed downward at the construction site will be used during proposed project construction where appropriate within the proposed project construction area. **VIS-2**: A textured finish on the proposed retaining wall on Rye Canyon Road at I-5 will be included to discourage graffiti.

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		motorists. Operational impacts would not be adverse.	
Cultural Resources	None.	There is a potential for previously unknown cultural and historical resources to be discovered during construction of the Build Alternative.	**CR-1:** All workers must participate in a Worker Environmental Awareness Program for cultural resources. Sign-in sheets will be maintained to document completion of the program by each worker. This program can be administered in person by or under the supervision of a Secretary of Interior (SOI) qualified archaeologist or through screening of a video/slide presentation prepared by a SOI-qualified archaeologist and overseen by an on-site manager. Contractor education will include the legal framework protecting cultural resources, typical kinds of cultural resources that may be found during construction, artifacts that would be considered potentially significant, and proper procedures and notifications if cultural resources are discovered. The training will review types of cultural resources and artifacts that would be considered potentially significant to support operator recognition of these materials during construction. Contingent upon the results of AB 52 consultation, Native American representatives shall be afforded the opportunity to participate in the cultural resource training to provide project personnel with tribal perspectives on working in areas sensitive for Tribal Cultural Resources. CR-2: If cultural materials are discovered during construction, all earthmoving activity

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			within 50 feet of the find will be diverted until a SOI-qualified archaeologist can assess the significance of the find and, if necessary, develop appropriate treatment measures.**CR-3:** If human remains are discovered, State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 states that further disturbances and activities will cease in any area or nearby area suspected to overlie remains, and the County Coroner will be contacted. Pursuant to PRC Section 5097.98, if the remains are thought to be Native American, the Coroner will notify the California Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC), which will then notify the Most Likely Descendant (MLD). At this time, the person who discovered the remains will also contact the District 7 Environmental Branch Chief so that they may work with the MLD on the respectful treatment and disposition of the remains. Further provisions of PRC Section 5097.98 are to be followed as applicable.
Hydrology and Floodplain	None.	The Build Alternative is anticipated to cause a maximum increase of 6 inches to the FEMA 100-year BFE. Hydraulic Analysis results indicated that BFEs decreased upstream of the proposed bridge compared to existing conditions. Additionally, results showed no rise in BFEs downstream of river station 8714.1. The corresponding increase in the horizontal extents of the existing base floodplain is maximum of 5 feet in width, occurring predominantly within	**HYD-1:** Any disturbed aquatic or wetland habitat would need to be restored or enhanced from existing conditions such as revegetation, BMPs, and other applicable actions that meet the requirements of the environmental permitting of the proposed project. Where temporary disturbance areas are unavoidable, the disturbance would be minimized to the maximum extent possible, and the area would be restored or enhanced as compared to existing conditions upon completion of the bridge construction. Permanent impact areas

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		the floodplains upstream of the I-5 Bridge.	would be mitigated by restoring and enhancing nearby degraded areas of wetland/riparian habitat. **HYD-2:** The proposed The Old Road Bridge would be designed to maintain current or improved levels of fish passage in the mainstem of Santa Clara River. The Old Road Bridge would also be designed such that the proposed piles would not encroach into the active channel during the summer construction season from June through September.
Water Quality and Storm Water Runoff	None.	Implementation of the Build Alternative would involve temporary soil disturbance during construction activities (i.e., building the roadways and bike lanes, associated curbs and gutters, sidewalks, wheelchair ramps, driveways, bridges, retaining walls, storm drainage improvements and bioswales, and relocating utilities). Approximately 54 acres of soil would be disturbed for construction of the Build Alternative. Implementation of the Build Alternative would result in a net increase of approximately 43 acres of impervious area.	Storm water management for the proposed project includes both short-term (construction phase) and long-term (postconstruction/maintenance) measures. Short-term measures focus on implementing construction site BMPs designed to reduce erosion and subsequent sediment transport; long-term measures consider factors such as increased storm water runoff caused by the added impervious surface. Compliance with the standard requirements of the Construction General Permit and the County Municipal Permit for potential short-term and long-term impacts (listed below in AMMs WQ-1 and WQ-2) would be required. **WQ-1:** In accordance with the Construction General Permit, Order WQ 2022-0057-DWQ, NPDES NO. CAS000002, a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) would be prepared and implemented to

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			address all construction-related activities, equipment, and materials that have the potential to impact water quality. The SWPPP would identify the sources of pollutants that may affect the quality of storm water; include construction site BMPs to control pollutants and sediment; and provide for construction materials management and non-stormwater BMPs. All construction site BMPs would follow the latest edition of the Los Angeles County Public Works Construction Site BMP Manual to control and minimize the impacts of construction-related activities, materials, and pollutants on the watershed. These BMPs include temporary sediment controls, temporary soil stabilization, scheduling management, waste management, materials handling, and other non-stormwater BMPs. **WQ-2:** In compliance with Municipal Permit Order No. R4-2021-0105 requirements, a final project-specific Standard Urban Storm Water Mitigation Plan would be prepared. Bioswales would be constructed in roadway medians to provide water quality treatment in addition to conveying storm water runoff. Swales provide pollutant removal through settling and filtration in the vegetation lining the channels and also provide the opportunity for volume reduction through infiltration and evapotranspiration.

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			DSAs, including slopes, would be reseeded using a California native plant seed blend. An erosion control seed mix (hydroseed) would be applied on all select material areas and slopes flatter than 1:1. Erosion control (bonded fiber matrix) would be applied on all cut slopes steeper than 1:1. As vegetation establishes in disturbed areas and cut slopes stabilize, potential for suspended sediments coming from the proposed project area into receiving waters would gradually be reduced.
Geology/Soils/Seismic/Topography	None.	Construction and Operation of the Build Alternative would not be anticipated to cause visual impacts to the geologic or topographic features in the proposed project vicinity. Proposed improvements associated with the Build Alternative would improve safety by adding bike lanes, a pedestrian path, and an equestrian trail, and enhancing roadway and bridge safety.	None.
Paleontology	None.	There are no known recorded fossil locations within one mile of the project. However, during construction, the Built Alternative could have direct or indirect impacts on paleontological resources, particularly at depth (where drilling or augering takes place) as well as any ground disturbance in the old terrace sediments mapped as Qog.	**PAL-1:** Paleontological Resources Monitoring and Mitigation Plan. Prior to construction-related excavations, a qualified paleontologist meeting the 2010 Society of Vertebrate Paleontology standards shall be retained to develop a Paleontological Resources Monitoring and Mitigation Plan (PRIMMP). The plan shall address qualifications of paleontological monitors and shall stipulate that the qualified paleontologist and the

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			paleontological resource monitors are empowered to stop excavation activity in order to investigate or safely remove possible fossils. The plan shall incorporate findings of the project geotechnical report and construction plans to formulate what construction activities should be monitored and shall include wet screening of boring or drilling spoils. Many paleontological mitigation efforts have recovered significant paleontological resources, especially microvertebrate fossils, from screening of such spoils. It shall also address unexpected discoveries of paleontological resources. **PAL-2:** Paleontological Monitoring and Mitigation of Impacts from Construction. The qualified paleontologist shall attend the preconstruction meeting and shall present a worker environmental awareness program (WEAP) to the construction crew. The WEAP shall discuss the types of fossils that may potentially be uncovered during project excavations, laws protecting paleontological resources, and appropriate actions to be taken when fossils are discovered. The qualified paleontologist shall see that the PRIMMP instructions are implemented. The qualified paleontologist shall produce a final paleontological monitoring report that discusses the paleontological monitoring program, any paleontological discoveries, and the preparation, curation, and accessioning of any fossils into a suitable paleontological repository.

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Tribal Cultural Resource	None.	In compliance with AB 52, the NAHC was contacted in July 2018, briefly describing the proposed project, attaching a map showing the APE, and asking the NAHC to review its Sacred Lands File (SLF) for any Native American cultural resources that potentially could be affected by the proposed project. A request also was made for the CEQA Tribal Consultation List, which includes the names of Native Americans who may have information or concerns about the APE and have requested notice about projects from CEQA lead agencies. Sixteen representatives from 11 tribes were contacted in support of AB 52 consultation. Tribes were provided with project updates and the opportunity to review proposed Extended Phase I Testing Plans. As a result, representatives from the Barbareno/Ventureno Band of Mission Indians (BVBMI), Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians (FTBMI), Gabrieleno/Tongva San Gabriel Band of Mission Indians (GTSGBMI), Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians (Santa Ynez), and Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation (formerly San Manuel Band of Mission Indians) (San Manuel) engaged in consultation efforts. As a result, the FTBMI participated in monitoring of Extended Phase I testing in the APE.	As discussed in Section 2.2.12, the Archaeological Survey Report (AECOM 2023g) determined that no precontact archaeological resources have been previously recorded in the APE. In addition, the Archaeological Survey Report (AECOM 2023g) and XPI investigation (AECOM 2023) determined that the project does exhibit archaeological sensitivity but the potential to encounter intact archaeological deposits is low. No tribal cultural resources were identified within the APE as a result of tribal consultation, though the APE does exhibit sensitivity for tribal cultural resources. AMM **CR-1** and **CR-2** would further reduce the potential for impacts to archaeological or tribal cultural resources during construction. In addition, AMM **CR-3** would further reduce the potential for the disturbance of human remains and provides guidance in the event that any human remains are discovered during construction. Based on the consultation and research listed above, as well as the AMMs, impacts would be less than significant with mitigation.

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Hazardous Waste/Materials	None.	With the exception of soil in the vicinity of boring B97 and B103. AMMs would be incorporated for the excavation and transport of soils oto an appropriate disposal facility, the soil within the remainder of the Phase II project limits is considered as nonhazardous/ unrestricted or suitable for reuse onsite. The Build Alternative would avoid impacts on hazardous wastes or materials to the extent practicable while adhering to design and operational criteria to maintain a safe roadway.	**HAZ-1:** If the plugged oil/gas well within the central portion of the proposed project is disturbed during construction of the proposed project, it would need to be re-abandoned in accordance with current California Geologic Energy Management Division (CalGEM)regulations. In addition, as a result of the informal agreement between CalGEM and LACPW's Environmental Programs Division (EPD), a gas mitigation plan would need to be obtained and submitted to CalGEM. **HAZ-2:** Crude oil/liquid petroleum pipelines run along The Old Road within the proposed project. If the pipelines are to be exposed and/or relocated, impacts to the subsurface may be encountered. Impacts to the subsurface discovered from these pipelines and any repairs to the pipelines would be the responsibility of the pipeline owner. **HAZ-3:** The proposed project includes upgrades to traffic signal equipment and relocation/installation of traffic pole standards and traffic signal equipment as necessary due to new lane configurations, which may generate universal wastes and electronic wastes (E-wastes). Universal wastes and E-wastes generated as part of the proposed project should be properly disposed in accordance with applicable regulations. **HAZ-4:** Aerially deposited lead (ADL) may be present in the unpaved areas adjacent

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			to the roadway, which, if disturbed should be evaluated to ensure worker safety. If excavated/excess soils are to be transported from the area of the proposed project, they should be sampled and handled in accordance with applicable regulations to ensure worker safety and for classification purposes. The potential presence of ADL will be addressed during the Plan, Specifications, & Estimates (PS&E) phase of the proposed project and would be handled in accordance with LACPW Special Provisions. A Lead Compliance Plan under LACPW Special Provisions would be required during construction when handling lead contaminated soils. **HAZ-5:** The proposed project includes the replacement of two bridges (over Santa Clara River and the abandoned UPRR tracks). Demolition of the two existing bridges will be subject to the National Emissions Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants regulations. The regulations require notification to the delegated air district prior to demolition of concrete structures regardless of whether asbestos was detected. The regulations require that an Asbestos-containing material (ACM) Survey be conducted and that the Survey report be part of the notification submittal to the regulatory agency. The ACM Survey should be conducted by a Certified Asbestos Consultant (CAC), and samples should be collected from concrete, brown fibrous expansion joint fill material, and

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			other materials the CAC suspects to contain asbestos. **HAZ-6:** Suspect lead-based paint (LBP) associated with painted curbs, poles, protective bollards, and fire hydrants within the proposed project including railings, fencing, metal beams, and other exposed metal elements associated with the bridges should be sampled and handled in accordance with applicable regulations to ensure worker safety and for classification purposes. The removal and testing of bridge paint and pavement markings including painted curbs will be managed during construction under specific LACPW Special Provisions. A Lead Compliance Plan under LACPW Special Provision would be required during construction when removal of lead-based paint, thermoplastic, painted traffic stripe, and/or pavement marking. **HAZ-7:** Thermoplastic paint and yellow-painted traffic stripes/pavement markings, which typically contain lead chromate, have been used for marking within the proposed project (roadway and curbs) and, as such, would require special removal, handling, and disposal. The removal and testing of all thermoplastic paint and pavement markings will be managed during construction under LACPW Special Provisions.

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			HAZ-8: Utility relocations are needed at several intersections proposed for improvements along The Old Road due to widening of The Old Road and for the proposed bridge improvements. The proposed project would also include the reconstruction of existing drainage facilities and catch basins and construction of new drainage facilities and catch basins, as needed. Dewatering activities are not anticipated as part of the utility relocations within the proposed project. **HAZ-9:** If soil in the area of the abandoned UPRR railroad tracks and proposed Multi-Use Trail extension is planned for excavation and off-site disposal as part of the proposed project, soil should be sampled and analyzed for the potential presence of petroleum hydrocarbons, volatile organic compounds (VOCs), metals, herbicides, and pesticides. During construction, soil excavations conducted on-site should be monitored for visible soil staining and odor. Impacted soil should be disposed off-site in accordance with pertinent local, state, and federal regulatory guidelines. **HAZ-10:** Treated Waste Wood (TWW) such as utility poles, roadside wooden signposts, metal beam guardrail posts, or former railroad ties should be handled properly in accordance with applicable regulations and may require special removal, handling, and disposal. All TWW should be managed during construction

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			under LACPW Special Provisions if TWW is generated. **HAZ-11:** Contractors working at the proposed project or removing soil materials and/or groundwater from the proposed project site, should be aware of appropriate handling and disposal methods or options. Higher levels of potential contaminants could be present at some locations; therefore, material moved or removed may require individual or specific testing to verify it is at levels below regulatory action limits. **HAZ-12**: It is anticipated that construction of the bridge piles could encounter groundwater based on the 1997 Seismic Hazard Report for the Newhall Quadrangle. Therefore, the slurry displacement method of construction will be utilized and will be specified in Section B of the bridge specifications. Once groundwater is encountered, drilling slurry would be placed in the hole to an elevation of 10 feet above the groundwater. As drilling progresses, drilling slurry would be added to the hole to maintain the same elevation of 10 feet above the groundwater. The slurry displacement method would contain any debris with concrete barriers and plastic sheeting. Groundwater is not anticipated from the slurry displacement method of construction, and any debris will be placed into Baker tanks.

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			HAZ-13: California Government Code Section 4216 requires that any operator or excavator call Underground Services Alert of California ("DigAlert") 2 working days before any planned excavation by dialing 811. Delineation of the proposed excavation area is mandatory. The area to be excavated should be marked with water soluble or chalk-based white paint on paved surfaces or with other suitable markings such as flags or stakes on unpaved areas prior to calling DigAlert. **HAZ-14:** A site-specific Health and Safety Plan (HSP) should be prepared consistent with LACPW Special Provisions. The HSP should include identification of key personnel; summary of risk assessment for workers, the community, and the environment; air monitoring plan; and emergency response plan. **HAZ-15:** As is the case for any project that proposes excavation, the potential exists for unknown hazardous contamination to be revealed during project construction. For any previously unknown hazardous waste/material encountered during construction, the procedures outlined in LACPW Special Provisions and Procedures should be followed and implemented during construction activities as well as SCAQMD Rule 1166 and SCAQMD Rule 1466. **HAZ-16:** During construction activities, Best Management Practices (BMPs)

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			should be implemented including temporary construction site BMPs and the regulatory permit compliance component for the State's Construction General Permit for applicability of a SWPPP (based in part on the soil DSAs shown on the phased plans) and compliance with the County's MS4 NPDES permit as well as adherence to the County's Construction Site BMP Manual and SWPPP preparation manual. All the storm water requirements specified are a standard contract requirement specified in Section EC.
Air Quality	None.	The Build Alternative would result in higher pollutant emissions relating to construction emissions than the No-Build Alternative because the no-build alternative would not result in construction emissions at all. Regarding operational emissions, the Build Alternative would result in lower gaseous criteria pollutant (NO_X, CO, and ROG/VOC) emissions than the No-Build Alternative and Existing Conditions because of improvements in vehicle delay and turnover of the regional vehicle fleet. Slight increases in PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ emissions are attributed to fugitive dust associated with break wear, tire wear, and resuspended road dust, which combined constitute over 90% of PM emissions from vehicle travel on roadways.	**AQ-1:** Construction Emissions. Site preparation and roadway construction would involve clearing, cut-and-fill activities, grading, removing or improving existing roadways, and paving roadway surfaces. During construction, short-term degradation of air quality is expected from the release of particulate emissions (airborne dust) generated by excavation, grading, hauling, and other activities related to construction. Implementation of the following avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures would minimize construction emissions: • The construction contractor must comply with LACPW Special Provisions in Section 14-9 (2018). Section 14-9-02 specifically requires compliance by the contractor with all applicable laws and regulations related to air quality, including air pollution control district and air quality

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			management district regulations and local ordinances. • Construction equipment and vehicles will be properly tuned and maintained. All construction equipment will use low-sulfur fuel as required by Title 17, CCR, Section 93114. • The construction contractor must comply with SCAQMD rules, including Rule 401 (Visible Emissions), Rule 402 (Nuisance), Rule 403 (Fugitive Dust), and Rule 1403 (Asbestos Emissions from Demolition/Renovation Activities). • Diesel-powered off-road equipment will limit idling in accordance with the ARB "Regulation for In-Use Off-Road Diesel-Fueled Fleets" (Title 13, CCR, Section 2449) and Approved Amendments. • Diesel-powered on-road vehicles and trucks will limit idling in accordance with the ARB "Airborne Toxic Control Measure to Limit Diesel-Fueled Commercial Motor Vehicle Idling" (Title 13, CCR, Section 2485)."
Noise	None.	None. Construction equipment is expected to generate noise levels ranging from 70 to 90 dB at a distance of 50 feet, and noise produced by construction equipment would be reduced over distance at a rate of about 6 dB per doubling of distance.	None.

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		No adverse noise impacts from construction are anticipated because construction would be conducted in accordance with Caltrans Standard Specifications Section 14.8-02. Construction noise would be short-term, intermittent, and overshadowed by local traffic noise.	
Energy	None.	None. The Build Alternative is not anticipated to result in adverse direct energy impacts during construction. Energy consumption during construction would be conserved and minimized to the maximum extent feasible. Energy conservation in construction activities is assumed, as the construction contractor would have a financial incentive and statutory mandate to minimize waste and externalities, respectively. Operationally, the Build Alternative would enable The Old Road corridor to maximize productivity through improvements to the capacity of the roadway lanes allowing for more flexibility in traffic movement and higher efficiencies. In addition, the Build Alternative would construct a Class IV bikeway, which would improve safety for cyclists and provide additional options for non-motorized travel.	None.
Natural Communities	None.	Implementation of the Build Alternative would result in permanent and temporary direct impacts to California	**VEG-1:** Bridge construction activities will occur during dry portions of the year to reduce impacts to the low flow channel.

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		Buckwheat Scrub, Fremont Cottonwood Forest and Woodland, and Elderberry Stand, which are summarized by acreage in Table 2-48. Indirect impacts to sensitive vegetation communities may also occur from construction and use of the Build Alternative. Temporary indirect impacts, such as construction fugitive dust (which can coat vegetation and reduce photosynthesis), sedimentation and erosion, and construction-generated trash/debris and unauthorized trespass could all adversely impact vegetation. The Build Alternative also has the potential for longer term impacts, such as the proliferation of invasive species through ground disturbing activities, which may indirectly degrade adjacent native vegetation communities. Indirect impacts may also occur in the form of increased potential for wildland fire and pollution in Santa Clara River. There is also the potential for disturbance to the root zones of adjacent native trees.	The limits of grading and temporary work areas will be demarked with construction exclusion fencing adjacent to areas with sensitive vegetation communities to avoid unintentional encroachment into these sensitive areas. Signage will be posted identifying the excluded areas as Environmentally Sensitive Areas. **VEG-2:** The project will incorporate storm drain systems to facilitate meeting water quality requirements and for stormwater management, which will minimize erosion and degradation of habitat around the bridge. **VEG-3:** Standard fugitive dust BMPs, and those required by a SWPPP, e.g., a water truck will be utilized to reduce impacts of construction-generated erosion and sedimentation into the adjacent Environmentally Sensitive Areas. **VEG-4:** BMPs will be implemented to ensure invasive plant material is not spread from the proposed project site to other areas by disposal off-site or by tracking seed on equipment, clothing, and shoes. Equipment/material imported from an area of invasive plants must be identified and measures must be implemented to prevent importation and spreading of non native plant material within the proposed project site. All construction equipment will be cleaned with water to remove dirt, seeds, vegetative material, or other debris that

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			could contain or hold seeds of noxious weeds before arriving to and leaving the proposed project site. Weeds removed will be appropriately bagged and disposed of in a sanitary landfill. **VEG-5:** A Vegetation Management and Restoration Plan will be prepared for agency review and approval prior to initiating project impacts. The final plan will include information and conditions listed in Section 2.4.1.3 of this document. Permanent and temporary impacts to sensitive vegetation communities will be compensated as specified below. **VEG-6:** Permanent and temporary impacts to sensitive vegetation communities will be replaced by creating or restoring habitats of similar functions and values in the BSA, or credits will be purchased through an applicable mitigation bank. Restoration will be in-kind and at a minimum 1:1 replacement ratio or other ratio determined in consultation with the resource agencies. All mitigation activities will be conducted in accordance with a Habitat Mitigation and Monitoring Plan due to USACE, RWQCB, and CDFW before the issuance of permits. The Habitat Mitigation and Monitoring Plan will outline the identification and location of areas that could be used for creation, restoration, or habitat enhancement. The plan will include lists of native plant species, by habitat-type, that may be used

Affected Resource	Potential Impact: No-Build Alternative	Potential Impact: Build Alternative	Project Features, Avoidance, Minimization, or Mitigation Measures
			in potential on-site revegetation efforts (e.g., planting and seeding). In addition, if needed to meet mitigation needs, the plan will identify opportunities for additional enhancements of habitats in temporary impact areas, such as supplemental planting of trees, weeding of adjacent buffer habitat, or other opportunities. The enhancement opportunities will include acreage estimates of treated areas, acreage of invasive removal, and figures to illustrate the treatment area and mapped invasive species. A habitat restoration specialist will determine the optimal areas for habitat establishment and restoration and prepare the Habitat Mitigation and Monitoring Plan that provides details on the concept. The plan will specifically discuss habitat restoration implementation, including plant establishment methods, performance standards, maintenance and monitoring period, and reporting. **VEG-7:** As an alternative to the restoration of habitats to compensate for permanent and/or temporary removal of riparian habitats, the applicant (at the discretion of USACE and CDFW) may remove exotic plant species from the BSA in the following locations: (1) where there is an infestation of exotics such as giant reed such that the natural habitat functions and values are substantially degraded and at risk, and where the cover of exotics is equal to or exceeds 25% of the ground; or (2) other areas where exotic removal would be strategic in a watershed approach to weed

Affected Resource	Potential Impact: No-Build Alternative	Potential Impact: Build Alternative	Project Features, Avoidance, Minimization, or Mitigation Measures
			management, as determined by USACE and CDFW. The weed removal sites will be selected in a logical manner to ensure that the eradication of weeds from specific sites will contribute to the overall control of exotics in the watercourses. Removal areas will be kept free of exotic plant species for 5 years after initial treatment. In addition, native riparian vegetation must become established through natural colonization and, after 5 years, meet the revegetation plant cover goals established by USACE and CDFW. **Migration Corridors** Avoidance and minimization measures, and compensatory mitigation, described previously under **VEG-1 through VEG-5,** would be implemented. These measures include use of BMPs and water trucks to minimize fugitive dust and other impacts. Compensation mitigation described previously for **VEG-6 and VEG-7** would be implemented. Additional measures would be incorporated based on input from the County of Los Angeles internal SEA impact review process. Additional measures may include the use of light shields to prevent light intrusion into adjacent natural habitats (especially along the Old Road Bridge over the Santa Clara River), measures to reduce the potential for avian roadkill, and measure to monitor wildlife movement under the expanded bridge to ensure connectivity is maintained.

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Wetlands and Other Waters	None.	The Build Alternative may permanently impact up to 0.05 acre, and temporarily impact 0.03 acre, of Waters of the U.S. (WOTUS). Indirect impact from bridge shading is 0.40 acre of WOTUS. Total impacts to CDFW-jurisdictional streambeds and riparian habitat include approximately 0.20 acre of permanent impacts and 0.13 acre of temporary impacts, as well as 0.94 acre of bridge shading and 0.014 acre due to bridge columns.	Avoidance and minimization measures, and compensatory mitigation, described previously under VEG-1 through VEG-5, would be implemented. These measures include use of BMPs and water trucks to minimize fugitive dust and other impacts. Compensation mitigation described previously for VEG-6 and VEG-7 would be implemented and provide the necessary compensation for impacts to the Santa Clara River. All mitigation activities will be conducted in accordance with a Habitat Mitigation and Monitoring Plan due to USACE, RWQCB, and CDFW as part of the regulatory permit process.
Plant Species	None.	There is the potential for permanent or temporary impacts to several California black walnut trees located in the vicinity of The Old Road Bridge. One Southern California black walnut would be directly removed or shaded out by expansion of the Old Road bridge. One additional Southern California black walnut is in close proximity to the LOD between the Old Road and I-5 but could likely be avoided by installation of environmental protective fencing. The five other Southern California black walnuts are located far enough away from the LOD (located on the east side of I-5) that they are unlikely to be impacted by the Build Alternative. 15 valley oak trees will be directly removed as a result of Build	Avoidance and minimization measures for potential impacts to the two Southern California black walnut trees in and around The Old Road Bridge are detailed below. **WALNUT-1:** The project is expected to directly impact one Southern California black walnut, and indirectly impact one additional tree. A pre-construction survey is required to fence the exact LOD, during which protective fencing will be placed around the one tree that may be indirectly impacted. If feasible, the one Southern California black walnut within the direct footprint of the expanded bridge will be transplanted and replanted outside of the LOD along the bank of Santa Clara River. In addition, because transplanting is not always successful, any Southern California black walnut trees that are directly impacted will be mitigated for at a 2:1 ratio

Affected Resource	Potential Impact: No-Build Alternative	Potential Impact: Build Alternative	Project Features, Avoidance, Minimization, or Mitigation Measures
		Alternative implementation and are subject to the Los Angeles County Oak Tree Ordinance. It may be necessary to obtain an oak tree permit for the permanent removal of the 15 valley oak trees.	(as individuals, not acreage). The mitigated trees are to be planted nearby at an acceptable location for this species. Ideally, any replacement may be grown in a nursery and re-planted before proposed project implementation. Otherwise, purchasing walnut plants from a native plant nursery would be acceptable, preferably from stock originating in Los Angeles County. Measures to minimize impacts to oak trees that will not be removed, but occur within proximity of construction activities, are provided below. These measures are intended to preserve and protect the remaining oak trees in the proposed project area. **OAK-1:** Protective Fencing. A plan will be developed for protecting oak trees during construction. The intent is to install protective fencing along the boundary of The Old Road ROW in areas adjacent to oak trees. For any oak trees located outside of The Old Road ROW, this plan will be approved by the Forestry Division of the County of Los Angeles. For any oak trees located within The Old Road ROW, this plan will be approved by LACPW. Equipment damage to limbs, trunks, and roots of all remaining trees will be avoided during proposed project construction. Even slight trunk injuries can result in susceptibility to long-term pathogenic maladies.

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			Protective fencing not less than 4 feet in height will be placed at the limits of The Old Road ROW where the protective zone of any individual oak tree or dense stand of oak trees within 200 feet of the grading limits. Oak tree protective fencing will be in accordance with the Los Angeles County Code, Chapter 22.176. The protective zone is defined as within the dripline of an oak tree and extending from there to a point at least 5 feet outside of the dripline, or 15 feet from the trunk of a tree, whichever distance is greater. This fencing will be inspected prior to commencement of proposed project construction in the area and will remain in place until construction is completed. **OAK-2:** Grading Restrictions near Protective Zones. Care must be taken to limit grade changes near the protective zone of an oak tree. Grade changes can lead to plant stress from oxygen deprivation or oak root fungus at the root collar of oaks. Minor grade changes farther from the trunk are not as critical but can negatively affect the health of the tree if not carefully monitored by a County-approved certified arborist. • The grade will not be lowered or raised around the trunk (i.e., within the protective zone) of any oak tree without the approval of the Los Angeles County Forester or LACPW (as applicable), or a County-certified arborist as

Affected Resource	Potential Impact: No-Build Alternative	Potential Impact: Build Alternative	Project Features, Avoidance, Minimization, or Mitigation Measures
			specified in an approved oak tree permit. A certified arborist will supervise all excavation or grading proposed within the protective zone of a tree. • Trenching, excavation, or clearance of vegetation within the protective zone of an oak tree will be accomplished by the use of hand tools or small handheld power tools. Any major roots encountered will be conserved to the greatest extent possible and treated as recommended by the certified arborist. • No utility trenches will be routed within the protective zone of an oak tree unless no feasible alternative locations are available and will be approved by the County Forester or LACPW, as determined appropriate. **OAK-3:** Equipment Storage. • No storage of equipment, supplies, vehicles, or debris will be permitted within the protective zone of an oak tree. • No dumping of construction wastewater, paint, stucco, concrete, or any other cleanup waste will occur within the protective zone of an oak tree. • No temporary structures will be placed within the protective zone of any remaining oak tree.

Affected Resource	Potential Impact: No-Build Alternative	Potential Impact: Build Alternative	Project Features, Avoidance, Minimization, or Mitigation Measures
			OAK-4: Maintenance. Healthy trees, if not maintained, often grow beyond their ability to support themselves and fail at their naturally occurring weakest point. This point is typically at a branch union or near the main crotch of the tree. Weight-reduction pruning and/or cabling is important in any tree preservation program. • Pruning of replacement oak trees and preserved oak trees will include the removal of dead wood and stubs, and medium pruning of branches measuring 2 inches in diameter or less. • Pruning of replacement oak trees and preserved oak trees will be in accordance with the guidelines published by the National Arborist Association. In no case will more than 25% of the overall tree canopy and 10% of the overall root mass of any oak tree be removed. After pruning, installation of support cables to prevent future main crotch failures may be necessary based on a County-certified arborist's determination. • All replacement oak trees will be maintained in accordance with the principles set forth in the publication, Oak Trees: Care and Maintenance prepared by the Forestry Division of the Fire Caltrans of the County of Los Angeles. • A 5-year maintenance period will begin upon the start of planting the

Affected Resource	Potential Impact: No-Build Alternative	Potential Impact: Build Alternative	Project Features, Avoidance, Minimization, or Mitigation Measures
			replacement trees. All replacement trees failing to survive within this period will be replaced. **OAK-5:** Frequency of Watering. Care should be taken to avoid placing any irrigation devices within watering distance of the protected zone of oak trees. Oak trees survive and thrive on annual rainfall alone and generally do not require supplemental irrigation except during periods of extreme drought or for establishment of newly planted trees (i.e., replacement trees). • Irrigation water will not reach within 15 feet of any oak trunk. • Neither grass nor ground covers will be planted under the canopy of oak trees. **OAK-6:** Control of Diseases and Pests. A County-approved arborist will evaluate the effects of mistletoe, pathogens, and insect pests on the preserved and planted oak trees within the 5-year maintenance period, in addition to the overall health and structural integrity of the trees, to ensure longevity of remaining oak trees. **OAK-7:** Construction Monitoring. Damage to remaining trees must be avoided by workers and equipment during construction activities. • A qualified biologist or County-certified arborist will monitor on-site construction and grading activities occurring near all

Affected Resource	Potential Impact: No-Build Alternative	Potential Impact: Build Alternative	Project Features, Avoidance, Minimization, or Mitigation Measures
			identified oak tree protection zones to ensure that damage to oak trees does not occur. • Prior to initiation of construction activities, the qualified biologist or County-certified arborist will schedule a field meeting to inform personnel involved in construction where all protective zones are located and the importance of avoiding encroachment within the protective zones. **Compensatory Mitigation.** As detailed previously under WALNUT-1, any Southern California black walnut trees that are directly impacted will be mitigated for at a 2:1 ratio (as individuals, not acreage). Pursuant to Section 22.56.2050-2260 of the Los Angeles County Oak Tree Ordinance, the following compensatory MM is proposed to compensate for the 15 valley oak trees to be permanently removed by the proposed project. **OAK-8:** Replacement Trees. All oak trees removed will be replaced by a tree of the same species at a ratio of 2:1. All heritage trees that will be removed will be replaced at a 10:1 ratio. All replacement trees will be at least 24-inch box trees and measure 1 inch or more in diameter, as measured from 1 foot above the base. Free-form trees with multiple stems are permissible; the combined diameter of the two largest

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			stems of such trees will measure a minimum of 1 inch in diameter, as measured from 1 foot above the base. Replacement trees will consist exclusively of indigenous oak trees and be certified as being grown from a seed source collected in Los Angeles County or Ventura County.
Wildlife Species	None.	Temporary, direct impacts would result from the use of upland and aquatic habitat for equipment and materials staging, grading, as well as from clearing and tree removal for construction activities and access to construction sites. Permanent impacts would result from direct removal of occupied habitat for multiple species. Operation of the Build Alternative would have minor effects on special-status wildlife species within the BSA.	**Fish** Arroyo chub has the potential to be directly and indirectly impacted by the proposed project in similar ways to those for the unarmored threespine stickleback (UTS) because they occupy the same habitat within Santa Clara River and the Northern Drainage. The avoidance and minimization measures UTS-1 and UTS-2 would be implemented for arroyo chub which restricts contact with surface water at the Northern Drainage and Santa Clara River. Hence, no impacts to arroyo chub are anticipated. **Amphibians and Reptiles** The general measures GEN-1 through GEN-14, arroyo toad-specific measures ARTO-1 through ARTO 4, and southwestern pond turtle-specific measures WPT-1 and WPT-2 would be implemented. These measures would reduce potential impacts to non-listed special-status reptile and amphibian species. **Birds** Avoidance and minimization measures detailed in Section 2.4.5 below (GEN-1 to GEN 14and RIP-1 to RIP-3) would be

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			implemented and provide impact avoidance for non-listed birds including those protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. In particular, to remain in compliance with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, pre-construction nesting bird surveys prior to vegetation clearing or grubbing during the avian breeding season will reduce the potential for injury or mortality to nesting birds. Furthermore, conducting ground-disturbing activities outside of the avian nesting season or noise monitoring for loud construction activities may be necessary if done during the avian nesting season. **Mammals** The avoidance and minimization measures detailed in Section 2.4.5 below (GEN-1 to GEN-14), would be incorporated into the proposed project and reduce potential impacts to special-status bat species. Additionally, implementation of AMMs BAT-1 through BAT-3 presented below would further reduce potential impacts to special-status bat species. **BAT-1:** No earlier than 20 days prior to the commencement of construction activities around the two bridge locations, a field survey will be conducted by a qualified biologist to determine if active roosts of bats are present on or within 300 feet of the proposed project boundaries. Should an active roost be identified, a determination will be made regarding whether the roost is used as a night-roost,

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			day-roost, or maternity-roost. If an active roost would be removed, MM BAT-2 (below) will be implemented. Alternatively, if an active roost is identified within 300 feet of the disturbance boundary, but would not be removed, MM BAT-3 (below) will be implemented. Because the ambient noise levels already exceed acceptable noise levels due to surrounding construction activities and traffic noise, additional noise mitigation will not be implemented. Consequently, no interference will take place with bat echolocation and insect foraging. **BAT-2**: Should a night-roost be identified within the LOD, the roost structure will be removed during daylight hours while the roost is not in use. Should an active day-roost be identified, roosting bats will be evicted through the use of humane exclusionary devices. Prior to implementation, the proposed methods for bat exclusion will be approved by CDFW. The roost will not be removed until it has been confirmed by a qualified biologist that all bats have been successfully excluded. Should an active maternity-roost be identified (the breeding season of native bat species in California generally occurs from April 1 through August 31), the roost will not be disturbed and construction within 300 feet will be postponed or halted, at the discretion of the biological monitor, until the roost is vacated and juveniles have fledged, as determined by the biologist. CDFW will be consulted

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			regarding the necessity to construct replacement roosting habitat or to modify the proposed project (as appropriate) to include features conducive to roosting. This determination will be based on the bat species to be displaced, the abundance of other roost sites in the area, and the size of the roost removed. All CDFW recommendations for roost replacement will be implemented. **BAT-3:** Should a night-roost be identified within the 300-foot buffer of the LOD, construction-related activities will be conducted during daylight hours while the roost is not in use. Should an active day-roost be identified, a determination (in consultation with CDFW or a qualified bat expert) will be made regarding if construction-related activities (i.e., noise and vibrations) could substantially disturb roosting bats. This determination will be based on baseline noise/vibrations levels, anticipated noise-levels associated with the construction of the proposed project, and the sensitivity to noise-disturbances of the bat species present. If it is determined that noise could result in the temporary abandonment of a day-roost, construction-related activities will be scheduled to minimize the period the roost would be subject to noise-related disturbances. Should an active maternity-roost be identified (the breeding season of native bat species in California generally occurs from April 1 through August 31), construction within 300 feet of the roost will

Affected Resource	Potential Impact: No-Build Alternative	Potential Impact: Build Alternative	Project Features, Avoidance, Minimization, or Mitigation Measures
			be postponed or halted, at the discretion of the biological monitor, until the roost is vacated and juveniles have fledged, as determined by the biologist. **<u>Compensatory Mitigation</u>** Compensatory mitigation for permanent and temporary loss of habitat occupied by non-listed special status reptile, amphibian, bird, and mammal species will be provided in compensatory mitigation required for federally listed species impacts to species detailed in Section 2.4.5.4 below. Additional compensatory mitigation may be necessary if bat roosts, or maternity colonies are detected under The Old Road Bridge and need to be removed. However, there is additional bat roosting habitat in the surrounding vicinity in the form of manmade bridges, including the adjacent I-5 overpass, that could provide roosting opportunities in the event there is bat dispersal. Additionally, the new bridge, once complete, has potential to provide roosting options or other features considered suitable for bats.
Threatened and Endangered Species	None.	Temporary, direct impacts would result from the use of upland and aquatic habitat for equipment and materials staging, grading, as well as from clearing and tree removal for construction activities and access to construction sites. Permanent direct impacts include the removal of habitat during expansion of The Old Road and	**GEN-1:** The contractor(s) will be informed, prior to the bidding process, regarding the biological constraints of the proposed project (will be included in Section EC of the special provisions). The proposed project limits will be clearly marked on project plans provided to the contractor(s), and areas outside of the proposed project limits will be designated as “no construction” zones. A construction

Affected Resource	Potential Impact: No-Build Alternative	Potential Impact: Build Alternative	Project Features, Avoidance, Minimization, or Mitigation Measures
		shading of Santa Clara River from the expanded Old Road Bridge. Operation of the Build Alternative would have a minimal change to the habitat of threatened and endangered animals.	manager will be present during all construction activities to ensure that work is limited to designated project limits. **GEN-2:** ESA fencing and silt fencing with appropriate signs will be installed by the contractor prior to work to prevent habitat impacts and prevent the spread of silt from the construction zone into adjacent habitats. The fencing will be installed in a manner that does not impact habitats to be avoided and will be installed along the outer edge of work limits. **GEN-3:** Employees will strictly limit their activities, vehicles, equipment, and construction materials to the fenced construction limits, staging areas, and routes between the construction limits and staging areas. Temporary construction fencing will be removed upon proposed project completion. **GEN-4:** All workers must participate in a Worker Environmental Awareness Program for sensitive biological resources. Sign-in sheets will be maintained to document completion of the program by each worker. This program can be administered in person by a qualified biologist or through screening of a video/slide presentation prepared by a qualified biologist and overseen by an on-site manager. Contractor education will include a review of special-status species and protected habitats occurring/potentially occurring on-site. Identification of these

Affected Resource	Potential Impact: No-Build Alternative	Potential Impact: Build Alternative	Project Features, Avoidance, Minimization, or Mitigation Measures
			resources and all biological avoidance and minimization measures relevant to the contractors' work will be reviewed. Stop work and notification procedures will be outlined. The education program will include a section specific to UTS, southwestern pond turtle, arroyo toad, LBVI, and SWFL. Education handouts will be provided and posted at the work site. **GEN-5:** A qualified biologist, defined as an individual with the appropriate federal and state permits to conduct the specified activities, will be available to relocate any listed species out of harm's way, if detected within the project limits of construction. They have verified previous experience with the species for which they are conducting surveys and have been approved by USFWS to ensure that they are truly "qualified" to conduct species surveys, monitoring, and relocation activities. In addition to a qualified biologist being available for species surveys, monitoring, and relocation activities, biological monitors will be present on a daily basis throughout the construction period when construction activities are adjacent to federally listed species habitat or have the potential to impact listed species. Biological monitors will be qualified for the monitoring activities and species in the area. A biological monitor will monitor the status of BMPs to ensure they continue to work after installation and prevent species

Affected Resource	Potential Impact: No-Build Alternative	Potential Impact: Build Alternative	Project Features, Avoidance, Minimization, or Mitigation Measures
			that are in proximity to construction activities from being affected by the BMPs. In particular, construction monitoring will occur daily while ground-disturbing activities occur in/near the Santa Clara River. Biological monitors will ensure BMPs are operating effectively, conduct daily sweeps of the active construction areas to ensure no listed species are impacted, and conduct pre-activity clearance surveys ahead of vegetation/ground disturbance when in listed species habitat or critical habitat (that contains the necessary physical and biological features). Repeat pre-activity clearance surveys will be conducted when there is a lapse in activities in suitable listed species habitat longer than three days after vegetation removal or a previous survey. **GEN-6:** All equipment maintenance; staging; and dispensing of fuel, oil, coolant, or any other such activities will occur in designated areas outside of jurisdictional wetlands or waters and within the fenced proposed project limits. These designated areas will be located in previously compacted and disturbed areas to the maximum extent practicable in such a manner as to prevent any runoff from entering jurisdictional wetlands or waters. Fueling of equipment will take place within existing paved areas, if feasible, greater than 100 feet from jurisdictional wetlands or waters. Contractor equipment will be checked for leaks prior to operation and

Affected Resource	Potential Impact: No-Build Alternative	Potential Impact: Build Alternative	Project Features, Avoidance, Minimization, or Mitigation Measures
			repaired as necessary. "Fueling zones" will be designated on construction plans. **GEN-7:** In areas that do not require excavation or grading, vegetation will be trampled instead of completely removed. **GEN-8:** To reduce impacts to listed species critical and occupied habitat, prior to entering the proposed project site, all personnel will remove invasive species materials, propagules, seeds, individuals, etc. from project equipment, project materials, equipment, and clothes to reduce the proliferation of invasive species. **GEN-9:** The project site will be kept as clean of debris as possible to avoid attracting predators of sensitive wildlife. All food-related trash items will be enclosed in sealed containers and regularly removed from the site. **GEN-10**: Pets of project personnel will not be allowed on the proposed project site. **GEN-11:** Disposal or temporary placement of excess fill, brush, or other debris will not be allowed in WOTUS or their banks. **GEN-12**: The majority of construction is expected to be undertaken during daylight; however, when nighttime construction is necessary, lighting will be of the lowest illumination necessary for human safety, will be diverted away from any native vegetation communities, and will consist of

Affected Resource	Potential Impact: No-Build Alternative	Potential Impact: Build Alternative	Project Features, Avoidance, Minimization, or Mitigation Measures
			low-sodium or similar lighting equipped with shields to focus light downward onto the appropriate subject area. **GEN-13:** Exclusionary devices will be installed underneath the bridge to prevent birds and bats from nesting during construction. Installation of these devices will be completed prior to February 15 (beginning of bird breeding season) and remain until construction is completed. A qualified biologist will inspect the area prior to installation for nests and evidence of breeding activity. If breeding activity is not detected, inactive nests will be destroyed to prevent birds from establishing breeding. If breeding activity is confirmed, exclusionary devices will be installed in all other areas lacking active nests. Active nests will be monitored by the biologist until breeding is complete. Once breeding is complete, exclusionary devices will be installed in these areas. **GEN-14**: Best efforts will be implemented (within the control of Los Angeles County, taking into consideration land ownership) to restrict public access into Santa Clara River that could adversely affect listed fish and wildlife resources. These actions will include, among other things, posting signs (along the Multi-Use Trail and other areas where the sidewalk abuts the Santa Clara SEA) identifying an ecologically sensitive area, promoting public education and awareness of such ecological sensitivities, and the maintenance of fences and

Affected Resource	Potential Impact: No-Build Alternative	Potential Impact: Build Alternative	Project Features, Avoidance, Minimization, or Mitigation Measures
			barricades to prevent unauthorized or unrestricted access to the river bottom, as applicable. **Species-Specific Avoidance and Minimization Measures** The following unarmored threespine stickleback-specific avoidance and minimization measure will be implemented during construction of the proposed project to reduce impacts: **UTS-1**: Prior to the start of construction, thorough surveys for UTS will be conducted by a qualified biologist highly knowledgeable and experienced with identifying UTS. The qualified biologist and survey methodology will be approved by USFWS prior to survey commencement. 1. Immediately prior to the start of construction, the qualified biologist (in close coordination with USFWS) will conduct no-take visual-only surveys for UTS throughout the northern drainage (e.g., from the existing The Old Road culvert down to the stream's confluence with the mainstem of the Santa Clara River) to confirm absence. a. If UTS are detected during either survey, the northern drainage will be considered occupied by

Affected Resource	Potential Impact: No-Build Alternative	Potential Impact: Build Alternative	Project Features, Avoidance, Minimization, or Mitigation Measures
			UTS. If this is the case, the project culvert extension option will not be considered, and an alternative design will be necessary. b. If UTS are not detected, the project could potentially begin. 2. Immediately following the UTS survey, a fish-excluding device will be installed and maintained. This device will be designed, installed, monitored, and maintained to (a) completely exclude UTS and other aquatic life from the project area in the northern drainage during the entire term of work in or near surface waters, and (b) avoid stranding, entrapment, or entanglement of wildlife. The fish-exclusion device will be regularly monitored by a qualified biologist to ensure it is functional. 3. A surface water diversion will also be designed, installed, monitored, and maintained in a manner that ensures that sufficient water flow continues to maintain aquatic life downstream from the project area in the northern drainage. 4. Additional BMPs will be implemented to avoid and

Affected Resource	Potential Impact: No-Build Alternative	Potential Impact: Build Alternative	Project Features, Avoidance, Minimization, or Mitigation Measures
			minimize project impacts to water quality, aquatic life, nesting birds, and other natural resources. BMPs will be placed around the periphery of work areas to ensure no inadvertent spills, erosion, sedimentation, or construction-related effects occur. 5. If UTS are detected within the project area or northern drainage, work will be halted and USFWS and CDFW will be contacted immediately. **UTS-2:** For the mainstem of the Santa Clara River where UTS are assumed present, work activities will be conducted in a way to ensure no surface water contact. Construction of the piles within the Santa Clara River will occur during summer months to coincide with periods of low flow for the Santa Clara River to minimize the potential for UTS impacts. Vegetation trimming and removal will be conducted in a way to prevent contact with surface water, and BMPs will be placed along the length of the Santa Clara River to ensure no inadvertent spills, erosion, or sedimentation occurs. A biological monitor will be present during cast-in-drilled-hole pile installation when in proximity to the Santa Clara River to ensure that vibration effects are not negatively affecting aquatic species.

Affected Resource	Potential Impact: No-Build Alternative	Potential Impact: Build Alternative	Project Features, Avoidance, Minimization, or Mitigation Measures
			Any additional measures developed in consultation with USFWS will be incorporated. **Arroyo Toad** **ARTO-1:** Prior to clearing, grubbing, and construction activities, arroyo toad exclusionary fencing will be installed around the perimeter of all work areas adjacent to potential arroyo toad breeding habitat as determined by a qualified arroyo toad biologist. In areas without water flows, the fence will consist of woven nylon fabric or similar material at least 2 feet high, staked firmly to the ground. No fencing will be placed in areas of flowing water (due to the potential for UTS). In areas where soils are suitable for burrowing, the lower 1 foot of material will stretch outward along the ground and be secured with a continuous line of sandbags to prevent burrowing beneath the fence. Doubling this line (i.e., stacking sand or gravel bags two-deep) may reduce maintenance and should be considered to improve the integrity of the fencing. In areas where soils are not suitable for burrowing, (i.e., hardpack soils), fencing may be buried to reduce maintenance concerns and improve the integrity of the fencing over time. Decisions on the appropriate fencing installation method for a given reach will be made by the qualified arroyo toad biologist. All fencing will be removed following completion of project activities. Ingress and egress of equipment and personnel will use two identified access points to the site,

Affected Resource	Potential Impact: No-Build Alternative	Potential Impact: Build Alternative	Project Features, Avoidance, Minimization, or Mitigation Measures
			which will be as narrow as possible and closed off by exclusionary fence when personnel are not present. **ARTO-2:** Prior to vegetation grubbing or construction, but after exclusionary fence has been installed around the impact footprint, at least three surveys for arroyo toad of any life stages or clutches will be conducted within the fenced area by a qualified biologist knowledgeable of arroyo toad biology and ecology. Surveys will be conducted during the appropriate climatic conditions during the appropriate time of day or night to maximize the likelihood of encountering arroyo toad. If arroyo toad of any life stages or clutches is found within the proposed project area, it will be captured and translocated, by the biologist, to the closest area of suitable habitat within Santa Clara River. Before each workday begins, the qualified biologist will also check to see if arroyo toad has entered the impact footprint. If arroyo toad is found within the impact footprint, it will be moved outside of the impact footprint, if suitable habitat exists, or out of harm's way. **ARTO-3:** The qualified biologist will be present during each morning before construction activities begin to inspect all arroyo toad exclusionary fencing for damage or holes, conduct a sweep of the work area for arroyo toad of any life stages, inspect any covered stockpiles for gaps or sign that arroyo toad has accessed the soils underneath and will be present

Affected Resource	Potential Impact: No-Build Alternative	Potential Impact: Build Alternative	Project Features, Avoidance, Minimization, or Mitigation Measures
			when these covers are removed. If burrows characteristic of arroyo toad are found, the burrows will be hand-excavated. The qualified biologist will relocate any arroyo toad found to suitable habitat adjacent to the construction site but at least 200 feet away. **ARTO-4:** Excavations or trenches created by construction activities that have the potential to trap arroyo toad will be covered with cover plates or other materials at the end of each workday. Excavations or trenches that are covered will have the edges sealed with sandbags, bricks, or boards to prevent arroyo toad from becoming trapped in excavations or trenches. The qualified biologist will inspect all excavations and trenches (covered and uncovered) for the presence of arroyo toad prior to disturbance of soils or removal of cover plates. The qualified biologist will be present when the cover plates are removed and will inspect and relocate any arroyo toad that may have entered the trench during the night to suitable habitat adjacent to the construction site but at least 200 feet away. **Southwestern Pond Turtle** **WPT-1:** A qualified biologist will survey the work site no more than 48 hours before the onset of activities for signs of southwestern pond turtle and/or southwestern pond turtle nesting activity (i.e., recently excavated nests, nest plugs) or nest depredation (partially to fully excavated nest chambers,

Affected Resource	Potential Impact: No-Build Alternative	Potential Impact: Build Alternative	Project Features, Avoidance, Minimization, or Mitigation Measures
			nest plugs, scattered eggshell remains, eggshell fragments). Preconstruction surveys to detect western pond turtle nesting activity should be concentrated within suitable upland habitat in the BSA and should focus on areas along south- or west-facing slopes with bare hard-packed clay or silt soils or a sparse vegetation of short grasses or forbs. Survey efforts should focus on suitable aerial and aquatic basking habitat such as logs, branches, rootwads, and riprap, as well as the shoreline and adjacent warm, shallow waters where pond turtle may be present below the water surface beneath algal mats or other surface vegetation. **WPT-2:** If southwestern pond turtle is observed during the preconstruction survey, it will be avoided to the greatest extent practicable. If avoidance is not feasible, LACPW will confer with USFWS to determine the best approach to ensure no take of the species, including additional measures such as the implementation of exclusion buffers, nest exclosures, silt fencing, screening, and additional BMP installation, as appropriate. **Least Bell's Vireo and Southwestern Willow Flycatcher** The following avoidance and minimization measures will be implemented during construction of the proposed project to reduce impacts to LBVI and SWFL.

Affected Resource	Potential Impact: No-Build Alternative	Potential Impact: Build Alternative	Project Features, Avoidance, Minimization, or Mitigation Measures
			RIP-1: To the greatest extent possible, construction activities (such as vegetation removal) will be timed to avoid the nesting season for riparian avian species (March 15 through September 15). **RIP-2:** If work is scheduled during the riparian avian breeding season (March 15 through September 15), and within LBVI or SWFL suitable habitat, a qualified biologist will conduct a preconstruction nesting survey to ensure that no active bird nests are present within 300 feet of construction activities. If no nests are detected, then vegetation removal will be permitted during the nesting season. **RIP-3:** If an active nest is detected, no construction activities will be permitted within 300 feet of the nest. Work within nest buffers may not resume until the young fledge and disperse, or the nest has been determined to fail by the qualified biologist. Limits of construction to avoid a nest site will be established in the field with flagging and stakes or construction fencing. **Mountain Lion** The following avoidance and minimization measures will be implemented during construction of the proposed project to reduce impacts to mountain lions. **LION-1:** During construction of The Old Road Bridge, any nighttime lighting necessary for work or placed around

Affected Resource	Potential Impact: No-Build Alternative	Potential Impact: Build Alternative	Project Features, Avoidance, Minimization, or Mitigation Measures
			temporary work areas/laydown yards will be shielded away from the Santa Clara River. Security lights around temporarily fenced areas under or adjacent to the Santa Clara River will have motion-activated sensors to ensure they are not continually on throughout the night, but only trigger if someone enters the fenced work area. **LION-2:** Any permanent streetlights installed on The Old Road Bridge or along the west side of The Old Road where it is adjacent to the Santa Clara River will be shielded so that light does not directly glare into native habitat within the Santa Clara River. **Compensatory Mitigation** Unarmored Threespine Stickleback **UTS-3:** While the project is anticipated to avoid direct take of UTS, there is still potentially occupied and assumed occupied habitat that may require mitigation. Impacts to occupied habitat may be mitigated through obtaining credits at an applicable mitigation bank, the creation or enhancement of similar riparian habitat at an approved mitigation site, or by the removal of exotic species from an area of existing similar habitat as determined by USFWS. The requirement for replacing suitable habitat by obtaining credits at an applicable mitigation bank, creating/restoring new habitat, and/or removing exotic species from existing

Affected Resource	Potential Impact: No-Build Alternative	Potential Impact: Build Alternative	Project Features, Avoidance, Minimization, or Mitigation Measures
			habitat will be determined in consultation with USFWS. <u>Arroyo Toad</u> **ARTO-5:** To compensate for the direct loss of arroyo toad critical habitat, in consultation with USFWS, it may be necessary to acquire mitigation lands and/or conduct restoration (such as nonnative species removal) within Santa Clara River or other similar location. The specific mitigation ratio will be determined in consultation with USFWS. Critical habitat to be mitigated will be in-kind and contain the same physical and biological features that were present in the critical habitat removed by the proposed project. <u>Southwestern Pond Turtle</u> **WPT-3:** Pending the federal listing determination for this species, further consultation may be required with USFWS to determine the appropriate mitigation approach. Under its current status, compensatory mitigation for permanent and temporary loss of habitat for southwestern pond turtle will be provided in compensatory mitigation required for federally listed species impacts to arroyo toad, LBVI, and SWFL, similar to the approach proposed for non-listed special-status wildlife species. <u>Least Bell's Vireo and Southwestern Willow Flycatcher</u> **RIP-4:** The removal of LBVI and SWFL critical habitat will be mitigated through

Affected Resource	Potential Impact: No-Build Alternative	Potential Impact: Build Alternative	Project Features, Avoidance, Minimization, or Mitigation Measures
			obtaining credits at an applicable mitigation bank, the creation or enhancement of similar riparian habitat at an approved mitigation site, or by the removal of exotic species from an area of existing similar habitat. The requirement for replacing suitable habitat by obtaining credits at an applicable mitigation bank, creating/restoring new habitat, and/or removing exotic species from existing habitat will be determined in consultation with USFWS. <u>Mountain Lion</u> **LION-3:** Pending the state listing status of mountain lion, impacts will be assessed by CDFW during the Incidental Take Permitting process and any necessary mitigation will be acquired/implemented.
Invasive Species	None.	Implementation of the Build Alternative has the potential to spread invasive species to adjacent native habitats in the BSA through the entering and exiting of contaminated construction equipment, the inclusion of invasive species in seed mixtures and mulch, and the improper removal and disposal of invasive species causing seed to be spread along the highway.	Avoidance and minimization measures, and compensatory mitigation, described previously under VEG-5 and VEG-6, would be implemented. These measures include use of BMPs to ensure invasive plant material is not spread from the proposed project site to other areas by disposal off-site or by tracking seed on equipment, clothing, and shoes. Compensation mitigation described previously for VEG-7 would be implemented and provide the necessary compensation for impacts.
Wildfire	None.	Emergency Access. The proposed project will not cause any permanent road closures but will cause temporary lane closures during construction..	As discussed in Section 2.2.9, AMMs COM-2 through COM-4 would be implemented to reduce or eliminate temporary effects on traffic and emergency

Affected Resource	Potential Impact: No-Build Alternative	Potential Impact: Build Alternative	Project Features, Avoidance, Minimization, or Mitigation Measures
			services. Additionally, although the proposed project area is susceptible to wildfire risks, standard construction practices and regulatory safety compliance measures would reduce the risks to less than significant with mitigation.
Climate Change	None.	None. The Build Alternative will improve traffic operations and accommodate future traffic projections which would result in less pollutant emissions than the No-Build Alternative because of improvements in vehicle delay.	None.
Public Services	None.	The proposed project would not involve the construction of any infrastructure or developments that would increase the local population, thereby necessitating the provision of new of physically altered government facilities. During construction, temporary impacts to traffic are anticipated due to possible lane closures and detours.	As discussed in Section 2.2.9, AMMs COM-2 through COM-4 would be implemented to reduce or eliminate temporary effects on emergency services. In addition, as stated in AMM COM-5, coordination would occur with utility service providers, and a public outreach program would be implemented to minimize impacts to surrounding communities. As such, impacts to public services would minimal. Therefore, the proposed project would not cause existing public services to provide additional services or create new associated facilities, and impacts would be less than significant with mitigation.
Cumulative Impacts	None. Two other projects within a three-year time frame of the Build Alternative implementation were identified. These projects	None. Although the acquisitions that are anticipated as part of the Build Alternative would represent adverse effects, they are not anticipated to contribute to cumulative impacts. The proposed full property acquisition partial acquisitions would occur primarily to vacant or public utility and	None.

Affected Resource	Potential Impact: No-Build Alternative	Potential Impact: Build Alternative	Project Features, Avoidance, Minimization, or Mitigation Measures
	include the I-5 Rye Canyon Ramps Project and Newhall Ranch Specific Plan.	commercial/industrial properties. The proposed project area is anticipated to undergo notable changes with the proposed developments, but no adverse cumulative impacts from relocations and real property acquisition are foreseeable.	

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Chapter 1 Proposed Project

1.1 Introduction

Caltrans, as assigned by FHWA, is the lead agency under the NEPA, and the LACPW is the lead agency under the CEQA. LACPW proposes to implement The Old Road over Santa Clara River and the Southern Pacific Transportation Company (SPT Co.) Bridge, et al. Project (proposed project), which would relieve congestion, enhance traffic safety, and make necessary safety upgrades to the bridges over the Santa Clara River and the abandoned SPT Co. railroad tracks through implementation of various roadway improvements along The Old Road between Henry Mayo Drive and Magic Mountain Parkway within Los Angeles County, California. Additionally, the proposed project would include an extension of the County of Los Angeles Multi-Purpose Regional River Trail (Multi-Use Trail).

1.2 Purpose and Need

1.2.1 Project Purpose

The fundamental purpose of the proposed project is to address The Old Road deficiencies within the project area and improve the adjacent roadway system that includes the connecting roads and intersections to The Old Road.

The purpose of the project is to relieve congestion, enhance traffic and road safety, upgrade structural safety, increase regional roadway capacity to accommodate expected future traffic growth projections, and meet jurisdictional goals and policies for the project area.

The specific purpose objectives of the proposed project are to:

- Replace and upgrade the FWHA designated Structural Deficient Santa Clara River Bridge to a status of good condition;
- Provide water passage for the volume of water of a LACPW Capital Flood event (50-year burned and bulked storm) scenario at The Old Road over the Santa Clara River Bridge;
- Reduce forecasted traffic congestion and increase regional roadway capacity on The Old Road and adjacent roadway system to accommodate projected growth in the area;
- Provide an emergency overflow route on The Old Road to enhance safety for the adjacent roadway system that would support Operation Snowflake, an effort implemented by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), the California Highway Patrol, and local partner agencies in response to emergency closures of Interstate 5, by providing an alternative route when the I-5 experiences full closures due to snowy and icy conditions.
- Improve multi-modal travel facilities (i.e., trails, bike lanes, etc.) within the proposed project area;

- Improve traffic operations to be consistent with LACPW highway design speed safety standards.
- Alleviate current congestion on The Old Road and the adjacent roadway system;
- Enhance traffic flow and roadway safety on The Old Road and adjacent roadways;

1.2.2 Project Need

The need for the proposed project is summarized as follows:

Existing roadway intersection conditions are currently deficient and characterized by roadway congestion, specifically at The Old Road & I-5 SB Ramps, Ave Stanford & Rye Canyon Road, and The Old Rd & Sky View Lane. Substantial increases in traffic demand are anticipated over the next few years based on projected growth in the area.

The Old Road over the Santa Clara River Bridge currently is not high enough to allow the volume of water of a LACPW Capital Flood event (50-year burned and bulked storm) to pass under it. Constructing the replacement bridge at a higher elevation would provide a minimum freeboard of 2.5 feet and meet County Capital Storm Floodway requirements.

Existing safety deficiencies exist with the lack of emergency overflow due to the current road network capacity. The Old Road is currently an ineffective Operation Snowflake alternative route in the scenario of the I-5 experiencing full closures due to snowy and icy conditions due to its existing lane capacity of four lanes.

Emergency repairs were performed on the superstructure, piles, and abutment seats of The Old Road over Santa Clara River Bridge immediately following the 1994 Northridge earthquake. The bridge currently is classified as Structurally Deficient per FHWA standards for seismic, flood, and highway design. Replacing the bridge would eliminate this classification.

Additionally, current traffic demand in the proposed project area based on projected growth in the area meets or exceeds roadway capacity for many arterial roadways. The roadways are expected to worsen due to their current capacity relative to the significant increases in traffic demand. These roadway segments include The Old Road between Rye Canyon Road and Skyview Lane, and The Old Road between I-5 Southbound Ramps and Rye Canyon Road. These roadway capacity deficiencies are inconsistent with the City of Santa Clarita and Los Angeles County General Plan goals and polices.

Lastly, the existing roadways are inconsistent with improvements described in the County of Los Angeles Mobility Element for the Highway Plan for Santa Clarita Valley Plan Area. Improvements needed call for The Old Road to be widened or re-striped from four lanes to a six-lane major highway between I-5 southbound ramps at Rye Canyon Road, and between Rye Canyon Road and Magic Mountain Parkway.

1.2.3 Independent Utility and Logical Termini

The project alternatives would address the purpose and need without additional improvements; therefore, the project has independent utility. Additional project improvements are not required to meet the project purpose and need.

Logical termini for project development are defined as (1) rational end points for a transportation improvement, and (2) rational end points for a review of the environmental impacts. The environmental impact review frequently covers a broader geographic area than the strict limits of the transportation improvements. In the past, the most common termini have been points of major traffic generation, especially intersecting roadways. This is because in most cases traffic generators determine the size and type of facility being proposed. However, there are a case where the project improvement is not primarily related to congestion due to traffic generators, and the choice of termini based on these generators may not be appropriate. When developing a transportation project, project sponsors should consider how the end points of the action are determined, both for the improvement itself and for the scope of the environmental analysis.

The logical termini for the project have been identified to accommodate the new bridges replacement, including realignment of the bridge approaches from the existing roadway, and includes the placement of the construction signage to allow for project construction. These limits were defined to encompass the whole of the action necessary to address the project needs.

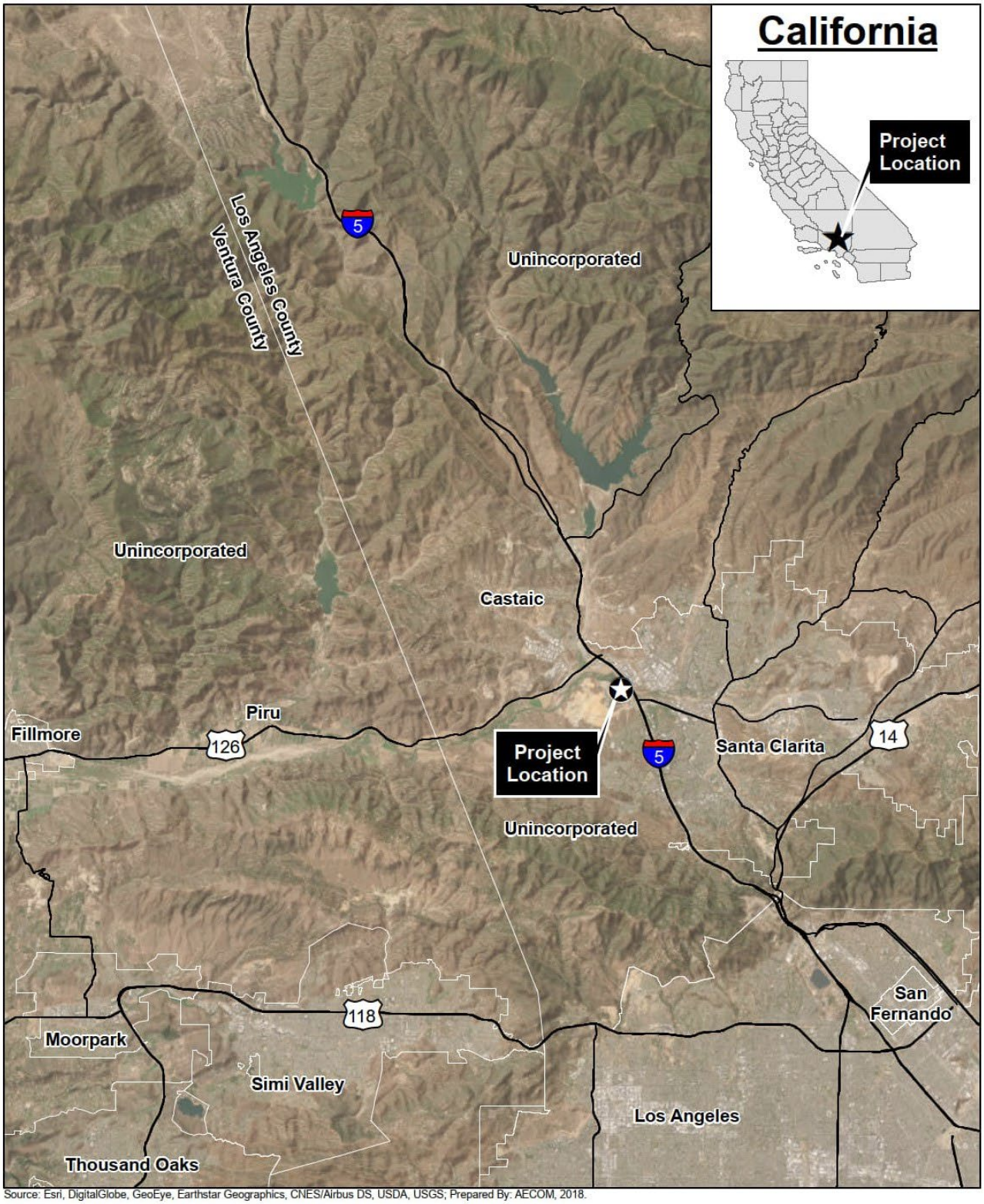
1.3 Project Description

This section describes the proposed action and project alternatives developed to meet the purpose and need of the project, while avoiding or minimizing environmental impacts. The proposed alternatives are the Build Alternative and the No-Build Alternative.

1.3.1 Project Location and Setting

The proposed project site includes the approximately 2-mile stretch of the existing The Old Road right-of-way (ROW) between Henry Mayo Drive and Magic Mountain Parkway in western Los Angeles County. Because ROW acquisitions would be required to implement the proposed project, the proposed project site also includes areas adjacent to and on either side of the roadway. Additionally, the proposed project would include an extension of the Multi-Use Trail. As such, the proposed project site would include an approximately 0.58-mile extension of the trail on the southbound side of The Old Road from where the trail travels under The Old Road and I-5 just southeast of Rye Canyon Road to just northwest of the I-5 on- and off-ramps. The area where the trail would be extended is currently developed with an access road. Regional access to the proposed project site is provided via I-5, which roughly parallels The Old Road alignment and runs on the eastern and northern sides of the roadway. Local access is provided via Henry Mayo Road, which forms the northern boundary of the proposed project site; Rye Canyon Road, which intersects with The Old Road in the middle of the proposed project site; Sky View Lane, which intersects with The Old Road in the southern portion of the proposed project site; and Magic Mountain Parkway, which forms the southern boundary of the proposed project site. Figure 1 shows the regional location of the proposed project site, and Figure 2 shows the proposed project limits and components.

The Old Road is a four-lane (two northbound and two southbound) roadway, located within a ROW variably measuring 140 to 160 feet wide that runs in a north-south direction parallel to I-5 through the Santa Clarita Valley. The roadway's southern terminus is the junction of San Fernando Road and Sierra Highway in Los Angeles County; the northerly terminus is roughly at Oak Court in the unincorporated community of Stevenson Ranch, north of Lake Hughes Road. The Old Road is identified as a Major Highway in the County's General Plan. The roadway includes two bridges (the Santa Clara River Bridge and the SPT Co. Bridge) within the proposed project site.



Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS; Prepared By: AECOM, 2018.

Figure 1
Project Vicinity Map

Source: Esri Maps & Data, 2018; Prepared By: AECOM, 2019.

0 500 1,000 Feet

Muiti-Use Trail
Project Limits
Proposed Staging Area

Figure 2
Proposed Action Components

The area on the southern side of the roadway is characterized primarily by undeveloped land with an office complex to the west of the intersection of The Old Road and Magic Mountain Parkway, and a recreational vehicle storage facility south of the intersection of The Old Road and Henry Mayo Drive. The Old Road also crosses over the Santa Clara Riverbed. Directly adjacent to The Old Road to the south is the Valencia Water Reclamation Plant, which is a Los Angeles County Sanitation District facility and serves the Santa Clarita Valley Sanitation District. Further south of the proposed project site, approximately 0.40 miles southwest of The Old Road, is the Magic Mountain amusement park. To the north of The Old Road ROW is I-5, which roughly parallels the road ROW. There are a few locations where the space between The Old Road and I-5 is wider, and these areas generally include commercial uses such as a hotel, gas station, and various restaurants. The area north of I-5 is generally characterized with commercial office uses closer to I-5 and residential uses further to the north. Currently, The Old Road does not allow parking within the roadway ROW.

1.3.2 Project Objectives

The specific objectives of the proposed project include the following:

- Alleviate current congestion at The Old Road and adjacent roadway system;
- Reduce forecasted traffic congestion on adjacent streets to accommodate projected traffic growth at The Old Road and adjacent roadways.
- Increase regional roadway capacity at The Old Road and adjacent roadway system to accommodate projection growth in the area;
- Enhance traffic safety and roadway safety at The Old Road and adjacent roadway system;
- Improve multi-modal travel facilities (i.e., trails, bike lanes, etc.) within the proposed project area;
- Replace and upgrade the FWHA designated Structural Deficient Santa Clara River Bridge to a status of good condition;
- Provide water passage for the volume of water of a LACPW Capital Flood event (50-year burned and bulked storm) scenario by repairing and increasing the height of The Old Road over the Santa Clara River Bridge;
- Replace and upgrade the SPT Co. Bridge;
- Meet the goals and policies identified in the County of Los Angeles Mobility Element, which identifies The Old Road as part of the future roadway improvements needed to implement the Highway Plan for the Santa Clarita Valley Plan Area.
- Provide an emergency overflow route on The Old Road to enhance safety for the adjacent roadway system that would be support Operation Snowflake, an effort implemented by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), the California Highway Patrol, and local partner agencies in response to emergency closures of Interstate 5, by providing an alternative route when the I-5 experiences full closures due to snowy and icy conditions.

- Improve traffic operations to be consistent with LACPW highway design speed safety standards.

1.3.3 Description of the Proposed Project

The proposed project improvements primarily consist of reconstructing and widening The Old Road, replacing two bridges, reconstructing and widening of Rye Canyon Road, and reconstructing and widening Sky View Lane, including reconfiguration of its intersection with The Old Road, as shown in Figure 2.

The Old Road over the Santa Clara River Bridge is currently not high enough to allow the volume of water of a LACPW Capital Flood event (defined as a 50-year burned and bulked storm) to pass under it. Replacing the bridge at a higher elevation would provide a minimum freeboard of 2.5 feet to allow a Capital Flood event to pass under it. Additionally, emergency repairs were performed on the superstructure, piles, and abutment seats of the bridge immediately following the 1994 Northridge Earthquake. Nonetheless, the bridge is currently classified as structurally deficient per FHWA standards. Replacing the bridge as part of this project would eliminate that classification.

Current traffic demand in the project area meets or exceeds roadway capacity for many arterial roadways. Increases in traffic demand are anticipated over the next few years concurrent with projected population growth in the area. As such, the widening of The Old Road to six lanes is critical to the passage of traffic and emergency vehicles in the area.

The primary components of the proposed project include the following.

1.3.3.1 The Old Road Improvements

The proposed project would realign and widen the existing roadway alignment from two lanes in each direction to three lanes in each direction, as well as provide intersection improvements. Class IV bicycle lanes, raised medians, sidewalks, and barriers on the bridges to separate pedestrians from the travel way would be provided. Fiberoptic communication along The Old Road would be installed, and utilities would be relocated as needed. Reconstruction of existing drainage facilities and catch basins as well as and construction of new drainage facilities and catch basins would be completed as needed.

1.3.3.2 Bridge Replacements

The Old Road over the Santa Clara River Bridge is proposed for reconstruction as a six-lane bridge, at an elevation of approximately 9 feet higher on the northern end and 15 feet higher on the southern end than the existing bridge to meet County Capital Storm Floodway requirements. The new bridge would be a multi-span bridge with a precast, prestressed concrete girder superstructure on bents that are supported by columns and piles in the riverbed.

The extent of the dry-season low flow has been determined from a hydrological study. To comply with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's (CDFW) No Contact directive, no piles would be constructed within the extent of the dry-season low flow. The bridge superstructure was selected such that no falsework would be placed within the extent of the dry-season low flow, and no construction equipment or falsework would be placed within the extent of the dry-season low flow. In addition, construction equipment would be placed outside of the predicted maximum flow width during the summer season. The location of an existing high-

pressure gas line will need to be verified prior to construction. If a conflict exists, the gas line may need to be abandoned under the river and replaced with a new line installed on the bridge.

The Old Road over the abandoned SPT Co. railroad tracks is proposed for reconstruction as a six-lane bridge. The bridge would be reconstructed at a lower grade to improve roadway safety and to match the road elevation at Rye Canyon Road. The new bridge would be a single-span bridge with a precast, prestressed concrete girder superstructure. A minimum of 12 feet of vertical clearance over the abandoned railroad ROW would be maintained. This ROW is presently used as a utility corridor. A Multi-Use Trail would be built along this ROW as part of the proposed project, described below. Prior to construction, utilities would be verified and relocated if necessary.

Both The Old Road bridge replacements would include additional roadway improvements, such as the addition of bicycle lanes, raised medians, sidewalks, and concrete barriers to separate pedestrians from traffic lanes.

1.3.3.3 Multi-Use Trail Extension

The proposed project would extend the existing Multi-Use Trail from its existing terminus just south of Rye Canyon Road to just northwest of the I-5 on- and off-ramps. The improvements would include the following:

- Extend the existing Multi-Use Trail to consist of bike lanes, a paved pedestrian path, and an equestrian trail; and
- Construct bicycle and pedestrian access ramps from The Old Road to the Multi-Use Trail at the I-5 hook ramp intersection.

1.3.3.4 Sky View Lane Improvements

The proposed project would reconstruct and widen Sky View Lane between The Old Road and Entertainment Drive from two lanes in each direction to two lanes westbound and four lanes eastbound. The improvements would include the following:

- Construction of retaining walls at needed locations;
- Reconstruction of catch basins;
- Intersection improvements at The Old Road and Sky View Lane that include two additional eastbound turn lanes; and
- Install a traffic signal.

1.3.3.5 Rye Canyon Road Improvements

Rye Canyon Road would be widened as follows:

- At Rye Canyon Road and Avenue Stanford, there would be three through lanes, one left-turn lane, and one right-turn lane westbound; three through lanes, two left-turn lanes and a right-turn lane eastbound; one shared through right-turn lane and two left-turn lanes northbound; and one through lane, one right-turn lane and one left-turn lane southbound.

- At The Old Road and Rye Canyon Road, there would be three left-turn lanes and two right-turn lanes westbound; three through lanes and two right-turn free right-turns northbound; and three through lanes and two left-turn lanes southbound.

- Signal improvements would be implemented to accommodate the widening. In addition, a soil nail retaining wall would be constructed along the northern side abutment of the I-5/Rye Canyon Road undercrossing, and a standard retaining wall would be constructed along the southern side concrete slope of the I-5/Rye Canyon Road undercrossing.

1.3.3.6 Construction Scenario

Construction of the proposed project is anticipated to begin in Fall 2024 and take approximately 4.5 years to complete, concluding in Winter 2028. Construction activities would occur for 12 hours per day, 7 days per week. The maximum roadway fill to be installed would be approximately 15 feet. The maximum depth for piles would be approximately 150 feet and construction for the proposed project components would occur as described below.

The Old Road Improvements

Roadway Improvements

The proposed The Old Road improvements would include realignment and widening of the existing roadway alignment, as well as intersection improvements that would be constructed in two phases. Phase 1 would be between Henry Mayo Drive and the I-5 on/off-ramps (Fall 2024–Fall 2026), and Phase 2 would be between the I-5 on/off-ramps and Magic Mountain Parkway (Spring 2026–Winter 2028). The phased activities would be as follows:

- Reconstruction, realignment, and widening of the roadway from two lanes in each direction to three lanes in each direction;

- Installation of bike lanes, sidewalks, curbs and gutters, curb access ramps, raised medians, and planting of trees;

- Installation of fiberoptic communication along The Old Road for traffic signal communications;

- Utility relocation;

- Reconstruction of existing drainage facilities and construction of new drainage facilities as needed;

- Reconstruction of existing catch basins and construction of new catch basins as needed; and

- Construction of retaining walls at needed locations.

Intersection Improvements

1. The Old Road at Henry Mayo Drive (Existing Signalized Intersection):

    - Upgrade new traffic signal equipment as necessary due to new lane configurations.

- Restripe all approaches as necessary due to new lane configurations that would be installed.

2. The Old Road at Gateway Drive (Existing Signalized intersection):
    - Upgrade traffic signal equipment as necessary due to road widening and new lane configurations.
    - Restripe approaches on northern and southern side of the roadway due to new lane configurations that would be installed.
    - Relocate traffic signal pole standards and traffic signal equipment due to widening of The Old Road.
3. The Old Road at I-5 On/Off-Ramps (Proposed Signalized Intersection):
    - Caltrans to install new traffic signal at new I-5 On/Off ramp location.
    - Restripe approaches on north and south sides due to new lane configurations that would be installed.
4. The Old Road at I-5 On/Off Ramps (Existing Signalized Intersection):
    - Caltrans to remove existing traffic signal equipment at existing location of I-5 On/Off Ramps.
5. The Old Road at Rye Canyon Road (Existing Signalized Intersection):
    - Upgrade traffic signal equipment as necessary due to road widening and new lane configurations.
    - Restripe approaches on North and South sides due to new lane configurations that would be installed.
    - Relocate traffic signal pole standards and traffic signal equipment due to widening of The Old Road.
6. The Old Road at Sky View Lane (Proposed Signalized Intersection):
    - Install new signalized intersection at Sky View Lane to include construction of Americans with Disability Act (ADA) curb ramps, signal standards, and traffic signal equipment.
    - Restripe all approaches as necessary due to new lane configurations that would be installed.
7. The Old Road at Project Entry-Private Driveway:
    - Upgrade traffic signal equipment as necessary due to widening and new lane configurations.
    - Restripe all approaches as necessary due to new lane configurations that would be installed.

- Relocate traffic signal pole standards and traffic signal equipment due to widening of The Old Road.

8. The Old Road at Magic Mountain Parkway (Existing Signalized Intersection):

    - Realign vehicle heads and raised median to accommodate new lane configurations that would be installed.

    - Upgrade traffic signal equipment as necessary due to widening and new lane configurations.

    - Restripe all approaches as necessary due to new lane configurations that would be installed.

Construction Equipment

Construction equipment utilized for this component of the proposed project includes approximately five dump trucks, excavators, and a water truck. Trucks would travel to and from the proposed project site each day throughout the construction period. The additional heavy-duty construction equipment would remain on-site throughout construction.

Bridge Replacements

Two bridges along The Old Road alignment would be replaced, including the Santa Clara River Bridge, which crosses over the Santa Clara River, and the SPT Co. Bridge, which crosses over the abandoned SPT Co. railroad tracks. Construction activities associated with bridge replacement would be similar for both bridges. The bridge construction would occur concurrently and would be divided into two stages, one for the western side and one for the eastern side of the bridge. Construction would begin with the western side replacement; once the western side is completed, traffic would be switched to that side, and construction would begin on the eastern side. The stages follow the same steps, as described below:

Stage 1: Western Side Bridge Replacement

Phase 1: Site Preparation (Spring or Summer of 2026)

- Implement traffic control detour.

- Install shoring along the northern and southern roadway bridge approaches.

- Create an embankment by backfilling within the shoring 15 feet high at the northern and southern bridge approaches.

- Install subgrade and base course materials.

- Remove part of the existing bridge foundation and construct the western side of the bridge over the SPT Co. Railroad tracks.

Phase 2: Bridge Foundations (Spring 2026–Fall 2026)

- Clear and grub at the riverbed easement for tree removals and construct a temporary access ramp.

- Construct embankment 2:1 slope from the riverbed to the face of the north abutment.
- Construct the bridge substructure on the western side of the bridge over Santa Clara River, including abutment, column pile extensions, and cap beams; install piles at approximately 150 feet deep within the riverbed and 100 feet deep at the abutments.
- Erect pre-stressed girders.
- Construct continuity diaphragms between girders at all bents.

Phase 3: Bridge Deck (Fall 2026–Spring 2027)

- Install concrete deck falsework, pour deck, and add barrier rails.
- Apply asphalt paving on road approach.

Stage 2: Eastern Side Bridge Replacement

Phase 1: Site Preparation (Spring 2027)

- Implement traffic control detour to switch traffic to the western side of the bridge.
- Create and embankment by backfilling within the shoring 15 feet high at the northern and southern bridge approaches.
- Install subgrade and base course materials.
- Remove the bridge superstructure over the abandoned SPT Co. Railroad tracks, including deck and barrier rails.
- Remove the existing bridge over Santa Clara River, including deck, barrier rails, and pier walls.

Phase 2: Bridge Foundations (Summer 2027–Fall 2027)

- Clear and grub at the riverbed easement.
- Construct embankment 2:1 slope from the riverbed to the face of the north abutment.
- Construct the bridge substructure on the eastern side of the bridge over Santa Clara River, including abutment, column pile extensions, and cap beams; install piles at approximately 150 feet deep within the riverbed and 100 feet deep at the abutments.
- Erect pre-stressed girders.
- Construct continuity diaphragms between girders at all bents.
- Construct eastern side of the bridge over the abandoned SPT Co. Railroad tracks.

Phase 3: Bridge Deck (Spring 2028–Winter 2028)

- Install concrete deck falsework, pour deck, and add barrier rails.
- Apply asphalt paving on road approach.

- Construct closure pour to connect the two halves of the river replacement bridge together.
- Construct closure pour to connect the two halves of the replacement bridge over the abandoned railroad ROW together.
- Remove deck falsework, including deck closure pour activity.

Construction Equipment

Construction equipment utilized for this component of the proposed project includes five pieces of heavy equipment, such as loader, drill rig, backhoe, hoe ram, and 100-ton capacity hydraulic crane; approximately five to 10 concrete trucks; approximately five dump trucks; one forklift; excavators, and several telescopic man-lifts. Trucks would travel to and from the proposed project site each day during the construction period for the bridge replacements. The additional construction equipment would remain on-site throughout construction.

Construction Personnel

Construction personnel during a typical construction day would include the following:

- One project manager,
- One project superintendent,
- One road foreman,
- One bridge foreman,
- Four operators,
- Ten journeymen, and
- Ten laborers.

The number of construction personnel traveling to and from the proposed project site each day during the peak construction period would be doubled from those listed above.

1.3.3.7 Best Management Practices

An appropriate combination of monitoring and resource impact avoidance would be employed during all the construction activities, including implementation of the following Best Management Practices (BMPs):

- Temporary construction site BMPs and the regulatory permit compliance component for the State's Construction General Permit for applicability of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) and compliance with the County's Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit.
- Implementation of a Construction and Demolition Debris Recycling and Reuse Plan in accordance with Chapter 20.87 of the Los Angeles County Code.

- Adherence to the Los Angeles County's Construction Site BMP Manual and Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan preparation manual.

- South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD): The requirements of both Rule 402 and 403 are standard contract requirements that are specified in Section EC of the LACPW contract special provisions.

LACPW would work with local authorities to prepare a construction traffic notification procedure to minimize transportation and traffic effects.

1.3.4 Project Alternatives

There are two alternatives proposed for the project: the No-Build Alternative and the Build Alternative. The criteria used for the alternative evaluation includes: if the alternative meets the purpose and need, avoids environmental impacts, and is within the proposed project cost.

1.3.4.1 Alternative 1: No-Build Alternative

Alternative 1, the No-Build Alternative, would maintain the existing lane configuration of The Old Road. The Old Road would continue to be a four-lane (two northbound and two southbound) roadway and would not accommodate current or projected traffic demands, and intersection improvements would not be performed. Under the No-Build Alternative, the proposed project would not be constructed, and no impacts on land use would occur.

The Old Road would continue to be a four-lane (two northbound and two southbound) roadway and would not accommodate current or projected traffic demands, and intersection improvements would not be performed. The No-Build Alternative would not repair the structurally deficient bridge or allow the volume of water of a LACPW Capital Flood event (defined as a 50-year burned and bulked storm) to pass under it. It would not enhance vehicular, pedestrian, or bicycle safety.

1.3.4.2 Alternative 2: Build Alternative

Alternative 2, the Build Alternative, would improve existing traffic operations and accommodate future traffic projections along the roadway. The improvements primarily would consist of reconstruction and widening of The Old Road, replacement of two bridges, reconstruction and widening of Rye Canyon Road, and reconstruction and widening of Sky View Lane, including reconfiguration of its intersection with The Old Road. In addition, the proposed project would include an extension of the Multi-Use Trail. Current traffic demand in the proposed project area meets or exceeds roadway capacity for many arterial roadways. Increases in traffic demand are expected over the next few years, concurrent with projected population growth in the area. Thus, widening The Old Road to six lanes is critical to the passage of traffic and emergency vehicles in the area.

The Old Road over the Santa Clara River Bridge is currently not high enough to allow the volume of water of a LACPW Capital Flood event (defined as a 50-year burned and bulked storm) to pass under it. Replacing the bridge at a higher elevation would provide a minimum freeboard of 2.5 feet to allow a Capital Flood event to pass under it. Additionally, emergency repairs were performed on the superstructure, piles, and abutment seats of the bridge immediately following the 1994 Northridge earthquake. Nonetheless, the bridge is currently

classified as structurally deficient per FHWA standards. Replacing the bridge as part of this project would eliminate that classification.

The primary components of the Build Alternative are discussed in Section 1.3.3 above.

1.3.5 Alternatives Considered but Eliminated from Further Discussion

Alternatives were considered during the early stages of project development but were eliminated because they would not meet the project's purpose and need or were considered infeasible. The original project has been modified several times to reduce impacts to sensitive resources and to facilitate wildlife movement. Earlier iterations of the project were eliminated from further detailed analysis because the currently proposed project and its alternatives present more environmentally friendly options toward fulfilling the project's objectives.

Raising the Santa Clara River Bridge with No Road Widening
This alternative proposed to construct the Santa Clara River Bridge to accommodate the capital flood requirements and proposed reconstruction of the necessary bridge approach lengths to accommodate the raising of the Santa Clara River Bridge approximately 14' as well as lowering the Multi-Use Trail bridge to meet vertical sight distance requirements. The proposed cross-section of the roadway and the bridge would follow the existing configuration of two northbound and two southbound lanes in each direction. During the scoping period, Public Works eliminated this alternative due to its failure to meet Los Angeles County's of Highway and Bikeway Master Plan objectives as well as the impacts to the projected future traffic.

Arched Corrugated Steel Plate Tunnel for Trail Crossing The Old Road
This alternative proposed to replace the existing bridge formerly known as the Southern Pacific Transportation Company (SPT Co.) Bridge with a tunnel consisting of arched corrugated steel plates. The proposed tunnel would span 33-feet to accommodate the proposed Multi-Use Trail. As a steel structure, the corrugated steel would require periodical repainting and coating as part of the required maintenance. During the scoping period, Public Works eliminated this alternative due to its long-term maintenance costs, additional backfill material required, and the non-standard design.

Alternative Alignment for the Multi-Use Trail
This alternative proposed an alternate alignment for the Multi-Use Trail. The alignment would have been moved from the proposed alignment that passes through the Valencia Water Reclamation Plant to the west boundary of The Old Road right-of-way. This realignment for the Multi-Use Trail was not feasible due to the following reasons:

- There are over 30 oak trees which would need to be removed for the alternate alignment. The County Oak Tree ordinance calls for a replacement ratio of 10:1 which would be infeasible in the project area.
- The alternate alignment would involve substantial additional excavation. This area has been identified as sensitive for cultural resources, so there would be an increased risk of encountering and having to develop a plan and mitigate for such.
- The realigned trail will not be large enough to accommodate for the Low Impact Device (LID) feature currently proposed.
- This alternative would join the existing trail at an intersection of 50° at the proposed bridge, resulting in poor sight distance.
- This alternative would result in users walking between two retaining walls along a curve, which may result in reduced sight distance.

1.3.6 Permits and Approvals Needed

The following permits, licenses, agreements, and certifications (PLACs) are required for project construction:

Agency	PLAC	Status
United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)	Biological Opinion	A Biological Opinion will be obtained prior to the approval of the EIR/EA and issuance of the FONSI.
United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)	Section 404 Permit for filling or dredging waters of the United States (U.S.)	Following approval of the EIR and issuance of the FONSI, permit applications will be submitted.
CDFW	1602 Agreement for Streambed Alteration	Following approval of the EIR and issuance of the FONSI, permit applications will be submitted.
Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB)	Potential Section 401 Water Quality Certification or waiver and or/Porter Cologne Act Waste Discharge Requirements Compliance with the NPDES Construction General Permit	The applicable RWQCB permit will be determined during design. If needed, this permit may involve a joint “Application for 401 Water Quality Certification” and/or “Report of Waste Discharge." A statewide NPDES permit for construction and operations would be in effect for the project. Compliance review would take place during the design phase.
Federal Highway Administration	Concurrence with the project’s conformity to Clean Air Act and other requirements	Air quality studies would be submitted for FHWA determination after the environmental document’s public circulation period has closed and prior to a FONSI.
State Historic Preservation Office	National Historic Preservation Act Section 106 consultation	In compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act Section 106 and Assembly Bill (AB) 52, the NAHC was contacted in July 2020. The Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians requested further consultation and a meeting once the Cultural Resources Report, as well as grading and excavation details were made available. Consultation will continue regarding the proposed project.

Chapter 2 Affected Environment, Environmental Consequences, and Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

This chapter discusses potential environmental impacts of the proposed project and recommended avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures (AMMs). The proposed AMMs are also summarized in Appendix C. Additional relevant information can be found in appendices as follows: Appendix A provides the Caltrans Title VI Policy Statement, and Appendix B lists the technical studies prepared for this proposed project. This chapter also addresses issues of concern pursuant to NEPA.

2.1 Topics Considered but Determined Not to be Relevant

As part of the scoping and environmental analysis carried out for the proposed project, the following environmental issues were considered, but either the resources are not present or no adverse impacts were identified. As a result, the following resources are not discussed further in this document.

Coastal Zone – The proposed project is located in unincorporated Los Angeles County but is not located within the coastal zone; therefore, no coastal resources would be affected by construction or operation of the project.

Timberlands – There are no forest resources or timberlands in the proposed project vicinity or in the proposed project area. Therefore, the California Timberland Productivity Act does not apply.

Wild and Scenic Rivers – There are no wild and scenic rivers in the proposed project vicinity. Therefore, the proposed project is not subject to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act or the California Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

2.2 Human Environment

2.2.1 Existing and Future Land Use

The following section is based on the Community Impact Assessment (CIA) (AECOM 2023a) prepared for the proposed project. This section describes the existing and future regional land use in the immediate proposed project area and surrounding vicinity.

2.2.1.1 Regulatory Setting

Public Resources Code (PRC) 21083 and 21087 and CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2(a) require lead agencies to assess the impact of a proposed project by examining alternations in the human use of the land, including population distribution and population concentration, and commercial and residential development. CEQA Guidelines Section 15131 allows public agencies to consider economic and social impacts when determining the significance of an environmental impact.

Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulation 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Section 1502.16(c) requires environmental documents to identify possible conflicts between the proposed project and local land use plans.

2.2.1.2 Affected Environment

2.2.1.2.1 Study Area

Project Area

The proposed project area could be directly affected by proposed project construction and operation, and it includes the permanent footprint of the Build Alternative (i.e., the permanently affected areas) plus the construction footprint, including staging areas associated with the Build Alternative (i.e., the temporarily affected areas). The proposed project area is within a variable 140- to 160-foot-wide ROW that runs in a north/south direction, parallel to I-5 through the Santa Clarita Valley. The roadway's southern terminus is the junction of San Fernando Road and Sierra Highway in Los Angeles County; the northerly terminus is roughly at Oak Court in the unincorporated community of Castaic (north of Lake Hughes Road). Major intersections along The Old Road within the proposed project limits include Sky View Lane, Rye Canyon Road, the I-5 southbound ramps, Henry Mayo Drive, Magic Mountain Parkway, and the State Route (SR) 126 overcrossing.

Study Area

The study area is defined as the areas and nearby communities that have the greatest potential to be directly or indirectly affected by the proposed project during construction and operation. The study area was delineated using aerial photographs, municipal boundaries, and physical characteristics that naturally delineate an area and the area in which both direct and indirect effects would be likely to occur at their greatest intensity.

The study area includes an area much larger than that which could be directly affected by proposed project construction and ROW acquisitions, to provide a broader picture of the area potentially affected by the proposed project than city and county demographics alone can provide. City and county demographic data were analyzed to present the general population and housing characteristic of the study area. Census tracts also were used to incorporate populations that may not be directly affected by the proposed project but may be indirectly affected by proposed project construction and operation. The study area encompasses the proposed project area, as well as a half-mile buffer around the study area. A half-mile was determined to be a sufficient range for all potential environmental impacts that could affect human population. In addition, the study area includes the unincorporated community of Stevenson Ranch, the City of Santa Clarita (the incorporated community nearest the proposed project area), and Los Angeles County (the larger metropolitan areas included in the analysis) for reference.

Study Area Census Tracts

The study area for the proposed project comprising the following seven U.S. Census Tracts (Figure 3), because they come in direct contact with the study area: U.S. Census Tracts 9201.06, 9201.07, 9201.08, 9201.14, 9202.00, 9203.28, and 9203.39, Block Group 1.

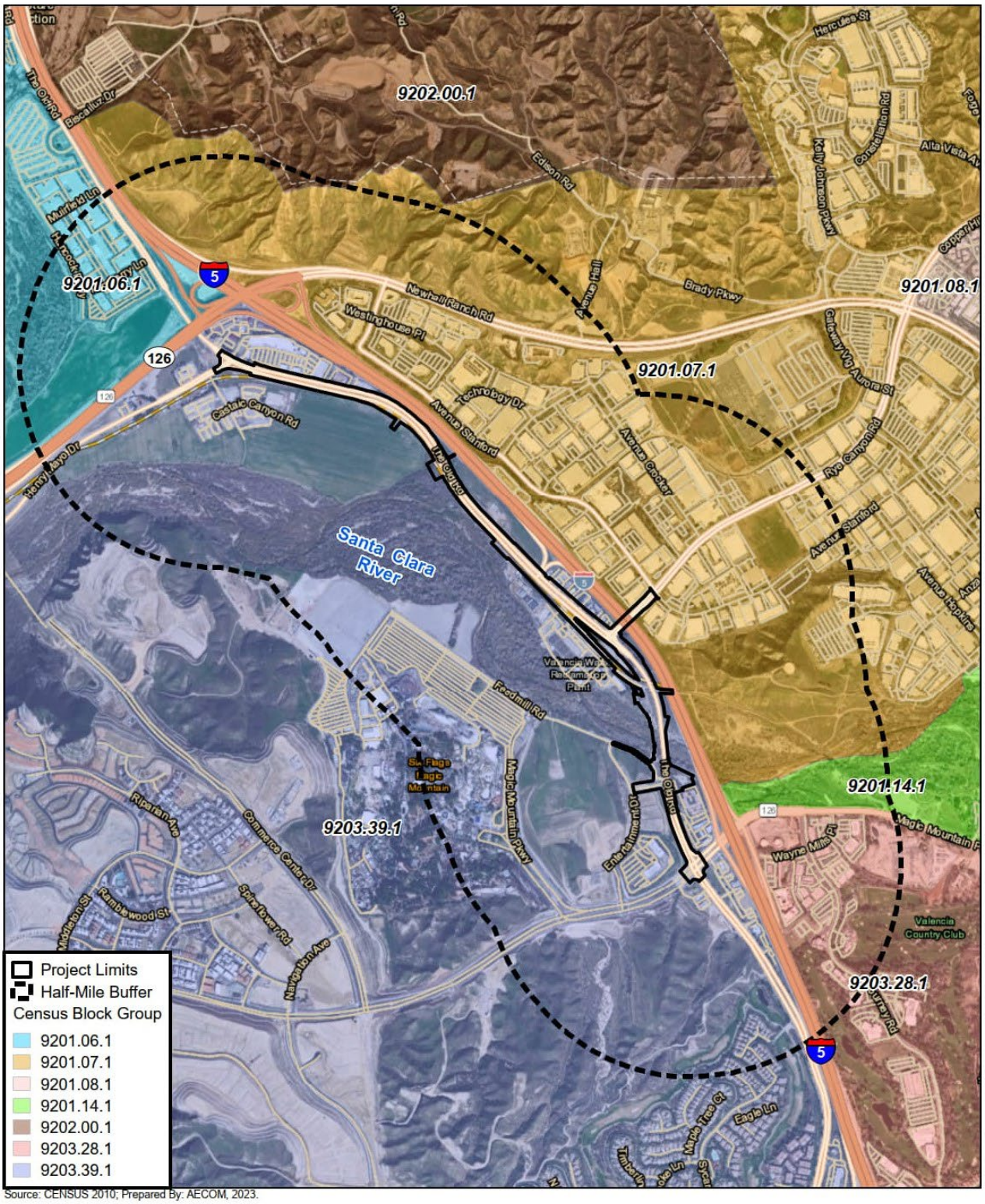


Figure 3
Census Map

2.2.1.2.2 Zoning and Existing Land Uses

Existing Land Use Patterns

Existing land uses are defined as those uses of the study area and adjacent areas that existed at the time the CIA was conducted. The applicable land use planning documents for the study area are the Los Angeles County General Plan, 2012 Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan, and the 2011 City of Santa Clarita General Plan.

The proposed project area is within the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan, a component of the Los Angeles County General Plan, which is intended to guide the regulation of development within the unincorporated portions of the Santa Clarita Valley. In addition, a portion of the proposed project along Rye Canyon Road is guided by the City of Santa Clarita General Plan.

The proposed project area is in unincorporated areas in Los Angeles County as well as in the City of Santa Clarita. Specifically, the proposed project area is in the community of Stevenson Ranch, developed from its role as a highway stop containing small cafes, hotels, and automotive services along the Old Ridge Route, which opened in 1914.

The Old Road is a four-lane (two northbound and two southbound) roadway, within a variable 140- to 160-foot-wide ROW that runs in a north/south direction, parallel to I-5 through the Santa Clarita Valley. The roadway's southern terminus is the junction of San Fernando Road and Sierra Highway in the City of Santa Clarita; and the northern terminus is roughly at Oak Court in the unincorporated community of Castaic (north of Lake Hughes Road).

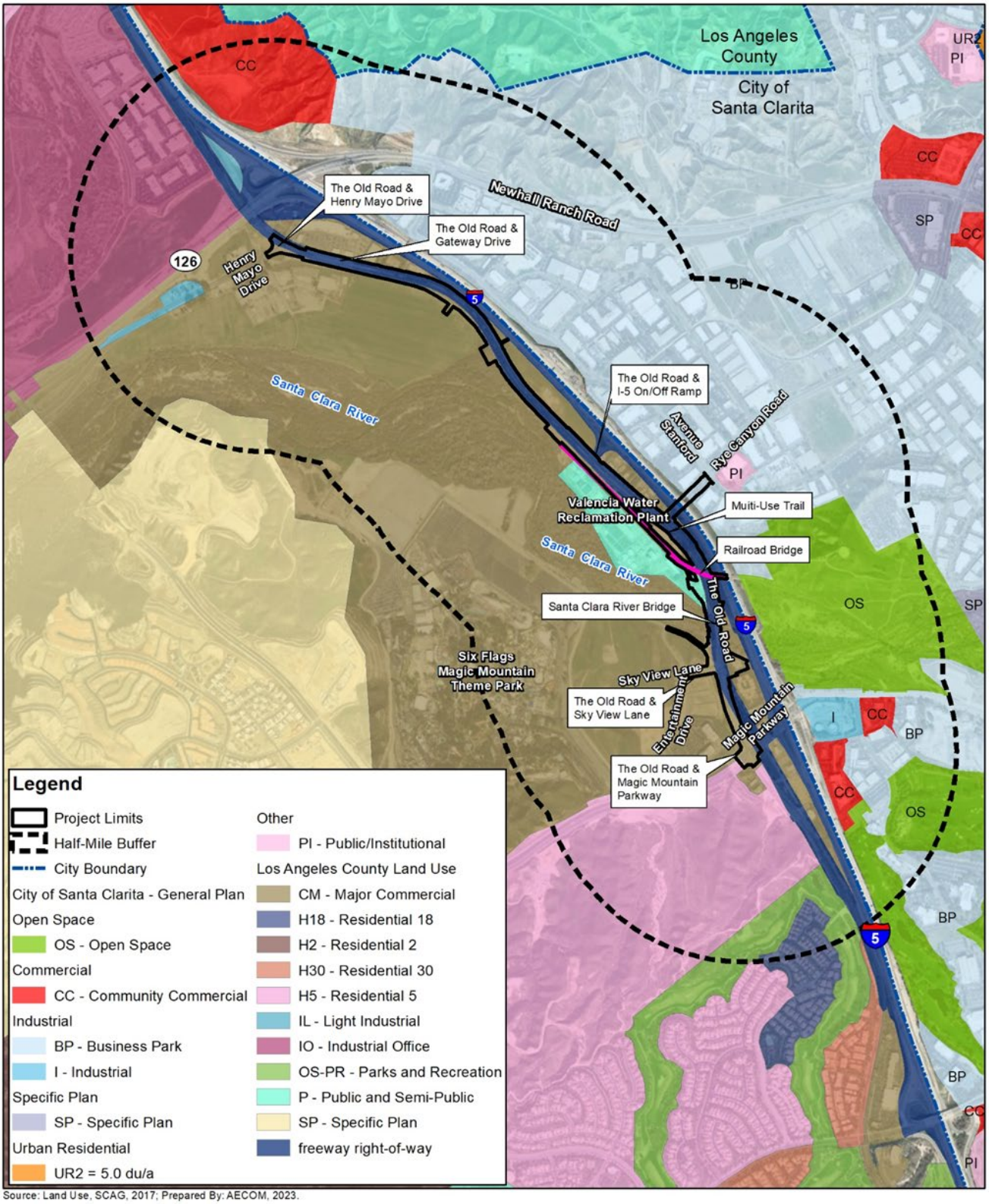
Rye Canyon Road is a six-lane (three eastbound and three westbound) roadway that runs in an east/west direction, mainly within the City of Santa Clarita. The roadway's western terminus is the junction of The Old Road at Rye Canyon Road within Los Angeles County; and the eastern terminus is the junction of Newhall Ranch Road and Rye Canyon Road within the City of Santa Clarita.

Zoning

Los Angeles County General Plan, 2012 Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan, and the 2011 City of Santa Clarita General Plan

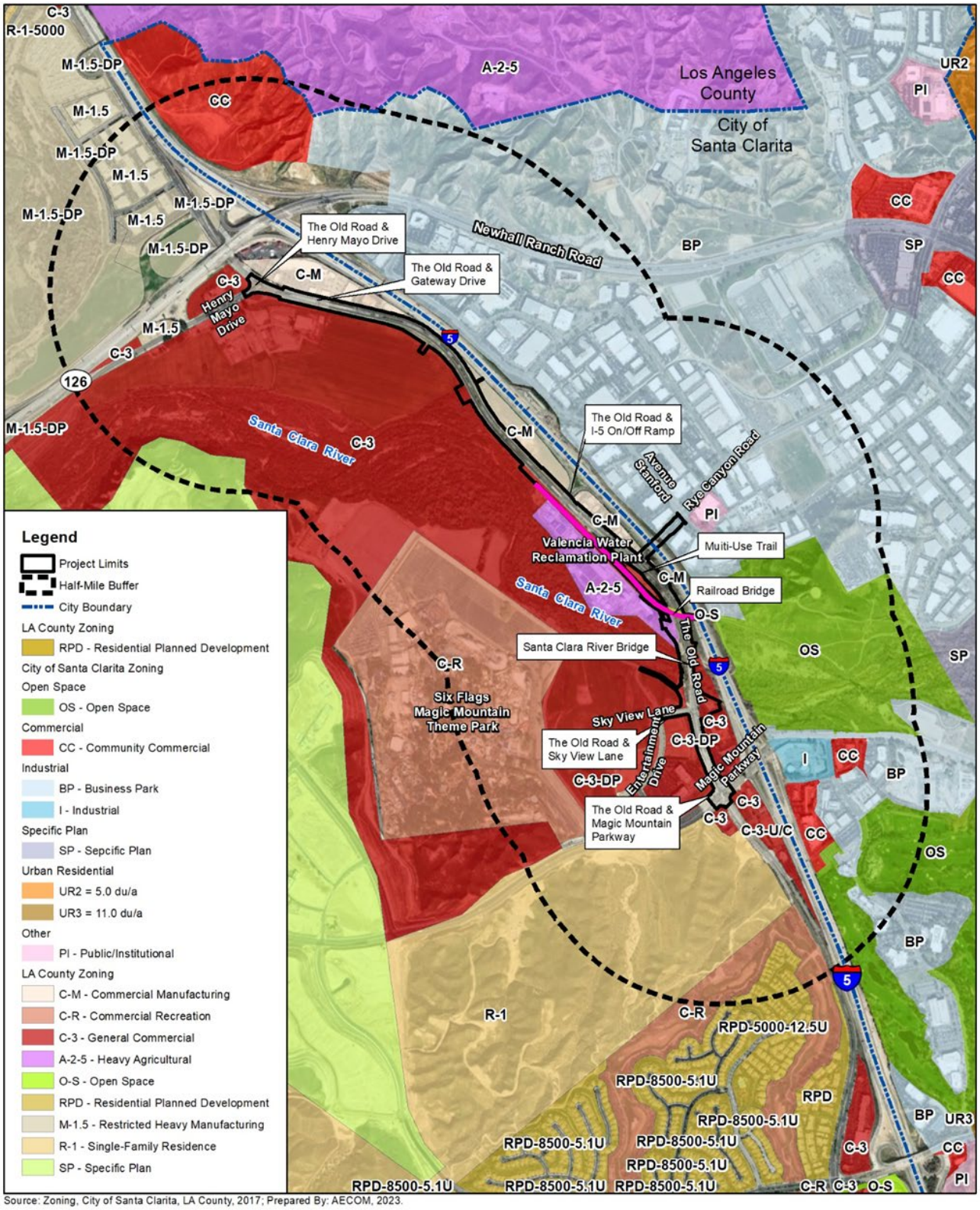
The roughly 2-mile segment of the proposed project is in the unincorporated community of Stevenson Ranch in the northern part of Los Angeles County, as well as the City of Santa Clarita. Thus, the proposed project area is subject to the policies in the Los Angeles County General Plan and the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan.. The proposed project area also is subject to policies in the City of Santa Clarita General Plan. Figure 4 shows the land use designations, and Figure 5 shows the zoning designations of the proposed project area, as described next.

The area immediately west of The Old Road and the portion of Henry Mayo Road within the proposed project area is zoned C-3, which is noted as General Commercial. The purpose of this area is described as "local-serving commercial uses, including retail, restaurants, and personal and professional services; single family and multifamily residences; and residential and commercial mixed uses". Along Henry Mayo Drive within the proposed project area there is an



Source: Land Use, SCAG, 2017; Prepared By: AECOM, 2023.

Figure 4
General Plan Land Use



Source: Zoning, City of Santa Clarita, LA County, 2017; Prepared By: AECOM, 2023.

Figure 5
Zoning Map

existing Boys Camp (27211 Henry Mayo Drive), a recreational vehicle (RV) storage facility (28755 Castaic Canyon Road), and the Castaic Union School District Transportation (27051 Henry Mayo Drive).

The area immediately east of The Old Road and west of I-5 is zoned Commercial Manufacturing (C-M). The purpose of this area is described as “large and intense commercial uses, such as regional and destination shopping centers, tourist and recreation related commercial services; multifamily residences; and residential and commercial mixed uses”. Land uses include a Boys Camp (27211 Henry Mayo Drive), an RV storage facility (28755 Castaic Canyon Road), and a commercial complex that includes a church, Subway Restaurant, a sports complex, and commercial offices. A California Highway Patrol office (28648 The Old Road) also is east of The Old Road and just south of SR-126 and Henry Mayo Drive. Further southeast of The Old Road is a commercial complex consisting of several restaurants, including Jack in the Box (28144 The Old Road), Starbucks (28120 The Old Road), Original Tommy’s (28116 The Old Road), Del Taco (28082 The Old Road), and Jimmy Dean’s Charbroiled Burgers (28018 The Old Road).

The area immediately west of I-5, between Rye Canyon Road and Avenue Stanford, is within the City of Santa Clarita. This area is zoned Business Park (BP) and designated BP in the City of Santa Clarita General Plan. Land uses in the proposed project area along Rye Canyon Road include Riedel Communications (25702 Rye Canyon Road), Concentra Urgent Care (25733 Rye Canyon Road), Artex Kitchen Design (25700 Rye Canyon Road), and DTC (25709 Rye Canyon Road).

The majority of the proposed project area south of Henry Mayo Drive is designated General Commercial (C-3) in Los Angeles County General Plan. The Santa Clara River crosses The Old Road, and the Valencia Water Reclamation Plant (an area zoned A-2-5 for Heavy Agriculture) is west of The Old Road across the aforementioned commercial complex.

The land southwest of the proposed project area includes an area designated as Commercial Recreation (C-R), which is limited to low-intensity commercial uses “that are compatible with rural and agricultural activities, including retail, restaurants, and personal and professional services.” This area includes Six Flags Magic Mountain (26101 Magic Mountain Parkway). North of Magic Mountain Parkway are areas designated as General Commercial (C-3-DP and C-3). Businesses include the Hilton Garden Inn Valencia Six Flags (27710 The Old Road). South of Magic Mountain Parkway are areas designated as General Commercial (C-3-U/C) that consist of various restaurant chains, and single-family residential areas designated as R-1.

2.2.1.2.3 Surrounding Zoning and Land Use

Surrounding Land Use Patterns

Historically, the proposed project site and its surroundings have been used primarily for agricultural purposes or cattle grazing from, or prior to, 1928 through 1994. By 2002, areas adjacent to the proposed project site were developed by grading, mainly for industrial and commercial uses.

I-5 is a major transportation corridor east of The Old Road. The agricultural land and the hillsides east of I-5 generally are undisturbed by development. In general, commercial businesses are located primarily north of Magic Mountain Parkway. The area further north of the proposed project alignment includes residential homes, which include both single-family and multi-family residences. Single-family residences encompass the southern portion of the

proposed project limits. Figure 5 shows the zoning designations of the proposed project area, as described next.

Surrounding Zoning

Unincorporated Los Angeles County

Surrounding zoning within unincorporated Los Angeles County includes M-1.5 or M-1.5-DP, which is north and west of Henry Mayo Drive. According to the Los Angeles County General Plan, this area is designated as Restricted Heavy Manufacturing. Areas designated as Heavy Agricultural (A-2-5) are north of Newhall Ranch Road and east of I-5.

Areas south of the proposed project area and south of Magic Mountain Parkway are zoned as R-1 and RPD. These areas include single- and multi-family residential areas. Within these areas are golf courses zoned C-R.

City of Santa Clarita

Surrounding zoning within the City of Santa Clarita includes areas zoned Community Commercial (CC) north of Henry Mayo Drive and east of The Old Road and I-5. The surrounding area east of The Old Road and I-5, along Rye Canyon Road, is predominantly zoned BP. Businesses along this portion of the proposed project area include technology firms, consulting agencies, insurance companies, hotels (along Newhall Ranch Road), and the Santa Clarita Valley Chamber of Commerce (28494 Westinghouse Place). The California Highway Patrol Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Facility also is east of The Old Road and I-5 (27858 Golden State Highway).

An area also is designated Open Space (O-S), south of Rye Canyon Road, north of Magic Mountain Parkway, and east of The Old Road and I-5 (City of Santa Clarita 2018a). The Valencia Country Club (27330 Tourney Road) is south of Magic Mountain Parkway, east of I-5.

Areas zoned BP also are south of Magic Mountain Parkway along Tourney Road. These areas include Kaiser Permanente Santa Clarita Medical Offices (27107 Tourney Road) and the U.S. Social Security Administration (27200 Tourney Road).

2.2.1.2.4 Future Land Use

Future land uses are planned land uses that will occur as a result of land use designations and policies contained in applicable land planning documents. Recent development trends in the proposed project area have been focused primarily on transportation projects. Table 2-1 lists the development projects in the proposed project vicinity. The proposed project time frame includes any other projects that may occur within 3 years of the proposed project implementation. The projects that are listed were used to analyze cumulative impacts of the proposed project.

Table 2-1: Planned Local Developments

Name	Jurisdiction	Proposed Uses	Status
I-5 Rye Canyon Ramps Project	County of Los Angeles	I-5 Ramps (connect The Old Road to I-5)	95-percent (%) Plans
Newhall Ranch Specific Plan	County of Los Angeles	15,000-acre Master Planned Community	Under construction

Source: AECOM 2023a

The Newhall Ranch Project, a development that broke ground in 2018 and began to sell homes in 2021, intends to add over 21,500 homes to the Santa Clarita Valley along SR-126 (Daily News 2021). As discussed in further detail in Section 2.2.5, the Build Alternative would not change current access along The Old Road or provide new access; only improvements or re-alignments of intersections along The Old Road would occur. The intersection and other improvements associated with the Build Alternative would create benefits for travelers by decreasing congestion; however, the alternative would not accommodate additional traffic beyond what currently is projected for the area. Furthermore, the Build Alternative would address existing operational demand and capacity deficiencies and would not be expected to influence the amount, location, and/or distribution of growth currently expected in and around the study area. The proposed project is not expected to induce land development, or to encourage changes in population density or construction of additional housing beyond what already is planned for the study area.

2.2.1.3 Environmental Consequences

2.2.1.3.1 Alternative 1: No-Build Alternative

The No-Build Alternative would maintain the current configuration of The Old Road in the study area. The No-Build Alternative would not be consistent with the Los Angeles County Circulation Element, which calls for The Old Road to be a six-lane major highway. The Old Road over the Santa Clara River bridge would continue to be substandard for the following reasons: (a) the bridge would continue to have insufficient freeboard to allow an LACPW Capital Food to pass under the bridge, (b) the bridge would continue to not meet Caltrans bridge seismic criteria, and (c) the bridge would continue to not meet LACPW highway design speed safety standards (it currently is designed for 40 mph, whereas the master plan highway criterion is 65 mph).

The existing lane configurations would be unchanged, no ROW acquisitions would be required, and no intersection improvements would be undertaken. Under the No-Build Alternative, the proposed project would not be constructed and would not affect land use.

2.2.1.3.2 Alternative 2: Build Alternative

Temporary Impacts

Construction of the Build Alternative is expected to last approximately 4.5 years. Typical roadway construction activities would result in some temporary localized impacts on land uses in the area, including additional truck traffic, pollutant emissions from construction activities, increased noise and vibration, and temporary delays and/or detours. However, such potential construction impacts would be temporary and intermittent. Temporary construction easements (TCEs) would be needed for construction access and staging.

Currently, The Old Road, Rye Canyon Road, and Sky View Lane do not allow parking within the roadway ROW. Parking lots for commercial properties would be affected temporarily by proposed project construction activities. Temporary easements would be required from some parcels.

The selection of suitable staging sites would be done by the contractor; Figure 2 shows the potential staging site near the proposed bridges. Access to businesses would remain open during proposed project construction activities.

Permanent Impacts

Direct Impacts

The majority of roadway improvements and construction would occur within the existing ROW. However, acquisition of the ROW would be required along almost all of the western side of The Old Road. The majority of this property is vacant, with the exception of the Valencia Water Reclamation Plant. This land currently is owned by the Newhall Land and Farming Company and the Los Angeles County Sanitation District. No ROW extensions would occur on the eastern side of the road, with the exception of a small acquisition at the southeastern corner of the intersection of Rye Canyon Road and The Old Road, and a small portion along the southeastern corner of the intersection of Sky View Lane and The Old Road. Both parcels are owned by Newhall Land and Farming Company and currently are vacant. Therefore, farmland may be acquired for the proposed project, which may lead indirectly to the conversion of farmland. However, none of the existing parcels are being used for farming, and this land would not be suitable for farming because sufficient land area is not available for farming on these parcels. Table 2-2 and Figure 6 below show parcels/Assessor Parcel Numbers (APNs) affected by ROW acquisition.

In addition, ROW acquisition also would be required along Rye Canyon Road between The Old Road and Avenue Stanford. The ROW acquisition would be required to accommodate the roadway widening and sidewalk improvements from three commercial properties. The roadway widening would affect the I-5 bridge over Rye Canyon Road, which would require the concrete slopes under the bridge to be reconstructed with retaining walls. These acquisitions would cause direct impacts on the commercial properties along the ROW of Rye Canyon Road.

One full parcel acquisition would be required, as shown in Table 2-2 below. The full parcel acquisition would occur on vacant land owned by the Newhall Land and Farming Company. The land use would permanently change from the existing use to transportation land use where the ROW would be expanded to construct the Build Alternative. In addition, as shown in Table 2-2 below, additional properties would have partial acquisitions, which would change the land use designation for the portion of the properties acquired, while the remaining portion of the property retains its existing use.

The Build Alternative would not preclude any of the planned projects listed in Table 2-1. Overall, the Build Alternative would provide enhanced access within this portion of the County of Los Angeles.

No park or recreational activities are anticipated to be affected by the acquisitions.

Indirect Impacts

Based on Caltrans guidance, indirect impacts on land use typically occur outside of the proposed project study area and can last longer than direct impacts (Caltrans 2011). Regional development impacts (e.g., changes in regional development and growth-related changes) on land use patterns are not anticipated with implementation of the Build Alternative.

Source: Esri Maps & Data, 2023; Prepared By: AECOM, 2023.

0 500 1,000 Feet

Project_Limits

Project Parcels

2826163031 Parcel Number

Figure 6

Parcels Selection for Review

The proposed project is not anticipated to induce growth or change regional development patterns. Growth has been occurring in the study area at a slow rate and is expected to continue to grow at a slow rate (as discussed in Section 2.2.5). The Build Alternative would address existing operational and capacity deficiencies and would not be expected to influence the amount, location, and/or distribution of growth in and around the study area. The proposed project is not anticipated to induce land development or encourage changes in population density or the construction of additional housing.

The area subject to ROW acquisition is urbanized and also contains vacant parcels. As shown in Table 2-2, the Build Alternative would affect 23 parcels (permanently or temporarily), and the majority of the affected parcels would result in partial acquisitions or easements. As discussed above, one full parcel acquisition would be required. The majority of ROW acquisitions and easements would occur on vacant parcels or commercial/office use properties fronting The Old Road. Businesses would be slightly affected in terms of the permanent acquisitions; driveways and parking likely would be affected but not the buildings themselves. No relocations would be required, and construction would accommodate continued access to the businesses. The acquired properties would be used for ROW and converted to transportation uses, which would be a direct impact on land use. However, the Build Alternative would not require permanent displacement of structures or changes in access to homes or businesses. Overall, the proposed project would involve ROW acquisition for transportation uses and would not have adverse effects on land use and zoning designations.

Table 2-2: Land Use Impacts

Impacted Parcel (APN)	Owner of Record	Land Use	Parcel Size	Acquisition Area	Acquisition and Type
2826005007	Newhall Land and Farming Co	Vacant	38,738 Square Feet (SF)	686.96 SF	Partial ROW Acquisition
2826005013	Newhall Land and Farming Co	Vacant	648,292 SF	166,041.54 SF	Partial ROW Acquisition
2826006008	Newhall Land and Farming Co	Vacant	209,259 SF	274.5 SF	Partial ROW Acquisition and Temporary Easement
2826006905	County Sanitation District No 32	Public Utility	292,994 SF	49,608.40 SF	Partial ROW Acquisition and Temporary Easement
2826006906	County Sanitation District No 32	Public Utility	104,344 SF	925.66 SF	Partial ROW Acquisition and Temporary Easement
2826007021	Newhall Land and Farming Co	Vacant	6,403,327 SF	38,076.48 SF	Partial ROW Acquisition and Temporary Easement
2826037018	Studio Inn & Suites, LLC and Maruti Investments, Inc.	Commercial/ Industrial	150,958SF	9,445.64 SF	Temporary Easement
2826121002	Fleet Properties	Commercial/ Industrial	25,525 SF	1,976.77 SF	Temporary Easement

Table 2-2: Land Use Impacts

Impacted Parcel (APN)	Owner of Record	Land Use	Parcel Size	Acquisition Area	Acquisition and Type
2826121006	Deme Properties LLC	Commercial/ Industrial	27,961 SF	3,047.83 SF	Partial ROW Acquisition and Temporary Easement
2826121007	28038 The Old Road LLC	Commercial/ Industrial	36,819 SF	2,923.92 SF	Temporary Easement
2826163031	Newhall Land and Farming Co	Vacant	241,149 SF	778.05 SF	Partial ROW Acquisition and Temporary Easement
2826006003	Newhall Land and Farming Co	Commercial/ Industrial	19,415 SF	910.75 SF	Partial ROW Acquisition and Temporary Easement
2826006009	Newhall Land and Farming Co	Access Road/Vacant	110,537 SF	79,521.71 SF	Partial ROW Acquisition and Temporary Easement
2826006901	County Sanitation District No 32	Public Utility	617 SF	617 SF	Temporary Easement
2826006907	County Sanitation District No 32	Public Utility	2,622 SF	374.60 SF	Temporary Easement
2826037025	Newhall Land and Farming Co	Vacant	18,697 SF	21,735.65 SF	Temporary Easement
2826037026	Newhall Land and Farming Co	Vacant	97,993 SF	42,250 SF	Temporary Easement
2826037027	CEF Equities LLC and Rexford Pico LLC	Vacant	69,583 SF	56,500 SF	Temporary Easement
2866007062	Newhall Land and Farming Co	Vacant	33,792 SF	19,905.44 SF	Full Permanent ROW Acquisition
2866008001	Rye Canyon Industrial LLC	Commercial/ Industrial	117,130 SF	3,245.00 SF	Partial ROW Acquisition and Temporary Easement
2866009014	Di Pietro Holdings	Commercial/ Industrial	91,725 SF	6,451.00 SF	Partial ROW Acquisition and Temporary Easement
2826163034	Newhall Land and Farming	Vacant	221,814 SF	4,409 SF	Partial ROW Acquisition
2826005056	Old Road Realty LLC	Vacant	144,994 SF	644 SF	Temporary Easement

Source: AECOM 2023a

Because the impacts would be contained within the proposed project area, implementation of the Build Alternative would not result in indirect impacts on land use. The proposed project improvements would result in a more efficient transportation system, which would be locally and regionally beneficial.

2.2.1.4 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

The proposed project design would require some ROW acquisitions, but it would be consistent with current and future planned local land use, with the exception of acquisitions required for the Build Alternative. The Build Alternative would avoid impacts on existing built land uses to the extent practicable while adhering to design and operational criteria to maintain a safe roadway. During final design, efforts would be undertaken to further minimize construction and operation impacts on existing and planned land uses. The following AMMs will be implemented:

> **COM-1:** Maintain access and parking throughout construction. Before construction, LACPW would reconfigure access and parking to residential and commercial lots, to allow continued availability of that parking and access.

2.2.2 Consistency with State, Regional, and Local Plans and Programs

The following section is based on the CIA (AECOM 2023a) prepared for the proposed project and describes the adopted plans within the proposed project study area and goals, policies, or objectives that would be applicable to the proposed project. State law is the foundation for local planning in California. All references in this section are available in the CIA.

The California Government Code (Sections 65000 et seq.) contains many of the laws pertaining to the regulation of land uses by local governments, including the general plan requirement, specific plans, subdivisions, and zoning. However, the State seldom is involved in local land use and development decisions; these have been delegated to the City councils and boards of supervisors of the individual cities and counties. Local decision-makers adopt their own set of land use policies and regulations based on State laws.

The study area falls under the jurisdiction of Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG). The SCAG region, which is the largest Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) in the nation, includes six counties (i.e., Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Ventura) and 191 cities. As the designated MPO, SCAG is mandated by federal and State law to prepare a long-range Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) every 4 years. The RTP now incorporates a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) to comply with the Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act (Senate Bill [SB] 375, Steinberg), which requires development of regional reduction targets for greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in long-range regional planning for land use, housing, and transportation. In 2020, SCAG's Regional Council adopted the Connect SoCal (2020-2045 RTP/SCS). Connect SoCal is a long-range visioning plan that balances future mobility and housing needs with economic, environmental, and public health goals through 2045.

In addition to the regional plans, State law requires that each City and County adopt a general plan containing the following seven components or elements: land use, circulation, housing, conservation, open space, noise, and safety (California Government Code Sections 65300 et seq.). At the same time, each jurisdiction is free to adopt additional elements covering subjects of particular interest to that jurisdiction, such as recreation, urban design, or public facilities. The local general plan can be described as the City or County's "blueprint" for future development.

Community plans and specific plans often are used by Cities and Counties to plan the future of a particular area at a finer level of detail than that provided by the general plan. A community plan is a portion of the local general plan focusing on the issues pertinent to a particular area or community within the City or County. It supplements the policies of the general plan. Specific plans describe allowable land uses, identify open space, and detail the availability of facilities and financing for a portion of the community. Specific plans must be consistent with the local general plan. A specific plan implements, but is not technically a part of, the general plan.

The general plans of the affected communities (Los Angeles County; City of Santa Clarita; and the unincorporated community of Stevenson Ranch, which is under the jurisdiction of Los Angeles County) were reviewed to understand the development trends, land use-related goals, and specific policies of the local jurisdictions that could be affected by the proposed project. The land use, community design, open space, and/or mobility elements for each plan provide most of the goals or policies relevant to the proposed project area. Figure 4 shows the General Plan Land Use designations in the study area. The following sections discuss the relevant regional and local policies.

2.2.2.1 Affected Environment

The proposed project's consistency with the following types of plans was considered and is discussed next: Transportation Plans/Programs, Regional Growth Plans, Regional Conservation Plans, and General and Community Plans.

2.2.2.1.1 Transportation Plans/Programs

SCAG Federal Transportation Improvement Program

The Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP) is a federally mandated 4-year program for all federally funded transportation projects in the region, as well as all regionally significant transportation projects for which approval from federal funding agencies is required, regardless of funding source. The FTIP is a comprehensive listing of such transportation projects proposed over a 6-year period. As the MPO for the region, SCAG is responsible for developing the FTIP for submittal to Caltrans and the federal funding agencies. The FTIP for the SCAG region is developed in partnership between the six County Transportation Commissions (CTCs) of Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Ventura. The projects in the FTIP have been found to be consistent with SCAG's approved RTP/SCS.

The proposed project is included in the 2023 FTIP (Project Identification [ID] LAF3136) and is proposed for federal funding from the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program, and Caltrans's Highway Bridge Program.

The proposed project's operational emissions, which would include ozone precursors reactive organic gases (ROG) and nitrogen oxides (NOx), would meet the transportation conformity requirements imposed by U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) and SCAQMD.

2.2.2.1.2 Regional Growth Plans

Connect SoCal (SCAG RTP/SCS)

SCAG is a regional agency established pursuant to California Government Code Section 6500, also referred to as the Joint Powers Authority law. SCAG is designated as a Council of

Governments, a Regional Transportation Planning Agency, and an MPO. The proposed project site is within SCAG's regional authority. As an MPO and public agency, SCAG develops transportation and housing strategies that transcend jurisdictional boundaries that affect the quality of life for Southern California as a whole. On September 3, 2020, SCAG's Regional Council adopted Connect SoCal. Connect SoCal is a long-range visioning plan that balances future mobility and housing needs with economic, environmental, and public health goals. Connect SoCal embodies a collective vision for the region's future and was developed with input from local governments, county transportation commissions, tribal governments, non-profit organizations, businesses, and local stakeholders in Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Ventura counties. Connect SoCal includes more than 4,000 transportation projects, ranging from highway improvements to railroad grade separations, bicycle lanes, new transit hubs, and replacement bridges. These future investments were included in county plans that were developed by the six CTCs, all seeking to reduce traffic bottlenecks, improve the efficiency of the region's network, and expand mobility choices. The goals of Connect SoCal are to: 1) encourage regional economic prosperity and global competitiveness; 2) improve mobility, accessibility, reliability, and travel safety for people and goods; 3) enhance the preservation, security, and resilience of the regional transportation system; 4) increase person and goods movement and travel choices within the transportation system; 5) reduce greenhouse gas emission and improve air quality; 6) support healthy and equitable communities; 7) adapt to a changing climate and support an integrated regional development pattern and transportation network; 8) leverage new transportation technologies and data-driven solutions that result in more efficient travel; 9) encourage development of diverse housing types in areas that are supported by multiple transportation options; and 10) promote conservation of natural and agricultural lands and restoration of habitats.

2.2.2.1.3 Regional Conservation Plans

Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board's Watershed Management Initiative for the Santa Clara River Watershed

California State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) and Los Angeles RWQCB adopted the Watershed Management Initiative (WMI) to integrate surface and groundwater regulatory programs while promoting cooperative, collaborative efforts within the watershed to achieve water resource protection, enhancement, and restoration while balancing economic and environmental impacts. Specifically, the WMI has three main goals/objectives:

i Use water quality to identify and prioritize water resource problems within individual watersheds. Involve stakeholders to develop solutions.

ii Better coordinate point source and nonpoint source regulatory efforts. Establish working relationships between staff from different programs.

iii Better coordinate local, State, and federal activities and programs, especially those related to regulations and funding, to assist local watershed groups.

The Santa Clara River WMI identifies a number of programs and actions to address water quality impairments in the Santa Clara River watershed, including Total Maximum Daily Load and NPDES waste discharge permit requirements. The Santa Clara River WMI also has developed a Watershed Management Program to implement compliance with permit requirements on a watershed scale, through customized strategies, control measures, and best management practices.

2005 Santa Clara River Enhancement and Management Plan

Santa Clara River flows in a generally western direction for approximately 84 miles through Tie Canyon, Aliso Canyon, Soledad Canyon, Santa Clarita Valley, Santa Clara River Valley, and Oxnard Plain before discharging to the Pacific Ocean near the Ventura Marina. Santa Clara River and its tributary system have a watershed area of about 1,634 square miles, 40% in Los Angeles County and 60% in Ventura County.

The proposed project area is within the jurisdictional boundaries of Los Angeles RWQCB (Region 4) and is within the Upper Santa Clara River watershed, specifically Reach 5 as identified in the Upper Santa Clara River Integrated Regional Water Management Plan. Thus, it is subject to the river-wide issues and recommendations of the Santa Clara River Enhancement and Management Plan (SCREMP). The SCREMP is a guidance document for the preservation, enhancement, and sustainability of the physical, biological, and economic resources that occur within the 500-year floodplain limits of Santa Clara River.

The primary objectives of the SCREMP are to:

i Develop a comprehensive management plan for the resources of Santa Clara River within its 500-year floodplain that will achieve a balance among the various ways that these resources are used and the ways they will be sustained.

ii Develop strategies for the enhancement of certain resource categories that will, over time, result in a net increase in these resources and their associated beneficial uses.

iii Develop the SCREMP so that it is fully compliant with existing federal, state, county, and local jurisdictional entities' laws, codes, regulations, ordinances, plans, policies, and/or programs.

iv Develop the SCREMP so that it facilitates implementation of public agency mandates so as to promote strategies for the preservation, enhancement, and sustainability of physical, biological, and economic resources.

v Develop the SCREMP so that it acknowledges and respects the private property and water rights of private property owners for the duration that the SCREMP is implemented, and also provides that the exercise of private property rights will occur so as to promote strategies for preservation, enhancement, and sustainability of physical, biological, and economic resources.

vi Develop the SCREMP so that it facilitates implementation of mandated public agency actions and the exercise of private property rights by providing guidance on obtaining and expediting necessary permitting from federal, state, and county regulatory agencies.

2.2.2.1.4 General and Community Plans

2035 Los Angeles County General Plan

The Los Angeles County General Plan is the guide for long-term physical development and conservation through a framework of goals, policies, and implementation programs. The Los Angeles County General Plan guides growth countywide through goals, policies, and programs that discourage sprawling development patterns; protects areas with hazard, environment, and resource constraints; encourages infill development in areas near transit, services, and existing infrastructure; and make a strong commitment to ensuring sufficient services and infrastructure. It also lays the foundation for future community-based planning initiatives that will identify

additional opportunities for accommodating growth and development of plans that respond to the unique and diverse character of local communities. The most current general plan was adopted by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors on October 6, 2015. The 2035 General Plan provides the policy framework for how and where the unincorporated areas will grow through 2035, establishing goals, policies, and programs to foster healthy, livable, and sustainable communities. Relevant policies in the Land Use, Mobility, Conservation and Natural Resources, Noise, Safety, and Public Services and Facilities elements were reviewed, as follows:

- *Land Use* – Chapter 6 of the Los Angeles County General Plan is the Land Use Element. This element provides strategies and planning tools to facilitate and guide future development and revitalization efforts. In accordance with the California Government Code, the Land Use Element designates the proposed general distribution, general location, and extent of uses.

- *Mobility* – Chapter 7 of the Los Angeles County General Plan is the Mobility Element. This element provides an overview of the transportation infrastructure and strategies for developing an efficient and multimodal transportation network. The Mobility Element contains two sub-elements: 1) the Highway Plan, and 2) the Bicycle Master Plan. The Highway Plan provides policy guidance for building a comprehensive highway network and was used to determine the proposed project's design speeds and future roadway network. Both the Highway Plan and Bicycle Master Plan establish policies for the roadway and bikeway systems in the unincorporated areas, which are coordinated with the networks in the 88 cities in Los Angeles County. The General Plan also establishes a program to prepare community pedestrian plans, with guidelines and standards to promote walkability and connectivity throughout the unincorporated areas.

- *Conservation and Natural Resources* – Chapter 9 of the Los Angeles County General Plan is the Conservation and Natural Resources Element. This element guides the long-term conservation of natural resources and preservation of available open space areas. The Conservation and Natural Resources Element addresses the following conservation areas: Open Space Resources; Biological Resources; Local Water Resources; Agricultural Resources; Mineral and Energy Resources; Scenic Resources; and Historic, Cultural, and Paleontological Resources.

- *Noise* – Chapter 11 of the Los Angeles County General Plan is the Noise Element. The purpose of this element is to reduce and limit the exposure of the general public to excessive noise levels. The Noise Element sets the goals and policy direction for management of noise in the unincorporated areas.

- *Safety* – Chapter 12 of the Los Angeles County General Plan is the Safety Element. The purpose of this element is to reduce the potential risk of death, injuries, and economic damage resulting from natural and human-made hazards. The Safety Element addresses only limited aspects of human-made disasters, such as hazardous waste and materials management, and in particular, those aspects related to seismic events, fires, and floods. In general, hazardous materials management is addressed in the Los Angeles County Integrated Waste Management Plan (California Code of Regulations [CCR] Section 18755.5).

- *Public Services and Facilities* – Chapter 13 of the Los Angeles County General Plan is the Public Services and Facilities Element. This element promotes the orderly and

efficient planning of public facilities and infrastructure in conjunction with land use development and growth. This element focuses on services and facilities that are affected the most by growth and development: Drinking Water, Sanitary Sewers, Solid Waste, Utilities, Early Care and Education, and Libraries.

2012 Los Angeles County Bicycle Master Plan

The Los Angeles County Bicycle Master Plan, adopted in March 2012, provides policy guidance for building a comprehensive bicycle network throughout the unincorporated areas. The Bicycle Master Plan identifies bikeways and transportation systems that are available for use by bicyclists, such as roadways with bike lanes or designated bike routes, and dedicated off-road bike paths, such as bike paths along the flood protection channels. The purposes of the Bicycle Master Plan are to: 1) guide development of infrastructure, policies, and programs that improve the bicycling environment; 2) depict the general location of planned bikeway routes; and 3) provide a system of bikeways that is consistent with the General Plan.

2012 Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan

The Los Angeles County General Plan identifies 11 planning areas, one being the Santa Clarita Valley Planning Area. According to the General Plan Guidelines published by the State, an "Area Plan" is a planning tool that focuses on a particular region or community within the overall General Plan area. The proposed project is primarily within the Santa Clarita Valley Planning Area (Planning Area). The Planning Area is bordered to the west by the Ventura County line, to the north by the Los Padres National Forest and Angeles National Forest, to the east by the Angeles National Forest, and to the south by a major ridgeline that separates the Santa Clarita Valley from the San Fernando Valley. The Planning Area includes more than 480 square miles, of which about 195 square miles are unincorporated. The Planning Area is approximately 30 to 40 miles northwest of Downtown Los Angeles. The Santa Clarita Valley contains territory under the jurisdiction of two political entities. The unincorporated areas under the jurisdiction of Los Angeles County are addressed in the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan, and the incorporated area within the boundaries of the City of Santa Clarita is included in the City's General Plan.

The Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan, *One Valley One Vision*, a component of the Los Angeles County General Plan, is intended to provide focused goals, policies, and maps to guide regulation of development within the unincorporated portions of the Santa Clarita Valley. The Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan has been prepared to ensure consistency with both the County's comprehensive General Plan and with the City of Santa Clarita's General Plan. Relevant policies in the Land Use, Circulation, Conservation and Open Space, Safety, and Noise elements were reviewed, as follows:

- *Land Use Element* – This element contains a land use map and descriptions of the designations applied to land in the Santa Clarita Valley, to guide the type, intensity, and density of future uses. The element also contains goals, policies, and implementation measures to ensure that new development and the use of land reflect community goals, enhance quality of life, are supported by adequate services, utilities, roadways, and other infrastructure, ensure public safety through consideration of hazardous land use conditions, and conserve valuable resources and amenities in the Valley.

- *Circulation Element* – This element plans for the continued development of efficient, cost-effective, and comprehensive transportation systems that are consistent with

regional plans, local needs, and the Valley's community character. The Circulation Element contains maps showing major transportation facilities in the Santa Clarita Valley, including streets and highways, rail and public transit routes, stations and terminals, airport facilities, and trails. The Circulation Element has been developed in conformance with Caltrans; the Regional Mobility Plan prepared by SCAG; the Los Angeles Metropolitan Transportation Authority's (Metro) Congestion Management Program and Bikeway Strategic Plan; Santa Clarita Transit's Transportation Development Plan; and Los Angeles County's Airport Land Use Plan, as well as the Los Angeles County General Plan. The Old Road is the principal alternative to I-5. However, The Old Road often is subject to the same constraints, as it parallels I-5 through Castaic.

The proposed project is listed as part of future roadway improvements needed to implement the recommended Highway Plan, in Table C-3 of the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan. Specifically, improvements between I-5 southbound ramps at Rye Canyon Road, and between Rye Canyon Road and Magic Mountain Parkway call for The Old Road to be widened or re-striped from four lanes to a six-lane major highway.

Based on the traffic model analysis undertaken for the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan planning effort, which evaluated 23 key intersections in the Santa Clarita Valley, intersection improvements were determined to be required. Within the proposed project area, this improvement included The Old Road at Magic Mountain Parkway.

In addition, a portion of The Old Road also is designated as a gap in the interjurisdictional bikeway network identified by the Metro Plan, which is summarized in Table C-4 of the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan.

- *Conservation and Open Space Element* – This element contains maps, goals, policies, and implementation measures to ensure preservation of an open space greenbelt around most portions of the Santa Clarita Valley, in addition to preserving water quality, historic and cultural resources, scenic views, and providing recreational facilities to enhance the quality of life for Valley residents. A key component of this element is preservation of resources within portions of designated Significant Ecological Areas in the County General Plan.

- *Safety Element* – The Safety Element contains maps, goals, policies, and implementation measures to ensure that residents are not exposed to health risks related to air pollution, earthquakes, wildland fires, or other environmental hazards, and that adequate provisions are made for crime prevention, law enforcement, and fire protection services.

- *Noise Element* –The Noise Element identifies current noise conditions within the planning area, and projects future noise impacts resulting from continued growth allowed by the Land Use Element. The Noise Element identifies noise-sensitive land uses and noise sources and defines areas of noise impact for developing programs to ensure that residents in the Santa Clarita Valley will be protected from excessive noise intrusion. Table N-2 of the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan shows roadway links that will experience an increase of 1 decibel with the updated City General Plan and County Area Plan, as compared to the previously adopted City General Plan and County Area Plan. Per Table N-2, within the proposed project area, Magic Mountain Parkway west and east of The Old Road has been identified as a roadway link projected to experience a noise increase.

2011 City of Santa Clarita General Plan

Land use decisions are guided by the City of Santa Clarita's General Plan, which establishes goals and policies related to land use, transportation, population growth and distribution, development, open space, resource preservation and utilization, air and water quality, noise impacts, public safety, infrastructure, and other related physical, social, and economic factors. As stated in the General Plan, in addition to serving as a basis for local decision-making, the General Plan establishes a clear set of development guidelines for citizens, developers, neighboring jurisdictions, and agencies, and provides the community with an opportunity to participate in the planning process. The purposes of this General Plan are to comply with State requirements and provide the City with a comprehensive, long-range policy guideline for future development. Relevant policies in the Land Use, Circulation, Noise, Conservation and Open Space, and Safety elements were reviewed, as follows:

- *Land Use* – Chapter 2 of the City of Santa Clarita General Plan is the Land Use Element. This element is the City's and County's long-term blueprint for development of property to meet the Santa Clarita Valley's future needs for new housing, retail, office, industrial, parks, open space, and other uses.

- *Circulation* – Chapter 4 of the City of Santa Clarita General Plan is the Circulation Element. This element plans for the continued development of efficient, cost effective, and comprehensive transportation systems that are consistent with regional plans, local needs, and the Valley's community character. The Old Road is the principal alternative to I-5. However, The Old Road often is subject to the same constraints, as it parallels I-5 through Castaic.

Henry Mayo Drive (from Commerce Center Drive to The Old Road) also is designated as a Parkway on Table C-2 of the Circulation Element. The proposed project is listed because future roadway improvements are needed to implement the recommended Highway Plan in Table C-3 of the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan, specifically, improvements between I-5 southbound ramps at Rye Canyon Road and between Rye Canyon Road and Magic Mountain Parkway, which call for The Old Road to be widened or re-striped from four lanes to a six-lane major highway. In addition, a portion of The Old Road also is designated as a gap in the interjurisdictional bikeway network, identified by the Metro plan, which is summarized in Table C-4 of the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan. Based on the traffic model analysis undertaken for the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan planning effort, which evaluated 23 key intersections in the Santa Clarita Valley, intersection improvements were determined to be required. Within the proposed project area, this included The Old Road at Rye Canyon Road and The Old Road at Magic Mountain Parkway.

- *Noise* – Chapter 5 of the City of Santa Clarita General Plan is the Noise Element. This element identifies current noise conditions within the planning area, and projects future noise impacts resulting from the continued growth allowed by the Land Use Element. The element identifies noise-sensitive land uses and noise sources and defines areas of noise impact for developing programs to ensure that residents in the Santa Clarita Valley will be protected from excessive noise intrusion.

- *Conservation and Open Space* – Chapter 6 of the City of Santa Clarita General Plan is the Conservation and Open Space Element. This element combines two of the mandatory General Plan elements required by State law into a single element: conservation and open space. This combined element establishes a policy

framework for the designation and long-term preservation of open space within the planning area, and it addresses the wide range of community benefits derived from open space.

- *Safety* – Chapter 7 of the City of Santa Clarita General Plan is the Safety Element. The aim of this element is to reduce the potential risk of death, injuries, property damage, and economic and social dislocation resulting from these hazards, by providing a framework to guide local land use decisions related to zoning, subdivisions, and entitlement permits.

2.2.2.2 Environmental Consequences

The discussion below focuses on the impacts of the proposed project on state, regional, and local plans. The proposed project's consistency with relevant plans and policies are shown in Table 2-3 below.

2.2.2.2.1 Alternative 1: No-Build Alternative

Implementation of the No-Build Alternative would maintain the existing lane configuration of The Old Road, which would continue to be four lanes (two northbound and two southbound). In addition, implementation of the No-Build Alternative would maintain the existing lane configuration of Rye Canyon Road and Sky View Lane. The No-Build Alternative would not enhance safety, alleviate congestion on roadways in the proposed project area, reduce forecasted traffic congestion on adjacent streets and intersections and accommodate projected traffic growth in the surrounding area, or increase regional roadway capacity. In addition, this alternative would not be consistent with the Los Angeles County Mobility Element, improve emergency access, or improve highway operations for consistency with the LACPW highway design speed safety standards.

The No-Build Alternative is inconsistent with the various goals and policies shown in Table 2-3.

The No-Build Alternative generally is inconsistent with the goals and policies in the 2035 Los Angeles County General Plan, which includes the Mobility Element, Safety Element, and Public Services and Facilities Element.

The No-Build Alternative generally is inconsistent with the goals and policies in the 2015 Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan and the 2011 City of Santa Clarita General Plan, which include the Land Use Element, Circulation Element, and the Safety Element. Some of the goals and policies with which the No-Build Alternative would be consistent are the Land Use Element, including not resulting in additional stormwater pollutants (Policy LU 7.3.2); Circulation Element, as it would not result in any ROW impacts (Policy C-2.1.4); the Conservation and Open Space Element, because it would not result in additional stormwater pollutants (Policy CO-4.3.7); and the Noise Element, because the proposed project would not result in noise increases (Policy N-1.1.3 and Policy N-3.1.4). In addition, the No-Build Alternative would be inconsistent with the Bicycle Master Plan within the Mobility Element of the Los Angeles County General Plan

Table 2-3: Consistency with Plans and Policies

Policy/Goal	Alternative 1 No-Build Alternative	Alternative 2 Build Alternative
SCAG FTIP		
Project ID - LAF3136; RTIP ID - 1A1005. Widen The Old Road from north of Magic Mountain Parkway to Henry Mayo Drive to 1200 feet west of The Old Road. The proposed project is located on The Old Road from approximately 700 feet north of Magic Mountain Parkway to Henry Mayo Drive from The Old Road to the SR-126 hook ramps, and Rye Canyon Road between The Old Road and Avenue Stanford. Widening from four to six lanes is planned to reduce bottleneck. Toll Credits will be used to match Surface Transportation Program-Local (STP-L) funds.	**Not Consistent.** Alternative 1 would maintain the existing lane configuration of The Old Road and would continue to be a four-lane (two northbound and two southbound) roadway.	**Consistent.** Alternative 2 would reconstruct and widen The Old Road from Magic Mountain Parkway to Henry Mayo Drive. In addition, Alternative 2 would result in intersection improvements at The Old Road/1-5 hook ramps.
Connect SoCal RTP/SCS		
Goal 2: Maximize mobility and accessibility for all people and goods in the region.	**Not Consistent.** Traffic conditions under Alternative 1 would continue to worsen without implementation of the proposed project.	**Consistent.** Alternative 2 would alleviate congestion on roadways in the study area and reduce forecasted traffic congestion on adjacent streets through intersection enhancements. In addition, Alternative 2 would improve traffic flow and decrease congestion along The Old Road, thereby, improving mobility and enhancing goods movement capabilities.
Goal 3: Ensure travel safety and reliability for all people and goods in the region.	**Not Consistent.** The Old Road over the Santa Clara River Bridge currently does not meet LACPW highway design speed safety standards (it is currently designed for 40 mph, whereas the master plan highway criterion is 65 mph). In addition, The Old Road over the Santa Clara River Bridge currently is classified as Structurally Deficient per FHWA standards for seismic, flood, and highway design. Furthermore, The Old Road over the Santa Clara River Bridge is not high enough to allow the LACPW Capital Flood to pass under the bridge.	**Consistent.** Alternative 2 would include a replacement bridge that would be constructed at a higher elevation to allow proper floodway clearance. In addition, The Old Road over the Santa Clara River Bridge would be replaced to meet current seismic design criteria. These proposed project features would ensure safety and reliability for all people and goods in the region.

Table 2-3: Consistency with Plans and Policies

Policy/Goal	Alternative 1 No-Build Alternative	Alternative 2 Build Alternative
Goal 4: Preserve and ensure a sustainable regional transportation system.	**Not Consistent.** See response under Goal 2.	**Consistent.** See response under Goal 2.
Goal 6: Protect the environment and health of residents by improving air quality and encouraging active transportation (non-motorized transportation such as bicycling and walking).	**Not Consistent.** Traffic conditions under Alternative 1 would continue to worsen without implementation of the proposed project, thereby increasing air quality impacts and decreasing energy efficiency.	**Consistent.** Air quality impacts were evaluated in the Air Quality Report (TAHA 2023a) for the proposed project. The Build Alternative would result in less criteria pollutant emissions than the No-Build Alternative and existing conditions because of improvements in vehicle delay. Proposed improvements also include installing a segment of the Multi-Use Trail, which would consist of bike lanes, a paved pedestrian path, and an equestrian trail, furthering continuity with bike trails and improving the bicycle and equestrian environment.
Goal 8: Encourage land use and growth patterns that facilitate transit and active transportation.	**Not Consistent.** No changes to transit or non-motorized transportation would result from Alternative 1.	**Consistent.** Alternative 2 would consist of bicycle lanes, sidewalk improvements, widened shoulders, and raised medians along various segments providing safer streets, while enhancing pedestrian accessibility. Proposed improvements also include installing a segment of the Multi-Use Trail, which would consist of bike lanes, a paved pedestrian path, and an equestrian trail, furthering continuity with bike trails and improving the bicycle and equestrian environment.
Policy 2: Ensuring safety, adequate maintenance, and efficiency of operations on the existing multimodal transportation system should be the highest RTP/SCS priorities for any incremental funding in the region.	**Not Consistent.** See response under Goal 8.	**Consistent.** See response under Goal 8.
Policy 4: Transportation demand management (TDM) and nonmotorized transportation will be focus areas, subject to Policy 1.	**Not Consistent.** See response under Goal 8.	**Consistent.** See response under Goal 8.
Policy 7: The RTP/SCS will encourage transportation investments that result in cleaner air, a better environment, a more efficient transportation system and sustainable outcomes in the long run.	**Not Consistent.** See response under Goal 6.	**Consistent.** See response under Goal 6.

Table 2-3: Consistency with Plans and Policies

Policy/Goal	Alternative 1 No-Build Alternative	Alternative 2 Build Alternative
SCREMP		
Goal 6.4: It is of utmost concern to protect the lives of people and their properties that afford shelter or the basis for their economic livelihood, and all measures to achieve this protection will be implemented in full consideration of the other resources but will not be constrained to such an extent as to place the lives of people or their properties at foreseeable undue risk.		
RR 10. Maintenance of Design Flow Capacity: When the effectiveness and adequacy of public flood protection facilities is reduced below the design and/or Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)-required levels and upon submittal of documentation on the hydraulic impact on the facility to regulatory agencies, sediment deposition removal will be allowed to the level of the pre-determined design flow line. The sediment deposition removal would be subject to all laws, regulations, and permit requirements including mitigation. The mitigation for sediment deposition removal for future facilities will be addressed in the original permit. However, the requirement for alternative analyses and justifications shall be waived where legally possible or minimized in accordance with available regional general permits.	**Not Consistent.** Alternative 1 would maintain existing conditions. The Old Road over the Santa Clara River Bridge is currently classified as Structurally Deficient per FHWA standards for seismic, flood, and highway design. Furthermore, The Old Road over the Santa Clara River Bridge is not high enough to allow the LACPW Capital Flood to pass under the bridge.	**Consistent.** Under Alternative 2, The Old Road over the Santa Clara River Bridge would be replaced to meet current seismic design criteria. Furthermore, the replacement bridge would be constructed at a higher elevation to allow proper floodway clearance and pass the LACPW Capital Flood event which would improve flooding conditions in the proposed project area. Implementation of construction-phase BMPs, and proposed project design features would minimize erosion and sediment discharge during construction and while vegetation is established. Any sediment deposition removal that would be required would be subject to all laws, regulations, and permit requirements including mitigation.
2035 Los Angeles County General Plan		
Land Use Element		
Goal LU 7: Compatible land uses that complement neighborhood character and the natural environment.		
Policy LU 7.1: Reduce and mitigate the impacts of incompatible land uses, where feasible, using buffers and other design techniques.	**Consistent.** No changes to adjacent neighborhoods would result from the No-Build Alternative.	**Consistent.** Alternative 2 would be compatible with existing land uses, as The Old Road is an existing primary north-south arterial through the Santa Clarita Valley. Alternative 2 would be consistent with the Santa Clarita Valley Planning Area Plan and the Los Angeles County Circulation Element, which calls for The Old Road to be a six-lane major highway.

Table 2-3: Consistency with Plans and Policies

Policy/Goal	Alternative 1 No-Build Alternative	Alternative 2 Build Alternative
Goal LU 9: Land use patterns and community infrastructure that promote health and wellness.		
Policy LU 9.2: Encourage patterns of development that promote physical activity.	**Not Consistent.** No changes to transit or non-motorized transportation would result from Alternative 1.	**Consistent.** Alternative 2 would include bicycle lanes, sidewalk improvements, widened shoulders, and raised medians along various segments, providing safer streets, while enhancing pedestrian accessibility. Proposed improvements also include installing a segment of the Multi-Use Trail, which would consist of bike lanes, a paved pedestrian path, and an equestrian trail, furthering continuity with bike trails and improving the bicycle and equestrian environment.
Mobility Element		
Goal M 1: Street designs that incorporate the needs of all users.		
Policy M 1.1: Provide for the accommodation of all users, including pedestrians, motorists, bicyclists, equestrians, users of public transit, seniors, children, and persons with disabilities when requiring or planning for new, or retrofitting existing, transportation corridors/networks whenever appropriate and feasible.	**Not Consistent.** See response under Policy LU 9.2.	**Consistent.** See response under Policy LU 9.2.
Goal M 2: Interconnected and safe bicycle- and pedestrian-friendly streets, sidewalks, paths and trails that promote active transportation and transit use.		
Policy M 2.1: Provide transportation corridors/networks that accommodate pedestrians, equestrians and bicyclists, and reduce motor vehicle accidents through a context-sensitive process that addresses the unique characteristics of urban, suburban, and rural communities whenever appropriate and feasible.	**Not Consistent.** The No-Build Alternative would maintain the existing lane configuration of The Old Road. It would continue to be a four-lane (two northbound and two southbound) roadway, and would not construct bicycle lanes or a Multi-Use Trail.	**Consistent.** Alternative 2 would reconstruct and widen of The Old Road from Magic Mountain Parkway to Henry Mayo Drive. These improvements would enhance traffic safety and improve local vehicular circulation. In addition, Alternative 2 would include a Class IV bikeway, sidewalk improvements, widened shoulders, and raised medians along various segments providing safer streets, while enhancing pedestrian accessibility. Proposed improvements also include installing a segment of the Multi-Use Trail, which would consist of bike lanes, a paved pedestrian path, and an equestrian trail, furthering continuity with bike trails and improving the bicycle and equestrian environment.

Table 2-3: Consistency with Plans and Policies

Policy/Goal	Alternative 1 No-Build Alternative	Alternative 2 Build Alternative
Policy M 2.6: Encourage the implementation of future designs concepts that promote active transportation, whenever available and feasible.	**Not Consistent.** See response under Policy LU 9.2.	**Consistent.** See response under Policy LU 9.2.
Goal M 4: An efficient multimodal transportation system that serves the needs of all residents.		
Policy M 4.1: Expand transportation options that reduce automobile dependence.	**Not Consistent.** See response under Policy LU 9.2.	**Consistent.** See response under Policy LU 9.2.
Goal M 5: Land use planning and transportation management that facilitates the use of transit.		
Policy M 5.4: Support and pursue funding for the construction, maintenance and improvement of roadway, public transit, and equestrian, pedestrian and bicycle transportation systems.	**Not Consistent.** See response under Policy LU 9.2.	**Consistent.** See response under Policy LU 9.2.
Goal M 7: Transportation networks that minimizes negative impacts on the environment and communities.		
Policy M 7.1: Minimize roadway runoff through the use of permeable surface materials, and other low impact designs, wherever feasible.	**Not Consistent.** The Old Road would be maintained in its current condition and would not result in erosion control improvements. Alternative 1 would not provide the necessary level of flood protection as The Old Road over the Santa Clara River Bridge would remain in its existing condition. Currently, the bridge is not high enough to allow the LACPW Capital flood to pass under The Old Road over the Santa Clara River Bridge.	**Consistent.** Alternative 2 would alter existing drainage patterns, rates, and volumes through construction of the new road alignment, reconstructing existing catch basins and constructing new catch basins and drainage facilities, and by increasing the impervious surface in the proposed project area. The net increase in impervious surface with implementation of the proposed project would result from the increase of two lanes to three lanes in each direction of The Old Road. However, the total increase in impervious surface area from the proposed project would be insignificant in comparison to the watershed area of Santa Clara River at The Old Road Bridge crossing. Nonetheless, potential changes in runoff rates/volumes would be addressed by drainage facility improvements and treatment BMPs that are designed to increase storm water retention and reduce runoff volumes (e.g., bioswales). In addition, with the implementation of proposed project improvements, the Santa Clara Bridge would be designed to pass the LACPW Capital Flood event which would improve flooding conditions in the proposed project area.

Table 2-3: Consistency with Plans and Policies

Policy/Goal	Alternative 1 No-Build Alternative	Alternative 2 Build Alternative
Conservation and Natural Resources Element		
Goal C/NR 3: Permanent, sustainable preservation of genetically and physically diverse biological resources and ecological systems including: habitat linkages, forests, coastal zone, riparian habitats, streambeds, wetlands, woodlands, alpine habitat, chaparral, shrublands, and Significant Ecological Areas (SEAs).		
Policy C/NR 3.9: Consider the following in the design of a project that is located within an SEA, to the greatest extent feasible: Preservation of biologically valuable habitats, species, wildlife corridors and linkages; Protection of sensitive resources on the site within open space; Protection of water sources from hydromodification in order to maintain the ecological function of riparian habitats; Placement of the development in the least biologically sensitive areas on the site (prioritize the preservation or avoidance of the most sensitive biological resources on-site); Design required open spaces to retain contiguous undisturbed open space that preserves the most sensitive biological resources on-site and/or serves to maintain regional connectivity; Maintenance of watershed connectivity by capturing, treating, retaining, and/or infiltrating stormwater flows on site; and Consideration of the continuity of on-site open space with adjacent open space in project design.	**Not Consistent.** Alternative 1 would not provide the necessary level of flood protection as The Old Road over the Santa Clara River Bridge would remain in its existing condition. Currently, the bridge is not high enough to allow the LACPW Capital flood to pass under The Old Road over the Santa Clara River Bridge.	**Consistent.** Alternative 2 would reconstruct The Old Road over Santa Clara River Bridge at an elevation approximately 9 feet higher on the northern end and 15 feet higher on the southern end than the existing bridge to allow proper floodway clearance, ensuring consistency with the LACPW Capital Flood event. Alternative 2 would also improve drainage facilities and catch basins; all of which would provide protection of the Santa Clara River. Furthermore, treatment BMPs that are designed to increase stormwater retention and reduce runoff volumes (e.g., bioswales) would be implemented. BMPs would be incorporated into the design to comply with the County Municipal Stormwater NPDES Permit.
Goal C/NR 5: Protected and useable local surface water resources.		
Policy C/NR 5.1: Support the LID philosophy, which seeks to plan and design public and private development with hydrologic sensitivity, including limits to straightening and channelizing natural flow paths, removal of vegetative cover, compaction of	No impacts on hydrology would result from the No-Build Alternative.	**Consistent**. Alternative 2 would alter existing drainage patterns, rates and volumes through construction of the new road alignment, reconstructing existing catch basins and constructing new catch basins and drainage facilities, and by increasing the impervious surface in the proposed project area. The net increase in impervious surface with implementation of the proposed project would result from the

Table 2-3: Consistency with Plans and Policies

Policy/Goal	Alternative 1 No-Build Alternative	Alternative 2 Build Alternative
soils, and distribution of naturalistic BMPs at regional, neighborhood, and parcel-level scales.		increase of two lanes to three lanes in each direction of The Old Road. However, the total increase in impervious surface area from the proposed project would be insignificant in comparison to the watershed area of the Santa Clara River at The Old Road Bridge crossing. Nonetheless, potential changes in runoff rates/volumes would be addressed by drainage facility improvements and treatment BMPs that are designed to increase stormwater retention and reduce runoff volumes (e.g., bioswales). BMPs would be incorporated into the proposed project design.
Policy C/NR 5.2: Require compliance by all County Caltrans with adopted Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4), General Construction, and point source NPDES permits.	**Consistent.** No changes to stormwater would result from the No-Build Alternative.	**Consistent.** Construction would cause short-term and temporary impacts during the construction process from the generation of pollutants such as sediment, metals, oil and grease, soil stabilization residues, nutrients, organic compounds, and trash and debris. Alternative 2 would implement temporary BMPs with respect to erosion, sediment, good housekeeping, and pollution prevention in compliance with the NPDES General Permit for Storm Water Discharges Associated with Construction and Land Disturbance Activities, Order WQ 2022-0057-DWQ, NPDES NO. CAS000002 (Construction General Permit) to minimize stormwater pollutants during the construction phase. Alternative 2 would alter existing drainage patterns, rates and volumes through construction of the new road alignment, reconstructing existing catch basins and constructing new catch basins and drainage facilities, and by increasing the impervious surface in the proposed project area. The net increase in impervious surface with implementation of the proposed project would result from the increase of two lanes to three lanes in each direction of The Old Road. However, the total increase in impervious surface area from the proposed project would be insignificant in comparison to the watershed area of the Santa Clara River at The Old Road Bridge crossing. Nonetheless, potential changes in runoff rates/volumes would be addressed by drainage facility improvements and treatment BMPs that are designed to increase stormwater retention and reduce runoff volumes (e.g., bioswales). BMPs

Table 2-3: Consistency with Plans and Policies

Policy/Goal	Alternative 1 No-Build Alternative	Alternative 2 Build Alternative
		would be incorporated into the design to comply with the County Municipal Stormwater NPDES Permit.
Policy C/NR 5.7: Actively support the design of new and retrofit of existing infrastructure to accommodate watershed protection goals, such as roadway, railway, bridge, and other - particularly - tributary street and greenway interface points with channelized waterways.	**Not Consistent.** See response under Policy C/NR 3.9.	**Consistent.** See response under Policy C/NR 3.9.
Goal C/NR 6: Protected and usable local groundwater resources.		
Policy C/NR 6.1: Support the LID philosophy, which incorporates distributed, post-construction parcel-level stormwater infiltration as part of new development.	No impacts on hydrology would result from the No-Build Alternative.	**Consistent**. Alternative 2 would alter existing drainage patterns, rates, and volumes through construction of the new road alignment and reconstruction of existing catch basins and constructing new catch basins and drainage facilities, and by increasing the impervious surface in the proposed project area. The net increase in impervious surface with implementation of the proposed project would result from the increase of two lanes to three lanes in each direction of The Old Road. However, the total increase in impervious surface area from the proposed project would be insignificant in comparison to the watershed area of the Santa Clara River at The Old Road Bridge crossing. Nonetheless, potential changes in runoff rates/volumes would be addressed by drainage facility improvements and treatment BMPs that are designed to increase stormwater retention and reduce runoff volumes (e.g., bioswales). BMPs would be incorporated into the proposed project design.
Policy C/NR 6.5: Prevent stormwater infiltration where inappropriate and unsafe, such as in areas with high seasonal groundwater, on hazardous slopes, within 100 feet of drinking water wells, and in contaminated soils.	**Not Consistent.** Alternative 1 would not provide the necessary level of flood protection as The Old Road over Santa Clara River Bridge would remain in its existing condition. Currently, the bridge is not high enough to allow the LACPW Capital flood to pass under The Old Road over Santa Clara River Bridge.	**Consistent.** Alternative 2 would reconstruct The Old Road over Santa Clara River Bridge at an elevation approximately 9 feet higher on the north end and 15 feet higher on the south end than the existing bridge to allow proper floodway clearance, ensuring consistency with the LACPW Capital Flood event. This proposed project would also improve drainage facilities and catch basins; all of which would provide protection of the Santa Clara River.

Table 2-3: Consistency with Plans and Policies

Policy/Goal	Alternative 1 No-Build Alternative	Alternative 2 Build Alternative
		Furthermore, treatment BMPs that are designed to increase stormwater retention and reduce runoff volumes (e.g., bioswales) would be implemented. BMPs would be incorporated into the design to comply with the County Municipal Stormwater NPDES Permit. However, BMPs would not be incorporated in areas with high seasonal groundwater, on hazardous slopes, within 100 feet of drinking water wells, or in contaminated soils.
Goal C/NR 7: Protected and healthy watersheds.		
Policy C/NR 7.4: Promote the development of multi-use regional facilities for stormwater quality improvement, groundwater recharge, detention/attenuation, flood management, retaining non-stormwater runoff, and other compatible uses.	**Not Consistent.** The Old Road would be maintained in its current condition and would not result in stormwater quality improvements.	**Consistent.** Alternative 2 would improve drainage facilities and catch basins; all of which would provide protection of the Santa Clara River. Furthermore, treatment BMPs that are designed to increase stormwater retention and reduce runoff volumes (e.g., bioswales) would be implemented. BMPs would be incorporated into the design to comply with the County Municipal Stormwater NPDES Permit.
Noise Element		
Goal N 1: The reduction of excessive noise impacts.		
Policy N 1.9: Require construction of suitable noise attenuation barriers on noise sensitive uses that would be exposed to exterior noise levels of 65 dBA CNEL and above, when unavoidable impacts are identified.	**Consistent.** Alternative 1 would maintain the existing lane configuration of The Old Road and would not result in noise increases.	**Not Consistent.** Traffic noise impacts were evaluated in the Noise Study Report for the proposed project. No adverse noise impacts from construction of Alternative 2 are anticipated because construction would be conducted in accordance with Caltrans Standard Specifications Section 14.8-02. Construction noise would be short-term, intermittent, and overshadowed by local traffic noise. While the noise abatement criteria (NAC) was determined to be exceeded at some commercial and trail locations, noise abatement, in the form of noise walls, were determined to be not feasible due to access restrictions (business access driveways from the proposed project roadway) and substantial noise contributed from non-proposed project roadway sources (I-5 and local water

Table 2-3: Consistency with Plans and Policies

Policy/Goal	Alternative 1 No-Build Alternative	Alternative 2 Build Alternative
		treatment plant). Therefore, noise abatement is not recommended for the proposed project.
Policy N 1.12: Decisions on land adjacent to transportation facilities, such as the airports, freeways and other major highways, must consider both existing and future noise levels of these transportation facilities to assure the compatibility of proposed uses.	**Consistent.** See response under Policy N 1.9.	**Consistent.** See response under Policy N 1.9. .
Safety Element		
Goal S 2: An effective regulatory system that prevents or minimizes personal injury, loss of life, and property damage due to flood and inundation hazards.		
Policy S 2.4: Ensure that developments located within the County's Flood Hazard Zones are sited and designed to avoid isolation from essential services and facilities in the event of flooding.	**Not Consistent.** The proposed project area is located within the base of a 100-year flood plain, the Santa Clara River. Under Alternative 1, The Old Road would be maintained in its current condition, which would not be consistent with the LACPW Capital Flood level of protection. Furthermore, The Old Road over Santa Clara River Bridge is currently classified as Structurally Deficient per FHWA standards for seismic, flood, and highway design. Alternative 1 would not result in any flood control improvements, thus, worsening conditions without implementation of the proposed project.	**Consistent.** Alternative 2 would improve flood control services by reconstructing The Old Road as a six-lane bridge at a higher elevation to meet LACPW Capital Storm Floodway requirements. In addition, Alternative 2 would also improve drainage facilities through catch basin improvements and construction of drainage facilities; all of which would provide protection of the Santa Clara River.
Policy S 2.6: Work cooperatively with public agencies with responsibility for flood protection, and with stakeholders in planning for flood and inundation hazards.	**Not Consistent**. No changes to flood protection or hazards would occur with the No-Build Alternative that would require cooperation with public agencies.	**Consistent**. The proposed project would have a public hearing and allow agencies and the public to provide input on the Build Alternative.
Goal S 4: Effective County emergency response management capabilities.		
Policy S 4.6: Ensure that essential public facilities are maintained during natural disasters, such as flooding.	**Not Consistent.** See response under Policy S 2.4.	**Consistent.** See response under Policy S 2.4.

Table 2-3: Consistency with Plans and Policies

Policy/Goal	Alternative 1 No-Build Alternative	Alternative 2 Build Alternative
Public Services and Facilities Element		
Goal PS/F 1: A coordinated, reliable, and equitable network of public facilities that preserves resources, ensures public health and safety, and keeps pace with planned development.		
Policy PS/F 1.4: Ensure the adequate maintenance of infrastructure.	**Not Consistent.** See response under Policy S 2.4.	**Consistent.** See response under Policy S 2.4.
2012 County of Los Angeles Bicycle Master Plan		
Goal 1 - Bikeway System: Expanded, improved, and interconnected system of county bikeways and bikeway support facilities to provide a viable transportation alternative for all levels of bicycling abilities, particularly for trips of less than five miles.		
Policy IA1.1.3: Implement bikeways proposed in this Plan when reconstructing or widening existing streets.	**Not Consistent.** No changes to transit or non-motorized transportation would result from Alternative 1.	**Consistent.** Alternative 2 would result in a Class IV bikeway, sidewalk improvements, widened shoulders, and raised medians along various segments providing safer streets, while enhancing pedestrian accessibility. Proposed improvements also include installing a segment of the Multi-Use Trail, which would consist of bike lanes, a paved pedestrian path, and an equestrian trail, furthering continuity with bike trails and improving the bicycle and equestrian environment.
Goal 2 – Safety: Increased safety of roadways for all users.		
Policy 2.1 Implement projects that improve the safety of bicyclists at key locations.	**Not Consistent.** See response under Policy IA1.1.3.	**Consistent.** See response under Policy IA1.1.3.
Policy 2.4: Evaluate impacts on bicyclists when designing new or reconfiguring streets.	**Not Consistent.** See response under Policy IA1.1.3.	**Consistent.** See response under Policy IA1.1.3.
2015 Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan		
Land Use Element		
Goal LU-1: An interconnected Valley of Villages providing diverse lifestyles, surrounded by a greenbelt of natural open space.		
Objective LU-1.2: Maintain the distinctive community character of villages and neighborhoods throughout the planning area by establishing uses, densities, and design guidelines appropriate to the particular needs and goals of each area, including but not limited to the following:		
Policy LU-1.2.8: In Castaic, promote expansion of neighborhood commercial uses to serve local residents; address traffic congestion; ensure compatibility between highway-oriented	**Not Consistent.** Traffic conditions under Alternative 1 would continue to worsen without implementation of the proposed project.	**Consistent.** Alternative 2 would alleviate congestion on roadways in the study area and reduce forecasted traffic congestion on adjacent streets through intersection enhancements. In addition, Alternative 2 would improve

Table 2-3: Consistency with Plans and Policies

Policy/Goal	Alternative 1 No-Build Alternative	Alternative 2 Build Alternative
commercial uses and nearby residential uses; and maintain community character in accordance with the County's Castaic Area Community Standards District.		traffic operations to be consistent with LACPW highway design speed safety standards. Alternative 2 would also include a Class IV bikeway, sidewalk improvements, widened shoulders, and raised medians along various segments providing safer streets, while addressing traffic congestion.
Goal LU 2: A mix of land uses to accommodate growth, supported by adequate resources and maintaining community assets.		
Objective LU 2.2: Protect significant community resources from encroachment by incompatible uses, where feasible and appropriate.		
Policy LU 2.2.3: Consistent with adopted plans, ensure that adequate open space is set aside and protected from development throughout the planning area in order to provide the benefits of watershed management, habitat preservation and connectivity, and recreational opportunities.	**Not Consistent.** No open space improvements would result from Alternative 1.	**Consistent.** Alternative 2 would include installing a segment of the Multi-Use Trail, which would consist of bike lanes, a paved pedestrian path, and an equestrian trail, furthering continuity with bike trails and improving the bicycle and equestrian environment.
Goal LU 3: Healthy and safe neighborhoods for all residents.		
Objective LU-3.2: Promote walkable neighborhoods that provide safe access to community services and essential services.		
Policy LU-3.2.2: In planning residential neighborhoods, include pedestrian linkages, landscaped parkways with sidewalks, and separated trails for pedestrians and bicycles.	**Not Consistent.** Alternative 1 would maintain existing conditions, which would not include bicycle and pedestrian access ramps improvements from The Old Road to the Multi-Use Trail at the I-5 hook ramp intersection.	**Consistent.** Alternative 2 would include bicycle lanes, sidewalk improvements, widened shoulders, and raised medians along various segments providing safer streets, while enhancing pedestrian accessibility. Proposed improvements also include installing a segment of the Multi-Use Trail, which would consist of bike lanes, a paved pedestrian path, and an equestrian trail, furthering continuity with bike trails and improving the bicycle and equestrian environment.
Goal LU 5: Enhanced mobility through alternative transportation choices and land use patterns.		
Objective LU-5.1: Provide for alternative travel modes linking neighborhoods, commercial districts, and job centers.		
Policy LU-5.1.1: Require safe, secure, clearly-delineated, adequately-illuminated walkways and bicycle facilities in all commercial and business centers.	**Not Consistent.** Alternative 1 would maintain existing conditions, which would not include bicycle and pedestrian access improvements.	**Consistent.** Alternative 2 would include Class IV bicycle lanes, sidewalk improvements, streetlights on the new bridges, widened shoulders, and raised medians along various segments providing safer streets, while enhancing pedestrian accessibility.

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Policy/Goal	Alternative 1 No-Build Alternative	Alternative 2 Build Alternative
		Proposed improvements also include installing a segment of the Multi-Use Trail, which would consist of bike lanes, a paved pedestrian path, and an equestrian trail, furthering continuity with bike trails and improving the bicycle and equestrian environment.
Policy LU-5.1.2: Require connectivity between walkways and bikeways serving neighborhoods and nearby commercial areas, schools, parks, and other supporting services and facilities.	**Not Consistent.** No mobility improvements would result from Alternative 1.	**Consistent.** Alternative 2 would include installing a segment of the Multi-Use Trail, which would consist of bike lanes, a paved pedestrian path, and an equestrian trail, furthering continuity with bike trails and improving the bicycle and equestrian environment.
Goal LU 7: Environmentally responsible development through site planning, building design, waste reduction, and responsible stewardship of resources.		
Objective LU-7.3: Protect surface and ground water quality through design of development sites and drainage improvements.		
Policy LU 7.3.2: Maintain stormwater runoff on-site by directing drainage into rain gardens, natural landscaped swales, rain barrels, permeable areas, and use of drainage areas as design elements, where feasible and reasonable.	**Consistent.** The Old Road would be maintained in its current condition and would not result in increased stormwater runoff.	**Consistent.** Alternative 2 would improve drainage facilities and catch basins; all of which would provide protection of the Santa Clara River. Furthermore, treatment BMPs that are designed to increase stormwater retention and reduce runoff volumes (e.g., bioswales) would be implemented. BMPs would be incorporated into the design to comply with the County Municipal Stormwater NPDES Permit.
Policy LU-7.3.4: Implement best management practices for erosion control throughout the construction and development process	**Not Consistent.** The Old Road would be maintained in its current condition and would not result in erosion control improvements.	**Consistent.** Alternative 2 would improve drainage facilities and catch basins; all of which would provide protection of the Santa Clara River.
Circulation Element		
Goal C 1: An inter-connected network of circulation facilities that integrates all travel provides viable alternatives to automobile use, and conforms with regional plans.		
Objective C-1.1: Provide multi-modal circulation systems that move people and goods efficiently while protecting environmental resources and quality of life.		
Policy C-1.1.1: Reduce dependence on the automobile, particularly single-occupancy vehicle use, by providing safe and convenient access to transit, bikeways, and walkways.	**Not Consistent.** Alternative 1 would maintain existing conditions, which would not include bicycle and pedestrian access ramps improvements from The	**Consistent.** Alternative 2 would include bicycle lanes, sidewalk improvements, widened shoulders, and raised medians along various segments providing safer streets, while enhancing pedestrian accessibility.

Table 2-3: Consistency with Plans and Policies

Policy/Goal	Alternative 1 No-Build Alternative	Alternative 2 Build Alternative
	Old Road to the Multi-Use Trail at the I-5 hook ramp intersection.	Proposed improvements also include installing a segment of the Multi-Use Trail, which would consist of bike lanes, a paved pedestrian path, and an equestrian trail, furthering continuity with bike trails and improving the bicycle and equestrian environment.
Policy C-1.1.4: Promote public health through provision of safe, pleasant, and accessible walkways, bikeways, and Multi-Use Trail systems for residents.	**Not Consistent.** See response under Policy C-1.1.1.	**Consistent.** See response under Policy C-1.1.1.
Policy C-1.1.7: Consider the safety and convenience of the traveling public, including pedestrians and cyclists, in design and development of all transportation systems.	**Not Consistent.** See response under Policy C-1.1.1.	**Consistent.** See response under Policy C-1.1.1.
Objective C-1.3: Ensure conformance of the Circulation Plan with regional transportation plans.		
Policy C-1.3.3: Through trip reduction strategies and emphasis on multi-modal transportation options, contribute to achieving the air quality goals of the SCAQMD Air Quality Management Plan.	**Not Consistent.** Traffic conditions under Alternative 1 would continue to worsen without implementation of the proposed project, thereby increasing air quality impacts and decreasing energy efficiency.	**Consistent.** Alternative 2 would increase regional roadway capacity and reduce congestion. Air quality impacts were evaluated in the Air Quality Report for the proposed project. The Build Alternative would result in less criteria pollutant emissions than the No-Build Alternative and existing conditions because of improvements in vehicle delay. Alternative 2 would also include installing a segment of the Multi-Use Trail, which would consist of bike lanes, a paved pedestrian path, and an equestrian trail, furthering continuity with bike trails and improving the bicycle and equestrian environment.
Policy C-1.3.4: Coordinate circulation planning with the Regional Transportation Plan prepared by the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), to ensure consistency of planned improvements with regional needs.	**Not Consistent.** See responses under SCAG FTIP regarding consistency with the SCAG FTIP and the Connect SoCal.	**Consistent.** See responses under SCAG FTIP regarding consistency with the SCAG FTIP and the Connect SoCal. Furthermore, the need for the proposed project is based on an assessment of the existing and future transportation demand in the proposed project area compared to the existing capacity of the facility. The improvements included in the proposed project are developed based on the approved land use plan by Los Angeles County and as

Table 2-3: Consistency with Plans and Policies

Policy/Goal	Alternative 1 No-Build Alternative	Alternative 2 Build Alternative
		defined in the SCAG forecast traffic volumes for the 2040 horizon year.
Goal C 2: A unified and well-maintained network of streets and highways which provides safe and efficient movement of people and goods between neighborhoods, districts, and regional centers, while maintaining community character.		
Objective C 2.1: Implement the Circulation Plan (as shown on Exhibit C-2) for streets and highways to meet existing and future travel demands for mobility, access, connectivity, and capacity.		
Policy C-2.1.3: Protect and enhance the capacity of the roadway system by upgrading intersections to meet level of service standards, widening and/or restriping for additional lanes, synchronizing traffic signals, and other means.	**Not Consistent.** Alternative 1 would maintain the existing lane configuration of The Old Road and would continue to be a four-lane (two northbound and two southbound) roadway. No intersection improvements would be performed. LOS would continue to degrade specifically at the Rye Canyon Road and The Old Road intersection.	**Consistent.** Alternative 2 would include intersection enhancements at The Old Road and Sky View Lane; The Old Road and Rye Canyon Road; the proposed Old Road/I-5 ramps; The Old Road and Henry Mayo Drive; The Old Road and Gateway Drive; and The Old Road and Magic Mountain Parkway. Furthermore, based on the results of the LOS analysis, the proposed roadway widening and associated improvements along The Old Road and Sky View Lane would improve intersection traffic operations within the study area.
Policy C-2.1.4: Ensure that future dedication and acquisition of right-of-way is based on the adopted Circulation Plan, proposed land uses, and projected demand.	**Consistent.** Under Alternative 1, the existing lane configurations would be unchanged, no ROW acquisitions would be required, and no intersection improvements undertaken.	**Consistent.** Temporary construction, permanent drainage, and roadway ROW easements would be required on portions of several properties within the proposed project boundary. Right-of-Way would be needed at the following locations: The Old Road; Multi-Use Trail; Sky View Lane. There are no structures on these parcels upon which ROW acquisitions are planned; thus, no relocation of businesses or residences, or structure demolitions will be required during implementation of the proposed project.
Objective C-2.2: Adopt and apply consistent standards throughout the Santa Clarita Valley for street design and service levels, which promote safety, convenience, and efficiency of travel.		
Policy C-2.2.1: Designate roadways within the planning area based on their functional classification as shown on Exhibit C-2.	**Not Consistent.** The current roadway does not meet the objectives of the Los Angeles County General Plan for a six-lane major highway designation.	**Consistent.** Alternative 2 would be consistent with the Santa Clarita Valley Planning Area Plan and the Los Angeles County Circulation Element, which calls for The Old Road to be a six-lane major highway.
Policy C-2.2.4: Strive to maintain a Level of Service (LOS) D or better on most roadway segments and intersections to the extent practical; in some locations, a LOS E may be acceptable, or a LOS F	**Not Consistent.** Traffic conditions under Alternative 1 would continue to worsen without implementation of the proposed project.	**Consistent.** Alternative 2 would alleviate congestion on roadways in the study area and reduce forecasted traffic congestion on adjacent streets through intersection enhancements. Implementation of Alternative 2 would

Table 2-3: Consistency with Plans and Policies

Policy/Goal	Alternative 1 No-Build Alternative	Alternative 2 Build Alternative
may be necessary, for limited durations during peak traffic periods.		improve the future year projected LOS at the following intersections compared to the No-Build Alternative: The Old Road and I-5 southbound ramps from LOS F to LOS C in the AM peak hour and LOS D in the PM peak hour; The Old Road and Rye Canyon Road intersection from LOS F to LOS D in the AM peak hour and LOS E in the PM peak hour; and The Old Road and Sky View Lane from LOS F to LOS B in the AM peak hour and LOS C in the PM peak hour.
Objective C-2.3: Balance the needs of congestion relief with community values for aesthetics and quality of life.		
Policy C-2.3.3: When evaluating road widening projects, consider the impacts of additional traffic, noise, and fumes on adjacent land uses and use context-sensitive design techniques where appropriate.	**Not Consistent.** Alternative 1 would maintain existing conditions and would not add additional impacts on traffic, noise, and fumes on adjacent land uses. However, this would not result in transportation improvements associated with proposed project implementation. LOS would continue to degrade specifically at the Rye Canyon Road and The Old Road intersection and Old Road and I-5 southbound ramps intersection.	**Consistent.** Under Alternative 2, the improvements primarily consist of reconstruction and widening The Old Road, replacement of two bridges, and reconstruction and widening Sky View Lane and Rye Canyon Road, including reconfiguration of their intersections at The Old Road. Traffic impacts were evaluated in the Transportation Assessment Report (AECOM 2023b) for the proposed project. Implementation of Alternative 2 would improve the future year projected LOS at the following intersections compared to the No-Build Alternative: The Old Road and 1-5 southbound ramps from LOS F to LOS C in the AM peak hour and LOS D in the PM peak hour; The Old Road and Rye Canyon Road intersection from LOS F to LOS D in the AM peak hour and to LOS E in the PM peak hour; and The Old Road and Sky View Lane from LOS F to LOS B in the AM peak hour and LOS C in the PM peak hour. Traffic noise impacts were evaluated in the Noise Study Report (TAHA 2023b) for the proposed project. Traffic noise modeling results indicate traffic noise levels at modeled receivers in Noise Study Area (NSA)-2 are predicted to be in the range of 69 to 74 decibels A (dBA) $L_{eq}(h)$ in the design year, and that the increase in noise would be 1 to 5 decibels (dB) in the design year. Because the predicted noise level in the design year would exceed 66 dBA L_{eq} (h) for Category C and 71 dBA L_{eq} (h) for

Table 2-3: Consistency with Plans and Policies

Policy/Goal	Alternative 1 No-Build Alternative	Alternative 2 Build Alternative
		Category E receivers, traffic noise impacts are predicted at receptors in this area. Noise abatement was evaluated and considered infeasible. Air Quality impacts were evaluated in the Air Quality Report for the proposed project. The Build Alternative would result in less criteria pollutant emissions than the No-Build Alternative and existing conditions because of improvements in vehicle delay.
Goal C 6: A unified and well-maintained bikeway system with safe and convenient routes for commuting, recreational use and utilitarian travel, connecting communities and the region.		
Objective C-6.1: Adopt and implement a coordinated master plan for bikeways for the Valley, including both City and County areas, to make bicycling an attractive and feasible mode of transportation.		
Policy C-6.1.1: For recreational riders, continue to develop Class I bike paths, separated from the right-of-way, linking neighborhoods to open space and activity areas.	**Not Consistent**. Alternative 1 would maintain existing conditions and not add bikeways to the proposed project site. There are currently no Class I bike paths at the proposed project site.	**Consistent**. Alternative 2 would add a Class IV bikeway at the proposed project site. Alternative 2 would also include installing a segment of the Multi-Use Trail, which would include bike lanes.
Policy C-6.1.2: For long-distance riders and those who bicycle to work or services, provide striped Class II bike lanes within the right-of-way, with adequate delineation and signage, where feasible and appropriate.	**Not Consistent**. Alternative 1 would maintain existing conditions and not add bikeways to the proposed project site. There are currently no Class II bike paths at the proposed project site.	**Consistent**. Alternative 2 includes the addition of a Class IV bikeway at the proposed project site.
Policy C-6.1.3: Continue to acquire or reserve right-of-way and/or easements needed to complete the bicycle circulation system as development occurs.	**Not Consistent**. Alternative 1 would maintain existing conditions and not add bikeways to the proposed project site. There are currently no bicycle pathways at the proposed project site and bicycle circulation is limited.	**Consistent**. Alternative 2 would add a Class IV bikeway at the proposed project site. Alternative 2 would also include installing a segment of the Multi-Use Trail, which would include bike lanes. Alternative 2 would contribute to the bicycle circulation system in the proposed project area.
Policy C-6.1.4: Where inadequate right-of-way exists for Class I or II bikeways, provide signage for Class III bike routes or designate alternative routes as appropriate.	**Not Consistent**. Alternative 1 would maintain existing conditions and not add bikeways to the proposed project site. There are currently no Class III bike paths at the proposed project site.	**Consistent**. Alternative 2 includes the addition of a Class IV bikeway at the proposed project site.
Goal C 7: Walkable communities, in which interconnected walkways provide a safe, comfortable and viable alternative to driving for local destinations.		

Table 2-3: Consistency with Plans and Policies

Policy/Goal	Alternative 1 No-Build Alternative	Alternative 2 Build Alternative
Objective C-7.1: A continuous, integrated system of safe and attractive pedestrian walkways, paseos and trails linking residents to parks, open space, schools, services, and transit.		
Policy C-7.1.8: Upgrade streets that are not pedestrian-friendly due to lack of sidewalk connections, safe street crossing points, vehicle sight distance, or other design efficiencies.	**Not Consistent.** Alternative 1 would maintain the existing lane configuration of The Old Road and would continue to be a four-lane (two northbound and two southbound) roadway. No intersection improvements would be performed.	**Consistent.** Alternative 2 would include a Class IV bikeway, sidewalk improvements, widened shoulders, and raised medians along various segments providing safer streets, while enhancing pedestrian accessibility. Proposed improvements also include installing a segment of the Multi-Use Trail, which would consist of a Class IV bikeway, a paved pedestrian path, and an equestrian trail, furthering continuity with bike trails and improving the bicycle and equestrian environment.
Policy C-7.1.10: Continue to expand and improve the Valley's Multi-Use Trail system to provide additional routes for pedestrian travel.	**Not Consistent.** Under Alternative 1, proposed improvements to portions of the Multi-Use Trail would not occur.	**Consistent.** Alternative 2 would install a segment of the Multi-Use Trail which consist of a Class IV bikeway, a paved pedestrian path, and an equestrian trail.
Conservation and Open Space Element		
Goal CO-1: A balance between the social and economic needs of Santa Clarita Valley residents and protection of the natural environment, so that these needs can be met in the present and in the future.		
Objective CO-1.1: Protect the capacity of the natural "green" infrastructure to absorb and break down pollutants, cleanse air and water, and prevent flood and storm damage.		
Policy CO-1.1.1: In making land use decisions, consider the complex, dynamic, and interrelated ways that natural and human systems interact, such as the interactions between energy demand, water demand, air and water quality, and waste management.	**Not Consistent.** Alternative 1 would not provide the necessary level of flood protection as The Old Road over Santa Clara River Bridge would remain in its existing condition. Currently, the bridge is not high enough to allow the LACPW Capital flood to pass under The Old Road over Santa Clara River Bridge. Traffic conditions under Alternative 1 would continue to worsen without implementation of the proposed project, thereby increasing air quality impacts and decreasing energy efficiency.	**Consistent.** Alternative 2 would reconstruct The Old Road over the Santa Clara River Bridge at an elevation approximately 9 feet higher on the north end and 15 feet higher on the south end than the existing bridge to allow proper floodway clearance. This proposed project would also improve drainage facilities and catch basins; all of which would provide protection of the Santa Clara River. Air Quality impacts were evaluated in the Air Quality Report for the proposed project. The Build Alternative would result in less criteria pollutant emissions than the No-Build Alternative and existing conditions because of improvements in vehicle delay.
Policy CO-1.1.2: In making land use decisions, consider the impacts of human activity within	**Not Consistent.** See response provided in Policy CO-1.1.1.	**Consistent.** See response provided in Policy CO-1.1.1.

Table 2-3: Consistency with Plans and Policies

Policy/Goal	Alternative 1 No-Build Alternative	Alternative 2 Build Alternative
watersheds and ecosystems, to maintain the functional viability of these systems.		
Objective CO-1.5: Manage urban development and human-built systems to minimize harm to ecosystems, watersheds, and other natural systems, such as urban runoff treatment trains that infiltrate, treat and remove direct connections to impervious areas.		
Policy CO-1.5.2: Design and manage public urban infrastructure systems to reduce impacts on natural systems.	**Not Consistent.** See response provided in Policy CO-1.1.1.	**Consistent.** See response provided in Policy CO-1.1.1.
Goal CO-2: Conserve the Santa Clarita Valley's hillsides, canyons, ridgelines, soils, and minerals, which provide the physical setting for the natural and built environments.		
Objective CO-2.1: Control soil erosion, waterway sedimentation, and airborne dust generation, and maintain the fertility of topsoil.		
Policy CO-2.1.1: Review soil erosion and sedimentation control plans for grading activities related to development, where appropriate to ensure mitigation of potential erosion by water and air.	**Not Consistent.** Alternative 1 would not provide the necessary level of flood protection as The Old Road over the Santa Clara River Bridge would remain in its existing condition. Currently, the bridge is not high enough to allow the LACPW Capital flood to pass under The Old Road over the Santa Clara River Bridge.	**Consistent.** Alternative 2 would alter existing drainage patterns, rates, and volumes through construction of the new road alignment, reconstruction of existing catch basins, and construction of new catch basins and drainage facilities; all of which would increase the impervious surface in the proposed project area. The net increase in impervious surface with implementation of the proposed project would result from the increase of two lanes to three lanes in each direction of The Old Road. However, the total increase in impervious surface area from the proposed project would be insignificant in comparison to the watershed area of the Santa Clara River at The Old Road Bridge crossing. Nonetheless, potential changes in runoff rates/volumes would be addressed by drainage facility improvements and treatment BMPs that are designed to increase stormwater retention and reduce runoff volumes (e.g., bioswales). BMPs would be incorporated into the design to comply with the County Municipal Stormwater NPDES Permit.
Goal CO-4: An adequate supply of clean water to meet the needs of present and future residents and businesses, balanced with the needs of natural ecosystems.		
Objective CO-4.3: Limit disruption of natural hydrology by reducing impervious cover, increasing on-site infiltration, and managing stormwater runoff at the source.		
Policy CO-4.3.2: On previously developed sites proposed for major alteration, provide stormwater management improvements to restore natural infiltration, as required by the reviewing authority.	**Not Consistent.** The Old Road would be maintained in its current condition and would not provide stormwater management improvements.	**Consistent.** Alternative 2 would alter existing drainage patterns, rates and volumes through construction of the new road alignment, reconstructing existing catch basins and constructing new catch basins and drainage facilities, and by

Table 2-3: Consistency with Plans and Policies

Policy/Goal	Alternative 1 No-Build Alternative	Alternative 2 Build Alternative
		increasing the impervious surface in the proposed project area. The net increase in impervious surface with implementation of the proposed project would result from the increase of two lanes to three lanes in each direction of The Old Road. However, the total increase in impervious surface area from the proposed project would be insignificant in comparison to the watershed area of the Santa Clara River at The Old Road Bridge crossing. Nonetheless, potential changes in runoff rates/volumes would be addressed by drainage facility improvements and treatment BMPs that are designed to increase stormwater retention and reduce runoff volumes (e.g., bioswales). BMPs would be incorporated into the design to comply with the County Municipal Stormwater NPDES Permit.
Policy CO-4.3.7: Reduce the number of pollutants entering the Santa Clara River and its tributaries by capturing and treating stormwater runoff at the source, to the extent possible.	**Consistent.** The Old Road would be maintained in its current condition and would not result in increased stormwater runoff.	**Consistent.** Construction would cause short-term and temporary impacts during the construction process from the generation of pollutants such as sediment, metals, oil and grease, soil stabilization residues, nutrients, organic compounds, and trash and debris. Alternative 2 would implement temporary BMPs with respect to erosion, sediment, good housekeeping, and pollution prevention in compliance with the NPDES General Permit for Storm Water Discharges Associated with Construction and Land Disturbance Activities, Order WQ 2022-0057-DWQ, NPDES NO. CAS000002 (Construction General Permit) to minimize storm water pollutants during the construction phase. Alternative 2 would alter existing drainage patterns, rates and volumes through construction of the new road alignment, reconstructing existing catch basins and constructing new catch basins and drainage facilities, and by increasing the impervious surface in the proposed project area. The net increase in impervious surface with implementation of the proposed project would result from the increase of two lanes to three lanes in each direction of The Old Road. However, the total increase in impervious surface area from the proposed project would be insignificant in comparison to the watershed area of the Santa Clara River at The Old Road Bridge crossing.

Table 2-3: Consistency with Plans and Policies

Policy/Goal	Alternative 1 No-Build Alternative	Alternative 2 Build Alternative
		Nonetheless, potential changes in runoff rates/volumes would be addressed by drainage facility improvements and treatment BMPs that are designed to increase stormwater retention and reduce runoff volumes (e.g., bioswales). BMPs would be incorporated into the design to comply with the County Municipal Stormwater NPDES Permit.
Goal CO-9: Equitable distribution of park, recreational, and trail facilities to serve all areas and demographic needs of existing and future residents.		
Objective CO-9.2: Recognize that trails are an important recreational asset that, when integrated with transportation systems, contribute to mobility throughout the Santa Clarita Valley. (Guiding Principle #34)		
Policy CO-9.2.1: Plan for a continuous and unified multi-use (equestrian, bicycling, and pedestrian/hiking) trail network for a variety of users, to be developed with common standards, in order to unify Santa Clarita Valley communities and connect with City, Regional, State, and Federal trails such as the dual-use (equestrian and hiking) Pacific Crest Trail.	**Not Consistent.** Alternative 1 would maintain existing conditions, which would not include bicycle and pedestrian access ramps improvements from The Old Road to the Multi-Use Trail at the I-5 hook ramp intersection.	**Consistent.** Proposed improvements under Alternative 2 include installing a segment of the Multi-Use Trail which would consist of bike lanes, a paved pedestrian path, and an equestrian trail, furthering continuity with bike trails and improving the bicycle and equestrian environment.
Policy CO-9.2.3: Use the Santa Clara River as a major recreational focal point for development of an integrated system of bikeways and trails, while protecting sensitive ecological areas.	**Not Consistent.** See response under Policy CO-9.2.1.	**Consistent.** See response under Policy CO-9.2.1.
Safety Element		
Goal S-1: Protection of public safety and property from hazardous geological conditions, including seismic rupture and ground shaking, soil instability, and related hazards.		
Objective S-1.3: Reduce risk of damage in developed areas from seismic activity.		
Policy S-1.3.1: Identify any remaining unreinforced masonry buildings or other unstable structures, and require remediation or seismic retrofitting as needed to meet seismic safety requirements.	**Not Consistent.** Alternative 1 would maintain existing conditions. The Old Road over the Santa Clara River Bridge is currently classified as Structurally Deficient per FHWA standards for seismic, flood, and highway design.	**Consistent.** Alternative 2 would replace The Old Road over the Santa Clara River Bridge to meet current seismic design criteria which would be consistent with FHWA standards and Caltrans bridge seismic criteria.
Policy S-1.3.4: Cooperate with other agencies as needed to ensure regular inspections of public infrastructure such as bridges, dams, and other	**Not Consistent.** See response under Policy S-1.3.1.	**Consistent.** See response under Policy S-1.3.1.

Table 2-3: Consistency with Plans and Policies

Policy/Goal	Alternative 1 No-Build Alternative	Alternative 2 Build Alternative
critical facilities, and require repairs to these structures as needed to prevent failure in the event of seismic activity.		
Goal S-2: Protection of public safety and property from unreasonable risks due to flooding.		
Objective S-2.2: Identify areas in the Santa Clarita Valley that are subject to inundation from flooding.		
Policy S-2.2.2: Identify areas subject to localized short-term flooding due to drainage deficiencies.	**Not Consistent.** The proposed project area is located within the base of a 100-year flood plain, the Santa Clara River. Under Alternative 1, The Old Road would be maintained in its current condition. The Old Road over the Santa Clara River Bridge would not be reconstructed as a six-lane bridge at a higher elevation, which would be inconsistent with the LACPW Capital Flood level of protection. Furthermore, The Old Road over the Santa Clara River Bridge is currently classified as Structurally Deficient per FHWA standards for seismic, flood, and highway design.	**Consistent.** Alternative 2 would reconstruct The Old Road as a six-lane bridge at the elevation approximately 9 feet higher on the north end and 15 feet higher on the south end than the existing bridge to meet LACPW Capital Storm Floodway requirements. In addition, Alternative 2 would improve drainage facilities through catch basin improvements and construction of additional drainage facilities; all of which would provide protection of the Santa Clara River.
Objective S-2.5: Limit risks to existing developed areas from flooding.		
Policy S-2.5.1: Address drainage problems that cause flooding on prominent transportation corridors by working with multi-jurisdictional agencies and stakeholders to construct needed drainage improvements.	**Not consistent**. See response under Policy S-2.2.2. The No-Build Alternative would not address or construct drainage improvements.	**Consistent.** See response under Policy S-2.2.2. The Old Road as a six-lane bridge at the elevation approximately 9 feet higher on the north end and 15 feet higher on the south end than the existing bridge to meet LACPW Capital Storm Floodway requirements. In addition, a public hearing would be held for the proposed project which would allow agencies to comment on the proposed project design.
Policy S-2.5.2: Provide for the maintenance of drainage structures and flood control facilities to avoid system malfunctions and overflows.	**Not Consistent.** Under Alternative 1, The Old Road would be maintained in its current condition and would not result in erosion control improvements.	**Consistent.** Alternative 2 would improve drainage facilities through catch basin improvements and construction of drainage facilities; all of which would provide protection of the Santa Clara River. Storm water management for the proposed project includes both short-term (construction

Table 2-3: Consistency with Plans and Policies

Policy/Goal	Alternative 1 No-Build Alternative	Alternative 2 Build Alternative
		phase) and long-term (postconstruction/maintenance) measures. Short-term measures focus on implementing construction site BMPs designed to reduce erosion and subsequent sediment transport; long-term measures consider factors such as increased storm water runoff caused by the added impervious surface.
Goal S-6: Reduced risk to public safety and property damage from accidental occurrences.		
Objective S-6.2: Increase public safety through the design of public facilities and urban spaces.		
Policy S-6.2.4: Continue to monitor traffic accident data in order to evaluate and address any traffic control needs to enhance public safety.	**Not Consistent.** The Old Road over the Santa Clara River Bridge currently does not meet LACPW highway design speed safety standards (it is currently designed for 39 mph, whereas the master plan highway criterion is 65 mph).	**Consistent.** Alternative 2 would also construct a Class IV bikeway, Multi-Use Trail, as well as sidewalks on the bridge (which don't currently exist), which will improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists in the project limits. The Old Road traffic conditions would continue to worsen without implementation of the Alternative 2.
Noise Element		
Goal N-1: A healthy and safe noise environment for Santa Clarita Valley residents, employees, and visitors.		
Objective N-1.1: Protect the health and safety of the residents of the Santa Clarita Valley by the elimination, mitigation, and prevention of significant existing and future noise levels.		
Policy N-1.1.3: Include consideration of potential noise impacts in land use planning and development review decisions.	**Consistent.** Alternative 1 would maintain the existing lane configuration of The Old Road and would not result in noise increases.	**Consistent.** No adverse noise impacts from construction of Alternative 2 are anticipated because construction would be conducted in accordance with Caltrans Standard Specifications Section 14.8-02. Construction noise would be short-term, intermittent, and overshadowed by local traffic noise. Traffic noise impacts were evaluated in the Noise Study Report (TAHA 2023b) for the proposed project. Traffic noise modeling results indicate traffic noise levels at modeled receivers in NSA-2 are predicted to be in the range of 69 to 74 dBA L_{eq}(h) in the design year, and that the increase in noise would be 1 to 5 dB in the design year. Because the predicted noise level in the design year would exceed 66 dBA L_{eq} (h) for Category C and 71 dBA L_{eq} (h) for Category E receivers, traffic noise impacts are predicted at receptors in this area. Noise abatement

Table 2-3: Consistency with Plans and Policies

Policy/Goal	Alternative 1 No-Build Alternative	Alternative 2 Build Alternative
		was evaluated and considered infeasible. While noise impacts are predicted as a result of the proposed project, the proposed project remains consistent with this policy, as the policy simply requires consideration of noise impacts in land use planning and development review decisions.
Goal N 2: Protect residents and sensitive receptors from traffic-generated noise.		
Objective N-2.1: Prevent and mitigate adverse effects of noise generated from traffic on arterial streets and highways through implementing noise reduction standards and programs.		
Policy N-2.1.2: Encourage the use of noise absorbing barriers, where appropriate.	**Consistent.** Alternative 1 would maintain the existing lane configuration of The Old Road and would not require noise absorbing barriers.	**Consistent.** Traffic noise impacts were evaluated in the Noise Study Report for the proposed project. No adverse noise impacts from construction of Alternative 2 are anticipated because construction would be conducted in accordance with Caltrans Standard Specifications Section 14.8-02. Construction noise would be short-term, intermittent, and overshadowed by local traffic noise. Traffic noise modeling results indicate traffic noise levels at modeled receivers in NSA-2 are predicted to be in the range of 69 to 74 dBA L_{eq}(h) in the design year, and that the increase in noise would be 1 to 5 dB in the design year. Because the predicted noise level in the design year would exceed 66 dBA L_{eq} (h) for Category C and 71 dBA L_{eq} (h) for Category E receivers, traffic noise impacts are predicted at receptors in this area. Noise abatement was evaluated and considered infeasible.
Policy N-2.1.3: Where appropriate, coordinate with Caltrans to ensure that sound walls or other noise barriers are constructed along Interstate 5 and State Route 14 in the immediate vicinity of residential and other noise sensitive developments, where setbacks and other sound alleviation devices do not exist.	**Consistent.** See response under Policy N-2.1.2.	**Consistent.** See response under Policy N-2.1.2.

Table 2-3: Consistency with Plans and Policies

Policy/Goal	Alternative 1 No-Build Alternative	Alternative 2 Build Alternative
Goal N-3: Protect residential neighborhoods from excessive noise.		
Objective N-3.1: Prevent and mitigate significant noise levels in residential neighborhoods.		
Policy N-3.1.4: Require that those responsible for construction activities develop techniques to mitigate or minimize the noise impacts on residences, and adopt standards that regulate noise from construction activities that occur in or near residential neighborhoods.	**Consistent.** Alternative 1 would maintain the existing lane configuration of The Old Road and would not result in noise increases.	**Consistent.** No adverse noise impacts from construction of Alternative 2 are anticipated because construction would be conducted in accordance with Caltrans Standard Specifications Section 14.8-02. Construction noise would be short-term, intermittent, and overshadowed by local traffic noise.
2011 City of Santa Clarita General Plan		
The Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan has been prepared to ensure consistency with the City of Santa Clarita's General Plan. Thus, the goals, objectives, and policies reviewed in the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan would be the same for the 2011 City of Santa Clarita General Plan.		

Source: Community Impact Assessment, AECOM, September 2023

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Transportation Plans/Programs

The No-Build Alternative is inconsistent with various goals and policies shown in Table 2-3, Consistency with Plans and Policies, including the SCAG FTIP, Connect SoCal, SCREMP, and 2012 County of Los Angeles Bicycle Master Plan.

2.2.2.2.2 Alternative 2: Build Alternative

The Build Alternative would be consistent with State, regional, and local plans and programs, and/or would be consistent with incorporation of the proper AMM, where applicable and feasible. Relevant goals and policies have been considered, as shown in Table 2-3, determining that the goals, objectives, and policies of the plans and programs discussed in Section 2.2.2 above would promote improvement in the transportation infrastructure, improve traffic circulation, accommodate many modes of transportation, improve air quality, support economic growth, and accommodate existing and future residents as well as businesses.

Transportation Plans/Programs

The Build Alternative would be consistent with all transportation plans and programs shown in Table 2-3, including the SCAG FTIP, Connect SoCal, SCREMP, and 2012 County of Los Angeles Bicycle Master Plan. The Build Alternative would be inconsistent with Policy C-6.1.1 of the 2015 Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan related to Class I bike paths; however, the Build Alternative would provide a Class IV bikeway as part of the proposed project, which provides further protection for cyclists. Therefore, the overarching Objective C-6.1 would be met by the Build Alternative. The Build Alternative would be inconsistent with Policy N 1.9 in the Noise Element of the 2035 Los Angeles County General Plan, related to construction of suitable noise attenuation barriers when unavoidable impacts are identified; however, noise barriers were considered and deemed to be infeasible for the proposed project.

2.2.2.3 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

The Build Alternative would be consistent with all relevant land use plan policies and programs. No AMMs are required.

2.2.3 Parks and Recreational Facilities

The following section is based on the CIA (AECOM 2023a) prepared for the proposed project. All references in this section are available in the CIA.

2.2.3.1 Regulatory Setting

The Park Preservation Act (California PRC Sections 5400-5409) prohibits local and state agencies from acquiring any property which is in use as a public park at the time of acquisition unless the acquiring agency pays sufficient compensation or land, or both, to enable the operator of the park to replace the park land and any park facilities on that land.

Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966, codified in federal law at 49 USC 303, declares that “it is the policy of the United States Government that special effort should be made to preserve the natural beauty of the countryside and public park and recreation lands, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, and historic sites.”

2.2.3.2 Affected Environment

No planned or publicly owned public parks, recreation areas, or wildlife or waterfowl refuges are within or immediately adjacent to the proposed project area. The following parks and recreation facilities are located within a 1-mile radius of the proposed project site:

Golf Courses

The Oaks Club at Valencia is an 18-hole golf course that stretches 7,218 yards with sweeping views of the Santa Clarita Valley.

In addition, according to the Los Angeles Bicycle Master Plan, no bikeways are in the proposed project area or the immediate vicinity. The entrance to the Six Flags Magic Mountain amusement park lies at the southern end of the proposed project boundary.

2.2.3.3 Environmental Consequences

2.2.3.3.1 Alternative 1: No-Build Alternative

Under the No-Build Alternative, no modifications to the existing roadway would occur. No impacts on parks or recreation facilities would occur.

2.2.3.3.2 Alternative 2: Build Alternative

Temporary Impacts

Construction of the Build Alternative is expected to last approximately 4.5 years. Typical roadway construction activities would result in some temporary localized impacts on land uses in the area, including additional truck traffic, pollutant emissions from construction activities, increased noise and vibration, and temporary delays and/or detours. However, such potential construction impacts would be temporary and intermittent. TCEs would be needed for construction access and staging. Therefore, potential construction impacts would be temporary and intermittent, and would not be considered adverse.

Permanent Impacts

The majority of roadway improvements and construction would occur within the existing ROW. However, acquisition of ROW would be required along almost all of the western side of The Old Road. The majority of this property is vacant, with the exception of the Valencia Water Reclamation Plant. This land currently is owned by the Newhall Land and Farming Company and the Los Angeles County Sanitation District. No ROW extensions would occur on the eastern side of the road, with the exception of a small acquisition at the southeastern corner of the intersection of Rye Canyon Road and The Old Road, and a small portion along the southeastern corner of the intersection of Sky View Lane and The Old Road. Both parcels are owned by Newhall Land and Farming Company and currently are vacant.

ROW acquisition would also be required along Rye Canyon Road between The Old Road and Avenue Stanford. The ROW acquisition would be required to accommodate the roadway widening and sidewalk improvements from three commercial properties. The roadway widening would affect the I-5 bridge over Rye Canyon Road, which would require the concrete slopes

under the bridge to be reconstructed with retaining walls. These acquisitions would cause direct impacts on the commercial and vacant properties along the ROW of Rye Canyon Road.

Public use of parks and recreational facilities would not be affected because there are no recreational activities occurring at these locations. In addition, no access to parks and recreational facilities are provided at the locations of the ROW acquisitions.

In addition, under the Build Alternative, improvements to recreational facilities would occur. The Build Alternative would include an extension of the Multi-Use Trail and would construct Class IV bike lanes, pedestrian pathways, and an equestrian trail, which would improve connectivity and increase recreational opportunities in the area. Construction activities would not restrict access to Six Flags Magic Mountain. No other park or recreation areas are in the immediate proposed project area; therefore, no impacts on parks and recreation would occur.

2.2.3.4 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

The Build Alternative would not affect parks or recreation facilities; therefore, no AMMs are required.

2.2.4 Farmlands

The following section is based on the CIA (AECOM 2023a) prepared for the proposed project. All references in this section are available in the CIA.

2.2.4.1 Regulatory Setting

NEPA and the Farmland Protection Policy Act ([FPPA], 7 USC 4201-4209; and their regulations, 7 CFR Part 658) require federal agencies, such as FHWA, to coordinate with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) if their activities may irreversibly convert farmland (directly or indirectly) to nonagricultural use. For purposes of the FPPA, farmland includes prime farmland, unique farmland, and land of statewide or local importance.

CEQA requires the review of projects that would convert Williamson Act contract land to non-agricultural uses. The main purposes of the Williamson Act are to preserve agricultural land and to encourage open space preservation and efficient urban growth. The Williamson Act provides incentives to landowners through reduced property taxes to discourage the early conversion of agricultural and open space lands to other uses.

The California Department of Conservation monitors farmland through the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP). FMMP was established in 1982 to continue the Important Farmland mapping efforts begun in 1975 by the NRCS. The program prepares and maintains an automated map and database system to record and report changes in the use of agricultural lands.

2.2.4.2 Farmland Conversion Impact Rating

Projects where farmland may be adversely affected require close coordination with the NRCS and completion of a Farmland Conversion Impact Rating Form. The rating form provides a basis for assessing the extent of farmland impacts relative to federally established criteria. The rating form is based on a Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA) system, which is a numerical

system that measures the quality of farmland. LESA systems have two components. The Land Evaluation element rates soil quality. The Site Assessment (Form AD-1006) component measures other factors that affect the viability of a farm, including, but not limited to, proximity to water and sewer lines and the size of the parcel. Sites receiving a combined score of less than 160 points do not require further evaluation. Alternatives should be proposed for sites with a combined score greater than 160. On the basis of this analysis, a federal agency may, but is not required to, deny assistance to private parties and state and local governments undertaking projects that would convert farmland.

2.2.4.3 Affected Environment

Some prime farmland and unique farmland, as identified in the FMMP, exists in the northern portion of the proposed project area, as shown in Figure 7. Prime Farmland is defined as farmland with the best combination of physical and chemical features for sustaining long-term agricultural production. This land has the soil quality, growing season, and moisture supply needed to produce sustained high yields. Farmland of Statewide Importance is similar to Prime Farmland but with minor shortcomings, such as greater slopes or less ability to store soil moisture.

Cultivated farmland, identified as Prime Farmland, is located south of the intersection of The Old Road and Henry Mayo Drive. This area has been designated for commercial use according to the Los Angeles County General Plan. Portions of this land are developed, including Los Angeles County Fire Station 76, the Castaic Union School District Transportation and Maintenance Yard, Kennedy Enterprise RV storage, and Furman MJ auto wrecker.

The additional area of Prime Farmland north of Henry Mayo Drive will not be impacted by either of the Build Alternatives. Therefore, it is not included in this discussion.

No portion of the proposed project site is under a Williamson Act Contract, as established in the Williamson Land Conservation Act, or any other local agricultural land conservation act. In addition, Los Angeles County does not participate in the program. Therefore, no analysis or discussion is required.

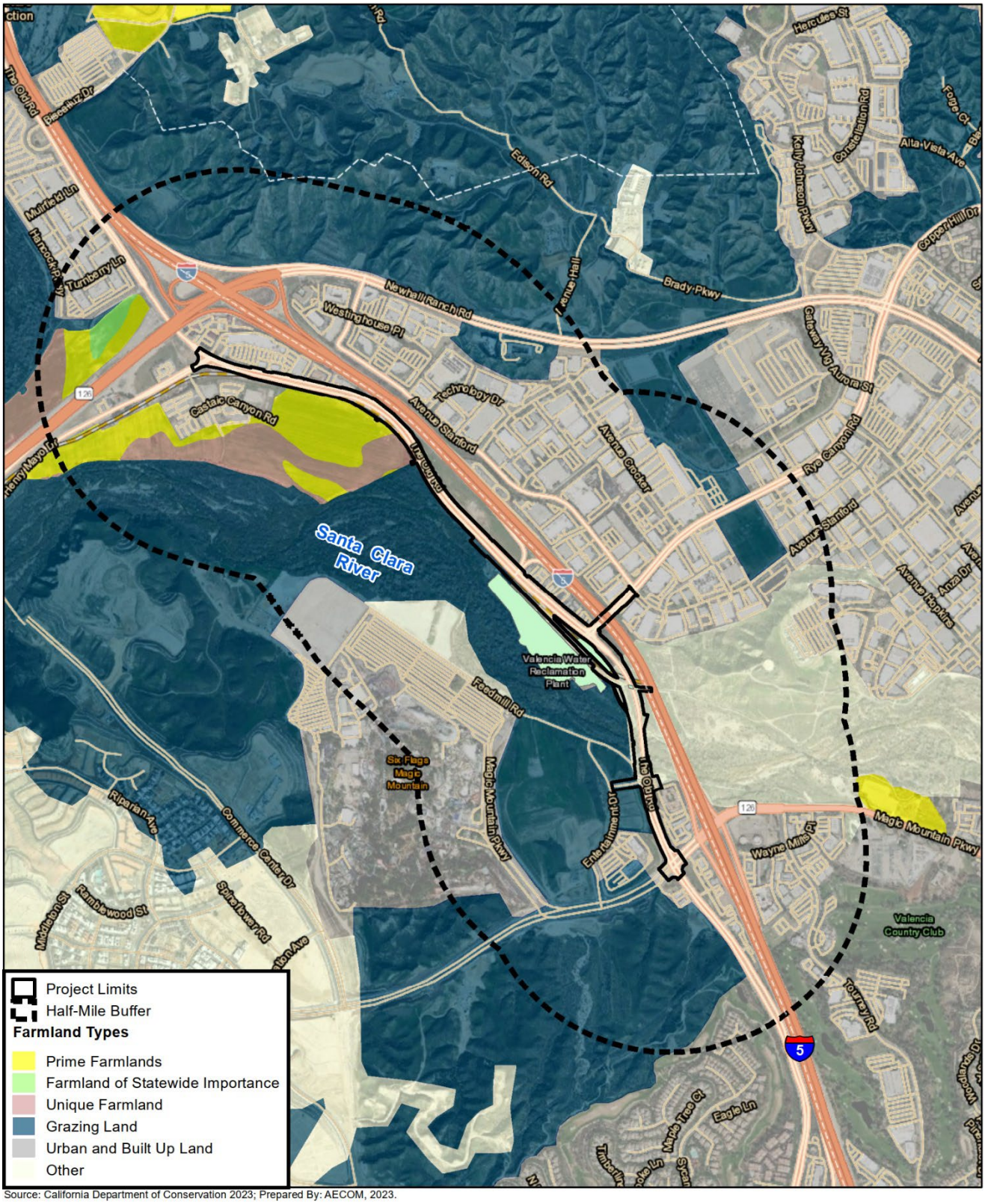
2.2.4.4 Environmental Consequences

2.2.4.4.1 Alternative 1: No-Build Alternative

Under the No-Build Alternative, no modifications to the existing roadway would occur. Therefore, no impacts on farmland would occur in the area surrounding The Old Road.

2.2.4.4.2 Alternative 2: Build Alternative

Under the Build Alternative, improvements to The Old Road would occur in areas designated as Prime and Unique Farmland. As shown in Table 2-4, Alternative 2 would result in impacts to Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, and Grazing Land as a result of partial acquisitions on those parcels.



Source: California Department of Conservation 2023; Prepared By: AECOM, 2023.

0 875 1,750 Feet

Figure 7
Existing Farmland

The Build Alternative will convert approximately 1.08 acres of Prime and Unique Farmland. However, the new ROW associated with the Build Alternative would not require acquisition of the entire parcel. Form AD-1006 was completed for the Build Alternative and submitted to the NRCS local field office to determine the farmland conversion impact rating (provided in Appendix D).

Table 2-4: Summary of Potential Impacts to Farmlands Under Alternative 2

Impacted Parcel (APN)	Farmland Designation	Parcel Size (SF)	Land Converted (SF)	Percent of Farmland in County	Percent of Farmland in State
2826005013	Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, Grazing Land	648,292 SF	166,041.54 SF	0.00015%	0.0000042%
2826006008	Grazing Land	209,259 SF	274.5 SF	0.00000001%	n/a*
2826006905	Grazing Land	292,994 SF	49,608.40 SF	0.00005%	n/a*
2826007021	Grazing Land	6,403,327 SF	38,076.48 SF	0.00015%	n/a*

Source: Community Impact Assessment, AECOM, 2023

The NRCS determined that the Build Alternative would traverse areas currently being devoted to a variety of agricultural uses, including hay, vegetables, and fruit and nut trees. However, the Build Alternative rated a combined score of 125 points on Form AD-1006, which is below the threshold of 160 points. According to the instructions for completing Form AD-1006, sites receiving a total score of less than 160 points do not need to "consider alternative actions, as appropriate, that could reduce adverse impacts (e.g., Alternative Sites, Modifications, or Mitigation)." Therefore, according to the results of Form AD-1006, no further analysis is needed for farmland issues under the FPPA. In addition, these areas are not currently used for agricultural purposes and the surrounding area is highly urbanized. Therefore, the acquisition of Farmland of Statewide Importance would not be adverse due to the zoning of the proposed project site and the combined score of 125 points on the Farmland Conversion Impact Rating Form.

2.2.4.5 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

Potential impacts to farmland would be 1.08 acres of farmland conversion to a transportation use. This land is not currently utilized as farmland, and there are no future plans to utilize it for agricultural uses. The property owner, Newhall Land and Farming Company, intends to develop these parcels into a housing tract development known as Entrada North (Los Angeles County Tentative Tract Map Number [No.] 071377). No impacts would occur to farmlands; therefore, no AMMs are required.

2.2.5 Growth

2.2.5.1 Regulatory Setting

The CEQ regulations, which established the steps necessary to comply with the NEPA of 1969, require evaluation of the potential environmental effects of all proposed federal activities and programs. This provision includes a requirement to examine indirect effects, which may occur in areas beyond the immediate influence of a proposed action and at some time in the future. The

CEQ regulations (40 CFR 1508.8) refer to these consequences as indirect impacts. Indirect impacts may include changes in land use, economic vitality, and population density, which are all elements of growth.

CEQA also requires the analysis of a project's potential to induce growth. The CEQA Guidelines (Section 15126.2[d]) require that environmental documents "…discuss the ways in which the proposed project could foster economic or population growth, or the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment…"

2.2.5.2 Affected Environment

The information in this section is based on the CIA (AECOM 2023a) prepared for the proposed project. The growth-related impacts of the proposed project were assessed using the *Guidance for Preparers of Growth-Related, Indirect Impacts Analyses* by Caltrans. Under NEPA and CEQA, growth inducement is not necessarily considered detrimental or beneficial, or even environmentally significant. Generally, growth inducement of a project is considered significant only if it would foster a population growth greater than what is assumed for applicable master plans, land use plans, or regional projections made by planning agencies. Growth induced by a project is considered to be significant if it directly or indirectly would affect the ability of agencies to provided public services, or if the potential growth would significantly affect the environment in some other way.

Different transportation projects influence growth to different degrees and in different ways, and the guidance has adopted a two-phase approach to evaluation of growth-related impacts. The first phase, called "first cut screening," helps the environmental planner determine the likely growth potential effect and whether further analysis may be necessary.

The first-cut screening involves examining a variety of interrelated factors to answer the following questions:

- To what extent would travel times, travel cost, or accessibility to employment, shopping, or other destinations be changed? Would this change affect travel behavior, trip patterns, or the attractiveness of some areas to development over others?

- To what extent would change in accessibility affect growth or land use change – its location, rate, type, or amount?

- To what extent would resources of concern be affected by this growth or land use change?

SCAG population, household, and employment estimates and the annual average growth rate forecasts for 2020–2045 for the region, County of Los Angeles, and local jurisdictions are shown in Table 2-5. The SCAG data did not include the individual unincorporated community of Stevenson Ranch, so the entire unincorporated County of Los Angeles was included for reference.

Table 2-5: Annual Average Growth Rate Percentages

Jurisdiction	Population 2016–2045	Households 2016–2045	Employment 2016–2045
SCAG Region	0.6	0.8	0.6
County of Los Angeles	0.6	0.7	0.4
City of Santa Clarita	1.3	1.4	1.2
Unincorporated County of Los Angeles	1.2	1.3	1.3

Source: Community Impact Assessment, AECOM, September 2023

According to the forecasts, the local jurisdictions are projected to grow at a faster annual rate than the County of Los Angeles and overall SCAG region. The area east and south of the proposed project area is generally built out, with some undeveloped land to the north and west (see Section 2.2.1 above for a discussion on land use in the proposed project vicinity).

2.2.5.3 Environmental Consequences

2.2.5.3.1 Alternative 1: No-Build Alternative

Under the No-Build Alternative, no modifications to the existing roadway would occur. The Old Road in its current state would not meet the goals and objectives of the Los Angeles County Circulation Element, LACPW planning, FHWA standards, and other regional forecasts. The Connect SoCal anticipates the growth planned within the local jurisdictions in and around the study area and adequately responds to this projected growth. The No-Build Alternative would not influence the level of growth within the study area and adjacent jurisdictions. The Old Road would remain in its current condition and, therefore, is not anticipated to influence the amount, location, and/or distribution of growth or housing and jobs in the local cities and unincorporated areas in the study area. Deficiencies in traffic demand and roadway operations such as congestion, safety, and inconsistency with jurisdictional plans and policies would remain and continue to worsen under this scenario since this alternative would not increase regional roadway capacity and improve safety to accommodate expected future traffic growth projections.

2.2.5.3.2 Alternative 2: Build Alternative

The “first-cut screening” for the Build Alternative is discussed next.

The Build Alternative would not change existing points of accessibility along The Old Road, Sky View Lane, Rye Canyon Road, or provide new access; only improvements or re-alignments of intersections along The Old Road, Sky View Lane, and Rye Canyon Road would occur. The intersection and other improvements associated with the Build Alternative would create benefits for travelers by decreasing congestion; however, the alternative would not accommodate additional traffic beyond what currently is projected for the area. The improvements are not expected to influence travel behavior, trip patterns, or the attractiveness of some areas to development over others. This alternative would not remove an impediment to growth because it would not provide an entirely new public facility.

The Build Alternative would address existing operational and capacity deficiencies and would not be likely to influence the amount, location, and/or distribution of growth in and around the study area. The proposed project would not be likely to induce land development, encourage

changes in population density, or construction of additional housing. All land use plans in the counties and cities in and around the study area include future growth. Service providers also regularly evaluate growth trends and provide required infrastructure upgrades as needed. No infrastructure plans have been identified in any local agency plans or service providers for the study area at this time.

This “first cut screening” demonstrates that the Build Alternative would not change access but would facilitate improved mobility in the study area. Utilities, land use, community facilities, and traffic would not be affected because this alternative would not be growth-inducing and would not result in reasonably foreseeable growth. Based on this analysis, the Build Alternative does not require further analysis of potential growth-related impacts.

2.2.5.4 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

The Build Alternative would not be growth-inducing, and no further analysis of growth-related impacts is required. Local and regional plans account potential growth in and around the study area, and the minimal road and intersection improvements to The Old Road and Rye Canyon Road would not encourage additional growth beyond those projections. No AMMs are required.

2.2.6 Community Character and Cohesion

2.2.6.1 Regulatory Setting

The NEPA of 1969, as amended, established that the federal government use all practicable means to ensure for all Americans safe, healthful, productive, and aesthetically and culturally pleasing surroundings (42 USC 4331[b][2]). FHWA in its implementation of NEPA (23 USC 109[h]) directs that final decisions on projects are to be made in the best overall public interest. This requires taking into account adverse environmental impacts, such as destruction or disruption of human-made resources, community cohesion, and the availability of public facilities and services.

Under CEQA, an economic or social change by itself is not to be considered a significant effect on the environment. However, if a social or economic change is related to a physical change, then social or economic change may be considered in determining whether the physical change is significant. Because this proposed project would result in physical change to the environment, it is appropriate to consider changes to community character and cohesion in assessing the significance of the proposed project’s effects.

2.2.6.2 Affected Environment

The information in this section is based on the CIA prepared for the proposed project (AECOM 2023a).

Community character is defined as the combination of demographics, housing characteristics, economic conditions, and community facilities. Community cohesion is defined as the degree to which residents have a sense of belonging in their neighborhood; a level of commitment to the community; or a strong attachment to neighbors, groups, and institutions, usually as a result of the continued association over time.

Other potential indicators of cohesion include a high proportion of the following: ethnic homogeneity, long-term residents, households of two or more people, rates of home ownership, and percentage of elderly residents.

Population and Housing

Demographic data were collected from the U.S. Census (U.S. Census Bureau 2010) and the 2020 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year Estimate (U.S. Census Bureau 2019) for the analysis discussed next. The ACS 5-year Estimates were used because the data are more reliable than other ACS estimates (e.g., the 1- and 3-year Estimates) and data were available for smaller geographies. Data were collected for U.S. Census Tracts within 0.5 miles of the proposed project area. Data also were collected for the community of Stevenson Ranch, City of Santa Clarita, and Los Angeles County as points of reference for demographic trends. In addition, Connect SoCal growth forecasts were used to estimate projected growth for the area.

Regional Population Characteristics

The current populations of the study area, local area, region, and state are shown in Table 2-6. Typically, growth rates between 2010 and 2019 in the study area are higher compared to the rest of the state, region, and local area. However, Census Tract 9201.14 has a slightly lower growth rate than the state and local area, and Census Tract 9202.00 experienced a negative growth rate. Census Tract 9202.00 contains the North County Correctional Facility and no other housing units. The decrease in population shown in Table 2-6 likely represents a decrease in inmate population.

Table 2-6: Current State, Regional, and Local Populations and Change

Geographic Area	2010	2019	Change	Percent Change
California	37,253,956	39,283,497	2,029,541	5.45%
County of Los Angeles	9,818,605	10,081,570	262,965	2.68%
City of Santa Clarita	176,320	213,411	37,091	21.04%
Unincorporated Community of Stevenson Ranch	16,934	19,179	2,245	13.26%
Census Tract 9201.06	3,110	3,381	271	8.71%
Census Tract 9201.07	3,954	6,295	2,341	59.21%
Census Tract 9201.08	3,439	5,386	1,947	56.62%
Census Tract 9201.14	6,490	6,518	28	0.43%
Census Tract 9202.00	6,920	5,393	-1,527	-22.07%
Census Tract 9203.28	1,990	2,036	46	2.31%
Census Tract 9203.39	7,337	7,420	83	1.13%

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau 2010, 2019

SCAG Connect SoCal growth forecasts were used to predict long-term growth of the area, shown in Table 2-7. The SCAG region is expected to see a 19 to 27% growth rate from 2016 to 2045, in population, households, and employment. Los Angeles County is expected to see a 13 to 24% growth rate from 2016 to 2045, in population, households, and employment. The City of Santa Clarita is expected to experience a roughly 15 to 18% growth rate in population and employment, with a 32% growth rate in households from 2016 to 2045, and unincorporated Los

Angeles County is predicted to experience a roughly 19 to 20% growth rate in population and employment, with a 42% growth rate in households from 2016 to 2045.

Table 2-7: Regional and Local Growth Rate

	2016	2045	2016-2045 Growth Rate (%)
SCAG Region			
Population	18,832,000	22,504,000	19.5
Households	6,012,000	7,633,000	27.0
Employment	8,389,000	10,049,000	19.8
Los Angeles County			
Population	10,110,000	11,674,000	15.5
Households	3,319,000	4,119,000	24.1
Employment	4,743,000	5,382,000	13.5
City of Santa Clarita			
Population	218,200	258,800	18.6
Households	71,800	95,200	32.6
Employment	91,200	105,200	15.4
Unincorporated County of Los Angeles			
Population	1,044,500	1,258,000	20.4
Households	294,800	419,300	42.2
Employment	269,100	320,100	19.0

Source: SCAG 2020

Neighborhoods/Communities/Community Character

The following neighborhoods were identified in the study area: the Santa Clarita neighborhoods of Newhall Ranch Road/McBean Parkway, Valencia Boulevard/Tourney Road, and Valencia; and the Stevenson Ranch neighborhoods of Val Verde, Sulphur Springs, and Del Valle. These neighborhoods are shown in Figure 8.

Santa Clarita

Newhall Ranch Road/McBean Parkway. This neighborhood roughly follows the Santa Clarita River, Dickason Drive, and Decoro Drive to the north. The eastern boundary follows Grandview Drive and McBean Parkway and extends out slightly along Newhall Ranch Road. The southern boundary is Magic Mountain Parkway, and the western boundary is I-5. This neighborhood aligns with Census Tract 9201.14.

Valencia Boulevard/Tourney Road. This neighborhood is bounded by I-5 to the west, Magic Mountain Parkway to the north, McBean Parkway on the east, and Valencia Boulevard on the south. The Valencia Boulevard/Tourney Road neighborhood corresponds to Census Tract 9203.28.

Valencia. Valencia is a small town and consists of just one neighborhood. The neighborhood is bounded by I-5 to the west, the Santa Clarita River and Avenue Rockefeller to the south, Newhall Ranch Road and Copper Hill Drive to the east, and San Francisquito

Motorway/Company Road and the Census Tract 9202.00 boundary to the north. Valencia contains Census Tracts 9201.07 and 9201.08.

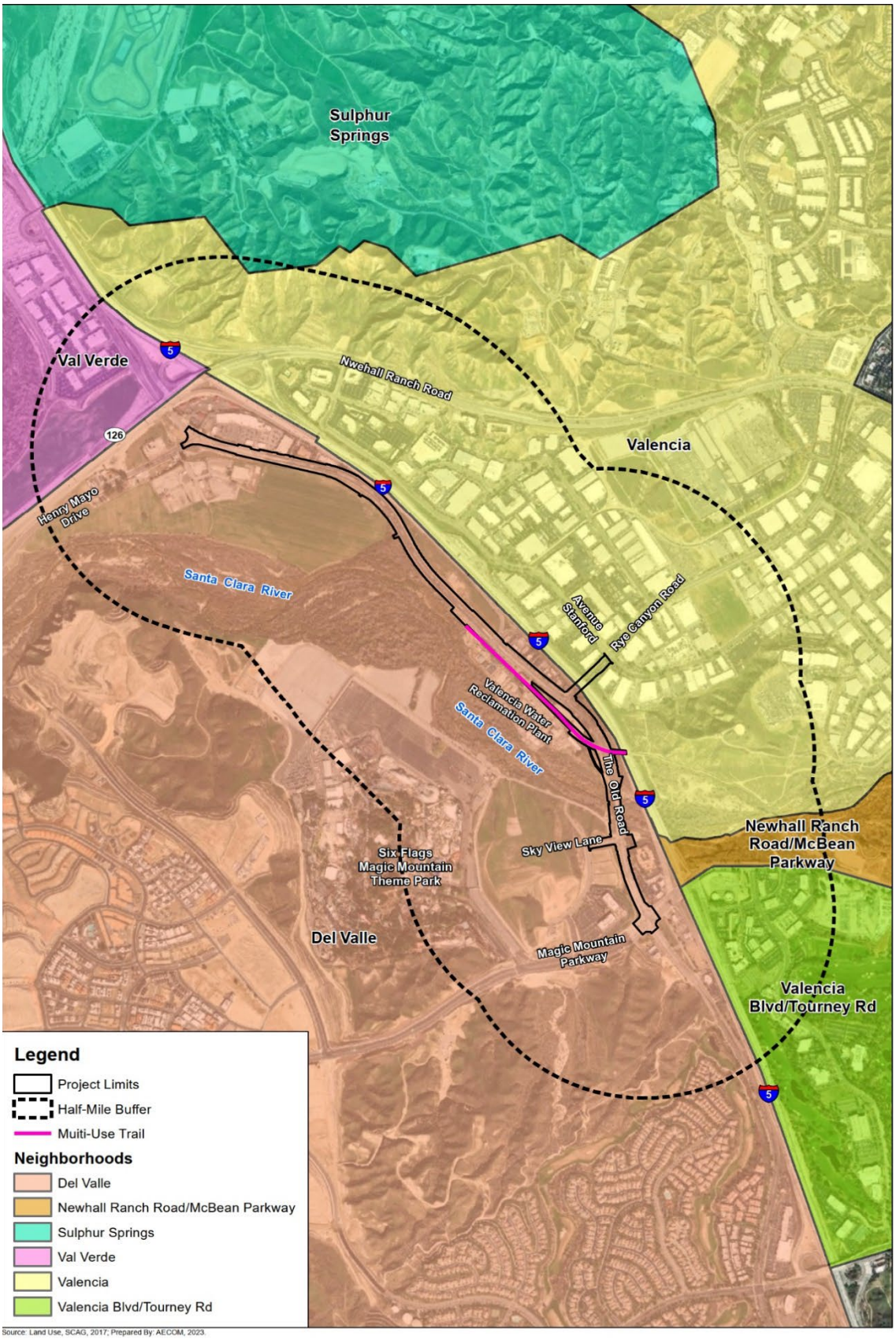


Figure 8
Neighborhoods Map

Stevenson Ranch

Del Valle. The eastern boundary of Del Valle is I-5, and the northern boundary is SR-126. The western and southern boundaries generally follow Potrero Canyon Road, Pico Canyon Road, Mallory Drive, Kavenagh Lane, Hemmingway Avenue, and Stevenson Ranch Parkway. Based on population density, the neighborhood is designated as suburban. This neighborhood closely aligns with Census Tract 9203.39.

Val Verde. The neighborhood is north of SR-126 and west of I-5. The western boundary of the neighborhood is the Los Angeles/Ventura County line, and the northern boundary roughly follows Hasley Canyon Road, Lechler Fire Truck Trail, and Oak Canyon Road. Based on population density, the neighborhood is designated as rural. This neighborhood falls partially within Census Tract 9201.06.

Sulphur Springs. The boundary for the Sulphur Springs neighborhood follows the boundary for Census Tract 9202.00. The Sulphur Springs neighborhood generally is undeveloped, with the exception of some industrial uses and the North County Correctional Facility.

Demographic Data

Demographic data can be used to describe community cohesion and characteristics. Information was gathered from the 2010 U.S. Census and the 2020 ACS 5-year Estimate for the elements of age, ethnicity, employment and income, and transit-dependent population.

Age

Age can be a defining characteristic for community character and cohesion. Elderly and stay-at-home parents tend to be more active in their communities, because they have more time to become involved. Transit-dependent populations are defined as coming from the population under age 19 or age 65 and older. Residents who tend to walk or use public transportation tend to correlate with a higher degree of community cohesion. Table 2-8 shows the distribution of the population by age in the state, region, locally, and in the study area.

As stated previously, Census Tract 9202.00 contains the North County Correctional Facility and no other residential properties. Therefore, it was excluded from the analysis of age trends in the study area presented next.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the population under 19 years of age has increased for all geographies. The population between 19 and 64 years old decreased for all geographies. The population over age 65 increased for all geographies between 2010 and 2019, with the exception of Census Tract 9201.08 (Valencia), which experienced an extremely minor decrease in population. No major changes occurred in age distribution for any geography in any age group, with all changes being less than a 5% increase or decrease except for Census Tract 9201.08 (Valencia), which experienced a roughly 7% change in a population of less than 19 years old.

Table 2-8: Age Distribution

Geographic Area	Year	Population Less Than 19 Years Old		Population 19 to 64 Years Old		Population Greater Than 64 Years Old	
California	2010	9,295,040	25.0%	23,712,402	63.7%	4,246,514	11.4%
	2019	10,060,387	25.6%	23,737,069	60.4%	5,486,041	14.0%
County of Los Angeles	2010	2,402,208	24.5%	6,350,698	64.7%	1,065,699	10.9%
	2019	2,476,983	24.60%	6,268,609	62.1%	1,335,978	13.3%
City of Santa Clarita	2010	46,180	26.2%	113,289	64.3%	16,851	9.6%
	2019	60,698	28.5%	127,638	59.8%	25,075	11.7%
Unincorporated Community of Stevenson Ranch	2010	6,254	36.9%	9,766	57.7%	1,433	5.3%
	2019	5,464	28.5%	11,892	62.1%	1,823	9.5%
Census Tract 9201.06	2010	899	28.9%	2,034	65.4%	177	5.7%
	2019	909	26.8%	2,135	63.1%	337	10.0%
Census Tract 9201.07	2010	1,490	37.7%	2,355	59.6%	109	2.8%
	2019	2,478	39.4%	3,416	54.1%	401	6.4%
Census Tract 9201.08	2010	1,061	30.9%	2,230	64.8%	148	4.3%
	2019	1,976	36.6%	3,184	59.1%	226	4.2%
Census Tract 9201.14	2010	1,882	29.0%	4,363	67.2%	245	3.8%
	2019	1,818	27.8%	4,367	67.0%	333	5.1%
Census Tract 9202.00*	2010	0	0.0%	6,903	99.8%	17	0.2%
	2019	219	4.1%	5,159	95.5%	15	0.3%
Census Tract 9203.28	2010	409	20.6%	1,457	73.2%	124	6.2%
	2019	400	19.7%	1,454	71.5%	182	8.9%
Census Tract 9203.39	2010	2,411	32.7%	4,617	62.6%	349	4.7%
	2019	2,361	31.8%	4,592	62.0%	467	6.3%

Note:
*Census Tract 9202.00 was excluded from analysis because it contains the North County Correctional Facility and no other residential properties.
Sources: U.S. Census Bureau 2010, 2019

For all census tracts in the study area, the 19–64 age range contained the majority of the population, ranging from roughly 54 to 72% of the population in 2019. The census tract with the lowest percentage of people in this age range was 9201.07 (Valencia), and the tract with the highest percentage was 9203.28 (Valencia Boulevard/Tourney Road). The census tract with the lowest percentage of population under age 19 was 9203.28 (Valencia Boulevard/Tourney Road) at 19.7%, with the highest in census tract 9201.07 (Valencia) at 39.4%. The census tract with the lowest percentage of population over age 65 was 9201.08 (Valencia) at 4.2%, with the highest in census tract being 9203.28 (Valencia Boulevard/Tourney Road) at 8.9%.

As the majority of the population in the study area falls within the 19–64 age range, a high level of transit-dependence is not likely in this area. The population's lower age range, in conjunction

with a lower percentage of the population over the age of 65, suggests a lower level of community cohesion.

Ethnicity

Because Census Tract 9202.00 contains the North County Correctional Facility and does not represent a typical community, it was excluded from the analysis of ethnicity trends in the study area presented next.

Typically, throughout the state, region, and local jurisdictions, Hispanic or Latino and White racial groups tend to be the largest communities. This tendency generally is reflected in the study area; however, the Hispanic or Latino community tends to be much smaller in the study area, with the exceptions of Census Tracts 9201.07 (Valencia), 9201.08 (Valencia), and 9203.39 (Del Valle), which have much larger populations of Asians. Table 2-9 shows the ethnic composition of the state, region, local jurisdictions, and census tracts in the study area.

The census tract with the lowest population of Hispanic or Latino racial group is Census Tract 9203.28 (Valencia Boulevard/Tourney Road) with 12.0%, while the largest Hispanic or Latino population occurs in Census Tract 9201.06 (Valencia) with 61.6%. The smallest population of the White racial group falls within Census Tract 9201.06 (Valencia) at 32.8%, with the largest population in Census Tract 9203.39 (Del Valle) at 51.2%. The largest Black/African American population in the study area is in Census Tract 9201.07 (Valencia) at 3.6%, and the smallest is in Census Tract 9203.28 (Valencia Boulevard/Tourney Road) at 2.0%. The lowest percentage of the Asian population in the study area is in Census Tract 9201.06 (Valencia) at 3.4%, and the highest percentage of the Asian population is in Census Tract 9201.08 (Valencia) at roughly 29.6%. All other ethnic groups in the study area were found in very small percentages of each Census Tract, all falling under 10.0%.

A large amount of ethnic diversity exists, with few groups above 50% of the population in the area, which could indicate a lack of community cohesion.

Housing

Households of two or more people and households that have been residents of a community for a longer period tend to correlate with a higher degree of community cohesion. In addition, ownership of a home, rather than rental, can correlate to a higher degree of community cohesion.

As shown in Table 2-10, Census Tract 9202.00 (Sulphur Springs) was reported as having no housing units. As discussed previously, population associated with this census tract is connected with the North County Correctional Facility. This census tract has been removed from the following discussion of housing trends. For all other census tracts, the ratio of owner- to renter-occupied housing was comparable to local jurisdictions and higher than the region and state. The average household size in the study area is similar to the state, region, or local jurisdictions, with the exceptions of Census Tracts 9201.06 (Valencia), 9201.07 (Valencia), 9201.08 (Valencia), and 9203.39 (Del Valle), which have larger average household sizes. All census tracts have a 93% or higher occupancy rate. This generally is consistent with the state, region, and local jurisdictions. Each census tract has between approximately 800 and 2,500 housing units. The average household size ranges from two to four people. Census Tract 9203.28 (Valencia Boulevard/Tourney Road) has the smallest household size, while Census Tract 9201.07 (Valencia) has the largest. Property value reflects the desirability of a particular

property with regard to aesthetic qualities, accessibility, safety, and many other factors. As of June 2022, the median home price in Santa Clarita was $807,146, and the median home price in Stevenson Ranch was $1,093,709 (Zillow.com 2022). Housing units in and around the study area typically are single-family suburban homes, with some multi-family housing. Vacancy rates in the study area generally are low, less than 7%, reflecting a high demand for housing. Unincorporated parts of Los Angeles County (e.g., the proposed project area) are expected to experience the most housing and population growth in the coming years because of the availability of developable land (CEF 2017).

Households of two or more people and households that have been residents of a community for a longer period tend to correlate with a higher degree of community cohesion. In addition, ownership of a home, rather than rental, can correlate to a higher degree of community cohesion. Overall, the ratio of owner- to renter-occupied housing was comparable to local jurisdictions and higher than the region and state. The average household size in the study area is similar to the state, region, or local jurisdictions, with the exceptions of Census Tracts 9201.06 (Valencia), 9201.07 (Valencia), 9201.08 (Valencia), and 9203.39 (Del Valle), which have larger average household sizes. All census tracts have a 93% or higher occupancy rate. This generally is consistent with the state, region, and local jurisdictions. Given the demographic indicators, community cohesion is relatively high.

2.2.6.3 Environmental Consequences

2.2.6.3.1 Alternative 1: No-Build Alternative

Under the No-Build Alternative, no modifications to the existing roadway would occur. The No-Build Alternative would not affect the distribution of existing or planned housing, nor the economic conditions of the proposed project area. There is no housing in the proposed project area, and economic activity and employment would not be changed.

2.2.6.3.2 Alternative 2: Build Alternative

According to several indicators of community cohesion, including high homeownership rates, housing tenure, size of households, and a high percentage of persons aged 65 and over, the study area does present some level of community cohesion.

During proposed project construction, residents may be disrupted temporarily and inconvenienced by detours, local road closures, dust, noise, and heavy construction equipment traffic on existing streets. These issues would be addressed in advance of proposed project construction; LACPW would work with local authorities by following a construction traffic notification procedure to minimize transportation and traffic effects. In addition, proposed project construction would not displace any residential units or nonresidential properties.

Table 2-9: Ethnic Composition

Geographic Area	Total Population	Hispanic or Latino of Any Race		Not Hispanic or Latino														Total Minority	
				White		Black/African American		American Indian and Alaskan Native		Asian		Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander		Some Other Race		Two or More Races			
California	38,832,994	15,100,054	38.9%	14,481,927	37.2%	2,250,792	5.8%	300,304	0.1%	5,645,773	14.5%	153,557	0.03%	5,408,569	14.0%	1,871,497	0.05%	28,859,049	74.3%
Los Angeles County	9,969,032	4,822,776	48.4%	2,620,622	26.2%	812,132	0.08%	72,494	0.07%	1,461,604	14.6%	27,184	0.03%	2,087,932	21.0%	392,031	4.0%	9,284,122	93.1%
City of Santa Clarita	210,469	70,204	33.4%	100,967	48.0%	8,322	4.0%	1,612	0.08%	23,494	11.1%	188	0.01%	15,120	7.2%	12,120	5.8%	118,940	56.5%
Unincorporated Community of Stevenson Ranch	19,179	2,773	14.5%	11,327	59.0%	685	3.6%	76	0.0%	4,821	25.1%	0	0.0%	518	0.0%	1,619	0.1%	10,494	54.7%
Census Tract 9201.06	3,336	2,056	61.6%	1,095	32.8%	72	2.2%	38	1.1%	115	3.4%	8	0.2%	515	15.4%	177	5.3%	2,804	84.1%
Census Tract 9201.07	6,182	1,068	17.2%	3,085	50.0%	222	3.6%	59	1.0%	1,615	26.1%	0	0.0%	214	3.5%	219	1.0%	3,178	51.4%
Census Tract 9201.08	5,279	827	15.7%	2,155	40.8%	165	3.1%	50	1.0%	1,565	29.6%	0	1.3%	275	6.0%	311	10.1%	2,923	55.4%
Census Tract 9201.14	6,445	1,268	19.6%	3,690	57.3%	183	2.8%	0	0.0%	1,098	17.0%	0	0.0%	41	0.6%	153	2.4%	2,590	40.2%
Census Tract 9202.00	5,393	3,206	49.7%	723	11.2%	978	15.2%	253	4.0%	83	1.3%	30	0.5%	659	10.2%	583	9.0%	5,209	80.8%
Census Tract 9203.28	2,036	243	12.0%	1,204	59.1%	42	2.0%	13	0.6%	413	20.2%	7	0.3%	22	1.1%	135	6.6%	740	36.3%
Census Tract 9203.39	7,374	884	12.0%	3,775	51.2%	161	2.2%	76	1.0%	2,118	28.7%	0	0.0%	145	1.2%	712	9.7%	3,384	45.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2019

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Table 2-10: Household Profile

Geography	Total Housing Units	Housing Units, Occupied		Housing Units, Vacant		Owner-Occupied Units*		Renter-Occupied Units*		Average Household Size
California	14,175,976	12,914,001	91.0%	1,261,975	8.9%	7,024,315	54.3%	5,889,686	45.6%	2.95
Los Angeles County	3,542,800	3,316,795	94.0%	226,005	6.4%	1,519,516	45.8%	1,797,279	54.2%	2.99
City of Santa Clarita	71,134	69,046	97.3%	2,088	2.9%	48,365	70.0%	20,681	30.0%	3.06
Unincorporated Community of Stevenson Ranch	6,769	6,486	95.8%	286	4.2%	4,536	83.1%	1,950	16.9%	2.96
Census Tract 9201.06	940	915	97.3%	25	2.7%	763	83.4%	152	16.6%	3.70
Census Tract 9201.07	1,683	1,672	99.3%	11	0.7%	1,395	83.4%	277	16.6%	3.76
Census Tract 9201.08	1,757	1,749	99.5%	8	0.5%	1,317	75.3%	432	24.7%	3.08
Census Tract 9201.14	2,319	2,258	97.4%	61	2.6%	1,167	51.7%	1,091	48.3%	2.89
Census Tract 9202.00**	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0
Census Tract 9203.28	894	835	93.4%	59	6.6%	403	48.3%	432	51.7%	2.44
Census Tract 9203.39	2,445	2,383	97.5%	62	2.5%	1,792	75.2%	591	24.8%	3.11

Notes:
* May not add up to total housing units because of margin of error of the survey data.
**Census Tract 9202.00 was excluded from the analysis because it contains the North County Correctional Facility and no other residential properties.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2019

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Once construction is complete, the proposed bridge would widen and increase the number of lanes to six-lanes. The Build Alternative would not provide new access to an undeveloped area, nor would they influence development opportunities by expanding capacity. Minority and low-income populations exist within and around the study area. However, the proposed project would benefit most area residents, including minority and low-income populations, by improving mobility and circulation throughout the area. The proposed project would not have disproportionately high or adverse impacts per Executive Order (EO) 12898 on Non-White, Hispanic, Latino, or low-income populations within the reference populations, because it would not result in adverse impacts being predominately borne by a minority or low-income population, nor would adverse impacts be appreciably more severe to these populations. Overall, the proposed project would be built along an existing transportation corridor and would not divide existing neighborhoods/communities. Therefore, no adverse impacts would occur.

2.2.6.4 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

Based on the above discussion and analysis, the Build Alternative would be built along an existing transportation corridor and would not divide existing neighborhoods/communities. In addition, the Build Alternative would not result in adverse impacts being predominately borne by a minority or low-income population, nor would adverse impacts be appreciably more severe to these populations. No further community character and cohesion analysis is required. Implementation of AMMs outlined elsewhere in this document would help minimize impacts on all the local communities, including minority and low-income populations.

2.2.7 Relocations and Real Property Acquisition

2.2.7.1 Regulatory Setting

The Department's Relocation Assistance Program (RAP) is based on the Federal Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended (Uniform Act), and Title 49 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 24. The purpose of the RAP is to ensure that persons displaced as a result of a transportation project are treated fairly, consistently, and equitably so that such persons will not suffer disproportionate injuries as a result of projects designed for the benefit of the public as a whole. Please see Appendix C for a summary of the RAP.

All relocation services and benefits are administered without regard to race, color, national origin, persons with disabilities, religion, age, or sex. Please see Appendix B for a copy of the Department's Title VI Policy Statement.

2.2.7.2 Affected Environment

The information in this section is based on the CIA (AECOM 2023a) prepared for the proposed project. Within the study area, the land adjacent to the proposed project has been developed with a variety of land uses, including residential, commercial, and recreation uses.

No residential parcels would be acquired or used for temporary construction access or staging for the proposed project. However, as shown in Table 2-2, the Build Alternative would affect 23 parcels (permanently or temporarily), and the majority of the affected parcels would result in partial acquisitions or easements. As discussed in Section 2.2.1, one full parcel acquisition would be required.

The acquisition of ROW would be required along almost all of the west side of The Old Road. The majority of this property is vacant, with the exception of the Valencia Water Reclamation Plant. This land currently is owned by the Newhall Land and Farming Company and the Los Angeles County Sanitation District. No ROW extensions would occur on the east side of the road, with the exception of a small drainage easement at the southeast corner of the intersection of Rye Canyon Road and The Old Road, and along the southeast corner of the intersection of Sky View Lane and The Old Road. Both parcels are owned by Newhall Land and Farming Company and currently are vacant.

ROW acquisition also would be required along Rye Canyon Road between The Old Road and Avenue Stanford. The roadway widening would affect the I-5 bridge over Rye Canyon Road, which would require the concrete slopes under the bridge to be reconstructed with retaining walls. ROW acquisition would be required from three commercial properties to accommodate the roadway widening and sidewalk improvements. Driveways and parking likely would be affected but not the buildings themselves. No relocations would be required, and construction would accommodate continued access to the businesses.

In addition, one full parcel acquisition would be required on vacant land owned by the Newhall Land and Farming Company. The land use would permanently change from the existing use to transportation land use where the ROW would be expanded to construct the Build Alternative. Overall, compensation would be provided in accordance with federal relocation assistance and property acquisition policies.

2.2.7.3 Environmental Consequences

2.2.7.3.1 Alternative 1: No-Build Alternative

The No-Build Alternative would maintain the current configuration of The Old Road. Under the No-Build Alternative, the proposed project would not be constructed, and no impacts would occur on relocations or property acquisition.

2.2.7.3.2 Alternative 2: Build Alternative

Under the Build Alternative, temporary construction, permanent drainage, and roadway ROW easements would be required on portions of several properties within the proposed project boundaries. A summary of the APNs, street address, current owner, current occupant or land use, and ROW acquisition type of each parcel within the proposed project boundaries is shown in Table 2-11.

At this preliminary stage of proposed project design, the Build Alternative is anticipated to require one full property acquisition; partial property acquisitions from 13 properties; and 20 temporary construction easements to accommodate roadway widening. All property owners and tenants will be made aware of any potential impacts to businesses and all businesses would be able to remain open during proposed project construction. The actual impacts to properties will be determined during the proposed project's final design phase.

The Build Alternative would require the full acquisition of one vacant parcel and partial acquisitions from vacant, public utility, and commercial/industrial properties. Adverse impacts as a result of relocations and property acquisition are anticipated, and the property owner would be compensated for its loss in the property under the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970. Throughout the proposed project area, TCEs would be needed for construction access and staging. No residential or commercial properties would

be displaced, and no relocation of residential units would be required with implementation of the Build Alternative.

Table 2-11: APN Summary Table and Planned ROW Acquisition and Type

#	APN	Street Address	Owner of Record	Current Occupant/Use	Parcel Size	Acquisition Area	Acquisition and Type	Description of Impacts
1	2826005007	n/a	Newhall Land and Farming Co	Vacant	35,906.21 SF	686.96 SF	Partial ROW Acquisition	Small acquisition in southeast corner of parcel, adjacent to The Old Road
2	2826005013	n/a	Newhall Land and Farming Co	Vacant	646,355.77 SF	166,041.54 SF	Partial ROW Acquisition and Temporary Easement	ROW extension along The Old Road
3	2826006008	n/a	Newhall Land and Farming Co	Vacant	209,259 SF	274.5 SF	Partial ROW Acquisition and Temporary Easement	Parcel will experience partial ROW acquisition and temporary impacts for construction access.
4	2826006905	28185 The Old Road, Valencia	County Sanitation District No 32	Public Utility	292,994 SF	49,608.40 SF	Partial ROW Acquisition and Temporary Easement	Parcel will experience partial ROW acquisition and temporary impacts for construction access and staging.
5	2826006906	28185 The Old Road, Valencia	County Sanitation District No 32	Public Utility	104,344 SF	925.66 SF	Partial ROW Acquisition and Temporary Easement	Parcel will experience partial ROW acquisition and temporary impacts along The Old Road.
6	2826007021	n/a	Newhall Land and Farming Co	Vacant	6,403,327 SF	38,0760.48 SF	Partial ROW Acquisition and Temporary Easement	Parcel will experience partial ROW acquisition and temporary impacts for construction access and staging.
7	2826037018	27710 The Old Road, Valencia	Studio Inn & Suites, LLC and Maruti Investments, Inc.	Commercial/ Industrial	134,856.42 SF	9,445.64 SF	Temporary Easement	Temporary impacts will occur in the parking lot of this parcel
8	2826121002	28070 The Old Road, Valencia	Fleet Properties	Commercial/ Industrial	32,696.33 SF	1,976.77 SF	Temporary Easement	Parking lot will be temporarily impacted along The Old Road
9	2826121006	28018 The Old Road, Valencia	Deme Properties LLC	Commercial/ Industrial	27,972.92 SF	3,047.83 SF	Temporary Easement	Parking lot will be temporarily impacted along The Old Road

#	APN	Street Address	Owner of Record	Current Occupant/Use	Parcel Size	Acquisition Area	Acquisition and Type	Description of Impacts
10	2826121007	28038 The Old Road, Santa Clarita	28038 The Old Road LLC	Commercial/ Industrial	36,857.37 SF	2,923.92 SF	Temporary Easement	Parking lot will be temporarily impacted along The Old Road
11	2826163031	n/a	Newhall Land and Farming Co	Vacant	249,084.24 SF	778.05 SF	Partial ROW Acquisition	The ROW will be extended along a small portion of the parcel along The Old Road
12	2826006003	n/a	Newhall Land and Farming Co	Vacant	19,503.17 SF	910.75 SF	Partial ROW Acquisition and Temporary Easement	Permanent and temporary impacts along a portion of the parcel along The Old Road and a small ROW extension in the northwest corner
13	2826006009	n/a/	Newhall Land and Farming Co	Access Road/Vacant	110,537 SF	79,521.71 SF	Partial ROW Acquisition and Temporary Easement	ROW acquisition along the entirety of the parcel. Permanent and temporary impacts due to the trail extension
14	2826006901	28185 The Old Road, Valencia	County Sanitation District No 32	Public Utility	720.27 SF	720.27 SF	Temporary Easement	Temporary impacts along The Old Road
15	2826006907	28185 The Old Road, Valencia	County Sanitation District No 32	Public Utility	3,897.25 SF	374.60 SF	Temporary Easement	Temporary impacts along The Old Road.
16	2826037025	n/a	Newhall Land and Farming Co	Vacant	21,735.65 SF	21,735.65 SF	Temporary Easement	Temporary impacts along The Old Road.
17	2826037026	n/a	Newhall Land and Farming Co	Vacant	118,365.62 SF	42,250 SF	Temporary Easement	Temporary impacts along The Old Road.
18	2826037027	n/a	CEF Equities LLC and Rexford Pico LLC	Vacant	69,583 SF	56,500 SF	Temporary Easement	Temporary construction impacts along The Old Road.
19	2866007062	n/a	Newhall Land and Farming Co	Vacant	19,905.44 SF	19,905.44 SF	Full Permanent ROW Acquisition	Permanent impacts associated with the construction of the trail extension.

#	APN	Street Address	Owner of Record	Current Occupant/Use	Parcel Size	Acquisition Area	Acquisition and Type	Description of Impacts
20	2866008001	25702 Rye Canyon Road, Valencia, and 25700 Rye Canyon Road, Valencia	Rye Canyon Industrial LLC	Commercial/ Industrial	116,267.91 SF	3,245.00 SF	Partial ROW Acquisition and Temporary Easement	Permanent and temporary impacts along Rye Canyon Road.
21	2866009014	25733 Rye Canyon Road, Valencia, and 25709 Rye Canyon Road, Valencia	Di Pietro Holdings	Commercial/ Industrial	90,848.75 SF	6,451.00 SF	Partial ROW Acquisition and Temporary Easement	Permanent and temporary impacts along Rye Canyon Road.
22	2826121006	28018 The Old Road, Valencia	DEME Properties LLC	Commercial/ Industrial	27,972.92 SF	2,231.00 SF	Partial ROW Acquisition and Temporary Easement	Permanent and temporary impacts along Rye Canyon Road.
23	2826006003	Intersection of The Old Road and Rye Canyon Road	Newhall Land and Farming Co.	Vacant	19,503.17 SF	1,075.00 SF	Partial ROW Acquisition and Temporary Easement	Permanent and temporary impacts along Rye Canyon Road.
24	2826163034	n/a	Newhall Land and Farming	Vacant	221,814 SF	4,409 SF	Partial ROW Acquisition	ROW will be extended to widen Skyview Lane.
25	2826005056	28656 The Old Road, Santa Clarita	Old Road Realty LLC	Vacant	144,994 SF	644 SF	Temporary Easement	Temporary impacts along The Old Road

Source: Community Impact Assessment, AECOM, 2023

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2.2.7.4 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

REL-1: Where acquisition is unavoidable, the provisions of the Uniform Act and the 1987 Amendments, as implemented by the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Regulations for Federal and Federally Assisted Programs adopted by USDOT (March 2, 1989) and where applicable, the California Public Park Preservation Act of 1971, will be followed. An appraisal of the affected property will be obtained, and an offer for the full appraisal will be made.

REL-2: Advance notice would be provided to property owners and business owners on the proposed project construction schedule to minimize disruptions.

2.2.8 Environmental Justice

2.2.8.1 Regulatory Setting

All projects involving a federal action (funding, permit, or land) must comply with Executive Order (EO) 12898, *Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations*, signed by President William J. Clinton on February 11, 1994. This EO directs federal agencies to take the appropriate and necessary steps to identify and address disproportionately high and adverse effects of federal projects on the health or environment of minority and low-income populations to the greatest extent practicable and permitted by law. Low income is defined based on the Department of Health and Human Services poverty guidelines. For 2024, this was $31,200 for a family of four.

EO 14096—"Revitalizing Our Nation's Commitment to Environmental Justice for All" was enacted on April 21, 2023. EO 14096 on environmental justice does not rescind EO 12898 – "Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations," which has been in effect since February 11, 1994 and is currently implemented through DOT Order 5610.2C. This implementation will continue until further guidance is provided regarding the implementation of the new EO 14096 on environmental justice.

All considerations under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and related statutes, have also been included in this project. The Department's commitment to upholding the mandates of Title VI is demonstrated by its Title VI Policy Statement, signed by the Director, which can be found in Appendix B of this document.

2.2.8.2 Affected Environment

The environmental justice analysis was conducted using census tract data from the U.S. Census Bureau ACS 5-year Estimate (2015–2019) for the reference populations of Los Angeles County, City of Santa Clarita, unincorporated community of Stevenson Ranch, and census tracts within a half-mile of the proposed project area (see Figure 3). The following analysis compares four measures with which to evaluate environmental justice:

- Percentage of Non-White residents in the study area census tracts (see Table 2-9);
- Percentage of Hispanic or Latino residents in the study area census tracts (see Table 2-9);

- Median household income in the study area census tracts (see Table 2-12); and
- Percentage of population below poverty level in the study area census tracts (see Table 2-12).

Table 2-12: Income and Poverty Statistics for the Region and the Study Area

Geographic Area/ Block Group	Median Household Income	Population for Whom Poverty Status Is Determined	Population below Poverty Line	Percent of Population below Poverty Line
California	$106,916	38,535,926	5,149,742	13.4%
Los Angeles County	$99,133	9,928,773	1,480,446	14.9%
City of Santa Clarita	$119,314	211,295	17,345	8.2%
Unincorporated Community of Stevenson Ranch	$166,328	19,165	1,043	5.4%
Census Tract 9201.06	$102,497	3,381	138	4.1%
Census Tract 9201.07	$201,581	6,295	212	3.4%
Census Tract 9201.08	$130,354	5,369	508	9.5%
Census Tract 9201.14	$129,088	6,464	441	6.8%
Census Tract 9202.00*	$0	0	0	0.0%
Census Tract 9203.28	$156,443	2,036	202	9.9%
Census Tract 9203.39	$189,341	7,420	381	5.1%

* Census Tract 9202.00 (Sulphur Springs) contains the North County Correctional Facility and no other residences; no household income or poverty data was collected by the U.S. Census Bureau.
Source: Community Impact Assessment, AECOM, 2023

Minority groups make up over half the population of the State, Los Angeles County, and City of Santa Clarita, and the unincorporated community of Stevenson Ranch. Minority populations in the census tracts range from 36.3% in Census Tract 9203.28 (Valencia Boulevard/Tourney Road) to 84.1% in Census Tract 9201.06 (Val Verde).

Typically, throughout the State, region, and local jurisdictions, Hispanic or Latino and White racial groups tend to be the largest communities. The Hispanic or Latino community tends to be much smaller in the study area census tracts, with the exceptions of Census Tract 9201.06 (Val Verde), which has much larger populations of the Hispanic or Latino group.

Census Tract 9202.00 (Sulphur Springs) contains the North County Correctional Facility and no other residences. Therefore, no household income or poverty data was collected by the U.S. Census Bureau for this census tract, and it is not included in the following discussion of income and poverty trends. The median household income for the census tracts in the study area ranges from $102,497 in Census Tract 9201.06 (Val Verde) to $201,581 in Census Tract 9201.07 (Valencia). With the exception of Census Tracts 9201.08 (Valencia) and Census Tract 9203.28 (Valencia Boulevard/Tourney Road), the census tracts in the study area have a lower poverty rate compared to that of the State, Los Angeles County, and the City of Santa Clarita. Percent poverty rate in the study area census tracts range from 3.4% in Census Tract 9203.07 (Valencia) to 9.9% in Census Tracts 9203.28 (Valencia Boulevard/Tourney Road).

2.2.8.3 Environmental Consequences

Census tracts are considered to have substantial minority populations if the percentage of minority residents is more than 10% higher than the County subdivision and/or the County average. Census tracts are considered to have substantial low-income populations if the percentage of residents within them who are living below the Census Bureau's defined poverty threshold is more than 5% higher than the County subdivision and/or the County average. The Census Bureau determines the number of persons living below the poverty line based on their poverty thresholds. For 2019, the Census Bureau's preliminary weighted average poverty threshold for a family of four was $26,172.

Generally, impacts are considered to be disproportionately high or adverse if: a) adverse impact(s) of the proposed project would be borne predominately by a minority or low-income population group; or b) if adverse impact(s) of the proposed project would be appreciably more severe or greater in magnitude for minority and/or low-income groups than the adverse impact(s) to nonminority and/or non-low-income population groups even after implementation of mitigation measures and offsetting project benefits are considered.

2.2.8.3.1 Alternative 1: No-Build Alternative

The No-Build Alternative would maintain the current configuration of The Old Road. Deficiencies in traffic demand and roadway operations such as congestion, safety, and inconsistency with jurisdictional plans and policies would remain and continue to worsen for environmental justice populations and non-environmental justice populations under this scenario since this alternative would not increase regional roadway capacity and improve safety to accommodate expected future traffic growth projections.

2.2.8.3.2 Alternative 2: Build Alternative

Under the Build Alternative, temporary construction, permanent drainage, and roadway ROW easements would be required. However, no homes or businesses would be displaced or relocated, and the Build Alternative would keep The Old Road and Rye Canyon Road in the same general alignment. The proposed project would not physically divide any neighborhoods. This alternative also would provide benefits of transportation efficiency improvements to community members and commuters, as well as to emergency response vehicles.

Table 2-13 summarizes the environmental justice indicators for the census tracts in the study area, as well as local, regional, and state populations for comparison. As stated previously, Census Tract 9202.00 (Sulphur Springs) contains a nontraditional population and was not considered in the analysis trends, although the data is shown in the table. As shown, Census Tract 9201.06 (Val Verde) contains minority populations more than 10% higher than the County subdivision. Hispanic or Latino populations also are more than 10% higher in Census Tract 9201.06 (Val Verde), compared to the County subdivision. Census Tract 9023.28 (Valencia Boulevard/Tourney Road) had approximately ten percent of the population below the poverty line, which was approximately 5% higher than the County subdivision. No census tracts had a median household income less than the national poverty line.

The Build Alternative would benefit most study area residents, including minority and low-income populations, by improving mobility and circulation in the study area. Proposed project construction would occur in census tracts with large minority and Hispanic or Latino populations; however, construction would not occur near residences and would not be likely to cause disproportionate impacts. Construction associated with the Build Alternative would have

the potential to affect non-minority and higher income populations as well. Any impacts related to construction would be temporary.

As discussed in Section 2.2.1, the Build Alternative would affect 23 parcels (permanently or temporarily), and the majority of the affected parcels would result in partial acquisitions or easements. One full parcel acquisition would be required. However, access to businesses and community facilities would not be restricted during construction or after construction is completed, so minority or low-income populations would not be cut off from any services. Furthermore, no communities would be divided, and thus the proposed project would not separate minority or low-income populations from the rest of the community.

Table 2-13: Environmental Justice Indicators

Geography	Total Minority Population	Hispanic or Latino Population	Percent below Poverty Line	Median Household Income
California	74.3%	38.9%	13.4%	$106,916
Los Angeles County	93.1%	48.4%	14.9%	$99,133
Santa Clarita	56.5%	33.4%	8.2%	$119,314
Unincorporated Community of Stevenson Ranch	54.7%	14.5%	5.4%	$166,328
Census Tract 9201.06	84.1%	61.6%	4.1%	$102,497
Census Tract 9201.07	51.4%	17.2%	3.4%	$201,581
Census Tract 9201.08	55.4%	15.7%	9.5%	$130,354
Census Tract 9201.14	40.2%	19.6%	6.8%	$129,088
Census Tract 9202.00	80.8%	49.7%	0.0%	$0
Census Tract 9203.28	36.3%	12.0%	9.9%	$156,443
Census Tract 9203.39	45.9%	12.0%	5.1%	$189,341

Source: Community Impact Assessment, AECOM, 2023

The Build Alternative would not have disproportionately high or adverse impacts per EO 12898 on a minority, Hispanic or Latino, or low-income population within the referenced populations because it would not result in adverse impacts, directly or indirectly, being predominately borne by a minority or low-income population, nor would adverse impacts be appreciably more severe to these populations. Additionally, under this alternative, deficiencies in traffic demand and roadway operations such as congestion, safety, and inconsistency with jurisdictional plans and policies would improve since this alternative would increase regional roadway capacity and improve safety to accommodate expected future traffic growth projections.

2.2.8.4 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

Based on the above discussion and analysis, the Build Alternative would not cause disproportionately high and adverse effects on any minority or low-income populations in accordance with the provisions of EO 12898. No further environmental justice analysis is required. Implementation of AMMs outlined elsewhere in this document would help minimize impacts on all the local communities, including minority and low-income neighborhoods.

2.2.9 Utilities/Emergency Services

2.2.9.1 Regulatory Setting

2.2.9.2 Affected Environment

Power, gas, telecommunication, and water utilities are located within the proposed project vicinity. Southern California Edison (SoCal Edison) and Southern California Gas Company (SoCal Gas) provide electric and gas services in the area, for the City of Santa Clarita and unincorporated community of Stevenson Ranch. The Valencia Water Company is the water purveyor for the properties in the area. AT&T, DirecTV, Dish Network, Excede, HugesNet, and Spectrum all provide cable, internet, and phone services in the proposed project area. Fire protection and emergency medical services in the area are provided by Los Angeles County Fire Department, and police services are provided by Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department and California Highway Patrol, Newhall (540). The information in this section is based on the CIA (AECOM 2023a) prepared for the proposed project.

2.2.9.3 Environmental Consequences

2.2.9.3.1 No-Build Alternative

The No-Build Alternative would not require utility relocations and would not affect emergency services.

2.2.9.3.2 Build Alternative

Utilities within the proposed project boundary include electrical poles and cables, gas lines, oil lines, communication lines, water lines, and sanitation lines. Some utilities that are currently located overhead are anticipated to be placed underground. Utilities that would be relocated include:

Telecommunication:

- SoCal Edison pole charter overhead lines due to road widening, as existing poles would be located within the proposed pavement area; and
- AT&T conduits due to the proposed road finished grade exposing the utilities as well as bridge construction.

Natural Gas:

- 12-inch SoCal Gas line due to conflict with a single reinforced concrete box (RCB) culvert extension.

Wastewater:

- 12-inch Santa Clarita Valley Water Agency steel recycled water pipeline due to the proposed road finished grade exposing utilities and bridge construction.

Electrical:

- 750-22,500-volt overhead lines due to road widening as existing utility poles would be located within proposed pavement area.

Oil:

- Several oil lines due to the proposed road finished grade exposing the utilities as well as bridge construction.

Additionally, new catch basins and laterals would be added throughout the proposed project site to provide surface drainage along The Old Road and existing culverts would be extended to accommodate for roadway widening.

An underground utility pothole assessment was conducted by the Geotechnical and Materials Engineering Division (GMED) in which a total of 83 potholes were investigated. Four pothole locations required mitigation due to lead concentrations exceeding STLC State regulatory levels for hazardous waste. The pothole locations were mitigated through the removal of approximately 11.5 cubic yards of non-RCRA lead-impacted soil.

During construction of the Build Alternative the contractor would make the final determination on which utility lines would be preserved in place and encased in concrete, and which would be relocated. Utility relocations would not exceed a maximum depth of 30 feet and would not go outside the footprint of the existing ROW. Utility companies would be consulted during the planning and construction phases to ensure that no disruptions in service would occur. Therefore, no temporary or permanent impacts would occur on utilities.

2.2.9.4 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

LACPW and Caltrans would keep residents, businesses, community facilities, the surrounding community, and any service providers in the affected area informed about the proposed project construction schedule and traffic-affected areas, following traffic notification procedures. The following AMMs will be implemented:

COM-2: Provision will be made for motorist information (i.e., existing changeable message signs [CMSs], portable CMSs, stationary ground mounted signs).

COM-3: To the extent possible, incorporation of traffic circulation construction strategies will be implemented (i.e., lane closure restrictions during holidays and special local events, closure of secondary streets during construction to allow quick construction and reopening, lane modification to maintain the number of lanes needed, allowing night work and extended weekend work, maintaining business access, and maintaining pedestrian and bicycle access).

COM-4: Implementation of alternate and detour routes strategies, and street/intersection improvements will occur (e.g., widening, pavement rehabilitation, removal of median), to provide added capacity to handle detour traffic; signal improvements; make adjustments in signal timing, and/or signal coordination to increase vehicle throughput, improve traffic flow, and optimize intersection capacity; set restrictions at intersections and roadways necessary to reduce congestion and improve safety; and enforce parking restrictions on alternate and detour routes during work hours to increase capacity, reduce traffic conflicts, and improve access.

COM-5: Close coordination will occur with utility service providers and emergency service providers, and a public outreach program will be implemented to minimize impacts on surrounding communities.

2.2.10 Traffic and Transportation/Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

The information in this section is based on the Transportation Assessment Report (AECOM 2023b) and the Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Analysis (AECOM 2023c).

2.2.10.1 Regulatory Setting

Caltrans, as assigned by FHWA, directs that full consideration should be given to the safe accommodation of pedestrians and bicyclists during the development of federal-aid highway projects (23 CFR 652). It further directs that the special needs of the elderly and the disabled must be considered in all federal-aid projects that include pedestrian facilities. When current or anticipated pedestrian and/or bicycle traffic presents a potential conflict with motor vehicle traffic, every effort must be made to minimize the detrimental effects on all highway users who share the facility.

In July 1999, U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) issued an Accessibility Policy Statement pledging a fully accessible multimodal transportation system. Accessibility in federally assisted programs is governed by the USDOT regulations (49 CFR 27) implementing Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (29 USC 794). FHWA has enacted regulations for the implementation of the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), including a commitment to build transportation facilities that provide equal access for all persons. These regulations require application of the ADA requirements to federal-aid projects, including transportation enhancement activities.

2.2.10.2 Affected Environment

Study Area

Key roadway facilities within the proposed project study area are described below. The proposed project study corridor is generally located on the southwestern quadrant of the junction of two regional highway systems composed of SR-126 and I-5.

- **The Old Road**: The Old Road is a four-lane (two northbound and two southbound) roadway, located within a ROW, measuring variably 140 to 160 feet wide, that runs in a north-south direction parallel to I-5 through the Santa Clarita Valley. The roadway's southern terminus is the junction of San Fernando Road and Sierra Highway in Los Angeles County; the northerly terminus is roughly at Oak Court in the unincorporated community of Castaic, north of Lake Hughes Road. The Old Road is identified as a Major Highway in the County's General Plan. The roadway includes two bridges within the proposed project study area, and the posted speed limit is 55 mph.

- **SR-126:** SR-126 is an east/west state highway located just north of the proposed project alignment. The segment of SR-126 in the proposed project vicinity is also known as the Santa Paula Freeway and forms a vital link connecting I-5 from the east to U.S. Highway 101 on the west towards the coast. The highway provides for up to four lanes in each direction in the proposed project vicinity and has an average annual daily traffic (AADT) value of 42,430**.**

- **I-5**: I-5 is a north/south interstate freeway located just east of the proposed project alignment. The segment of I-5 in the proposed project vicinity is also known as the

Golden State Freeway. The freeway provides for up to four lanes per in each direction in the proposed project vicinity and has an AADT of 144,000.

For the traffic analysis, the study intersections that were specifically evaluated in the Transportation Assessment Report (AECOM 2023b) are summarized in Table 2-14.

Study intersection traffic operating conditions and roadway segment capacities were evaluated for each of the following scenarios:

- Existing (2022) Conditions,
- Project Opening Year (2028) No-Build,
- Project Opening Year (2028) Build,
- Design Year (2048) No-Build, and
- Design Year (2048) Build.

Table 2-14: Study Locations

ID	Intersection	Control Type
1	The Old Road/Turnberry Lane	Unsignalized
2	The Old Road/Henry Mayo Drive	Signalized
3	The Old Road/Gateway Center Drive	Signalized
4	The Old Road/I-5 Southbound Ramps	Signalized
5	The Old Road/Rye Canyon Road	Signalized
6	Avenue Stanford/Rye Canyon Road	Signalized
7	The Old Road/Sky View Lane	Unsignalized
8	The Old Road/Magic Mountain Parkway	Signalized

Source: AECOM 2023b

Traffic Operations Analysis Methods and Existing Conditions

Intersection Operations

Under SB 743, a project's effect on automobile delay will not constitute a significant environmental impact. Therefore, LOS and other similar vehicle delay or capacity metrics may no longer serve as transportation impact metrics for CEQA impact analyses. The Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) has updated the CEQA Guidelines and provided a final technical advisory in December 2018 which recommends VMT as the most appropriate measure of transportation impacts under CEQA. For land use and transportation projects, SB 743-compliant CEQA analysis became mandatory on July 1, 2020. Automobile delay, as described solely by LOS or similar measure of traffic congestion, is no longer considered a significant impact under CEQA. However, LACPW has completed a transportation assessment to analyze the circulation system outside of CEQA. This includes an analysis on roadway capacity and LOS for intersections and road segments to identify existing and future deficiencies. Thus, this assessment identified improvements needed to the circulation system outside of CEQA. As such, the criteria and analysis of LOS are discussed further below.

The study area intersections and arterial roadway segments fall within two jurisdictions: the City of Santa Clarita and Los Angeles County. The City's standard for level of service on arterial streets is LOS D. According to Los Angeles County Transportation Impact Analysis Guidelines, the acceptable level of service on arterial roads within the study area whether the roadways are operating in excess of their intended capacity. Acceptable LOS is determined on a case-by-case basis, but generally Level D is the desired minimum LOS. In some instances, LOS below D will

be deemed acceptable in order to further other General Plan goals and policies, such as those that protect environmentally sensitive areas, and when meeting active transportation goals, and encourage infill development, particularly within the Transit Oriented Districts.

Intersection LOS analysis was conducted to evaluate existing intersection operations during the weekday AM and PM peak hours. As shown in Table 2-15, intersections 4 and 6 in the PM peak hour and intersection 7 in the AM and PM peak hour are currently operating at LOS E or worse. The Highway Capacity Manual (HCM) LOS calculation worksheets are provided in Appendix B of the Transportation Assessment (AECOM 2023b).

Table 2-15: Existing (2022) Conditions Intersection LOS

Intersection		Traffic Control	AM Peak Hour		PM Peak Hour	
			Delay[1]	LOS[2]	Delay[1]	LOS[2]
1	The Old Road & Turnberry Lane	TWSC	11.0	B	12.4	B
2	The Old Road & Henry Mayo Drive	Signal	4.0	A	4.7	A
3	The Old Road & Gateway Drive	Signal	14.6	B	14.2	B
4	The Old Road & I-5 Southbound Ramps	Signal	34.1	C	**77.4**	**E**
5	The Old Road & Rye Canyon Road	Signal	25.3	C	29.3	C
6	Ave Stanford & Rye Canyon Road	Signal	38.0	D	**56.6**	**E**
7	The Old Rd & Sky View Lane	TWSC	**136.7**	**F**	**>300**	**F**
8	The Old Road & Magic Mountain Parkway	Signal	15.3	B	16.8	B

Notes:
TWSC = Two-Way Stop Control
> = Greater than
BOLD indicates unsatisfactory LOS
[1] Average control delay, in seconds per vehicle
[2] Intersections were analyzed using HCM 6th methodologies, except intersection 4 was analyzed using HCM 2010 Edition Methodology because HCM 6th does not apply.
Source: AECOM 2023b

Table 2-16 summarizes the ramp queue length analyses conducted at the study intersection of The Old Road and I-5 southbound ramps during AM and PM peak hours to determine the ramp queues at the study intersection. The westbound left-turn storage lane is adequate for the 95th percentile queue length. The queuing analysis worksheets are included in Appendix C of the Transportation Impact Study (AECOM 2023b).

Table 2-16: Existing Ramp Queue Length Analysis

Intersection	Ramp Direction	Queue Length (feet)		Storage (feet)
		AM Peak	PM Peak	
The Old Road & I-5 Southbound Ramps	Westbound Left	74	53	400

Note: 95th percentile queue is reported from the intersection analysis using Synchro 11.
Source: AECOM 2023b

The roadway segment capacity analysis was conducted to evaluate existing roadway conditions during a typical weekday. Under existing conditions, The Old Road is a four-lane divided major highway between Henry Mayo Drive and Magic Mountain Parkway. With the existing capacity of four lanes (five lanes between I-5 southbound ramps and Rye Canyon Road), the roadway V/C ratio was calculated for the study roadway segments as shown in Table 2-17. According to the V/C capacity thresholds, the road segments of the Old Road are currently operating at LOS D or better, therefore, the Old Road is adequate for the existing travel demand.

Table 2-17: Existing (2022) Conditions Roadway Capacity

Location	Lanes	Capacity	Existing Weekday Volume	Volume/ Capacity	LOS
The Old Road between SR-126 and Henry Mayo Drive	4	36,000	11,560	0.32	A
The Old Road between Gateway Drive and I-5 Southbound Ramps	4	36,000	15,774	0.44	A
The Old Road between I-5 Southbound Ramps and Rye Canyon Road	5	45,000	29,819	0.66	B
The Old Road between Rye Canyon Road and Sky View Lane	4	36,000	30,683	0.85	D

Note: Capacity based on City of Santa Clarita General Plan/Los Angeles County Area Plan Circulation Element.
Source: AECOM 2023b

Forecast Traffic Volumes and Vehicle Miles Traveled

The future forecast volumes for the study area were developed using the SCAG RTP/SCS Travel Demand Forecasting Model (SCAG model) to assess changes in VMT for this proposed project.

For the regional travel demand modeling purposes, SCAG has a Trip-Based Model, and an Activity-Based Model (ABM). The Trip-Based Model was developed and adopted for the 2016 RTP/SCS analysis, and this model has a base year of 2012. The ABM is a new generation of travel demand models and is a tour-based model in which individuals and their interaction with each other and their environment are explicitly represented. The latest version of the ABM has adopted the 2020 RTP/SCS, and this model has a base year of 2016 and horizon years of 2026 and 2045.

The SCAG model has been run for the No-Build Alternative scenarios in the model year 2026 and 2045. As part of the proposed project, road widening along The Old Road between Henry Mayo Drive and Magic Mountain Parkway, Rye Canyon Road between The Old Road and Avenue Stanford, and Sky View Lane between The Old Road and Entertainment Drive are proposed. The proposed roadway improvements were coded into the model network, and the model was run for the 2026 and 2045 Build Alternative scenarios to analyze the impacts of the roadway improvements at the proposed project local area and the regional area. The proposed project open year is 2028, and the design year is 2045; the open year (2028) VMT measurements are interpolated from the 2026 and 2045 VMT results.

The change between the No-Build Alternative and Build Alternative scenarios is network changes. In the No-Build Alternative scenario model network within the proposed project limits, The Old Road is a four-lane road, Rye Canyon Road has four lanes, and Sky View Lane has four lanes. In the Build Alternative scenario networks within the proposed project limits, The Old Road has been increased to six lanes, Rye Canyon Road has been changed to six lanes, and Sky View Lane has been changed to six lanes.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

Currently, there are no existing bicycle facilities within the proposed project area. From Henry Mayo Drive to where The Old Road parallels I-5, there is an existing sidewalk on the eastern side of The Old Road. Beyond the I-5 on-and off-ramps to the intersection of Rye Canyon Road, there is also an existing sidewalk on the eastern side of the roadway. In addition, from Sky View Lane to Magic Mountain Parkway, there is an existing sidewalk on the eastern side of the roadway.

2.2.10.3 Environmental Consequences

The No-Build Alternative assumes that no modifications would be made to The Old Road or improvements made to local roadway intersections, other than routine maintenance and rehabilitation of the facility and any currently planned and programmed projects within Los Angeles County.

The Build Alternative would widen The Old Road from Magic Mountain Parkway north to Henry Mayo Drive near the SR-126/I-5 interchange and replace two bridges along The Old Road (one over Santa Clara River and another over Union Pacific Railroad [UPRR] tracks). The Build Alternative would also include an extension of the existing Multi-Use Trail, which would include bike lanes, a paved pedestrian path, and an equestrian trail. The widening of Rye Canyon is assumed to have been completed by 2026 as part of the Build Alternative; therefore, the Build conditions reflect widenings of the Old Road and Rye Canyon Road.

2.2.10.3.1 Alternative 1: No-Build Alternative

Opening Year (2028)

Under the project opening year (2028) No-Build Alternative conditions, it is assumed that the I-5 at Rye Canyon Ramp improvements are completed, which is included in the baseline conditions in 2028. To establish future baseline conditions without the proposed roadway widening and associated improvements, the 2022 baseline lane geometry was used for the No-Build analysis at the study area intersections and roadway segments.

Intersection LOS Analysis

Intersection LOS analysis was conducted to evaluate project opening year (2028) No-Build Alternative conditions during the weekday AM and PM peak hours. Table 2-18 summarizes the opening year (2028) No-Build Alternative LOS at the study area intersections. As shown in Table 2-18, intersection 6 in the PM peak hour and intersection 7 in the AM and PM peak hour are currently operating at LOS E or worse.

Table 2-18: Opening Year (2028) No-Build Alternative Intersection LOS

Intersection		Traffic Control	AM Peak Hour		PM Peak Hour	
			Delay[1]	LOS	Delay[1]	LOS
1	The Old Road & Turnberry Lane	TWSC	11.4	B	13.2	B
2	The Old Road & Henry Mayo Drive	Signal	4.1	A	5.0	A
3	The Old Road & Gateway Drive	Signal	14.6	B	14.0	B
4	The Old Road & I-5 Southbound Ramps	Signal	12.2	B	18.6	B
5	The Old Road & Rye Canyon Road	Signal	28.1	C	37.7	D
6	Ave Stanford & Rye Canyon Road	Signal	50.6	D	**71.7**	**E**
7	The Old Road & Sky View Lane	TWSC	**270.6**	**F**	**>300**	**F**
8	The Old Road & Magic Mountain Parkway	Signal	15.7	B	17.4	B

Notes:
[1] Average control delay, in seconds per vehicle
[2] Intersections were analyzed using HCM 6th methodologies, except intersection 3 was analyzed using HCM 2010 Edition Methodology because HCM 6th does not apply.
BOLD indicates unsatisfactory LOS; the worst approach delays are reported for TWSC intersections.

Ramp Queuing Analysis

Table 2-19 summarizes the ramp queue length analyses conducted at the study intersection at The Old Road and I-5 southbound ramps during AM and PM peak hours to determine the ramp queues at the study intersection. The westbound left-turn storage lane is adequate for the 95th percentile queue length.

Table 2-19: Opening Year (2028) No-Build Alternative Ramp Queuing Analysis

Intersection	Ramp Direction	Queue Length (feet)		Storage (feet)
		AM Peak	PM Peak	
The Old Road & I-5 Southbound Ramps	Westbound Left	77	40	400

Note: 95th percentile queue is reported from the intersection analysis using Synchro 11.

Roadway Capacity Analysis

Roadway segment capacity analysis was conducted to evaluate the opening year (2028) No-Build Alternative conditions during typical weekday conditions. The number of lanes provided for the opening year (2028) No-Build Alternative scenario would remain the same as existing conditions. With the capacity of four lanes, the roadway volume/capacity (V/C) ratios were calculated for the study roadway segments. Future year volumes are projected based on the growth rate from the SCAG model and the 2018 daily traffic counts. As shown in Table 2-20, the capacity of The Old Road between Rye Canyon Road and Skyview Lane would not be adequate to handle the projected (year 2028) travel demand.

Table 2-20: Opening Year (2028) No-Build Alternative Roadway Capacity

Location	Lanes	Capacity	Weekday Volume	Volume/ Capacity	LOS
The Old Road between SR-126 and Henry Mayo Drive	4	36,000	12,851	0.36	A
The Old Road between Gateway Drive and I-5 Southbound Ramps	4	36,000	17,535	0.49	A
The Old Road between I-5 Southbound Ramps and Rye Canyon Road	5	45,000	33,148	0.74	C
The Old Road between Rye Canyon Road and Skyview Lane	4	36,000	34,108	**0.95**	**E**

Notes:
Capacity is based on the City of Santa Clarita General Plan/Los Angeles County Area Plan Circulation Element.
BOLD indicates unsatisfactory LOS

Design Year (2048)

Under the future No-Build Alternative Conditions, there would be no changes to the lane geometry of the study area intersections. To establish future baseline conditions without the proposed roadway widening and associated improvements, the baseline lane geometry of the I-5 at Rye Ramp intersection improvements were assumed to have been completed and was used for the No-Build Alternative analysis at the study area intersections and roadway segments.

Intersection LOS Analysis

Intersection LOS analysis was conducted to evaluate the design year (2048) No-Build Alternative conditions during the weekday AM and PM peak hours. Table 2-21 summarizes the design year (2048) No-Build Alternative LOS at the study area intersections. As shown in the table, intersection 6 and 7 would operate at LOS F in both AM and PM peak hours, and intersection 5 would operate at LOS F in PM peak hour using HCM 6th edition methodology.

Table 2-21: Design Year (2048) No-Build Alternative Intersection LOS

Intersection		Traffic Control	AM Peak Hour		PM Peak Hour	
			Delay[1]	LOS	Delay[1]	LOS
1	The Old Road & Turnberry Lane	TWSC	13.5	B	17.5	C
2	The Old Road & Henry Mayo Drive	Signal	4.5	A	5.8	A
3	The Old Road & Gateway Drive	Signal	14.4	B	13.6	B
4	The Old Road & I-5 Southbound Ramps	Signal	15.1	B	40.9	D
5	The Old Road & Rye Canyon Road	Signal	54.5	D	**100.3**	**F**
6	Ave Stanford & Rye Canyon Road	Signal	**115.1**	**F**	**152.7**	**F**
7	The Old Road & Sky View Lane	TWSC	**>300**	**F**	**>300**	**F**
8	The Old Road & Magic Mountain Parkway	Signal	16.9	B	19.6	B

Notes:
[1] Average control delay, in seconds per vehicle
[2] Intersections were analyzed using HCM 6th methodologies, except intersection 3 was analyzed using HCM 2010 Edition Methodology because HCM 6th does not apply.
BOLD indicates unsatisfactory LOS; the worst approach delays are reported for TWSC intersections.

Ramp Queuing Analysis

Table 2-22 summarizes the ramp queue length analyses conducted at the study intersection at The Old Road and I-5 southbound ramps during AM and PM peak hours to determine the ramp queues at the study intersection. The westbound left-turn storage lane is adequate for the 95th percentile queue length.

Table 2-22: Design Year (2048) No-Build Alternative Ramp Queuing Analysis

Intersection	Ramp Direction	Queue Length (feet)		Storage (feet)
		AM Peak	PM Peak	
The Old Road & I-5 Southbound Ramps	Westbound Left	93	69	400

Note: 95th percentile queue is reported from the intersection analysis using Synchro 11.

Roadway Capacity Analysis

Roadway segment capacity analysis was conducted to evaluate the design year (2048) No-Build Alternative conditions during typical weekday conditions. The number of lanes provided for the design year (2048) No-Build Alternative scenario would remain the same as existing conditions. With the capacity of four lanes, the roadway V/C ratios were calculated for the study roadway segments. The design year traffic volumes typically rely on travel demand models that often implicitly assume steady traffic growth. Design year volumes are projected based on the

growth rate from the SCAG model and the 2018 daily traffic counts. As shown in Table 2-23, the capacity of The Old Road between the I-5 southbound ramps and Skyview Lane would not be adequate to handle the projected (year 2048) travel demand.

Table 2-23: Design Year (2048) No-Build Alternative Roadway Capacity

Location	Lanes	Capacity	Weekday Volume	Volume/ Capacity	LOS
The Old Road between SR-126 and Henry Mayo Drive	4	36,000	17,152	0.48	A
The Old Road between Gateway Drive and I-5 Southbound Ramps	4	36,000	23,404	0.65	B
The Old Road between I-5 Southbound Ramps and Rye Canyon Road	5	45,000	44,243	0.98	**E**
The Old Road between Rye Canyon Road and Skyview Lane	4	36,000	45,525	1.26	**F**

Notes:
Capacity is based on the City of Santa Clarita General Plan/Los Angeles County Area Plan Circulation Element.
BOLD indicates unsatisfactory LOS

Vehicle Miles Traveled

The VMT analysis consists of an initial screening of project type and determines whether the project is likely to induce travel. This methodology is consistent with the guidance in Caltrans' Transportation Analysis under CEQA (TAC).

Los Angeles County has also adopted VMT thresholds in their Transportation Impact Analysis Guidelines (LACPW 2020). The guidelines provide screening criteria, which can be used to quickly identify whether a project should be expected to cause a less-than-significant impact related to VMT. Per the County's guidelines, a transportation project has a potentially significant VMT impact if it will increase the project area VMT.

The SCAG RTP/SCS Travel Demand Forecasting Model (SCAG model) was used to calculate direct changes in VMT due to this project. The SCAG model network is modified to reflect the vehicle capacity-enhancements that would result from the proposed project, and the model outputs are used to calculate the change in VMT for No-Build and Build conditions.

The change between the No-Build Alternative and Build Alternative condition is network changes. In the No-Build Alternative condition model network, within the proposed project limits, The Old Road has four lanes, Rye Canyon Road has four lanes, and Sky View Lane has four lanes. In the Build Alternative condition networks within the proposed project limits, The Old Road has been increased to six lanes, Rye Canyon Road has been changed to six lanes, and Sky View Lane has six lanes. Changes in VMT were computed from the SCAG model outputs.

For VMT changes, the No-Build Alternative condition and Build Alternative condition results were analyzed for the study area and regional area. Table 2-24 summarizes VMT for the regional area for the No-Build and Build conditions in the open year (2028) and design year (2045). VMT percentage changes between No-Build Alternative condition and Build Alternative condition are minor (less than plus or minus [±] 1%). VMT decreases by 119,921 vehicle miles traveled in the open year and decreases by 1,036,971 vehicle miles traveled in the design year based on the SCAG model. Based on these results, the No-Build Alternative has a less-than-significant project level and cumulative level VMT impact for the regional area.

Table 2-24: SCAG VMT Changes for Regional Area

Area	Open Year				Design Year			
	No-Build VMT (vehicle miles)	Build VMT (vehicle miles)	VMT Change (vehicle miles)	VMT Change (%)	No-Build (vehicle miles)	Build (vehicle miles)	VMT Change (vehicle miles)	VMT Change (%)
Regional Area	217,849,258	217,729,337	-119,921	-0.06%	225,893,139	224,856,168	-1,036,971	-0.46%

Source: AECOM 2023c

2.2.10.3.2 Alternative 2: Build Alternative

Level of Service

Operation

This section analyzes the effects of the proposed geometric improvements to the study locations with the implementation of the Build Alternative. The Build Alternative would widen The Old Road from Magic Mountain Parkway north to Henry Mayo Drive near the SR-126/I-5 interchange and replace two bridges along The Old Road (one over Santa Clara River and another over the UPRR tracks). The Build Alternative would also include an extension of the existing Multi-Use Trail, which would include bike lanes, a paved pedestrian path, and an equestrian trail. The widening of Rye Canyon is assumed to be completed by 2026 as part of the Build Alternative; therefore, the Build conditions reflect widenings of The Old Road and Rye Canyon Road.

Opening Year (2028)

Intersection LOS Analysis

Intersection LOS analysis was conducted with opening year (2028) conditions during weekday AM and PM peak hours. Table 2-25 summarizes the opening year (2028) LOS using HCM methodology at the study area intersections with the implementation of the Build Alternative. With the completion and opening of the Build Alternative, all study intersections are anticipated to operate at satisfactory LOS (LOS D or better), except intersection 6 operating at LOS E in the PM peak hour. Overall, the majority the study intersections exhibited improvements in delay and LOS when compared to the No-Build Alternative conditions.

Table 2-25: Project Opening Year (2028) Build Alternative Intersection LOS

Intersections		Traffic Control	AM Peak Hour		PM Peak Hour	
			Delay[1]	LOS	Delay[1]	LOS
1	The Old Road & Turnberry Lane	TWSC	11.4	B	13.2	B
2	The Old Road & Henry Mayo Drive	Signal	7.7	A	8.3	A
3	The Old Road & Gateway Drive	Signal	12.7	B	14.1	B
4	The Old Road & I-5 Southbound Ramps	Signal	11.7	B	13.6	B
5	The Old Road & Rye Canyon Road	Signal	22.0	C	23.5	C
6	Ave Stanford & Rye Canyon Road	Signal	43.4	D	**63.5**	**E**
7	The Old Road & Sky View Lane	Signal	9.2	A	14.7	B
8	The Old Road & Magic Mountain Parkway	Signal	20.8	C	22.4	C

Notes:
[1] Average control delay, in seconds per vehicle
[2] Intersections were analyzed using HCM 6th methodologies, except intersection 3 was analyzed using HCM 2010 Edition Methodology because HCM 6th does not apply.
BOLD indicates unsatisfactory LOS; the worst approach delays are reported for TWSC intersections.

Ramp Queuing Analysis

Table 2-26 summarizes the ramp queue length analyses conducted at the study intersection at The Old Road and I-5 southbound ramps during AM and PM peak hours to determine the ramp queues at the study intersection. The westbound left-turn storage lane is adequate for the 95th percentile queue length.

Table 2-26: Project Opening Year (2028) Ramp Queuing Analysis

Intersection	Ramp Direction	Queue Length (feet)		Storage (feet)
		AM Peak	PM Peak	
The Old Road & I-5 Southbound Ramps	Westbound Left	75	48	400

Note: 95th percentile queue is reported from the intersection analysis using Synchro 11.

Roadway Capacity Analysis

Roadway segment capacity analysis was conducted to evaluate the project opening year (2028) conditions during typical weekday conditions. With the implementation of the proposed widening and associated improvements (capacity of six lanes) for the opening year (2028) scenario, the roadway V/C ratios were calculated for the study roadway segments. Future year volumes are projected based on the growth rate from the SCAG model and the 2018 daily traffic counts. As shown in Table 2-27, the implementation of the proposed project would provide the needed capacity to The Old Road to accommodate the projected opening year (2028) travel demand.

Table 2-27: Opening Year (2028) Build Alternative Roadway Capacity

Location	Lanes	Capacity	Weekday Volume	Volume/ Capacity	LOS
The Old Road between SR-126 and Henry Mayo Drive	6	54,000	12,876	0.24	A
The Old Road between Gateway Drive and I-5 Southbound Ramps	6	54,000	17,570	0.33	A
The Old Road between I-5 Southbound Ramps and Rye Canyon Road	7	63,000	33,214	0.53	A
The Old Road between Rye Canyon Road and Skyview Lane	6	54,000	34,177	0.63	B

Note: Capacity is based on the City of Santa Clarita General Plan/Los Angeles County Area Plan Circulation Element.

Design Year (2048)

This section analyzes the effects of the proposed geometric improvements to the study locations with the implementation of the Build Alternative. The Build Alternative would widen The Old Road from Magic Mountain Parkway north to Henry Mayo Drive near the SR-126/I-5 interchange and replace two bridges along The Old Road (one over Santa Clara River and another over the UPRR tracks). The Build Alternative would also include an extension of the existing Multi-Use Trail, which would include bike lanes, a paved pedestrian path, and an equestrian trail.

Intersection LOS Analysis

Intersection LOS analysis was conducted to evaluate design year (2048) Build Alternative conditions during weekday AM and PM peak hours. Table 2-28 summarizes the design year (2048) LOS using HCM methodology at the study area intersections with the implementation of the Build Alternative. With the completion of the Build Alternative, all study intersections are anticipated to operate at satisfactory LOS (LOS D or better) except intersection 6 would operate at LOS E in the PM peak hour. Intersection 6 operates at LOS F in the design year No-Build Alternative conditions; however, after optimizing the traffic signal timing plan, intersection 6 would operate at LOS E in the design year Build Alternative conditions. Overall, most of the study intersections exhibited improvements in delay and LOS when compared to No-Build Alternative conditions. Overall, intersection 6 during PM peak hour has been improved by the Build Alternative.

Ramp Queuing Analysis

Table 2-29 summarizes the ramp queue length analyses conducted at the study intersection at The Old Road and I-5 southbound ramps during AM and PM peak hours to determine the ramp queues at the study intersection. The westbound left-turn storage lane is adequate for the 95th percentile queue length.

Table 2-28: Design Year (2048) Build Alternative Intersection LOS

Intersection		Traffic Control	AM Peak Hour		PM Peak Hour	
			Delay[1]	LOS	Delay[1]	LOS
1	The Old Road & Turnberry Lane	TWSC	13.5	B	17.6	B
2	The Old Road & Henry Mayo Drive	Signal	8.3	A	9.7	A
3	The Old Road & Gateway Drive	Signal	12.6	B	13.5	B
4	The Old Road & I-5 Southbound Ramps	Signal	14.2	B	29.2	C
5	The Old Road & Rye Canyon Road	Signal	28.3	C	35.5	D
6	Ave Stanford & Rye Canyon Road	Signal	47.2	D	**67.9**	**E**
7	The Old Road & Sky View Lane	Signal	10.1	B	21.3	C
8	The Old Road & Magic Mountain Parkway	Signal	21.8	C	24.3	C

Notes:
[1] Average control delay, in seconds per vehicle
[2] Intersections were analyzed using HCM 6th methodologies, except intersection 3 was analyzed using HCM 2010 Edition Methodology because HCM 6th does not apply.
BOLD indicates unsatisfactory LOS; the worst approach delays are reported for TWSC intersections.

Table 2-29: Design Year (2048) Build Alternative Ramp Queuing Analysis

Intersection	Ramp Direction	Queue Length (feet)		Storage Length (feet)
		AM Peak	PM Peak	
The Old Road & I-5 Southbound Ramps	Westbound Left	90	60	400

Note: 95th percentile queue is reported from the intersection analysis using Synchro 11.

Roadway Capacity Analysis

Roadway segment capacity analysis was conducted to evaluate the design year (2048) Build Alternative conditions during typical weekday conditions. With the implementation of the proposed widening and associated improvements (capacity of six lanes) for the design year (2048) Build Alternative scenario, the roadway V/C ratios were calculated for the study roadway segments. Future year volumes are projected based on the growth rate from the SCAG model and the 2018 daily traffic counts. As shown in Table 2-30, the implementation of the Build Alternative would provide the needed capacity to The Old Road to accommodate the projected design year (2048) travel demand.

Table 2-30: Design Year (2048) Build Alternative Project Roadway Capacity

Location	Lanes	Capacity	Weekday Volume	Volume/ Capacity	LOS
The Old Road between SR-126 and Henry Mayo Drive	6	54,000	17,216	0.32	A
The Old Road between Gateway Drive and I-5 Southbound Ramps	6	54,000	23,490	0.44	A
The Old Road between I-5 Southbound Ramps and Rye Canyon Road	7	63,000	44,406	0.70	B
The Old Road between Rye Canyon Road and Skyview Lane	6	54,000	45,694	0.85	D

Note: Capacity is based on the City of Santa Clarita General Plan/Los Angeles County Area Plan Circulation Element.

Queue Length Analysis

Consistent with the previous study, intersection queue length analyses were conducted at the study intersection for design year (2048) Build Alternative conditions during AM and PM peak hours to determine the recommended turn pocket lengths at the study intersections. Table 2-31 summarizes the turn pocket recommendations for The Old Road (northbound and southbound approaches) at the study intersections and for Sky View Lane (eastbound approach) at The Old Road intersection.

Table 2-31: Design Year (2048) Storage Length Analysis

Intersection	Approach Direction	Lane	Queue Length (feet)		Storage Length (feet)
			AM Peak	PM Peak	
The Old Road & Henry Mayo Drive	Northbound	Left	112	105	200
The Old Road & Gateway Drive	Northbound	Right	16	15	100
	Southbound	Left	16	24	100
The Old Road & I-5 Southbound Ramps	Northbound	Right	30	153	250
	Southbound	Left	43	#118	300
The Old Road & Rye Canyon Road	Northbound	Right	#648	#808	600
	Southbound	Left	307	471	500
Ave Stanford & Rye Canyon Road	Northbound	Left	71	#468	400
	Southbound	Left	44	#248	250
	Eastbound	Left	#148	30	150
	Westbound	Left	13	30	100
The Old Road & Sky View Lane	Northbound	Left	170	49	200
	Southbound	Left	6	19	100
	Southbound	Right	31	0	100
	Eastbound	Left	14	78	100

Notes:
- 95th percentile queue is reported from the intersection analysis using Synchro 11.
- Recommended storage is based on intersection traffic operations.
- # 95th percentile volume exceeds capacity; queue may be longer.

Based on the results of the LOS analysis, the proposed roadway widening and associated improvements along The Old Road and Sky View Lane would improve intersection traffic operations within the study area. In addition, the roadway capacity analysis indicates that the traffic demand on The Old Road justifies a six-lane facility in order to operate more efficiently.

Because the Build Alternative improves the existing intersection LOS and roadway segment capacity, implementation of the Build Alternative would not result in negative traffic impacts. However, even though the following recommendations would not be feasible for the Build Alternative, these enhancements would further improve the intersection LOS at the Avenue Stanford and Rye Canyon Road intersection to LOS D or better and reduce queue lengths at The Old Road and Rye Canyon Road intersection:

- Avenue Stanford and Rye Canyon Road intersection - provide a right-turn lane pocket for the northbound approach and the westbound approach in the City of Santa Clarita jurisdiction.

- The Old Road and Rye Canyon Road intersection – provide double left-turn lane pockets for the southbound approach and double right-turn lane pockets for the northbound approach.

Vehicle Miles Traveled

As discussed previously, the VMT analysis consists of an initial screening of project type and determines whether the proposed project is likely to induce travel. This methodology is consistent with the guidance in Caltrans TAC under CEQA.

The County of Los Angeles has also adopted VMT thresholds in their Transportation Impact Analysis Guidelines (July 2020). The guidelines provide screening criteria, which can be used to quickly identify whether a project should be expected to cause a less-than-significant impact related to VMT. Per the County's guidelines, a transportation project has a potentially significant VMT impact if it will increase the project area VMT.

Construction Impacts

Construction of the Build Alternative is anticipated to begin in Fall 2024 and take approximately 4.5 years to complete, concluding in Winter 2028. Construction activities would occur for 12 hours per day, 7 days per week.

VMT generated due to construction of the Build Alternative would generally be minor and limited to construction equipment and personnel and material haul trips. Most workers would primarily be employed from the local labor pool and, therefore, would simply be relocated trips from other construction sites and would not be traveling long distances. Local workers would be using the regional transportation network regardless of project approval; therefore, VMT from local workers would remain approximately the same as existing conditions. Construction traffic from implementation of the proposed modifications would not result in substantial levels of VMT. These transitory and temporary trips would occur only during construction activities; thus, no long-term VMT would be generated by construction of the proposed project in the proposed project area or wider region.

Periodic lane closure may be required during construction, but one lane in each direction would always remain open for the duration of construction. No detours would be required. Transportation demand management plans including, but not limited to, reducing single-occupancy vehicle trips of workers, decreasing the construction trip distances by optimizing logistics, and providing flexible work schedules will be considered during the construction phases. Therefore, construction impacts would be less than significant.

Operational Impacts

The No-Build Alternative condition and Build Alternative condition results were analyzed for the study area and regional area. VMT percentage changes between the No-Build Alternative condition and Build Alternative condition are minor (less than ±1%). VMT decreases by 119,921 vehicle miles traveled in the open year and decreases by 1,036,971 vehicle miles traveled in the design year based on the SCAG model.

Transportation studies consistently show that adding roadway capacity increases network-wide VMT by a nearly equivalent proportion within a few years, reducing or negating any initial congestion relief. That increase in VMT is called "induced travel." In order to calculate induced travel VMT, the National Center for Sustainable Transportation Induced Travel Calculator

(NCST Calculator) is used. The induced VMT results derived from the NCST Calculator are shown in Table 2-32, which shows the induced VMT for the Build Alternative. The total lane miles added by the Build Alternative is 4.12. The induced VMT is 9.7 million additional VMT per year in the regional area (Los Angeles County), which results in a total 26,575 VMT per day.

Table 2-32: Induced VMT for Regional Area

Area	Existing Total Regional VMT per Year (billion vehicle miles)	Existing Total Facility Lane Miles of Los Angeles County (vehicle miles)	Lane Miles Added (vehicle miles)	Elasticity Factor	Induced Daily VMT (vehicle miles)
Regional Area	30.1 billion	9,592	4.12	0.75	26,575

Source: AECOM 2023c

Table 2-33 represents the VMT changes in the regional area for the open year and design year. The total regional VMT decreases by 93,346 VMT for the open year and decreases by 1,010,396 VMT for the design year. Therefore, a reduction in total VMT occurs under both scenarios.

Table 2-33: VMT Changes for the Regional Area

Area	Open Year			Design Year		
	Induced VMT (vehicle miles)	VMT Change (vehicle miles)	Total VMT Change (vehicle miles)	Induced VMT (vehicle miles)	VMT Change (vehicle miles)	Total VMT Change (vehicle miles)
Regional Area	26,575	-119,921	-93,346	26,575	-1,036,971	-1,010,396

Source: AECOM 2023c

The Build Alternative would also incorporate the following improvements that have the potential to decrease the VMT generated by the Build Alternative. These improvements include:

- A Class IV bikeway, bike share programs, bike parking, and a Multi-Use Trail to encourage non-automobile trips and improve safety for cyclists;
- Add a Multi-Use Trail, sidewalks, and other improved pedestrian facilities to encourage non-automobile trips and create a complete sidewalk network.

The VMT Analysis Memorandum (AECOM, 2023c) also provides a list of regional level improvements that are a part of the County's ongoing efforts to implement VMT-reducing improvements. Based on the results, the Build Alternative has a less-than-significant project level and cumulative level VMT impact for the regional area. Therefore, impacts during operation of the Build Alternative would be less than significant.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

The No-Build Alternative would not alter the existing bicycle and pedestrian facilities in the proposed project area. For the Build Alternative, bicycle lanes, raised medians, sidewalks, and barriers to separate pedestrians from the travel way would also be constructed.

Construction of the Build Alternative is not anticipated to adversely affect any existing bicycle facilities currently in the proposed project area. Existing pedestrian facilities would be temporarily closed during construction. Pedestrians would be allowed to pass through the

project area, however, and the details of pedestrian facility closures will be described in the Transportation Management Plan (TMP), which would be developed at a later phase of the project design.

As discussed in Chapter 1 above, the proposed project would include an extension of the Multi-Use Trail, including an approximately 0.58-mile extension of the trail on the southbound side of The Old Road from where the trail travels under The Old Road and I-5 just southeast of Rye Canyon Road to just northwest of the I-5 on- and off-ramps. The area where the trail would be extended is currently developed with an access road to add additional pedestrian facilities.

The proposed project would also include a Class IV bikeway, which will include bicycle lanes on both sides of The Old Road between Henry Mayo Drive and Magic Mountain Parkway.

2.2.10.4 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

No AMMs are required to improve LOS, VMT, or bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

2.2.11 Visual/Aesthetics

2.2.11.1 Regulatory Setting

NEPA of 1969, as amended, establishes that the federal government use all practicable means to ensure all Americans safe, healthful, productive, and *aesthetically* (emphasis added) and culturally pleasing surroundings (42 USC 4331[b][2]). To further emphasize this point, the FHWA, in its implementation of NEPA (23 USC 109[h]), directs that final decisions on projects are to be made in the best overall public interest taking into account adverse environmental impacts, including among others, the destruction or disruption of aesthetic values.

CEQA establishes that it is the policy of the State to take all action necessary to provide the people of the state "with…enjoyment of *aesthetic*, natural, scenic and historic environmental qualities" (California PRC Section 21001[b]).

California Streets and Highways Code Section 92.3 directs Caltrans to use drought-resistant landscaping and recycled water when feasible, and incorporate native wildflowers and native and climate-appropriate vegetation into the planting design when appropriate.

2.2.11.2 Affected Environment

The following discussion is based on the Minor Visual Impact Assessment (AECOM 2023d) that was completed for the proposed project.

Visual Setting

The proposed project area is characterized by commercial buildings, the Los Angeles County Sanitation District No. 32 Treatment Plant, and rolling terrain. The primary land use within the proposed project corridor is urban commercial, with additional residential areas located to the northwest and southwest of the proposed project area.

Santa Clara River flows approximately 100 miles from its headwaters near Acton, California to the Pacific Ocean, through the Santa Susana Mountains and the Transverse Ranges. The portion of the Santa Clara River that flows through the proposed project area is not a California

or federally designated Wild and Scenic river (Caltrans 2023). In addition, no unique or scenic views or vistas exist in the proposed project area.

The proposed project area is not designated as, or considered eligible to be considered as, a scenic resource by the County of Los Angeles or the State of California (Caltrans 2018). However, the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan, prepared by the County of Los Angeles, calls for carefully managed urban development within the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan area to reduce potential disruption of views of prominent ridgelines and hillsides along roadways within the Santa Clarita Valley (Caltrans 2012a). The specific policies and objectives identified in the Conservation and Open Space Element of the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan are the following:

- Objective CO-6.1: Protect the scenic character of local topographic features;
- Policy CO-6.1.2: Preserve significant ridgelines as a scenic backdrop throughout the community by maintaining natural grades and vegetation;
- Objective CO-6.1: Protect the scenic character of local topographic features;
- Objective CO-6.2: Protect the scenic characters of view corridors;
- Policy CO-6.2.1: Where feasible, encourage development proposals to have varied building heights to maintain view corridor sight lines;
- Objective CO-6.5: Maintain the scenic character of designated routes, gateways, and vista points along roadways;
- Policy CO-6.5.2: Establish scenic routes in appropriate locations as determined by the reviewing agency, and adopt guidelines for these routes to maintain their scenic character;
- Objective CO-6.6: Limit adverse impacts by humans on the scenic environment;
- Policy CO-6.6.1: Enhance views of the night sky by reducing light pollution through use of light screens, downward directed lights, minimized reflective paving surfaces and reduced lighting levels, as deemed appropriate by the reviewing authority; and
- Policy CO-6.6.5: Encourage undergrounding of all new utility lines, and promote undergrounding of existing lines where feasible and practicable.

Visual Resources

Visual resources of the proposed project corridor are defined and identified by assessing visual character and visual quality. Visual character is a description of the proposed project corridor using attributes such as form, line, color, texture, and is used to describe, not evaluate. A change in visual character can be evaluated when it is compared with the viewer response to that change. Changes in visual character can identify how visually compatible a project would be with the existing conditions by using visual character attributes as an indicator. For the proposed project, the following attributes were considered:

- Dominance: position, size, or contrast;
- Scale: apparent size as it relates to the surroundings;

- Diversity: a variety of visual patterns; and
- Continuity: uninterrupted flow of form, line, color, or textual pattern.

Visual quality is evaluated by identifying the vividness, intactness, and unity present in the project corridor. Public attitudes validate the assessed level of quality and predict how changes to the project corridor can affect these attitudes. This process helps identify specific methods for addressing each visual impact that may occur as a result of the project. The three criteria for evaluating visual quality are defined below:

Vividness is the extent to which the landscape is memorable and is associated with distinctive, contrasting, and diverse visual elements.

Intactness is the integrity of visual features in the landscape and the extent to which the existing landscape is free from non-typical visual intrusions.

Unity is the extent to which all visual elements combine to form a coherent, harmonious visual pattern.

Viewers and Viewer Response

There are two types of viewer groups that would be associated with the proposed project, roadway neighbors and roadway users.

Roadway Neighbors (Views towards the road)

Roadway neighbors are people who have views towards the road. Area residents would be considered highly sensitive to visual changes because they are exposed to existing views for prolonged periods of time and would easily notice changes. There are two groups of residents located near the proposed project area. The first group is located approximately 1 mile northwest of the northern limits of the proposed project area near Henry Mayo Drive. A second group of residents is located approximately one-third mile southwest of the southern portion of the proposed project area, south of Magic Mountain Parkway. Neither group of residents has direct views of the proposed project site.

The commercial and industrial businesses located along the proposed project site contain viewers that would be considered moderately-low sensitivity, because these viewers would not be exposed to the existing views for prolonged periods of time and would not be sensitive to changes in the views after construction has been completed. However, these viewers would be located in a closer proximity to the proposed project site than area residents. The potential for response from these viewers would be moderately-low.

Roadway Users (Views from the road)

Roadway users are people who have views from the road. They can be subdivided into different viewer groups by two different methods: by mode of travel or by reason for travel. For example, subdividing roadway users by mode of travel may yield pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, car drivers and passengers, and truck drivers. Dividing roadway users or viewer groups by reason for travel creates categories such as tourists, commuters, and haulers. It is also possible to use both mode and reason for travel simultaneously, creating a category such as bicycling tourists, for example. There are two types of roadway users that have been considered in the proposed project.

Motorists traveling through the proposed project area along The Old Road, Rye Canyon Road, and Sky View Lane would have a moderately-low sensitivity to visual changes, because the exposure of these viewers to existing views is fleeting in nature, and primarily associated with travel to and from fixed points within and outside of the proposed project area. These viewers would be more likely to notice more pronounced changes to a viewshed, including construction, but would not necessarily notice compatible uses. Therefore, there would be a moderately-low potential for responses from these viewers.

Outdoor enthusiasts comprise a small number of roadway users within the proposed project area; however, the proposed project would include continuous opportunities to travel through the proposed project area on foot or by non-motorized forms of transportation. These viewers would normally be considered highly sensitive to visual change, but the current lack of opportunities to travel through the proposed project area by these forms of transportation means that the there is a low potential for responses from these viewers in the proposed project's pre-construction condition.

2.2.11.3 Environmental Consequences

2.2.11.3.1 Alternative 1: No-Build Alternative

Under the No-Build Alternative, no improvements would be made within the proposed project site. The visual character and quality of the site would remain as existing. This alternative includes no improvements to The Old Road, Rye Canyon Road, Sky View Lane, bridge replacements, or trail construction. There would be no changes to visual resources or views. Therefore, the No-Build Alternative would have no impacts to visual character or quality.

2.2.11.3.2 Alternative 2: Build Alternative

Visual impacts are determined by assessing changes to the visual resources and predicting viewer response to those changes.

Construction Impacts

There would be short-term and temporary impacts to visual resources during the construction of the proposed project. Construction activities including removing existing vegetation, construction equipment, staging areas, and materials; and the construction site itself would have adverse effects on the visual environment for the viewer groups discussed above. Construction is anticipated to occur during the day. Any nighttime activities would be limited, but it would be necessary to provide construction lighting at night that could potentially add new sources of light and glare for residents and motorists. AMM VIS-1 would ensure that directional lighting would be aimed downward at the construction during proposed project construction, where appropriate within the proposed project construction area to ensure that the proposed project would comply with the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan. The overall visual impact from the proposed project would be moderate with implementation of AMM VIS-1.

Operational Impacts

With the exception of the raised elevation of the I-5 southbound on-ramp, all elements of the proposed project would be compatible with existing views. As previously discussed, the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan calls for the visual character of projects to contain a balanced approach to growth within existing viewsheds without introducing new dominant elements. The proposed

project would be consistent with existing land uses and would not dominate new views or introduce more diverse landforms to the proposed project area. The structure's aesthetics would reflect the surrounding riparian habitat by utilizing earth-tone colors and textures resembling rocks or other geologic natural features. In addition, the bridge barrier would be a see-through Caltrans Type 85 design. The additional proposed lanes on The Old Road, Rye Canyon Road, and Sky View Lane would not expand the scale of the roadway substantially and would maintain the visual character of the roadway.

Furthermore, the corridor views would maintain their continuity with existing views from The Old Road and associated intersections within the proposed project area by introducing only compatible elements that exist in some form within the existing proposed project area. The proposed project would be fully compatible with the existing visual character of the corridor.

The visual quality of the existing corridor would not be altered by the proposed project because the proposed project would be consistent with the existing vividness, intactness, and unity within the proposed project area after construction has been completed.

Area residents would not be affected by the proposed project because there are no direct views available of the proposed project site from residences, as all potentials views of the proposed project site are blocked and interrupted by rows of trees and vegetation, as well as intervening development. Therefore, there would be a low potential for responses from residential viewers as they would not have direct views of the proposed project.

Commercial and industrial business viewers would be located in a closer proximity to the proposed project site than area residents. The potential for response from these viewers would be moderately-low. These viewers would be more likely to notice more pronounced changes to a viewshed, including construction, but would not necessarily notice compatible uses. Therefore, there would be a moderately-low potential for responses from these viewers.

In addition, new lighting would be installed along The Old Road and the proposed overcrossing structure, which would be finalized during the PS&E Phase. However, it is not anticipated that these elements would be a notable change to the existing lighting in the area, as the proposed project area is urbanized and has a moderate level of existing ambient lighting.

For the reasons stated above, the potential for impacts to visual resources, visual quality, and visual character would not be adverse. In addition, AMM VIS-2 would be implemented to discourage graffiti on the proposed retaining wall on Rye Canyon Road, which would further reduce visual impacts due to the proposed project.

2.2.11.4 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

In accordance with the policies and objectives discussed in the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan, the following measures to avoid or minimize visual impacts will be incorporated into the proposed project:

> **VIS-1**: Directional lighting aimed downward at the construction site will be used during proposed project construction where appropriate within the proposed project construction area.
>
> **VIS-2**: A textured finish on the proposed retaining wall on Rye Canyon Road at I-5 will be included to discourage graffiti.

2.2.12 Cultural Resources

The information in this section is based on the Historic Resources Evaluation Report (HRER) (AECOM 2023e), the Historic Property Survey Report (HPSR) (AECOM 2023f), the Archaeological Survey Report (ASR) (AECOM 2023g), and the Extended Phase I Report (XPI) (AECOM 2023).

2.2.12.1 Regulatory Setting

The term “cultural resources,” as used in this document, refers to the “built environment” (e.g., structures, bridges, railroads, water conveyance systems, etc.), places of traditional or cultural importance, and archaeological sites (both prehistoric and historic), regardless of significance. Under federal and state laws, cultural resources that meet certain criteria of significance are referred to by various terms including “historic properties,” “historic sites,” “historical resources,” and “tribal cultural resources.” Laws and regulations dealing with cultural resources include:

The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, sets forth national policy and procedures for historic properties, defined as districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects included in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Section 106 of the Act requires federal agencies to take into account the effects of their undertakings on historic properties and to allow the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) the opportunity to comment on those undertakings, following regulations issued by the ACHP (36 CFR 800). On January 1, 2014, the First Amended Section 106 Programmatic Agreement (PA) among FHWA, ACHP, California State Historic Preservation Officer, and Caltrans went into effect for Caltrans projects, both state and local, with FHWA involvement. The PA implements the ACHP’s regulations, 36 CFR 800, streamlining the Section 106 process and delegating certain responsibilities to Caltrans. The FHWA’s responsibilities under the PA have been assigned to Caltrans as part of the Surface Transportation Project Delivery Program (23 USC 327).

The Archaeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA) applies when a project may involve archaeological resources located on federal or tribal land. The ARPA requires that a permit be obtained before excavation of an archaeological resource on such land can take place.

CEQA requires the consideration of cultural resources that are historical resources and tribal cultural resources, as well as “unique” archaeological resources. California PRC Section 5024.1 established the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) and outlined the necessary criteria for a cultural resource to be considered eligible for listing in the CRHR and, therefore, a historical resource. Historical resources are defined in PRC Section 5020.1(j). In 2014, Assembly Bill (AB) 52 added the term “tribal cultural resources” to CEQA, and AB 52 is commonly referenced instead of CEQA when discussing the process to identify tribal cultural resources (as well as identifying measures to avoid, preserve, or mitigate effects to them). Defined in PRC Section 21074(a), a tribal cultural resource is a CRHR or local register eligible site, feature, place, cultural landscape, or object which has a cultural value to a California Native American tribe. Tribal cultural resources must also meet the definition of a historical resource. Unique archaeological resources are referenced in PRC Section 21083.2.

2.2.12.2 Affected Environment

The Area of Potential Effects (APE) established for the proposed project encompasses the extent of the proposed project footprint discussed above and all areas of ground disturbance,

referred to as the area of direct impacts (ADI), and extends beyond the ROW to consider the proposed project's visual, atmospheric, and audible effects to properties near the proposed project footprint. This area includes the developed properties adjacent to the areas where the roadway will be widened, new bridges will be added, and new intersections will be added, and where alterations associated with these changes may affect the setting or feeling of adjacent historic properties. Full parcel boundaries were included for the developed properties adjacent to the proposed project footprint, with the exception of properties with substantial building setbacks on large parcels, where the parcels were undeveloped, vacant, or currently used as surface parking lots.

The ADI is limited to those areas that will be directly impacted by the proposed project, including all sliver takes. The vertical extent of the ADI encompasses the maximum depth of excavation, which, exclusive of the bridge locations, may extend up to 15.5 feet beneath the existing ground surface, and the maximum height of construction, which will extend no more than 36.5 feet above the existing ground surface. At the bridge locations, the APE extends substantially deeper; piles would be installed at approximately 150 feet deep within the riverbed and 100 feet deep at the abutments.

While people are known to have inhabited Southern California beginning at least 13,000 years Before Present (B.P.), the first incontestable evidence of human occupation in the Los Angeles area dates to at least 9000 years B.P. and is associated with a period known as the Millingstone Cultural Horizon. Although many aspects of Millingstone culture persisted, by 3500 B.P., a number of socioeconomic changes occurred. These changes are associated with the period known as the Intermediate Horizon, which started around 5,000 B.P.

The Late Prehistoric period, spanning from approximately 1500 years BP to the Spanish mission era, is the period associated with the florescence of contemporary Native American groups. The proposed project is located in the traditional native lands of the Tataviam (known in older ethnographic literature by the Chumash name, Alliklik). The Tataviam occupied the upper reaches of the Santa Clara River drainage east of Piru Creek and the south-facing slopes of the Sawmill and Libre Mountains. In proximity to the proposed project area, the Tataviam village of *tasavayu(ʔu)ŋ* has been noted ethnographically to have been located near the confluence of Castaic Creek and Santa Clara River. The Tataviam occupied settlements ranging in size from hamlets of 10 to 15 people to small villages of up to 200 people. The total Tataviam population at the time of European contact is estimated to have totaled less than 1,000 persons (King and Blackburn 1978).

Following the establishment of the mission system and the coerced participation in new economic and social structures, Native people engaged in active and passive forms of resistance to maintain connections to their families, language, and traditions. By the 20th century, the Tataviam had mostly married into related groups, in particular the closely related Fernandeño and Gabrielino to the south and west, and the Kitanemuk to the east. The descendant communities of the Tataviam, Fernandeño, and their neighbors continue to live throughout the region today.

The history of Los Angeles County includes the following four periods: Early Explorer Period (1542 to 1769), Spanish Mission Period (1769 to 1822), Mexican Ranch Period (1822 to 1846), and Anglo-American Period (1846 to present).

A records search was completed on June 26 and July 18, 2018, at the South Central Coastal Information Center (SCCIC) of the California Historical Resources Information System, at California State University, Fullerton for the ADI and a 0.25-mile search radius. The SCCIC records search data determined four previously recorded cultural resources are within the records search area. Of these four previously recorded cultural resources, three are located within the APE. One additional precontact archaeological resource was initially identified in the records search radius but was confirmed to be 0.70 mile from the APE following further review. Additionally, a review of ethnographic maps indicated that a Tataviam village was located in the proposed project vicinity.

An intensive-level architectural history survey and archaeological survey of the APE was performed on July 10, 2018. On September 23, 2022, and March 29 and June 22, 2023, AECOM conducted supplemental archaeological surveys to inspect expanded areas of the APE. The archaeological surveys consisted of a reconnaissance-level pedestrian survey, which covered 100% of the proposed ground disturbance locations within the APE.

In total, eight resources were identified in the APE:

- Rancho San Francisco Adobe Headquarters Monument (P-19-186567) (Map Reference 1)
- PD-1 concrete culvert (Map Reference 2)
- Oak of the Golden Dream Monument (P-19-186541) (Map Reference 3)
- Valencia Water Reclamation Plant (Map Reference 4)
- The Old Road Bridge over the Santa Clara River (CA53C0327) (P-19-190315) (Map Reference 5)
- The Old Road Bridge over the SPT Co. (CA53C0328) (Map Reference 6), and
- The Route 5/126 Separation Bridge (CA532928) (Map Reference 7).
- Southern Pacific Railroad (SPRR) Santa Barbara Line (Santa Paula Branch) [SBL/SPB] (FJH-03292023-S-01) (Map Reference 8)

Seven of the properties were either previously evaluated or evaluated as part of this project under the NRHP and CRHR criteria for evaluation, and none were found eligible for listing in the NRHP or the CRHR. The three bridges were determined not eligible prior to this study and four resources, P-19-186567, PD-1 concrete culvert, P-19-186541, Valencia Water Reclamation Plant, were evaluated in support of the current project and determined not eligible. One resource, the SPRR SBL/SPB is assumed eligible for the purpose of this project, however, the section of the SPRR SBL/SPB that is within the APE is not eligible as a contributing resource. Additional information is included in the project HRER (AECOM 2023e) and the Assumption of Eligibility for the SPRR SBL/SPB in Appendix D of the HPSR (AECOM 2023f).

Native American consultation efforts for this proposed project included a review of the Sacred Lands File by the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC), which produced negative results in a letter dated July 25, 2018. The NAHC provided a list of 16 Native American representatives who may have interest in or knowledge of the proposed project area. These individuals were contacted by letter in August 2018. An attempt was made to contact those who

had not responded to the letter by phone. As a result of these initial contact efforts, seven responses were received. Four stated that the APE lies outside of their tribal territory or deferred to other Native American groups. Three said that the proposed project APE was sensitive for cultural resources and recommended monitoring.

In July 2020 an invitation to consult under AB52 was mailed to two tribes. The Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians (FTBMI) responded requesting formal consultation under CEAQ. In December 2021 letters were sent to the initial tribal representatives identified by the NAHC in 2018 to provide them with an update on the status of the project in support of AB52 consultation efforts. As a result of these re-notification letters, Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians requested formal consultation, two representatives (including one from Santa Ynez) requested Native American monitoring and one tribe indicated that the project is outside of the tribe's ancestral territory, and they would not request consulting party status.

Between April 18 and May 3, 2023, representatives identified by the NAHC were provided with an update on the status of the project and an opportunity to review the Extended Phase I proposal for the project. As a result, one tribe concluded consultation, one tribe deferred consultation to a local tribe, one tribe requested the opportunity to consult on placement of environmentally sensitive areas, should they be needed, and two tribes indicated they were interested in providing Native American monitoring for future work.

Archival research, tribal consultation, and the field survey results indicate that the project area has a moderate to high sensitivity for both prehistoric and historic archaeological resources. The

project site is located in the general vicinity of an ethnohistoric village and near to the natural resources surrounding the confluence of Castaic Creek and Santa Clara River. In addition, a number of archaeological sites are located within 1 mile of the APE, including a site with human remains about 0.70 mile to the east and the abandoned berm and bridge segment of the SPRR SBL/SPB (FJH-03292023) within the APE. The sedimentary deposits north of the Santa Clara River are younger Holocene age quaternary alluvium that have potential to overlay buried archaeological materials. Though sediments at the bridge over Santa Clara River are largely gravels, indicating a high-energy environment less likely to preserve archaeological deposits.

As a result of the archival research and pedestrian survey, an Extended Phase I assessment was conducted to determine the presence or absence of archaeological resources within the APE. Fieldwork was completed in August and September 2023. A total of 16 trenches and 54 shovel test pits (STPs) were excavated, in accordance with the Extended Phase I plan that was developed for the project. Four STPs were positive for historic-age archaeological material in proximity to the abandoned SPRR SBL/SPB alignment. All other STP and trench test locations were determined to be negative for archaeological resources, and no previously unrecorded archaeological resources were identified. The potential to encounter intact archaeological resources below ground surface appears to be low, based on the results of the Extended Phase I study. No historic Section 4(f) resources were identified in the study area.

2.2.12.3 Environmental Consequences

2.2.12.3.1 Alternative 1: No-Build Alternative

Under the No-Build Alternative, no improvements would be made within the proposed project site, including no improvements to The Old Road, Rye Canyon Road, Sky View Lane, bridge replacements, or trail construction. As such, there would be no impacts to any historical or archaeological resources.

2.2.12.3.2 Alternative 2: Build Alternative

The results of the HRER (AECOM 2023e) and the HPSR (AECOM 2023f) indicate that eight built environment resources were identified within the APE. Of these eight resources, three were previously determined ineligible for the NRHP (The Old Road over Santa Clara River Bridge (P-19-190315); The Old Road Bridge over the SPT Co. (CA53C0328); and the Route 5/126 Separation Bridge (CA532928), and four resources, P-19-186567, PD-1 concrete culvert, P-19-186541, and Valencia Water Reclamation Plant, were determined ineligible for listing in the NRHP as a result of the current studies. One resource, the SPRR SBL/SPB is assumed eligible for the purpose of this project, however, the section of the SPRR SBL/SPB that is within the APE is not eligible as a contributing element. Therefore, the proposed project achieves a finding of No Historic Properties Affected. In addition, the ASR (AECOM 2023g) and XPI investigation (AECOM 2023) determined that the project does exhibit archaeological sensitivity but the potential to encounter intact archaeological deposits is low.

However, there is a potential for previously unknown cultural and historical resources to be discovered during construction of the Build Alternative. With implementation of the AMMs discussed below in Section 2.2.12.3, potential impacts to cultural resources would not be adverse.

2.2.12.4 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

The following AMMs will be implemented to reduce adverse effects on cultural resources under the Build Alternative:

CR-1: All workers must participate in a Worker Environmental Awareness Program for cultural resources. Sign-in sheets will be maintained to document completion of the program by each worker. This program can be administered in person by or under the supervision of a Secretary of Interior (SOI) qualified archaeologist or through screening of a video/slide presentation prepared by a SOI-qualified archaeologist and overseen by an on-site manager. Contractor education will include the legal framework protecting cultural resources, typical kinds of cultural resources that may be found during construction, artifacts that would be considered potentially significant, and proper procedures and notifications if cultural resources are discovered. The training will review types of cultural resources and artifacts that would be considered potentially significant to support operator recognition of these materials during construction. Contingent upon the results of AB 52 consultation, Native American representatives shall be afforded the opportunity to participate in the cultural resource training to provide project personnel with tribal perspectives on working in areas sensitive for Tribal Cultural Resources.

CR-2: If cultural materials are discovered during construction, all earthmoving activity within 50 feet of the find will be diverted until a SOI-qualified archaeologist can assess the significance of the find and, if necessary, develop appropriate treatment measures.

CR-3: If human remains are discovered, State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 states that further disturbances and activities will cease in any area or nearby area suspected to overlie remains, and the County Coroner will be contacted. Pursuant to PRC Section 5097.98, if the remains are thought to be Native American, the Coroner will notify the California Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC), which will then notify the Most Likely Descendant (MLD). At this time, the person who discovered the remains will also contact the District 7 Environmental Branch Chief so that they may

work with the MLD on the respectful treatment and disposition of the remains. Further provisions of PRC Section 5097.98 are to be followed as applicable.

2.3 Physical Environment

2.3.1 Hydrology and Floodplain

2.3.1.1 Regulatory Setting

Executive Order 11988

EO 11988 (Floodplain Management) directs all federal agencies to refrain from conducting, supporting, or allowing actions in floodplains unless it is the only practicable alternative. FHWA requirements for compliance are outlined in 23 CFR 650 Subpart A.

To comply, the following must be analyzed:

- The practicability of alternatives to any longitudinal encroachments,
- Risks of the action,
- Impacts on natural and beneficial floodplain values,
- Support of incompatible floodplain development, and
- Measures to minimize floodplain impacts and to preserve/restore any beneficial floodplain values affected by the project.

The base floodplain is defined as “the area subject to flooding by the flood or tide having a one percent chance of being exceeded in any given year.” An encroachment is defined as “an action within the limits of the base floodplain.”

National Flood Insurance Program

FEMA is the nationwide administrator of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), which is a program established by the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 to protect lives and property, and to reduce the financial burden of providing disaster relief. Under the NFIP, FEMA has responsibility for flood hazard assessment and mitigation, and it offers federally backed flood insurance to homeowners, renters, and business owners in communities that choose to participate in the program. FEMA has adopted the 100-year floodplain as the base flood standard for the NFIP. FEMA is also concerned with construction that would be within a 500-year floodplain for proposed projects considered “critical actions”, which are defined as any activities where given a slight chance of flooding is too great. FEMA issues the Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) for communities that participate in the NFIP. These FIRMs present delineations of flood hazard zones. In California, nearly all of the state’s flood-prone communities participate in the NFIP.

2.3.1.2 Affected Environment

The following discussion is based on the Location Hydraulic Study and Floodplain Evaluation Report (AECOM 2023e).

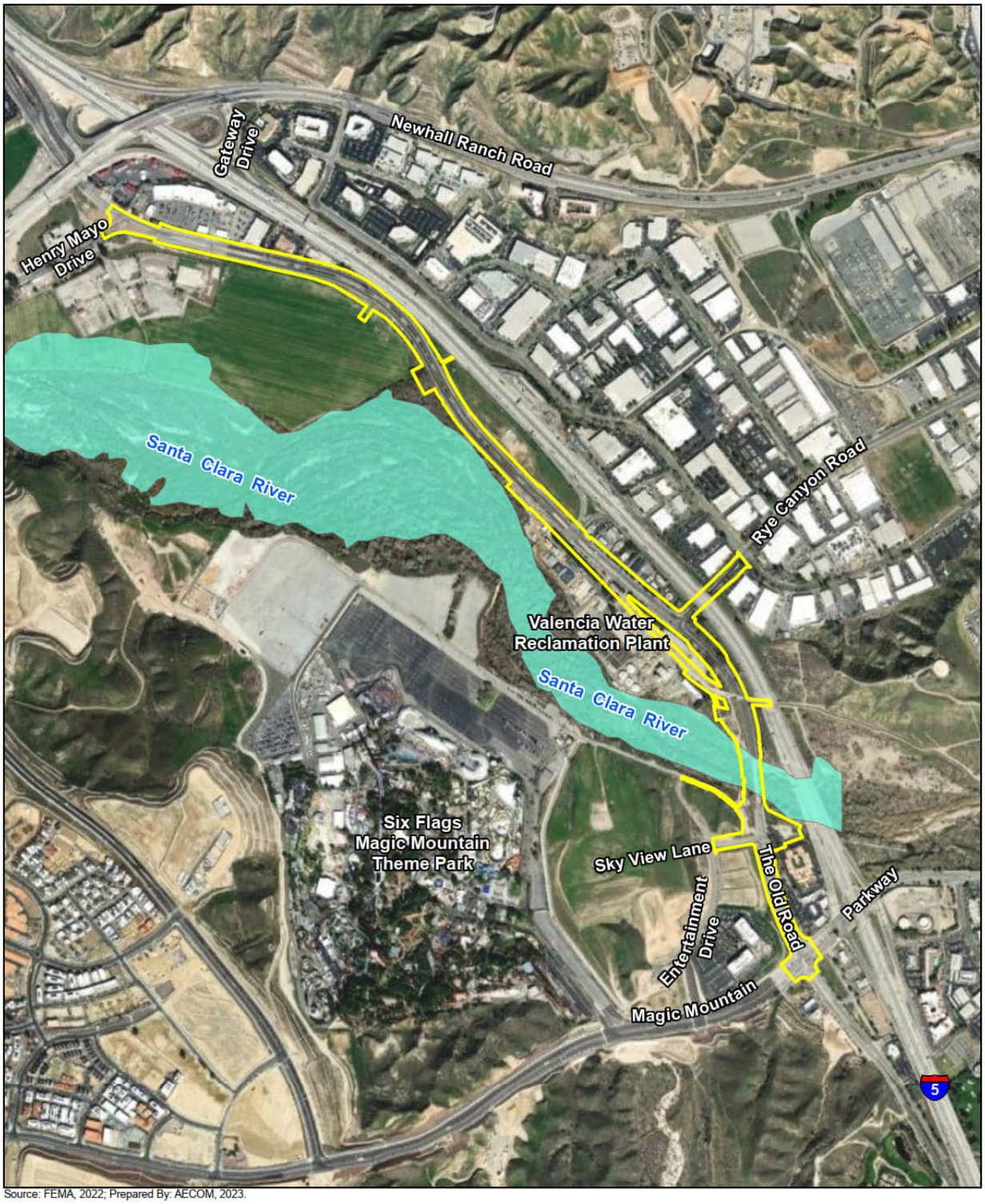
Santa Clara River Watershed

The proposed project is located in the Santa Clara River watershed. Santa Clara River flows roughly 100 miles, from its headwaters at Pacifico Mountain in the San Gabriel Mountains, and westward into Ventura County before discharging into the Pacific Ocean near the City of Ventura. Major tributaries include San Francisquito and Castaic Creeks in Los Angeles County and Piru, Sespe, and Santa Paula Creeks in Ventura County. The watershed is mostly undeveloped with a large portion in the Angeles National Forest. Santa Clara River exhibits some perennial flow in its eastern-most reaches within the Angeles National Forest. As the river continues westward within Los Angeles County, the stream and its tributaries become ephemeral due to the climate and basin characteristics of the watershed. However, flows can increase rapidly in response to high-intensity rainfall with the potential for severe flooding (Ventura County Watershed Protection District [VCWPD]/LACPW 2005).

The proposed project is located near the mainstem of Santa Clara River, just downstream of the Santa Clarita Valley within western Los Angeles County. Regional access to the proposed project site is provided by I-5, which runs in a north-south direction connecting the nearby unincorporated community of Stevenson Ranch and the City of Santa Clarita. The I-5 bridge crossing over Santa Clara River is located approximately 1 mile downstream the river junction with San Francisquito Creek. The existing The Old Road Bridge is located 500 feet downstream of the I-5 bridge. Approximately 4 miles downstream of The Old Road bridge, Castaic Creek joins into Santa Clara River.

FEMA 100-Year Base Flood

As discussed above, floodplains are defined using FIRMs, which categorize floodplains into different areas. The proposed project site is located within the FIRM Panel Nos. 06037C0805G and 06037C0815G, in Zone X, which is defined by FEMA as an area of minimal flood hazard. A portion of the proposed project, The Old Road Bridge, would be constructed within FEMA's regulatory 100-year base floodplain, within Zone AE (FEMA 2022). Zone AE floodplains indicate areas inundated with a 1% annual chance of flooding (100-year flood). The FEMA flood zones are depicted in Figure 9.



Source: FEMA, 2022; Prepared By: AECOM, 2023.

0 600 1,200 Feet

100 year - Zone AE

Project Limit

Figure 9

FEMA Flood Zones

Los Angeles County Public Works Capital Flood

The Old Road Bridge would also be constructed within LACPW Capital Floodplain and Capital Floodway. As summarized in the LACPW Hydrology Manual, the Los Angeles County policy of Capital Flood level of protection applies to all facilities, including open channels, closed conduits, bridges, dams, and debris basins not under State of California jurisdiction (LACDPW 2006). The County's Capital Flood is based on a theoretical 4-day, 50-year frequency design storm occurring after the watershed has been burned by severe fire. The resulting 50-year design flow rate is bulked by a design factor which accounts for the adverse conditions of a burned watershed, specifically decreased soil infiltration capacity and increased debris flows from eroded topsoil and burned vegetation. The probability of occurrence from the theoretical assumptions of the Capital Flood is extremely small and yields a greater design flow than FEMA's methodology for determining the 100-year base flood. As a result, the County's methodology is considered more conservative than the FEMA 100-year base flood. The proposed project would require protection from the Capital Flood as defined by the County.

2.3.1.3 Environmental Consequences

2.3.1.3.1 Alternative 1: No-Build Alternative

Under the No-Build Alternative, the proposed project would not replace the existing bridge. Therefore, the 100-year flood profile of The Old Road Bridge would remain unchanged from existing conditions.

The Old Road over the Santa Clara River Bridge currently is not high enough to allow the volume of water of a LACPW Capital Flood event (50-year burned and bulked storm) to pass under it. Under this scenario, repairs and improvements to the Santa Clara River Bridge would remain and worsen since constructing the replacement bridge at a higher elevation would not occur to provide a minimum freeboard of 2.5 feet and meet County Capital Storm Floodway requirements.

2.3.1.3.2 Alternative 2: Build Alternative

Risk Associated with the Proposed Action

FHWA 23 CFR 650A defines a significant encroachment as a highway encroachment or any action to promote base floodplain development that involves one or more of the following construction or flood related impacts:

- A significant potential for the interruption or termination of a transportation facility that is needed for emergency vehicles or that provides a community's only evacuation route;
- A significant risk; or
- A significant adverse impact on the natural and beneficial floodplain values.

The potential risk associated with the implementation of the proposed project includes, but is not limited to: 1) change in land use, 2) change in impervious surface area, 3) fill inside of the floodplain, 4) change in the 100-year base flood elevation (BFE), or 5) potential risk to life and property.

- **Change in Land Use:** The proposed project would not change the overall land use within the proposed project location and within the watershed basin (i.e., it would remain urban/developed).

- **Increase in Impervious Surfaces:** The proposed widening of The Old Road and bridge replacement would increase the impervious surface area within the Santa Clara River watershed. The additional impervious surfaces would result from the increase of two lanes to three lanes in each direction of The Old Road and the widening of Rye Canyon Road. The road widening would occur over a 2.5-mile segment; however, only the roughly 400-foot segment that consists of The Old Road Bridge replacement would encroach into the base floodplain. The extension of the Multi-Use Trail would also add additional impervious surface area; however, this area is located entirely out of the base floodplain. The additional impervious are at the proposed The Old Road Bridge crossing would not substantially increase the impervious surface area within the Santa Clara River watershed. Therefore, the increase of impervious surfaces from the proposed project is not considered a significant risk to the base floodplain.

- **Fill inside of the Floodplain:** Proposed embankments would be constructed for the proposed bridge replacement by backfilling with the associated shoring. The backfill would occur within the base floodplain, but the final proposed grade would not increase significantly from the existing grade. The total fill inside of the existing 100-year base floodplain is not considered a significant risk to the base floodplain.

- **Change in FEMA's 100-year Base Flood Elevation:** The Old Road Bridge replacement is anticipated to cause a maximum increase of 6 inches to the FEMA 100-year BFE. Hydraulic Analysis results indicated that BFEs decreased upstream of the proposed bridge compared to existing conditions. Additionally, results showed no rise in BFEs downstream of river station 8714.1. The corresponding increase in the horizontal extents of the existing base floodplain is maximum of 5 feet in width, occurring predominantly within the floodplains upstream of the I-5 Bridge.

- **Potential Risk to Life and Property:** No residences, buildings, or crops exist over the area of concern; backwater impacts resulting from the proposed project would not be a significant risk to life and property.

Summary of Potential Encroachments

FHWA 23 CFR 650A defines an "encroachment" as any highway construction, reconstruction, rehabilitation, repair, or improvement undertaken with federal or federal-aid highway funds or FHWA approval that is proposed within the limits of the base floodplain. The following sections discuss the potential encroachments and impacts associated with the construction of the proposed project in the FEMA 100-year base floodplain.

- **Potential Traffic Interruptions for the Base Flood:** The proposed The Old Road Bridge replacement would be able to safely pass the FEMA 100-year BFE and would not result in any traffic interruptions. Additionally, the nearby I-5 Bridge would also safely pass the FEMA 100-year BFE and could be used as alternative detour for local access from The Old Road.

- **Potential Impacts on Natural and Beneficial Floodplain Values:** Impacts on natural and beneficial floodplain values within the proposed project vicinity would be

minimal. Fill and land disturbance would occur only in areas necessary for construction of the proposed bridge foundations within the river channel and floodplain. The remaining proposed improvements would take place outside of the FEMA 100-year base floodplain and LACPW Capital floodplain. To reduce impacts associated with construction activities, standard BMPs would be implemented for the proposed project.

- **Support of Probable Incompatible Floodplain Development:** A significant encroachment onto the FEMA 100-year BFE is not anticipated based on the hydrologic and hydraulic evaluation of the proposed project. As detailed above, the rise occurring over the 100-foot segment would be contained within the existing base floodplain limits. Additionally, the proposed project would result in a rise of approximately 10 inches (0.8 foot) immediately downstream of The Old Road Bridge for the LACPW Capital Flood elevations. The proposed The Old Road Bridge would thus provide Capital-level flood protection and would not require reanalysis of the Capital floodway as defined by the County. The proposed project would support compatible floodplain development as defined by FEMA and LADPW.

- **Longitudinal Encroachments:** With the exception of The Old Road Bridge replacement, the proposed project elements would not encroach onto regulatory floodplains. It is not anticipated to have significant longitudinal encroachments as a result of proposed activities. Minor changes to the longitudinal extents of the FEMA 100-year BFE would occur as a result of the corresponding rise in BFEs. The resulting changes occur only within the vicinity of The Old Road Bridge and I-5 Bridge and are contained entirely within the County-designated Capital floodplain and floodway.

The Old Road over the Santa Clara River Bridge currently is not high enough to allow the volume of water of a LACPW Capital Flood event (50-year burned and bulked storm) to pass under it. Under this scenario, constructing the replacement bridge at a higher elevation would provide a minimum freeboard of 2.5 feet and meet County Capital Storm Floodway requirements.

2.3.1.4 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

The following AMMs will be implemented to reduce adverse effects on hydrology and floodplains under the Build Alternative:

HYD-1: Any disturbed aquatic or wetland habitat would need to be restored or enhanced from existing conditions such as revegetation, BMPs, and other applicable actions that meet the requirements of the environmental permitting of the proposed project. Where temporary disturbance areas are unavoidable, the disturbance would be minimized to the maximum extent possible, and the area would be restored or enhanced as compared to existing conditions upon completion of the bridge construction. Permanent impact areas would be mitigated by restoring and enhancing nearby degraded areas of wetland/riparian habitat.

HYD-2: The proposed The Old Road Bridge would be designed to maintain current or improved levels of fish passage in the mainstem of Santa Clara River. The Old Road Bridge would also be designed such that the proposed piles would not

encroach into the active channel during the summer construction season from June through September.

2.3.2 Water Quality and Storm Water Runoff

2.3.2.1 Regulatory Setting

Clean Water Act

In 1972, Congress amended the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, making the addition of pollutants to the waters of the U.S. (WOTUS) from any point source[1] unlawful unless the discharge is in compliance with a NPDES permit. This act and its amendments are known today as the Clean Water Act (CWA). Congress has amended the act several times. In the 1987 amendments, Congress directed dischargers of storm water from municipal and industrial/construction point sources to comply with the NPDES permit scheme. The following are important CWA sections:

Sections 303 and 304 require states to issue water quality standards, criteria, and guidelines.

Section 401 requires an applicant for a federal license or permit to conduct any activity that may result in a discharge to WOTUS to obtain certification from the state that the discharge will comply with other provisions of the act. This certification is most frequently required in tandem with a Section 404 permit request (see below).

Section 402 establishes the NPDES, a permitting system for the discharges (except for dredge or fill material) of any pollutant into WOTUS. RWQCBs administer this permitting program in California. Section 402(p) requires permits for discharges of storm water from industrial/construction and MS4s.

Section 404 establishes a permit program for the discharge of dredge or fill material into WOTUS. This permit program is administered by USACE.

The goal of the CWA is “to restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the Nation’s waters.”

USACE issues two types of 404 permits: General and Individual. There are two types of General permits: Regional and Nationwide. Regional permits are issued for a general category of activities when they are similar in nature and cause minimal environmental effect. Nationwide permits are issued to allow a variety of minor project activities with no more than minimal effects.

Ordinarily, projects that do not meet the criteria for a Regional or Nationwide permit may be permitted under one of USACE’s Individual permits. There are two types of Individual permits: Standard permits and Letters of Permission. For Individual permits, the USACE decision to approve is based on compliance with U.S. EPA’s Section 404 (b)(1) Guidelines (40 CFR Part 230), and whether the permit approval is in the public interest. The Section 404(b)(1) Guidelines were developed by U.S. EPA in conjunction with USACE, and allow the discharge of dredged or fill material into the aquatic system (WOTUS) only if there is no practicable alternative which would have less adverse effects. The Guidelines state that USACE may not issue a permit if there is a least environmentally damaging practicable alternative (LEDPA) to the proposed

[1] A point source is any discrete conveyance such as a pipe or a man-made ditch.

discharge that would have lesser effects on WOTUS and not have any other significant adverse environmental consequences. According to the Guidelines, documentation is needed that a sequence of avoidance, minimization, and compensation measures has been followed, in that order. The Guidelines also restrict permitting activities that violate water quality or toxic effluent[2] standards, jeopardize the continued existence of listed species, violate marine sanctuary protections, or cause "significant degradation" to WOTUS. In addition, every permit from USACE, even if not subject to the Section 404(b)(1) Guidelines, must meet general requirements. See 33 CFR 320.4. A discussion of the LEDPA determination, if any, for the document is included in the Wetlands and Other Waters section below.

Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act

California's Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act, enacted in 1969, provides the legal basis for water quality regulation within California. This act requires a "Report of Waste Discharge" for any discharge of waste (liquid, solid, or gaseous) to land or surface waters that may impair beneficial uses for surface and/or groundwater of the state. It predates the CWA and regulates discharges to waters of the state. Waters of the State (WOTS) include more than just waters of the U.S., like groundwater and surface waters not considered WOTUS. Additionally, it prohibits discharges of "waste" as defined, and this definition is broader than the CWA definition of "pollutant." Discharges under the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act are permitted by Waste Discharge Requirements (WDRs) and may be required even when the discharge is already permitted or exempt under the CWA.

SWRCB and RWQCBs are responsible for establishing the water quality standards (objectives and beneficial uses) required by the CWA and regulating discharges to ensure compliance with the water quality standards. Details about water quality standards in a project area are included in the applicable RWQCB Basin Plan. In California, RWQCBs designate beneficial uses for all water body segments in their jurisdictions and then set criteria necessary to protect those uses. As a result, the water quality standards developed for particular water segments are based on the designated use and vary depending on that use. In addition, SWRCB identifies waters failing to meet standards for specific pollutants. These waters are then state-listed in accordance with CWA Section 303(d). If a state determines that waters are impaired for one or more constituents and the standards cannot be met through point source or non-point source controls (NPDES permits or WDRs), the CWA requires the establishment of Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs). TMDLs specify allowable pollutant loads from all sources (point, non-point, and natural) for a given watershed.

California State Water Resources Control Board and Regional Water Quality Control Boards

California's SWRCB administers water rights, sets water pollution control policy, and issues orders on matters of statewide application, and oversees water quality functions throughout the state by approving Basin Plans, TMDLs, and NPDES permits. RWCQBs are responsible for protecting beneficial uses of water resources within their regional jurisdiction using planning, permitting, and enforcement authorities to meet this responsibility.

[2] U.S. EPA defines "effluent" as "wastewater, treated or untreated, that flows out of a treatment plant, sewer, or industrial outfall."

National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Program

Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems

CWA Section 402(p) requires the issuance of NPDES permits for five categories of storm water discharges, including MS4s. An MS4 is defined as "any conveyance or system of conveyances (roads with drainage systems, municipal streets, catch basins, curbs, gutters, ditches, human-made channels, and storm drains) owned or operated by a state, city, town, county, or other public body having jurisdiction over storm water, that is designed or used for collecting or conveying storm water." RWQCB has identified LACPW as an owner/operator of an MS4 under federal regulations. The MS4 permit covers all ROWs, properties, facilities, and activities in the state. SWRCB issues NPDES permits for 5 years, and permit requirements remain active until a new permit has been adopted.

Construction General Permit

Construction General Permit, Order No. 2022-0057-DWQ (adopted by the SWRCB on September 8, 2022, and effective on September 1, 2023), supersedes Order No. 2009-009-DWQ, as amended by Order No. 2010-0014-DWQ (effective on February 14, 2011) and Order No. 2012-0006-DWQ (effective on July 17, 2012). The permit regulates storm water discharges from construction sites that result in a Disturbed Soil Area (DSA) of 1 acre or greater, and/or are smaller sites that are part of a larger common plan of development. By law, all storm water discharges associated with construction activity where clearing, grading, and excavation result in soil disturbance of at least 1 acre must comply with the provisions of the General Construction Permit. Operators of regulated construction sites are required to develop Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plans (SWPPPs); to implement sediment, erosion, and pollution prevention control measures; and to obtain coverage under the Construction General Permit.

The Construction General Permit separates projects into Risk Levels 1, 2, or 3. Risk levels are determined during the planning and design phases, and are based on potential erosion and transport to receiving waters. Requirements apply according to the Risk Level determined. For example, a Risk Level 3 (highest risk) project would require compulsory storm water runoff pH and turbidity monitoring, and before construction and after construction aquatic biological assessments during specified seasonal windows. For all projects subject to the permit, applicants are required to develop and implement an effective SWPPP.

Section 401 Permitting

Under CWA Section 401, any project requiring a federal license or permit that may result in a discharge to a water of the U.S. must obtain a Section 401 Certification, which certifies that the project will be in compliance with state water quality standards. The most common federal permits triggering 401 Certification are CWA Section 404 permits issued by USACE. The 401 permit certifications are obtained from the appropriate RWQCB, dependent on the project location, and are required before USACE issues a Section 404 permit.

In some cases, RWQCB may have specific concerns with discharges associated with a project. As a result, RWQCB may issue a set of requirements known as WDRs under the California's Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act that define activities, such as the inclusion of specific features, effluent limitations, monitoring, and plan submittals that are to be implemented for protecting or benefiting water quality. WDRs can be issued to address both permanent and temporary discharges of a project.

2.3.2.2 Affected Environment

The following discussion is based on the Location Hydraulic Study and Floodplain Evaluation Report (AECOM 2023e) and the Water Quality Assessment Report (AECOM 2022).

Regional and Local Hydrology

The proposed project lies within the Los Angeles Region, which encompasses all coastal watersheds and drainages flowing into the Pacific Ocean between Rincon Point and the eastern Los Angeles County line. The proposed project area is situated within the Salt Canyon-Santa Clara River Hydrologic Area within the Upper Santa Clara River Hydrologic Unit. The Upper Santa Clara River watershed, located generally upstream or east of the Ventura County/Los Angeles County jurisdictional line, drains approximately 1,200 square miles and is approximately 640 square miles in size. The proposed project site is located adjacent to Santa Clara River, which runs primarily along the southwestern boundary of the proposed project site. An earthen agricultural ditch extends from The Old Road to the river at the middle of the proposed project site. Surface runoff from the proposed project area drains to the agricultural ditch, other existing storm conveyance structures, or directly into Santa Clara River, which is a direct tributary to the Pacific Ocean.

Surface Waters

Surface water quality in Santa Clara River has been impacted by increasing development in floodplain areas, which has resulted in increased runoff volumes and velocities, erosion, and loss of habitat. The reach of Santa Clara River within and adjacent to the proposed project site (Reach 5) has multiple channels (braided) and experiences high sediment loads, high bank erodibility, and intense and intermittent runoff conditions. Reach 5 of the river is listed on the SWRCB 303 (d) list for indicator bacteria, chloride, iron, and trash. TMDLs Upper Santa Clara River Chloride 2015, Santa Clara River Estuary Toxaphene 2011, and Santa Clara River Coliform Bacteria 2012 are all in effect.

The proposed project is within the jurisdiction of Los Angeles RWQCB and is subject to water quality objectives of the Los Angeles Region Basin Plan (RWQCB 2014). The Los Angeles Region Basin Plan lists beneficial uses of major water bodies within this region. Beneficial uses of Santa Clara Reach 5 include; water contact recreation, non-contact water recreation, municipal and domestic supply, industrial service supply, industrial process supply, agricultural supply, groundwater recharge, freshwater replenishment, warm freshwater habitat, wildlife habitat, rare/threatened/endangered species, and wetland habitat.

Groundwater

The proposed project is located within the Santa Clara River Valley East Groundwater Subbasin, located in the central-western portion of Los Angeles County. The subbasin is bound on the north by the Piru Mountains, on the east and southeast by the San Gabriel Mountains, on the south by the Santa Susana Mountains, and on the west by the Modelo Formation, the Saugus Formation, and a thinning of the alluvium near the adjoining Piru subbasin. According to RWQCB, the area overlying the groundwater basin is drained by Santa Clara River, Bouquet Creek, and Castaic Creek. The Santa Clara River Valley East Groundwater Subbasin is the main source of all local groundwater supply in the Santa Clarita Valley. The underlying groundwater basin at the proposed project provides municipal supply, industrial service supply, industrial process supply, and agricultural supply.

The SWRCB online GeoTracker database includes measurements of depth to groundwater in groundwater monitoring wells located at the 7-Eleven gasoline station (former Arco/Chevron, 28070 The Old Road), situated adjacent to the east of the central portion of the proposed project. From 2016 to 2018 (prior to well destructions), depth to groundwater was measured between 29 to 35 feet below ground surface, and the groundwater flow direction was calculated to flow west-northwest towards Santa Clara River. The groundwater flow direction in the proposed project is expected to vary and typically towards Santa Clara River. At the location of Santa Clara River, when the river is flowing, groundwater is at the elevation of the water surface in the river.

2.3.2.3 Environmental Consequences

2.3.2.3.1 Alternative 1: No-Build Alternative

Under the No-Build Alternative, the proposed project activities would not take place and, therefore, would not have any effects related to water quality and storm water runoff.

2.3.2.3.2 Alternative 2: Build Alternative

Construction

Implementation of the proposed project would involve temporary soil disturbance during construction activities (i.e., building the roadways and bike lanes, associated curbs and gutters, sidewalks, wheelchair ramps, driveways, bridges, retaining walls, storm drainage improvements and bioswales, and relocating utilities). Approximately 54 acres of soil would be disturbed for construction of the proposed project.

Without implementation of construction-phase BMPs, construction of the proposed project has the potential to impact water quality through the release pollutants such as sediment/turbidity, metals, oil and grease, nutrients, organic compounds, and trash and debris. Any type of soil disturbance would expose soil to erosion from wind and water that could result in sedimentation in downgradient surface waters if left uncontrolled. However, implementation of construction-phase BMPs is a mandatory regulatory component of compliance with the Construction General Permit. With implementation of MM WQ-1 (described in Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures section below*)* the potential for pollutant transport and erosion would be minimized.

Operation

Implementation of the proposed project would result in a net increase of approximately 43 acres of impervious area. The increase in impervious area would not be expected to significantly increase erosivity or sediment contribution to Santa Clara River. The increase in runoff due to an increase in impervious area within the proposed project site would require measures to meet the County of Los Angeles storm water and hydromodification requirements.

The existing drainage system consists of underground drains and catch basins, and two culverts located north of the I-5 ramp. Currently, storm water runoff flows from the eastern side of the roadway, through the culverts under The Old Road, and outlets on the western side of the roadway. The proposed drainage system involves the construction of approximately 1,500 linear feet of 18-inch reinforced concrete pipe (RCP) and 1,600 linear feet of 24-inch RCP along with 20 catch basins and the extension of two culverts across The Old Road north of Rye Canyon Road. The new system would connect to the existing drainage system, and all surface runoff

would be captured by catch basins and culverts before being conveyed to storm water and hydromodification control facilities (bioswales).

Operation of the proposed project would be subject to the requirements of the Los Angeles County Municipal NPDES Permit. Design pollution prevention BMPs (permanent pollution source control BMPs) would target pollutants of concern including sediment/turbidity, metals, soil stabilization residues, oil and grease, nutrients, organic compounds, and trash and debris. Treatment of runoff would be accomplished through the redesigned drainage facilities (catch basins, culverts, and storm drain outlets) and bioswales.

2.3.2.4 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

Storm water management for the proposed project includes both short-term (construction phase) and long-term (postconstruction/maintenance) measures. Short-term measures focus on implementing construction site BMPs designed to reduce erosion and subsequent sediment transport; long-term measures consider factors such as increased storm water runoff caused by the added impervious surface. Compliance with the standard requirements of the Construction General Permit and the County Municipal Permit for potential short-term and long-term impacts (listed below in AMMs WQ-1 and WQ-2) would be required.

> **WQ-1:** In accordance with the Construction General Permit, Order WQ 2022-0057-DWQ, NPDES NO. CAS000002, a SWPPP would be prepared and implemented to address all construction-related activities, equipment, and materials that have the potential to impact water quality. The SWPPP would identify the sources of pollutants that may affect the quality of storm water; include construction site BMPs to control pollutants and sediment; and provide for construction materials management and non-stormwater BMPs. All construction site BMPs would follow the latest edition of the Los Angeles County Public Works Construction Site BMP Manual to control and minimize the impacts of construction-related activities, materials, and pollutants on the watershed. These BMPs include temporary sediment controls, temporary soil stabilization, scheduling management, waste management, materials handling, and other non-stormwater BMPs.
>
> **WQ-2:** In compliance with Municipal Permit Order No. R4-2021-0105 requirements, a final project-specific Standard Urban Storm Water Mitigation Plan would be prepared.
>
> Bioswales would be constructed in roadway medians to provide water quality treatment in addition to conveying storm water runoff. Swales provide pollutant removal through settling and filtration in the vegetation lining the channels and also provide the opportunity for volume reduction through infiltration and evapotranspiration.
>
> DSAs, including slopes, would be reseeded using a California native plant seed blend. An erosion control seed mix (hydroseed) would be applied on all select material areas and slopes flatter than 1:1. Erosion control (bonded fiber matrix) would be applied on all cut slopes steeper than 1:1. As vegetation establishes in disturbed areas and cut slopes stabilize, potential for suspended sediments coming from the proposed project area into receiving waters would gradually be reduced.

2.3.3 Geology/Soils/Seismic/Topography

2.3.3.1 Regulatory Setting

For geologic and topographic features, the key federal law is the Historic Sites Act of 1935, which establishes a national registry of natural landmarks and protects "outstanding examples of major geological features." Topographic and geologic features are also protected under CEQA.

This section also discusses geology, soils, and seismic concerns as they relate to public safety and project design. Earthquakes are prime considerations in the design and retrofit of structures. Structures are designed using Caltrans's Seismic Design Criteria (SDC). The SDC provides the minimum seismic requirements for highway bridges designed in California. A bridge's category and classification will determine its seismic performance level and which methods are used for estimating the seismic demands and structural capabilities (Caltrans 2019a).

Local

Los Angeles County General Plan Conservation and Natural Resources Element

The Conservation and Natural Resources Element of the Los Angeles County General Plan addresses the management and use of natural resources including, but not limited to, mineral resources, scenic resources, geologic resources, and biological resources in the unincorporated areas of the County. The General Plan provides guidance on hillside regulation, habitat protection, and the management of water and agriculture to conserve geological resources and soils. The County has incorporated policies into the Conservation and Natural Resources Element to manage geological and mineral resources, listed in Table 2-34 (LACDRP 2015).

Table 2-34. Los Angeles County General Plan Goals and Policies

Goal	Policy
Geological Resources	
Goal C/NR 5: Protected and useable local surface water resources.	**Policy C/NR 5.1:** Support the LID philosophy, which seeks to plan and design public and private development with hydrologic sensitivity, including limits to straightening and channelizing natural flow paths, removal of vegetative cover, compaction of soils, and distribution of naturalistic BMPs at regional, neighborhood, and parcel-level scales.
Goal C/NR 9: Sustainable agricultural practices.	**Policy C/NR 9.1:** Support agricultural practices that minimize and reduce soil loss, minimize pesticide use, and prevent water runoff from leaching pesticide and fertilizer into groundwater and affecting water, soil, and air quality.
Mineral Resources	
Goal C/NR 10: Locally available mineral resources to meet the needs of construction, transportation, and industry.	**Policy C/NR 10.1**: Protect MRZ-2s and access to MRZ-2s from development and discourage incompatible adjacent land uses.
	Policy C/NR 10.2: Prior to permitting a use that threatens the potential to extract minerals in an identified Mineral Resource Zone, the County shall prepare a statement specifying its reasons for permitting the proposed use, and shall forward a copy to the State Geologist and the State Mining and Geology Board for review, in accordance with the Public Resources Code, as applicable.

Table 2-34. Los Angeles County General Plan Goals and Policies

Goal	Policy
	Policy C/NR 10.3: Recognize newly identified MRZ-2s within 12 months of transmittal of information by the State Mining and Geology Board.
	Policy C/NR 10.4: Work collaboratively with agencies to identify Mineral Resource Zones and to prioritize mineral land use classifications in regional efforts.
	Policy C/NR 10.5: Manage mineral resources in a manner that effectively plans for access to, development and conservation of, mineral resources for existing and future generations.
	Policy C/NR 10.6: Require that new non-mining land uses adjacent to existing mining operations be designed to provide a buffer between the new development and the mining operations. The buffer distance shall be based on an evaluation of noise, aesthetics, drainage, operating conditions, biological resources, topography, lighting, traffic, operating hours, and air quality.
Goal C/NR 11: Mineral extraction and production activities that are conducted in a manner that minimizes impacts to the environment.	**Policy C/NR 11.1:** Require mineral resource extraction and production activities and drilling for and production of oil and natural gas to comply with County regulations and state requirements, such as SMARA, and DOGGR regulations.
	Policy C/NR 11.2: Require the reclamation of abandoned surface mines to productive second uses.
	Policy C/NR 11.3: Require appropriate levels of remediation for all publicly owned oil and natural gas production sites based on possible future uses.
	Policy C/NR 11.4: Require that mineral resource extraction and production operations, as well as activities related to the drilling for and production of oil and natural gas, be conducted to protect other natural resources and prevent excessive grading in hillside areas.
	Policy C/NR 11.5: Encourage and support efforts to increase the safety of oil and gas production and processing activities, including state regulations related to well stimulation techniques such as hydraulic fracturing or “fracking.”

Note: C/NR = Conservation/Natural Resources
Source: Los Angeles County Caltrans of Regional Planning. 2015. Los Angeles County General Plan Conservation and Natural Resources Element. Available at: https://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/gp_final-general-plan-ch9.pdf. Accessed August 2023.

The Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975 (SMARA) authorizes local governments to assist the State in issuing mining permits and monitoring site reclamation efforts. The demand for mineral resources is high, and projected growth in the region will continue to strain the mineral supply. In addition, mineral resources include areas that are appropriate for the drilling and production of oil and natural gas. Oil production still occurs in many parts of the unincorporated areas, including the Baldwin Hills and the Santa Clarita Valley. The California Caltrans of Conservation, Division of Oil, Gas, and Geothermal Resources (DOGGR) regulates oil production and retains exclusive jurisdiction over all subsurface oil and gas activities in California. The County may regulate zoning and land use to mitigate impacts from surface operations on surrounding communities.

City of Santa Clarita General Plan Conservation and Open Space Element

The Conservation and Open Space Element of the City of Santa Clarita General Plan seeks to protect and conserve open space and natural resources such as geologic resources and mineral resources. State law requires that the General Plan address the prevention, control, and correction of soil erosion, and the location, quantity, and quality of rock, sand, and gravel resources (California Government Code Section 65302). Within the Santa Clarita Valley, the primary conservation issues with respect to soils and geologic resources are soil conservation, hillside development and ridgeline protection, and extraction of mineral resources. The City of Santa Clarita General Plan contains extensive aggregate mineral resources. The policies adopted under the Conservation and Open Space Element regarding the protection of geologic resources and mineral resources are listed in Table 2-35 (City of Santa Clarita 2011).

Table 2-35. City of Santa Clarita General Plan Goals and Policies

Goal/Objective	Policy
Geological Resources	
Objective CO 2.1: Control soil erosion, waterway sedimentation, and airborne dust generation, and maintain the fertility of topsoil.	**Policy CO 2.1.1:** Review soil erosion and sedimentation control plans for development-related grading activities, where appropriate, to ensure mitigation of potential erosion by water and air.
	Policy CO 2.1.2: Promote conservation of topsoil on development sites by stockpiling for later reuse, where feasible.
	Policy CO 2.1.3: Promote soil enhancement and waste reduction through composting, where appropriate.
Objective CO 2.2: Preserve the Santa Clarita Valley's prominent ridgelines and limit hillside development to protect the valuable aesthetic and visual qualities intrinsic to the Santa Clarita Valley landscape.	**Policy CO 2.2.1:** Locate development and designate land uses to minimize the impact on the Santa Clarita Valley's topography, minimizing grading and emphasizing the use of development pads that mimic the natural topography in lieu of repetitive flat pads, to the extent feasible.
	Policy CO 2.2.2: Ensure that graded slopes in hillside areas are revegetated with native drought tolerant plants or other approved vegetation to blend manufactured slopes with adjacent natural hillsides, in consideration of fire safety and slope stability requirements.
	Policy CO 2.2.3: Preserve designated natural ridgelines from development by ensuring a minimum distance for grading and development from these ridgelines of 50 feet or more if determined appropriate by the reviewing authority based on site conditions, to maintain the Santa Clarita Valley's distinctive community character and preserve the scenic setting.
	Policy CO 2.2.4: Identify and preserve significant geological and topographic features through designating these areas as open space or by other means as appropriate.
	Policy CO 2.2.5: Promote the use of adequate erosion control measures for all development in hillside areas, including single family homes and infrastructure improvements, both during and after construction.
	Policy CO 2.2.6: Encourage building and grading designs that conform to the natural grade, avoiding the use of large retaining walls and build-up walls that are visible from off-site, to the extent feasible and practicable.

Table 2-35. City of Santa Clarita General Plan Goals and Policies

Goal/Objective	Policy
Mineral Resources	
Objective CO 2.3: Conserve areas with significant mineral resources and provide for extraction and processing of such resources in accordance with applicable laws and land use policies.	**Policy CO 2.3.1:** Identify areas with significant mineral resources that are available for extraction through appropriate zoning or overlay designations.
	Policy CO 2.3.2: Consider appropriate buffers near mineral resource areas that are planned for extraction, to provide for land use compatibility and prevent the encroachment of incompatible land uses.
	Policy CO 2.3.3: Through the review process for any mining or mineral extraction proposal, ensure mitigation of impacts from mining and processing of materials on adjacent uses or on the community, including but not limited to air and water pollution, traffic and circulation, noise, and land use incompatibility.
	Policy CO 2.3.4: Ensure that mineral extraction sites are maintained in a safe and secure manner after cessation of extraction activities, which may include the regulated decommissioning of wells, clean-up of any contaminated soils or materials, closing of mine openings, or other measures as deemed appropriate by the agencies having jurisdiction.
	Policy CO 2.3.5: Promote remediation and restoration of mined land to a condition that supports beneficial uses, which may include but are not limited to recreational open space, habitat enhancement, groundwater recharge, or urban development.

Source: City of Santa Clarita General Plan. 2011. Conservation and Open Space Element. Available at: https://www.codepublishing.com/CA/SantaClarita/html/SantaClaritaGP/6%20-%20Conservation%20and%20Open%20Space%20Element.pdf. Accessed August 2023.

2.3.3.2 Affected Environment

This section is based on the Initial Site Assessment (ISA) Report (AECOM 2023f) and the Water Quality Assessment Report (AECOM 2022).

Geologic Setting

The Old Road is located within the western Transverse Ranges geomorphic province of Southern California. The Transverse Ranges, measuring about 10 to 15 miles wide and 300 miles long, are characterized by a complex series of mountain ranges, intervening valleys, and active faults with dominant east-west trends. According to the California Department of Conservation's California Geological Survey (CGS), Geologic Map of California, the geology of the proposed project is composed of Quaternary deposits including Pleistocene-Holocene (Q)- and Pleistocene (Qoa)-aged rocks that are made of marine and nonmarine (continental) sedimentary rocks (California Department of Conservation [CDOC] 2015).

Physiography and Topography

The Old Road is located within Sections 7, 17, 18, and 20 of Township 4 North, Range 16 West of the San Bernardino Meridian within unincorporated Los Angeles County and the City of Santa Clarita, California. Topographic coverage of the proposed project vicinity is provided by the

United States Geological Survey (USGS), 7.5-Minute Series “Newhall, California” Quadrangle map.

The proposed project elevation ranges from approximately 1,000 feet above mean sea level (MSL) near Henry Mayo Drive at the northern end of the proposed project to approximately 1,100 feet above MSL near Magic Mountain Parkway at the southern end of the proposed project. The local topographic gradient is generally to the northwest in the proposed project area.

Soils

According to U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service, a number of soil types occur throughout the proposed project; the two most prominent soil types in the area of the proposed project are Cometa loam and Sandy alluvial land. Cometa loam, the dominant soil type within the proposed project, is composed of moderately deep, moderately well, or well drained soils with slow to medium runoff potential and very slow permeability. These soils are formed in alluvium from granitic rock sources and are found on gently sloping, slightly dissected older stream terraces. Sandy alluvial land consists of unconsolidated alluvium that is mostly found on flood plains along and in Santa Clara River. Sandy alluvial land soils are associated with Hydrologic Soil Group B and are somewhat poorly drained with very slow runoff potential and moderately slow permeability.

Geologic Hazards

The City of Santa Clarita includes, and is in the vicinity of, several known active and potentially active earthquake faults and fault zones, which may cause strong ground-shaking and fault rupture. Based on the USGS interactive fault map, the inactive Holser fault crosses the proposed project site (CDOC 2015). The San Gabriel fault zone is located within approximately 1.25 miles east-northeast of the proposed project site. The Northridge blind thrust fault is located within approximately 2.5 miles southwest-west of the proposed project site. According to the California Department of Conservation’s Earthquake Hazards Zone Application, the proposed project is not located within an Earthquake Zone of Required Investigation.

Strong ground motions can worsen existing unstable slope conditions, particularly if coupled with saturated ground conditions. Seismically induced landslides can overrun structures, sever utility lines, and block roads, hindering rescue operations after an earthquake. The most widespread type of earthquake-induced landslides consists of generally shallow failures involving surficial soils, and the uppermost weathered bedrock in moderate to steep hillside terrain. Rockfalls and rockslides on very steep slopes are also common. A combination of geologic conditions leads to landslide vulnerability. These vulnerabilities include high seismic potential, steep slopes and deeply incised canyons, highly fractured rock, and rock with inherent weaknesses. The proposed project is not located within a Landslide Zone based on the California Department of Conservation’s Earthquake Hazards Zone Application (CDOC 2023).

Subsidence is the loss of surface elevation due to the removal of subsurface support. Subsidence is caused by the reduction of pore space in the ground that was formerly occupied by a fluid such as water or oil, cause by activities that contribute to the loss of support materials within the underlying soils, such as agricultural practices or the overdraft of an aquifer. There have been no reports of large-scale problems with ground subsidence in the City of Santa Clarita. Additionally, the proposed project site is located in an area of minimal flood hazard as defined by FEMA. A portion of the proposed project would be located in an area inundated with

a 1% annual chance of flooding (100-year flood). Flooding is further discussed in Section 3.3.1 below.

Liquefaction refers to a process by which water-saturated granular soils transform from a solid to a liquid state during strong ground-shaking, usually occurring during or after an earthquake. Areas in the Santa Clarita Valley underlain by unconsolidated alluvium, such as along Santa Clara River and tributary washes, may be prone to liquefaction, and the proposed project is located within a Liquefaction Zone based on the California Department of Conservation's Earthquake Hazards Zone Application. Additionally, lateral spreading can occur when liquefaction transforms a subsurface layer into a fluid-like mass, and gravity causes the earthquake to move the mass downslope or laterally**.** There is a potential for lateral spreading to occur in the proposed project area, in the areas potentially subject to liquefaction.

Mineral Resources

California Division of Mines and Geology has classified land in the region of the greater Los Angeles metropolitan area according to the presence or absence of significant sand and gravel deposits. This land classification is categorized into Mineral Resource Zone (MRZ), described below:

- MRZ-1: Areas that do not contain significant mineral deposits or low likelihood exists for their presence;
- MRZ-2: Areas that contain significant mineral deposits or high likelihood exists for their presence; and
- MRZ-3: Areas that contain mineral deposits, but their significance cannot be evaluated from available data.

According to the City of Santa Clarita General Plan Conservation and Open Space Element, the City's planning area contains almost 19,000 acres of MRZ-2 sites. Sand and gravel resources are primarily concentrated along waterways, including Santa Clara River, the South Fork of Santa Clara River, Castaic Creek, and east of Sand Canyon Road. A significant deposit of construction-grade aggregate extends approximately 15 miles from Agua Dulce Creek in the east, to the Ventura County line on the west. The Santa Clarita Valley also contains other mineral resources which have been extracted historically, including gold, natural gas, and oil. Many older mines and oil wells have been abandoned, although several oil and natural gas wells are still in production.

Investigations into the MRZ sites have been conducted for areas within the City of Santa Clarita. The proposed project site of The Old Road from Henry Mayo Drive to approximately Sky View Lane is located within an MRZ-2 site, meaning an area that contains significant mineral deposits or high likelihood exists for their presence. The remainder of The Old Road from approximately Sky View Lane to Magic Mountain Parkway is located within an MRZ-3 site, or an area that contains mineral deposits, but their significance cannot be evaluated from available data. As previously discussed, the proposed project component of the Santa Clara River Bridge that crosses over Santa Clara River, a waterway with sand and gravel resources, will be replaced (CDOC 2021).

Oil Fields

The State of California Geologic Energy Management Division's (CalGEM) online Well Statewide Tracking and Reporting (WellSTAR) database provides information regarding oil and gas wells located in and near the proposed project. According to the CalGEM database, the proposed project is within a portion of the Castaic Junction (ABD) Oil and Gas Field. No active oil and gas wells exist within the proposed project in the Castaic Junction (ABD) Oil and Gas Field. There are two plugged and abandoned oil and gas wells in or adjacent to the proposed project area, including one plugged and abandoned oil and gas well potentially located within the central portion of the proposed project in the southbound lanes of The Old Road near the intersection of The Old Road and the I-5 on- and off-ramps, as well as one plugged and abandoned oil and gas well located adjacent to the northern portion of the proposed project within the paved parking lot of the Gateway Promenade Shopping Center, located at 28656 to 28788 The Old Road, Valencia, California. The oil/gas well potentially located in the southbound lanes of The Old Road near the intersection of The Old Road and the I-5 on- and off-ramps was not identified in a geophysical survey conducted in April 2023 (CalGEM 2023).

2.3.3.3 Environmental Consequences

2.3.3.3.1 Alternative 1: No-Build Alternative

Under the No-Build Alternative, the existing The Old Road ROW between Henry Mayo Drive and Magic Mountain Parkway would remain on the proposed project site under currently existing conditions. Typical maintenance activities would occur as they do under existing conditions. No construction activities would occur, and materials would not be excavated at the proposed project site. Therefore, no impact related to geological or mineral resources would occur.

2.3.3.3.2 Alternative 2: Build Alternative

Construction

As described above, the proposed project is not located within an Earthquake Zone of Required Investigation. In addition, construction of the proposed project would improve the structural integrity of the two bridges along The Old Road for earthquake protection. Construction activities of the new bridges to improve structural integrity would include installing cast-in-drilled-hole piles for new abutment and piles; installing shoring of steel sheet piles; constructing abutment, column pile extensions and cap beams; and erecting pre-stressed girders.

The proposed project is not located within a Landslide Zone; however, the proposed project is located within a Liquefaction Zone, and the proposed project site includes soil prone to liquefaction. Construction activities involving temporary soil disturbance would include building the roadways and bike lanes, associated curbs and gutters, sidewalks, wheelchair ramps, driveways, bridges, retaining walls, storm drainage improvements and bioswales, and relocating utilities. Any increase in soil erosion could cause an increase in suspended sediments discharged into Santa Clara River. Additionally, increases in storm water runoff rates and volumes as a result of increased impervious area would alter existing drainage patterns of storm water runoff and increase erosion potential, which could influence channel stability.

Although construction activities may increase the potential of soil erosion, implementation of construction-phase BMPs is a mandatory regulatory component of compliance with the Construction General Permit. The implementation of BMPs and project design features would control runoff rates and amounts to minimize erosion and sediment discharge during

construction and while vegetation is established. Increases in runoff rates or volumes would not be anticipated to alter channel stability or change erosion and accretion (deposition) patterns in downstream reaches of Santa Clara River. These BMPs and AMMs are discussed further below.

The Old Road from Henry Mayo Drive to approximately Sky View Lane is located within an MRZ-2 site. The remainder of The Old Road from approximately Sky View Lane to Magic Mountain Parkway is located within an MRZ-3 site. Although a portion of the proposed project site is located within an area of mineral resource significance, the amount of excavation needed for the proposed project would be insignificant in relation to the size of the entire MRZ-2 area that encompasses parts of the proposed project region. Construction of the proposed project components would require a maximum roadway excavation of approximately 15 feet, and the maximum depth for piles would be approximately 150 feet.

According to the CalGEM database, the proposed project traverses a 0.64-mile portion of the Castaic Junction (ABD) Oil Field. No active oil/gas wells were depicted within the proposed project in the ABD oil/gas field. However, two plugged and abandoned oil/gas wells were identified in or adjacent to the area. Adherence to the goals and policies regarding mineral resources from the Los Angeles County General Plan Conservation and Natural Resources Element and the City of Santa Clarita General Plan Conservation and Open Space Element will be followed to reduce impacts on any mineral resources. In addition, the proposed project site is not located within or in the immediate vicinity of active mines. Therefore, the construction of the proposed project would not result in the substantial loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region or state or 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.

Construction of the proposed project would not be anticipated to cause visual impacts to the geologic or topographic features in the proposed project vicinity. Proposed improvements associated with the proposed project would improve safety for wilderness area visitors by adding bike lanes, a pedestrian path, and an equestrian trail, and enhancing roadway and bridge safety. In addition, the proposed project would be consistent with existing land uses and would not impact natural landmarks or landforms in the proposed project area. Construction would temporarily introduce equipment and materials within the proposed project corridor, but these impacts would be limited in duration. The proposed project would be fully compatible with the existing visual character of the corridor.

Operation

As previously discussed, the proposed project is not located within an Earthquake Fault Zone or a Landslide Zone. Operation of the proposed project would involve the use of two structurally improved bridges, reducing the potential impact of a seismic event. The proposed project is located within a Liquefaction Zone; however, with the implementation of the minimization measures, BMPs, and project design, project operation would not substantially increase the occurrence of liquefaction. In addition, the proposed project is located in an area of minimal flood hazard, as defined by FEMA.

Operation and maintenance of The Old Road improvements, bridge replacements, Multi-Use Trail extension, and Sky View Lane improvements would not require the use of mineral resources and, thus, would not result in the loss of availability of mineral resources within the proposed project vicinity. In addition, operation of the proposed project would be consistent with existing land uses and would not impact geologic and topographic features or natural landmarks and landforms in the proposed project area. Operation of the proposed project would be similar

to existing conditions. However, the Built Alternative would address current and expected (No-Build Alternative) roadway deficiencies on The Old Road and adjacent roadway system such as structural and operation safety, and inconsistency with jurisdictional plans and policies would improve since this alternative would increase regional roadway capacity, repair bridge structures and improve safety to accommodate expected future traffic growth projections.

2.3.3.4 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

The AMMs outlined in Section 2.3.2 above would reduce the potential impacts of geotechnical and soils conditions on proposed project components constructed under the Build Alternative.

2.3.4 Paleontology

2.3.4.1 Regulatory Setting

Paleontology is a natural science focused on the study of ancient animal and plant life as it is preserved in the geologic record as fossils.

Federal

A number of federal statutes specifically address paleontological resources, their treatment, and funding for mitigation as a part of federally authorized projects. The regulations listed below are included in this section based on the scope and federal funding of the proposed project.

National Environmental Policy Act (16 USC Section 431 et seq.)

NEPA, as amended, requires analysis of potential environmental impacts to important historic, cultural, and natural aspects of our national heritage (United States Code [USC], Section 431 et seq.; 40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR], Section 1502.25). NEPA directs federal agencies to use all practicable means to “Preserve important historic, cultural, and natural aspects of our national heritage…” (Section 101(b) (4)). Regulations for implementing the procedural provisions of NEPA are found in 40 CFR 1500 1508.

Antiquities Act of 1906

The Antiquities Act of1906 (16 US 431-433) states, in part:

> That any person who shall appropriate, excavate, injure or destroy any historic or prehistoric ruin or monument, or any object of antiquity, situated on lands owned or controlled by the Government of the United States, without the permission of the Secretary of the Department of the Government having jurisdiction over the lands on which said antiquities are situated, shall upon conviction, be fined in a sum of not more than five hundred dollars or be imprisoned for a period of not more than ninety days, or shall suffer both fine and imprisonment, in the discretion of the court.

Although there is no specific mention of natural or paleontological resources in the Act itself, or in the Act’s uniform rules and regulations (43 CFR 3), the term “objects of antiquity” has been interpreted to include fossils by the National Park Service (NPS), the BLM, the United States Forest Service (USFS), and other federal agencies. Permits to collect fossils on lands administered by federal agencies are authorized under this Act. However, due to the large gray areas left open to interpretation due to the imprecision of the wording, agencies are hesitant to interpret this act as governing paleontological resources.

Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FPMA) (43 USC 1701)

Federal law including FLPMA of 1976 (43 USC 1701) includes objectives such as the evaluation, management, protection and location of fossils on BLM –managed lands, defines fossils, and lays out penalties for the destruction of significant fossils. Also, NEPA requires the preservation of "historic, cultural, and natural aspects of our national heritage." Most recently, the Omnibus Public Lands Act refines NEPA and FKPMA guidelines and structures, as well as outlines minimum punishments for removal or destruction of fossils from federal/public lands (see below).

Paleontological Resources Preservation Act (PRPA)

Paleontological Resources Preservation, Title VI, Subtitle D: The Secretary (Interior and Agriculture) shall manage and protect paleontological resources on federal land using scientific principles and expertise. With the passage of the PRPA, Congress officially recognizes the importance of paleontological resources on federal lands (US Department of the Interior, US Department of Agriculture) by declaring that fossils from federal lands are federal property that must be preserved and protected using scientific principles and expertise. The PRPA provides:

- Uniform definitions of "paleontological resources" and "casual collecting";
- Uniform minimum requirements for paleontological resource use permit issuance (terms, conditions, and qualifications of applicants);
- Uniform criminal and civil penalties for illegal sale and transport, and theft and vandalism of fossils from Federal lands, and
- Uniform requirements for curation of federal fossils in approved repositories

Code of Federal Regulations, Title 43

Under the Title 43, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 8365.1-5, the collection off scientific and paleontological resources, including vertebrate fossils, on federal land is prohibited. The collection of a "reasonable amount" of common invertebrate or plant fossils for non-commercial purposes is permissible (43 CFR 8365.1-5 [United States Printing Office, 2014]).

State

California Environmental Quality Act

Under California law, paleontological resources are protected by CEQA. The CEQA Guidelines (Title 14, Chapter 3 of the California Code of Regulations, Section 15000 ***ET SEQ***.), define the procedures, types of activities, individuals, and public agencies required to comply with CEQA. As part of CEQA's Initial Study process, one of the questions that must be answered by the lead agency relates to paleontological resources: "Will the proposed project directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?" (CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G, Section VII, Part f).

The loss of a significant paleontological resources which includes any identifiable fossil that is unique, unusual, rare, uncommon, diagnostically or stratigraphically important, and/or those that add to an existing body of knowledge in specific areas – stratigraphically, taxonomically, and/or regionally, would be a significant environmental impact. Direct impacts to paleontological

resources primarily concern the potential destruction of nonrenewable paleontological resources and the loss of information associated with these resources. This includes the unauthorized collection of fossil remains. If potentially fossiliferous bedrock or surficial sediments are disturbed, the disturbance could result in the destruction of paleontological resources and subsequent loss of information.

The CEQA threshold of significance for a significant impact to paleontological resources is reached when a project is determined to "directly or indirectly destroy a significant paleontological resource or unique geologic feature" (CEQA Guidelines Appendix G, Section VII, Part f). In general, for project sites that are underlain by paleontologically sensitive geologic units, the greater the amount of ground disturbance, the higher the potential for significant impacts to paleontological resources.

Public Resources Code Section 5097.5 and Section 30244

Other state requirements for paleontological resource management are included in PRC Section 5097.5 and Section 30244. These statutes prohibit the removal of any paleontological site or feature from public lands without permission of the jurisdictional agency, define the removal of paleontological sites or features as a misdemeanor, and require reasonable mitigation of adverse impacts to paleontological resources from developments on public (state, county, city, district) lands.

Local

County of Los Angeles General Plan

The County of Los Angeles General Plan Conservation and Open Space Element (2015) contains goals and policies regarding paleontological resources. The Conservation and Open Space element establishes the goals of preserving and protecting sites of historical, archaeological, and scientific values, and defines the following policies relative to paleontological resources:

- Mitigate all impacts from new development on or adjacent to historic, cultural, and paleontological resources to the greatest extent feasible;
- Support an inter-jurisdictional collaborative system that protects and enhances historic, cultural, and paleontological resources;
- Promote public awareness of historic, cultural and paleontological resources;
- Ensure proper notification and recovery processes are carried out for development on or near historic, cultural, and paleontological resources.

City of Santa Clarita

The Conservation and Open Space Element of the City of Santa Clarita General Plan (2011) has no provisions for paleontological resources.

Professional Guidelines

Society of Vertebrate Paleontology

The Society for Vertebrate Paleontology (SVP) has established standard guidelines (SVP, 1995; 2010) that outline professional protocols and practices for conducting paleontological resource assessments and surveys, monitoring and mitigation, data and fossil recovery, sampling procedures, and specimen preparation, identification, analysis, and curation. Most practicing professional vertebrate paleontologists adhere closely to the SVP's assessment, mitigation, and monitoring requirements as specifically provided in its standard guidelines. Most state regulatory agencies with paleontological resource-specific Laws, Ordinances, Regulations, and Standards (LORS) accept and use the professional standards set forth by the SVP.

As defined by the SVP (2010:11), significant nonrenewable paleontological resources are:

> *Fossils and fossiliferous deposits, here defined as consisting of identifiable vertebrate fossils, large or small, uncommon invertebrate, plant, and trace fossils, and other data that provide taphonomic, taxonomic, phylogenetic, paleoecologic, stratigraphic, and/or biochronologic information. Paleontological resources are considered to be older than recorded human history and/or older than middle Holocene (i.e., older than about 5,000 radiocarbon years).*

Based on the significance definitions of the SVP (2010), all identifiable vertebrate fossils are considered to have significant scientific value. This position is adhered to because vertebrate fossils are relatively uncommon, and only rarely will a fossil locality yield a statistically significant number of specimens of the same genus. Therefore, every vertebrate fossil found has the potential to provide significant new information on the taxon it represents, its paleoenvironment, and/or its distribution. Furthermore, all geologic units in which vertebrate fossils have previously been found are considered to have high sensitivity. Identifiable plant and invertebrate fossils are considered significant if found in association with vertebrate fossils or if defined as significant by project paleontologists, specialists, or local government agencies.

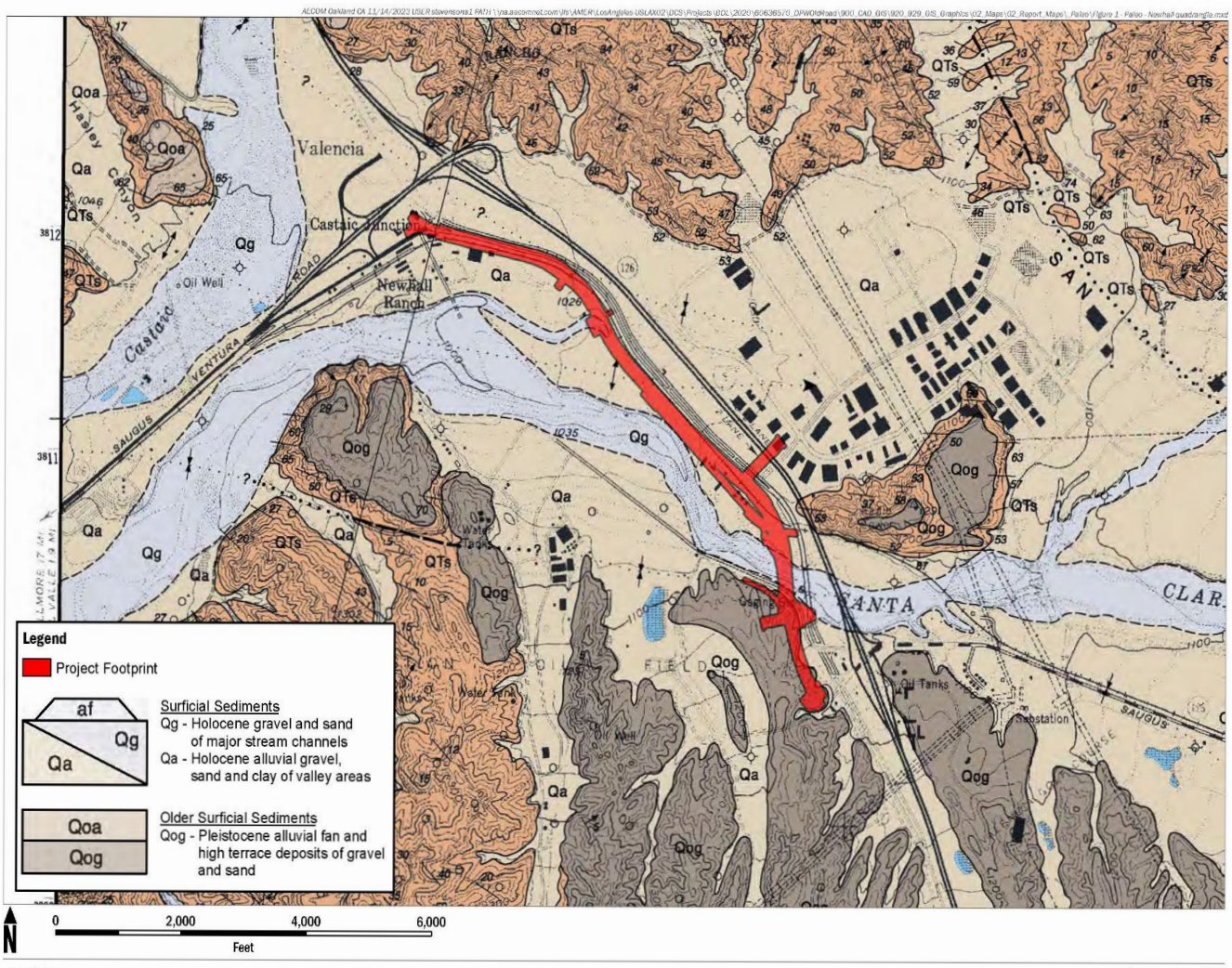
A geologic unit known to contain significant fossils is considered to be "sensitive" to adverse impacts if there is a high probability that earth-moving or ground-disturbing activities in that rock unit will either directly or indirectly disturb or destroy fossil remains. Paleontological sites indicate that the containing sedimentary rock unit or formation is fossiliferous. The limits of the entire rock formation, both areal and stratigraphic, therefore define the scope of the paleontological potential in each case (SVP, 1995).

Fossils are contained within surficial sediments or bedrock and are therefore not observable or detectable unless exposed by erosion or human activity. In summary, paleontologists cannot know either the quality or quantity of fossils prior to natural erosion or human-caused exposure. As a result, even in the absence of surface fossils, it is necessary to assess the sensitivity of rock units based on their known potential to produce significant fossils elsewhere within the same geologic unit (both within and outside of the study area), a similar geologic unit, or based on whether the unit in question was deposited in a type of environment that is known to be favorable for fossil preservation. Monitoring by experienced paleontologists greatly increases the probability that fossils will be discovered during ground-disturbing activities and that, if these remains are significant, successful mitigation and salvage efforts may be undertaken in order to prevent adverse impacts to these resources.

2.3.4.2 Affected Environment

The proposed project is located within the Transverse Ranges geomorphic province (Wagner, 2002). No known paleontological resources have been identified in the project area or within 1 mile of the project (Bell, 2023). The project footprint impacts three rock units (Figure 10; Dibblee

and Ehrenspeck, 1996). These are, from youngest to oldest, 1) Qa (Quaternary alluvium), alluvial gravel, sand, and clay of valley areas of Holocene age; 2) Qg (Quaternary gravel), gravel and sand of major stream channels of Holocene age; 3) Qog (Quaternary older alluvium), low terrace remnants of alluvial gravel and sand of late Pleistocene age. In general, the Qa and Qg sediments are too young to produce significant paleontological resources. Therefore, they would be rated as low according to the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology Standard Procedures (SVP 2010). The Qog, however, is of Pleistocene age and is equivalent to Older Alluvium. It should be rated as high according to those guidelines. There are several paleontological finds in Older Alluvium in the area (Jefferson, 1991). These include horse, bison, ground sloth, mastodon, and mammoth.



AECOM

County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works

The Old Road over Santa Clara River and SPT Co. Bridge, Et Al., project

PROJECT: 60636570

FIGURE 10

Dibblee and Ehrenspeck, H.E.ed. 1996 - Newhall Quadrangles Geologic Map

2.3.4.3 Environmental Consequences

2.3.4.3.1 Alternative 1: No-Build Alternative

Under the No-Build Alternative, no improvements would be made within the proposed project site, including no improvements to The Old Road, Rye Canyon Road, Sky View Lane, bridge replacements, or trail construction. As such, there would be no impacts to any paleontological resources.

2.3.4.3.2 Alternative 2: Build Alternative

There are no known recorded fossil locations within one mile of the project. However, during construction, the Built Alternative could have direct or indirect impacts on paleontological resources, particularly at depth (where drilling or augering takes place) as well as any ground disturbance in the old terrace sediments mapped as Qog.

In the event that significant paleontological resources should occur in the Qog sediments, they will be recovered by paleontological resource monitors. In the event that microvertebrate fossils are impacted by boring for footings, a representative sample will be recovered by wet screening sediment samples. In the event of inadvertent discovery of paleontological resources, PAL-2 would reduce the potential for impacts to unknown, buried paleontological resources because it would require appropriate training for on-site construction crews regarding paleontological resources and paleontological monitoring in locations where there is a potential for paleontological resources. With implementation of AMMs, impacts to paleontological resources would be of low intensity.

2.3.4.3 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

The following AMMs will be implemented to reduce adverse effects on would reduce impacts to paleontological resources.

> **PAL-1:** Paleontological Resources Monitoring and Mitigation Plan. Prior to construction-related excavations, a qualified paleontologist meeting the 2010 Society of Vertebrate Paleontology standards shall be retained to develop a Paleontological Resources Monitoring and Mitigation Plan (PRIMMP). The plan shall address qualifications of paleontological monitors and shall stipulate that the qualified paleontologist and the paleontological resource monitors are empowered to stop excavation activity in order to investigate or safely remove possible fossils. The plan shall incorporate findings of the project geotechnical report and construction plans to formulate what construction activities should be monitored and shall include wet screening of boring or drilling spoils. Many paleontological mitigation efforts have recovered significant paleontological resources, especially microvertebrate fossils, from screening of such spoils. It shall also address unexpected discoveries of paleontological resources.
>
> **PAL-2:** Paleontological Monitoring and Mitigation of Impacts from Construction. The qualified paleontologist shall attend the preconstruction meeting and shall present a worker environmental awareness program (WEAP) to the construction crew. The WEAP shall discuss the types of fossils that may potentially be uncovered during project excavations, laws protecting paleontological resources, and appropriate actions to be taken when fossils are discovered. The qualified paleontologist shall see that the PRIMMP instructions are implemented. The qualified paleontologist shall produce a final paleontological monitoring report that discusses the paleontological monitoring program,

any paleontological discoveries, and the preparation, curation, and accessioning of any fossils into a suitable paleontological repository.

2.3.5 Hazardous Waste/Materials

2.3.5.1 Regulatory Setting

Hazardous materials, including hazardous substances and wastes, are regulated by many state and federal laws. Statutes govern the generation, treatment, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials, substances, and waste, and also the investigation and mitigation of waste releases, air and water quality, human health, and land use.

The primary federal laws regulating hazardous wastes/materials are the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act of 1980, and the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976 (RCRA). The purpose of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act of 1980, often referred to as "Superfund," is to identify and cleanup abandoned contaminated sites so that public health and welfare are not compromised. The RCRA provides for "cradle to grave" regulation of hazardous waste generated by operating entities. Other federal laws include:

- Community Environmental Response Facilitation Act (CERFA) of 1992
- Clean Water Act
- Clean Air Act
- Safe Drinking Water Act
- Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA)
- Atomic Energy Act
- Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA)
- Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA)

In addition to the acts listed above, EO 12088, *Federal Compliance with Pollution Control Standards*, mandates that necessary actions be taken to prevent and control environmental pollution when federal activities or federal facilities are involved.

California regulates hazardous materials, waste, and substances under the authority of the State Health and Safety Code and is also authorized by the federal government to implement RCRA in the state. California law also addresses specific handling, storage, transportation, disposal, treatment, reduction, cleanup, and emergency planning of hazardous waste. The Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act also restricts disposal of wastes and requires cleanup of wastes that are below hazardous waste concentrations but could impact ground and surface water quality. California regulations that address waste management and prevention and cleanup of contamination include Title 22 Division 4.5 Environmental Health Standards for the Management of Hazardous Waste, Title 23 Waters, and Title 27 Environmental Protection.

Worker and public health and safety are key issues when addressing hazardous materials that may affect human health and the environment. Proper management and disposal of hazardous material is vital if it is found, disturbed, or generated during proposed project construction.

2.3.5.2 Affected Environment

Information in this section is summarized from the Initial Site Assessment (ISA) (AECOM 2023f). The ISA consisted of a focused regulatory agency database records search and a review of reasonably ascertainable historical information sources (e.g., historical aerial photographs, fire insurance maps, historical topographic maps, and oil and gas maps) to evaluate whether prior land uses have used or stored hazardous materials within or adjacent to the proposed project. A visual survey was also performed from ROWs and/or other publicly accessible areas to document property conditions and activities.

It was not feasible to evaluate the entire proposed project and adjacent and surrounding areas over the course of its entire length during the site visit and reconnaissance. The evaluation of the existing ROW and adjacent and surrounding areas focused on areas where hazardous substances were identified to be likely and potentially handled. However, based upon site observations and data collected from the various historical and database sources, this particular site-related limiting condition is not expected to have a significant limitation to this assessment.

Database Review

During the agency database review, 12 environmental database report (EDR) listings were identified associated with the parcels that have been identified as having a recognized environmental condition (REC) (Partial ROW Acquisition and Temporary Easement) by the proposed project and adjoin The Old Road or Rye Canyon Road. Table 2-36 shows the associated listings.

Table 2-36 Summary of Proposed Project EDR Listings

Facility Name	Facility Address	Description	REC	(APN) Parcel Acquisitions
The Blue Moon Café (EDR ID H45)	28743 The Old Road	Reportable air emissions in 1990	No	(2826005007) Partial ROW Acquisition. Small acquisition in southeast corner of parcel, adjacent to The Old Road.
LA County Sanitation District-Valencia Water Reclamation Plan (EDR ID 84/O88-O112)	28185 The Old Road	Release of diesel in 1993 during removal of 10,000-gallon UST. Soil removal activities completed in 2009, closure certification issued in 2015	No	(2826006900) Not within an acquired parcel.
Jack-in-the-Box #03390 (EDR ID O130-O131)	28144 The Old Road	Chemical storage facility. Related to storm water and industrial wastewater discharges at the site compliance-related and not indicative of a release	No	(2826121003) Not within an acquired parcel.

Table 2-36 Summary of Proposed Project EDR Listings

Facility Name	Facility Address	Description	REC	(APN) Parcel Acquisitions
Moller Retail #6123/Ashdon Development/A Shell of a Place/The Old Road Shell (EDR ID O113-O129, 341)	28120 The Old Road	Gasoline station located at this site, compliance-related and not indicative of a release	No	(2826121003) Not within an acquired parcel.
Original Tommy's Burgers (EDR ID P132)	28116 The Old Road	Related to storm water and industrial wastewater discharges at the site compliance-related and not indicative of a release	No	(2826121005) Not within an acquired parcel.
Del Taco #883 (EDR ID P134)	28082 The Old Road	Related to storm water and industrial wastewater discharges at the site compliance-related and not indicative of a release	No	(2826121004) Not within an acquired parcel.
Valencia Chevron/Flyers #228/Speedway No. 1481/46178/Texaco Star Mart/Tesoro Refining & Marketing Company LLC Site #47300/Fleet Card Fuels/Arco #47300 (EDR ID S171-S195)	28070 The Old Road	Gasoline station since 1996. Gasoline release discovered in 2011, groundwater monitoring conducted and case was closed in 2018 under the Low-Threat UST Closure Policy; petroleum hydrocarbon impacts were not detected in the groundwater monitoring well	No	(2826121001 and -002) Temporary Easement. Parking lot will be temporarily impacted along The Old Road.
Jimmy Dean's Restaurant (EDR ID 204)	28018 The Old Road	Related to storm water and industrial wastewater discharges at the site compliance-related and not indicative of a release	No	(2826121006) Partial ROW Acquisition and Temporary Easement. Permanent and temporary impacts along Rye Canyon Road.
Soapy Suds Car Wash/Brazil Granite & Marble Co. (EDR ID T198-T199)	28038 The Old Road	Related to storm water and industrial wastewater discharges at the site compliance-related and not indicative of a release	No	(2826121007) Partial ROW Acquisition. Small acquisition in southeast corner of parcel, adjacent to The Old Road.
US Healthworks (EDR IS U200-U203)	25733 Rye Canyon Road	No violations reported	No	(2866009014) Partial ROW Acquisition and Temporary Easement. Permanent and temporary impacts

Table 2-36 Summary of Proposed Project EDR Listings

Facility Name	Facility Address	Description	REC	(APN) Parcel Acquisitions
				along Rye Canyon Road.
Newhall Land & Farming Co./HR Textron Inc. Hydraulic Research/XMI Corp./Allied Signal Automotive/Applied Enviro Tech (EDR ID R135-H141)	25709 Rye Canyon Road	No violations reported; related to storm water and industrial wastewater discharges at the site compliance-related and not indicative of a release	No	(2866009014) Same as above.
Semco Instruments Inc. (EDR ID R170)	25700 Rye Canyon Road	No violations reported; related to storm water and industrial wastewater discharges at the site compliance-related and not indicative of a release	No	(2866008001) Partial ROW Acquisition and Temporary Easement. Permanent and temporary impacts along Rye Canyon Road.

Based on the review of these database listings, none of these EDR listings are considered to represent RECs to the proposed project. A REC is defined by the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) Standard as "the presence or likely presence of any hazardous substances or petroleum products in, on, or at a property: (1) due to any release to the environment; (2) under conditions indicative of a release to the environment; or (3) under conditions that pose a material threat of a future release to the environment." The term includes hazardous substances or petroleum products even under conditions in compliance with laws.

Twenty-four accidental spills/incidents were identified along The Old Road, as reported in the Cal OES HazMat Spill Notification database. These incidents are not expected to have created a REC to the proposed project based on one or more of the following: 1) the incident did not occur within the proposed project; 2) cleanup was completed; 3) type of material released; 4) quantity of the material released; or 5) the lack of listing in regulatory databases requiring remedial action, and, therefore, are not considered to represent RECs to the proposed project. Additionally, two plugged and abandoned oil/gas wells were identified in and adjacent to the proposed project, respectively. One of these wells is a REC, as it is located within the central portion of the proposed project in the southbound lanes of The Old Road near the intersection of The Old Road and the I-5 on/off-ramps.

Two plugged and abandoned oil/gas wells were identified in and adjacent to the proposed project, respectively. One of these wells is located within the central portion of the proposed project in the southbound lanes of The Old Road near the intersection of The Old Road and the I-5 on/off-ramps (Phase 2 portion of the proposed project). This oil/gas well was identified on CalGEM's WellSTAR online database as API# 037-16533, Newhall Land & Farming Co. No. 75 well. The other well is located adjacent to the north of the northern portion of the proposed project within the paved parking lot of the Gateway Promenade Shopping Center, located at 28656 to 28788 The Old Road. The oil/gas well potentially located in the southbound lanes of The Old Road near the intersection of The Old Road and the I-5 On- and Off-ramps was not identified in a geophysical survey conducted in April 2023.

Project Site Visit

An aerially deposited lead (ADL) survey for the project was conducted by Leighton Consulting, Inc. (Leighton) between March 27 and April 6, 2023. This survey was conducted to assess if the soil will be suitable to remain onsite or if excavation and disposal will be required during project construction, based on the lead concentrations identified in the soil at the Site. In addition, the laboratory results determine how the material should be classified for handling and disposal purposes with respect to lead. The classifications are:

- Non-hazardous;
- Non-Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) hazardous waste (i.e. State of California hazardous waste); and
- RCRA hazardous waste (i.e. Federal hazardous waste).

Soil samples were collected in laboratory-supplied 8-ounce glass jars with Teflon-lined lids. At least 200 grams of soil was collected per sample. The sample containers were clearly marked with sample identification, depth of the sample, date and time of collection, selected analyses and methods, preservatives (if used), and sampler's name. The soils encountered during this investigation were generally pale to dark brown, dry to moist silty sands, sandy silts, clayey sands, or poorly-graded sands with some gravel. In contrast with the rest of the soil borings sampled during this ADL survey, soil boring B108 contained lumber fragments and coarse gravel base material between 1 foot and 2 feet bgs. Groundwater was not encountered in any of the borings.

The soil samples were described and classified using the Unified Soil Classification System (USCS). No visible evidence of soil contamination (e.g., odor, staining) was encountered during sampling activities. Total lead was detected in 38 of the 367 soil samples at concentrations that exceed the DTSC-SL of 80 mg/kg for residential settings (unrestricted use); However, statistical analysis of the total lead data set, including non-detections, indicated the soils as non-hazardous/unrestricted. Overall, soils investigated during this ADL survey were not characterized as RCRA hazardous waste with the exception of soil in the vicinity of boring B97 and B103. AMM HAZ-4 would be incorporated for the excavation and transport of soils to an appropriate disposal facility. HAZ-4 would also include LACPW Special Provisions during construction when handling lead contaminated soils. The soil within the remainder of the Phase II project limits is considered as nonhazardous/ unrestricted or suitable for reuse onsite.

The following non-ASTM environmental concerns were identified, which are considered Caltrans transportation project hazards:

- Aerially deposited lead (ADL) may be present in unpaved areas along the proposed project, which if disturbed should be evaluated to ensure worker safety. If excavated soils are to be transported from the proposed project, they should be sampled for classification purposes.
- Asbestos-Containing Material (ACM) may be associated with structures in the proposed project including both bridges and pipelines.

- It is possible that lead-based paint (LBP) is still used in industrial settings, such as for street improvements. In addition, the railings, fencing, metal beams and other exposed metal elements associated with the bridges in the proposed project may contain LBP.

- The existing yellow thermoplastic paint and pavement marking originally used for traffic striping may contain lead along The Old Road.

- Abandoned (former) UPRR tracks are located in the area of the existing Multi-Use Trail and the proposed extension to the Multi-Use Trail.

- Treated wood waste (TWW) in the proposed project area could include utility poles, roadside wooden signposts, metal beam guardrail posts or former railroad lines.

2.3.5.3 Environmental Consequences

2.3.5.3.1 Alternative 1: No-Build Alternative

The No-Build Alternative would have no earth-moving activities; this alternative would not affect potential hazardous material sites in the proposed project area.

2.3.5.3.2 Alternative 2: Build Alternative

Construction

ADL from the historical use of leaded gasoline, exists along roadways throughout California. There is the likely presence of soils with elevated concentrations of lead as a result of ADL on the state highway system ROW within the limits of the proposed project alternatives.

As discussed above, one oil well is considered to represent a REC to the proposed project. One plugged oil/gas well (API No. 037-16533, known as Newhall Land & Farming Co., No.75) is located within the central portion of the proposed project in the southbound lanes of The Old Road and the I-5 on/off ramps. This oil well was advanced in 1962 by Humble Oil & Refining Company to a total depth of 13,700 feet. This well was plugged and abandoned in 1968 in accordance with applicable DOGGR regulations at that time. Humble Oil & Refining Company was later acquired by ExxonMobil Corporation. If this plugged oil/gas well is encountered during construction of the proposed project, it would need to be re-abandoned in accordance with current CalGEM rules and regulations. In addition, as a result of the informal agreement between CalGEM and Caltrans, a gas mitigation plan would need to be obtained and submitted to CalGEM.

In addition, as noted in the Aerial Deposited Lead Survey (Leighton Consulting Inc. 2023) completed for the proposed project, no soils investigated during the survey were characterized as RCRA hazardous waste. Soluble lead concentrations were reported above the non-RCRA hazardous waste value of 5.0 mg/L in two samples collected from the initial assessment at soil borings B97 and B103. Soluble lead concentrations reported from the analysis on all other soil samples were below the RCRA-hazardous waste value of 5 mg/L.

Two areas of soil are recommended for excavation and transport to an appropriate disposal facility; however, the soil within the remainder of the proposed project limits is considered as nonhazardous/unrestricted or suitable for reuse onsite.

Operation

Operation of the proposed project would not release hazardous materials. However, vehicles travelling on The Old Road would continue to generate pollutants from tire and brake wear, oil and grease leaks, and exhaust emissions. The release of these pollutants would be similar to existing conditions; therefore, the proposed project would not result in any new adverse effects.

2.3.5.4 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

The Build Alternative would avoid impacts on hazardous wastes or materials to the extent practicable while adhering to design and operational criteria to maintain a safe roadway. However, based on the findings and conclusions of the ISA, the following AMMs will be implemented under the Build Alternative:

HAZ-1: If the plugged oil/gas well within the central portion of the proposed project is disturbed during construction of the proposed project, it would need to be re-abandoned in accordance with current CalGEM regulations. In addition, as a result of the informal agreement between CalGEM and EPD, a gas mitigation plan would need to be obtained and submitted to CalGEM.

HAZ-2: Crude oil/liquid petroleum pipelines run along The Old Road within the proposed project. If the pipelines are to be exposed and/or relocated, impacts to the subsurface may be encountered. Impacts to the subsurface discovered from these pipelines and any repairs to the pipelines would be the responsibility of the pipeline owner.

HAZ-3: The proposed project includes upgrades to traffic signal equipment and relocation/installation of traffic pole standards and traffic signal equipment as necessary due to new lane configurations, which may generate universal wastes and electronic wastes (E-wastes). Universal wastes and E-wastes generated as part of the proposed project should be properly disposed in accordance with applicable regulations.

HAZ-4: ADL may be present in the unpaved areas adjacent to the roadway, which, if disturbed should be evaluated to ensure worker safety. If excavated/excess soils are to be transported from the area of the proposed project, they should be sampled and handled in accordance with applicable regulations to ensure worker safety and for classification purposes. The potential presence of ADL will be addressed during the Plan, Specifications, & Estimates (PS&E) phase of the proposed project and would be handled in accordance with LACPW Special Provisions. LACPW Special Provisions would be required during construction when handling lead contaminated soils.

HAZ-5: The proposed project includes the replacement of two bridges (over Santa Clara River and the abandoned UPRR tracks). Demolition of the two existing bridges will be subject to the National Emissions Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants regulations. The regulations require notification to the delegated air district prior to demolition of concrete structures regardless of whether asbestos was detected. The regulations require that an ACM Survey be conducted and that the Survey report be part of the notification submittal to the regulatory agency. The ACM Survey should be conducted by a Certified Asbestos Consultant (CAC), and samples should be collected from concrete, brown fibrous expansion joint fill material, and other materials the CAC suspects to contain asbestos.

HAZ-6: Suspect LBP associated with painted curbs, poles, protective bollards, and fire hydrants within the proposed project including railings, fencing, metal beams, and other exposed metal elements associated with the bridges should be sampled and handled in

accordance with applicable regulations to ensure worker safety and for classification purposes. The removal and testing of bridge paint and pavement markings including painted curbs will be managed during construction under specific LACPW Special Provisions. A Lead Compliance Plan under LACPW Special Provision would be required during construction when removal of lead-based paint, thermoplastic, painted traffic stripe, and/or pavement marking.

HAZ-7: Thermoplastic paint and yellow-painted traffic stripes/pavement markings, which typically contain lead chromate, have been used for marking within the proposed project (roadway and curbs) and, as such, would require special removal, handling, and disposal. The removal and testing of all thermoplastic paint and pavement markings will be managed during construction under LACPW Special Provisions.

HAZ-8: Utility relocations are needed at several intersections proposed for improvements along The Old Road due to widening of The Old Road and for the proposed bridge improvements. The proposed project would also include the reconstruction of existing drainage facilities and catch basins and construction of new drainage facilities and catch basins, as needed. Dewatering activities are not anticipated as part of the utility relocations within the proposed project.

HAZ-9: If soil in the area of the abandoned UPRR railroad tracks and proposed Multi-Use Trail extension is planned for excavation and off-site disposal as part of the proposed project, soil should be sampled and analyzed for the potential presence of petroleum hydrocarbons, volatile organic compounds (VOCs), metals, herbicides, and pesticides. During construction, soil excavations conducted on-site should be monitored for visible soil staining and odor. Impacted soil should be disposed off-site in accordance with pertinent local, state, and federal regulatory guidelines.

HAZ-10: TWW such as utility poles, roadside wooden signposts, metal beam guardrail posts, or former railroad ties should be handled properly in accordance with applicable regulations and may require special removal, handling, and disposal. All TWW should be managed during construction under LACPW Special Provisions if TWW is generated.

HAZ-11: Contractors working at the proposed project, or removing soil materials and/or groundwater from the proposed project site, should be aware of appropriate handling and disposal methods or options. Higher levels of potential contaminants could be present at some locations; therefore, material moved or removed may require individual or specific testing to verify it is at levels below regulatory action limits.

HAZ-12: It is anticipated that construction of the bridge piles could encounter groundwater based on the 1997 Seismic Hazard Report for the Newhall Quadrangle. Therefore, the slurry displacement method of construction will be utilized and will be specified in Section B of the bridge specifications. Once groundwater is encountered, drilling slurry would be placed in the hole to an elevation of 10 feet above the groundwater. As drilling progresses, drilling slurry would be added to the hole to maintain the same elevation of 10 feet above the groundwater. The slurry displacement method would contain any debris with concrete barriers and plastic sheeting. Groundwater is not anticipated from the slurry displacement method of construction, and any debris will be placed into Baker tanks.

HAZ-13: California Government Code Section 4216 requires that any operator or excavator call Underground Services Alert of California (“DigAlert”) 2 working days before any planned excavation by dialing 811. Delineation of the proposed excavation area is mandatory. The area to be excavated should be marked with water soluble or chalk-based white paint on paved surfaces or with other suitable markings such as flags or stakes on unpaved areas prior to calling DigAlert.

HAZ-14: A site-specific Health and Safety Plan (HSP) should be prepared consistent with LACPW Special Provisions. The HSP should include identification of key personnel;

summary of risk assessment for workers, the community, and the environment; air monitoring plan; and emergency response plan.

HAZ-15: As is the case for any project that proposes excavation, the potential exists for unknown hazardous contamination to be revealed during project construction. For any previously unknown hazardous waste/material encountered during construction, the procedures outlined in LACPW Special Provisions and Procedures should be followed and implemented during construction activities as well as SCAQMD Rule 1166 and SCAQMD Rule 1466.

HAZ-16: During construction activities, BMPs should be implemented including temporary construction site BMPs and the regulatory permit compliance component for the State's Construction General Permit for applicability of a SWPPP (based in part on the soil DSAs shown on the phased plans) and compliance with the County's MS4 NPDES permit as well as adherence to the County's Construction Site BMP Manual and SWPPP preparation manual.

2.3.6 Air Quality

2.3.6.1 Regulatory Setting

The Federal Clean Air Act (FCAA), as amended, is the primary federal law that governs air quality while the California Clean Air Act is its companion state law. These laws, and related regulations by U.S. EPA and California Air Resources Board (ARB), set standards for the concentration of pollutants in the air. At the federal level, these standards are called National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). NAAQS and state ambient air quality standards have been established for six criteria pollutants that have been linked to potential health concerns: carbon monoxide (CO), nitrogen dioxide (NO_2), ozone (O_3), particulate matter (PM)—which is broken down for regulatory purposes into particles of 10 micrometers or smaller (PM_{10}) and particles of 2.5 micrometers and smaller ($PM_{2.5}$), lead (Pb), and sulfur dioxide (SO_2). In addition, state standards exist for visibility-reducing particles, sulfates, hydrogen sulfide (H_2S), and vinyl chloride. The NAAQS and state standards are set at levels that protect public health with a margin of safety and are subject to periodic review and revision. Both state and federal regulatory schemes also cover toxic air contaminants (air toxics); some criteria pollutants are also air toxics or may include certain air toxics in their general definition.

Federal air quality standards and regulations provide the basic scheme for project-level air quality analysis under NEPA. In addition to this environmental analysis, a parallel "Conformity" requirement under the FCAA applies.

Conformity

The conformity requirement is based on FCAA Section 176(c), which prohibits USDOT and other federal agencies from funding, authorizing, or approving plans, programs, or projects that do not conform to the State Implementation Plan (SIP) for attaining the NAAQS. "Transportation Conformity" applies to highway and transit projects and takes place on two levels: the regional (or planning and programming) level and the project level. The proposed project must conform at both levels to be approved.

Conformity requirements apply only in nonattainment and "maintenance" (former nonattainment) areas for the NAAQS, and only for the specific NAAQS that are or were violated. U.S. EPA regulations in 40 CFR 93 govern the conformity process. Conformity requirements do not apply

in unclassifiable/attainment areas for NAAQS and do not apply at all for state standards regardless of the status of the area.

Regional conformity is concerned with how well the regional transportation system supports plans for attaining the NAAQS for CO, NO_2, O_3, PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$, and in some areas (although not in California) SO_2. California has nonattainment or maintenance areas for all of these transportation-related "criteria pollutants" except SO_2 and also has a nonattainment area for Pb; however, Pb is not currently required by the FCAA to be covered in transportation conformity analysis. Regional conformity is based on emission analysis of RTPs and FTIPs that include all transportation projects planned for a region over a period of at least 20 years (for the RTP) and 4 years (for the FTIP). RTP and FTIP conformity uses travel demand and emission models to determine whether or not the implementation of those projects would conform to emission budgets or other tests at various analysis years showing that requirements of the FCAA and the SIP are met. If the conformity analysis is successful, the MPO, FHWA, and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) make the determinations that the RTP and FTIP are in conformity with the SIP for achieving the goals of the FCAA. Otherwise, the projects in the RTP and/or FTIP must be modified until conformity is attained. If the design concept and scope and the "open-to-traffic" schedule of a proposed transportation project are the same as described in the RTP and FTIP, then the proposed project meets regional conformity requirements for purposes of project-level analysis.

Project-level conformity is achieved by demonstrating that the project comes from a conforming RTP and TIP; the proposed project has a design concept and scope[3] that has not changed significantly from those in the RTP and TIP; project analyses have used the latest planning assumptions and EPA-approved emissions models; and in PM areas, the proposed project complies with any control measures in the SIP. Furthermore, additional analyses (known as hot-spot analyses) may be required for projects located in CO and PM nonattainment or maintenance areas to examine localized air quality impacts.

Mobile Source Air Toxics

Controlling air toxic emissions became a national priority with the passage of the Clean Air Act Amendments (CAAA) of 1990, whereby Congress mandated that the U.S. EPA regulate 188 air toxics, also known as hazardous air pollutants. The U.S. EPA has assessed this expansive list in its rule on the Control of Hazardous Air Pollutants from Mobile Sources (Federal Register, Vol. 72, No. 37, page 8430, February 26, 2007), and identified a group of 93 compounds emitted from mobile sources that are part of U.S. EPA's Integrated Risk Information System (IRIS) (https://www.epa.gov/iris). In addition, the U.S. EPA identified nine compounds with significant contributions from mobile sources that are among the national and regional-scale cancer risk drivers or contributors and non-hazard contributors from the 2011 National Air Toxics Assessment (NATA) (https://www.epa.gov/national-air-toxics-assessment). These are *1,3-butadiene*, *acetaldehyde*, *acrolein*, *benzene*, *diesel particulate matter (diesel PM)*, *ethylbenzene*, *formaldehyde*, *naphthalene*, and *polycyclic organic matter*. While the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) considers these the priority MSAT, the list is subject to change and may be adjusted in consideration of future U.S. EPA rules.

The 2007 U.S. EPA rule mentioned above requires controls that will dramatically decrease MSAT emissions through cleaner fuels and cleaner engines. According to an FHWA analysis using U.S. EPA's MOVES3 model, even if vehicle activity (vehicle-miles traveled, VMT)

[3] "Design concept" means the type of facility that is proposed, such as a freeway or arterial highway. "Design scope" refers to those aspects of the project that would clearly affect capacity and thus any regional emissions analysis, such as the number of lanes and the length of the project.

increases by 31 percent from 2020 to 2060 as forecast, a combined reduction of 76 percent in the total annual emission rate for the priority MSATs is projected for the same time period, as shown in Figure 2-1 of the Air Quality Report. Diesel PM is the dominant component of MSAT emissions, making up 36 to 56 percent of all priority MSAT pollutants by mass, depending on calendar year.

2.3.6.2 Affected Environment

Information in this section is summarized from the Air Quality Report (TAHA 2023a).

Climate Meteorology, and Topography

The proposed project is located in unincorporated Stevenson Ranch area Los Angeles County, in proximity to the City of Santa Clarita. This area is within the South Coast Air Basin (SCAB), which includes Orange County and portions of Los Angeles, Riverside, and San Bernardino Counties. Air quality regulation in SCAB is administered by SCAQMD.

The climate of the proposed project area is generally Mediterranean in character, with cool winters (average 55.7 degrees Fahrenheit in January) and warm, dry summers (average 77.2 degrees Fahrenheit in July). Temperature inversions are common, affecting localized pollutant concentrations in the winter and enhancing O_3 formation in the summer. Mountains averaging 4,000 to 6,000 feet in altitude tend to trap pollutants in the region by limiting air flow. Annual average rainfall is 10.6 inches (at Van Nuys Airport), mainly falling during the winter months.

Criteria Pollutants and Attainment Status

Table 2-1 in the Air Quality Report (TAHA 2023a) lists the state and federal attainment status for all regulated pollutants for the Los Angeles County portion of the SCAB, and Table 2-2 in the Air Quality Report (TAHA 2023a) summarizes the sources and health effects of the six criteria pollutants and pollutants regulated in the State of California. As shown below, the SCAB portion of the County is designated as Extreme Nonattainment of the federal 8-hour average O_3 standard and Moderate Nonattainment of the 24-hour average $PM_{2.5}$ standard. The SCAB portion of the County has been in maintenance of the federal 24-hour average PM_{10} standard since 2013 and has been in maintenance of the federal CO standard since 2007. NO_2 concentrations have been consistently below the NAAQS since the Maintenance designation in 1998. The SCAB portion of the County is in attainment of the federal standard for SO_2 and is in partial nonattainment of the Pb NAAQS.

At the state level, the SCAB portion of the County and the proposed project area are designated as nonattainment of the CAAQS for O3, PM10, and PM2.5, and are in attainment of all other state air quality standards.

Table 2-2 in the Air Quality Report (TAHA 2023a) lists air quality trends in data collected at Santa Clarita Monitoring Station (22224 Placerita Canyon) for the past 5 years. The Santa Clarita Monitoring Station is the closest monitoring site to the proposed project area and provides data that are most representative of air quality conditions near the proposed project. As shown in Table 2-39, concentrations of O_3 exceeded the corresponding air quality standards numerous times in each year during the 5-year monitoring period between 2017 and 2021. Concentrations of PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ generally remained below the NAAQS, with one exception for $PM_{2.5}$ in 2020. The recorded concentrations in excess of the NAAQS are indicative of the ongoing air quality challenges facing the region and are demonstrative of the designated nonattainment statuses. Table 3-2 in the Air Quality Report (TAHA 2023a) displays a summary

of the current status of Approved SIPs for the SCAB portion of the County. The region has been in maintenance of NO_2 since 1998, CO since 2007, and PM_{10} since 2013. The 2016 Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP) outlined an attainment deadline of 2021 for the 2012 $PM_{2.5}$ standard; however, U.S. EPA extended the deadline for "Serious" nonattainment areas from 2021 to 2025. The 2022 AQMP indicates an attainment deadline of 2037 for the 2015 8-hour O_3 standard.

Mobile Source Air Toxics

Sources of MSAT emissions in the project area primarily include mobile source emissions from vehicles traversing along The Old Road, I-5, SR 126, and Magic Mountain Parkway. No MSAT monitoring sites were identified in the vicinity of the Project. The Santa Clarita Monitoring station does not record MSAT concentrations. The nearest is located in the City of Simi Valley, approximately five miles southwest of the project site. MSAT concentrations in the City of Simi Valley would not be representative of the project area due to differences in traffic conditions, climate, meteorology, and topography.

The Build Alternative is not categorically excluded by 23 CFR 771.117(c), CAA pursuant to 40 CRF 93.126, and therefore a discussion of MSAT emissions is warranted. FHWA released updated guidance in January 2023 (FHWA, 2023) for determining when and how to address MSAT impacts in the NEPA process for transportation projects. FHWA identified three levels of analysis:

- No analysis for projects with no potential for meaningful MSAT effects;
- Qualitative analysis for projects with low potential MSAT effects; and
- Quantitative analysis to differentiate alternatives for projects with higher potential MSAT effects.
- Projects with no meaningful potential MSAT effects, or exempt projects include those that:
- Projects qualifying as a categorical exclusion under 23 CFR 771.117;
- Projects exempt under the Clean Air Act conformity rule under 40 CFR 93.126; and
- Other projects with no meaningful impacts on traffic volumes or vehicle mix.

For projects that are categorically excluded under 23 CFR 771.117, or are exempt from conformity requirements under the Clean Air Act pursuant to 40 CFR 93.126, no analysis or discussion of MSAT is necessary. Documentation sufficient to demonstrate that the project qualifies as a categorical exclusion and/or exempt project will suffice. For other projects with no or negligible traffic impacts, regardless of the class of NEPA environmental document, no MSAT analysis is recommended. However, the project record should document in the EA or EIS the basis for the determination of no meaningful potential impacts with a brief description of the factors considered. Example language, which must be modified to correspond with local and project-specific circumstances, is provided in Appendix A of the FHWA Updated Interim Guidance on MSAT Analysis in NEPA Documents.

Projects that have low potential MSAT effects are those that serve to improve highway, transit, or freight operations or movement without adding substantial new capacity or creating a facility that is likely to substantially increase emissions. The large majority of projects fall into this

category. The types of projects included in this category are those that serve to improve operations of highway, transit, or freight without adding substantial new capacity or without creating a facility that is likely to meaningfully increase MSAT emissions. This category covers a broad range of projects.

Projects with Higher Potential MSAT Effects fall into a category that includes projects that have the potential for meaningful differences in MSAT emissions among project alternatives include those that:

- Create or significantly alter a major intermodal freight facility that has the potential to concentrate high levels of diesel particulate matter in a single location, involving a significant number of diesel vehicles for new projects or accommodating with a significant increase in the number of diesel vehicles for expansion projects; or

- Create new capacity or add significant capacity to urban highways such as interstates, urban arterials, or urban collector-distributor routes with traffic volumes where the AADT is projected to be in the range of 140,000 to 150,0005 or greater by the design year;

And also

- Be proposed to be located in proximity to populated areas.

Projects falling within this category should be more rigorously assessed for impacts. If a project falls within this category, you should contact the Office of Natural Environment (HEPN) and the Office of Project Development and Environmental Review (HEPE) in FHWA Headquarters for assistance in developing a specific approach for assessing impacts. This approach would include a quantitative analysis6 to forecast local-specific emission trends of the priority MSAT for each alternative, to use as a basis of comparison. This analysis also may address the potential for cumulative impacts, where appropriate, based on local conditions. How and when cumulative impacts should be considered would be addressed as part of the assistance outlined above.

Based on the ARB Land Use Handbook (Cal/EPA and ARB, 2005), it is generally recommended in California that projects perform an emissions analysis to address CEQA requirements if any of the following criteria are met:

- The project changes capacity or realigns a freeway, or urban road with AADT of 100,000 or more and there are sensitive land uses within 500 feet of the roadway.

- The project changes capacity or realigns a rural road (non-freeway) with AADT of 50,000 or more and there are sensitive land uses within 500 feet of the roadway.

- As summarized in Table 1-5, the maximum AADT on roadways within the study area was forecasted to be 45,368 vehicles in 2028 and 60,657 vehicles in 2048 with implementation of the Build Alternative. Maximum AADT would be well below the 140,000 AADT benchmark for a quantitative analysis in the horizon year of 2048 within the project area.

A qualitative analysis was performed and derived in part from a study conducted by the FHWA entitled, “A Methodology for Evaluating Mobile Source Air Toxic Emissions Among

Transportation Project Alternatives," which provided a basis for identifying and comparing the potential differences among MSAT emissions, if any, from the Build and No Build Alternatives.

Sensitive Receptors and Community Health Risks

Under the FCAA, ambient air quality must meet the standards for criteria air pollutants in all locations generally accessible to the public; however, some land uses are considered more sensitive to air pollution than others. Sensitive receptors include residential areas, schools, hospitals, other health care facilities, child/day care facilities, parks, and playgrounds. There are no sensitive receptors within 500 feet of the proposed project limits. Nearby land uses include commercial properties, hotels, restaurants, gas stations, the Valencia Water Reclamation Plant, and an office park.

2.3.6.3 Environmental Consequences

2.3.6.3.1 Alternative 1: No-Build Alternative

This alternative would not result in the construction of any of the proposed improvements and, therefore, would not result in temporary, construction-related impacts or substantial long-term effects associated with air quality. However, Deficiencies related to air quality in traffic demand and roadway operations such as congestion and inconsistency with jurisdictional plans and policies would remain and continue to worsen under this scenario since this alternative would not increase regional roadway capacity and improve safety to accommodate expected future traffic growth projections.

2.3.6.3.2 Alternative 2: Build Alternative

Short-term Effects (Construction Emissions)

The proposed project will result in short-term degradation of air quality during construction by generating airborne dust from such activities as clearing, grading, hauling, demolition, or excavation for roadway improvements. Emissions from construction equipment powered by gasoline and diesel engines are also anticipated and would include CO, NO_x, VOCs, directly emitted PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$, and toxic air contaminants such as diesel exhaust PM. Construction activities are expected to increase traffic congestion in the area, resulting in increases in emissions from traffic during the delays. These emissions would be temporary and limited to the immediate area surrounding the construction site.

Construction-related emissions for the Build Alternative are presented in Table 2-37. The emissions represent the peak daily construction emissions that would be generated by each alternative, considering combined emissions from overlapping construction activities associated with The Old Road improvements and the bridge replacements.

Table 2-37: Construction Emissions for the Build Alternative

Phase/Activity	PM_{10} (lbs./day)	$PM_{2.5}$ (lbs./day)	CO (lbs./day)	NO_x (lbs./day)	CO_2 (tons/day)
2024 Construction Activity Emissions					
West Bridge Replacement – Site Prep	11.4	3.2	28.0	33.2	5.0
The Old Road (N) – Clearing/Grubbing	21.3	5.3	26.0	28.3	3.1
The Old Road (N) – Excavation/Grading	22.2	5.7	35.3	56.7	10.2

Table 2-37: Construction Emissions for the Build Alternative

Phase/Activity	PM_{10} (lbs./day)	$PM_{2.5}$ (lbs./day)	CO (lbs./day)	NO_x (lbs./day)	CO_2 (tons/day)
2025 Construction Activity Emissions					
The Old Road (N) – Excavation/Grading	22.2	5.7	35.3	56.7	10.2
The Old Road (N) – Utilities/Sub-Grade	21.0	5.0	24.3	21.6	3.2
2026 Construction Activity Emissions					
The Old Road (N) – Utilities/Sub-Grade	21.0	5.0	24.3	21.6	3.2
The Old Road (N) – Paving/Restoration	1.1	0.8	24.4	25.2	4.7
West Bridge Replacement – Foundations	11.0	2.9	24.8	21.4	3.3
West Bridge Replacement – Bridge Deck	10.9	2.8	27.4	20.4	3.1
The Old Road (S) – Clearing/Grubbing	21.2	5.2	25.2	24.8	3.1
2027 Construction Activity Emissions					
West Bridge Replacement – Bridge Deck	10.9	2.8	27.4	20.4	3.1
The Old Road (S) – Clearing/Grubbing	21.2	5.2	25.2	24.8	3.1
The Old Road (S) – Excavation/Grading	22.1	5.6	34.3	54.0	10.0
East Bridge Replacement – Site Prep	11.0	2.9	24.5	22.2	3.4
East Bridge Replacement – Foundations	11.0	2.9	29.1	21.8	3.2
The Old Road (S) – Utilities/Sub-Grade	21.0	5.0	23.9	21.6	3.2
2028 Construction Activity Emissions					
The Old Road (S) – Utilities/Sub-Grade	21.0	5.0	23.9	21.6	3.2
East Bridge Replacement – Bridge Deck	10.9	2.8	27.1	20.4	3.1
The Old Road (S) – Paving/Restoration	1.1	0.8	24.1	25.1	4.6
Emissions Analysis					
2024 Maximum Daily Emissions (lbs./day)	32.7	8.5	54.0	61.5	8.1
2025 Maximum Daily Emissions (lbs./day)	22.2	5.7	35.3	56.7	10.2
2026 Maximum Daily Emissions (lbs./day)	32.1	8.0	52.6	46.6	8.0
2027 Maximum Daily Emissions (lbs./day)	33.1	8.5	63.4	76.2	13.4
2028 Maximum Daily Emissions (lbs./day)	31.9	7.8	51.2	45.5	7.7
All Maximum Daily Emissions (lbs./day)	33.1	8.5	63.4	76.2	13.4
Total Build Alternative Emissions (tons)	17.4	4.5	32.9	35.6	11,797.3
Annual Average Emissions (tons)	*3.9*	*1.0*	*7.3*	*7.9*	*2,621.6*

Source: Air Quality Report, TAHA 2023a

Site preparation and roadway construction would involve clearing, cut-and-fill activities, grading, removing or improving existing roadways, and paving roadway surfaces. During construction, short-term degradation of air quality is expected from the release of particulate emissions (airborne dust) generated by excavation, grading, hauling, and other activities related to construction. Implementation of the following avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures would minimize construction emissions:

- The construction contractor must comply with LACPW Special Provisions in Section 14-9 (2018). Section 14-9-02 specifically requires compliance by the contractor with all applicable laws and regulations related to air quality, including air pollution control district and air quality management district regulations and local ordinances.

- Construction equipment and vehicles will be properly tuned and maintained. All construction equipment will use low sulfur fuel as required by California Code of Regulations Title 17, Section 93114.

- The construction contractor must comply with SCAQMD rules, including Rule 401 (Visible Emissions), Rule 402 (Nuisance), Rule 403 (Fugitive Dust), and Rule 1403 (Asbestos Emissions from Demolition/Renovation Activities).

- Diesel-powered off-road equipment shall limit idling in accordance with the ARB "Regulation for In-Use Off-Road Diesel-Fueled Fleets" (Title 13, CCR, Section 2449).

- Diesel-powered on-road vehicles and trucks shall limit idling in accordance with the ARB "Airborne Toxic Control Measure to Limit Diesel-Fueled Commercial Motor Vehicle Idling" (Title 13, CCR, Section 2485).

Long Term Effects (Operational Emissions)

Table 2-38 shows that the Build Alternative would result in lower gaseous criteria pollutant (NO_X, CO, and ROG/VOC) emissions than the No-Build Alternative and Existing Conditions because of improvements in vehicle delay and turnover of the regional vehicle fleet. Slight increases in PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ emissions are attributed to fugitive dust associated with break wear, tire wear, and resuspended road dust, which combined constitute over 90% of PM emissions from vehicle travel on roadways.

For project-level analysis, an NO_2 assessment protocol is not available, and emissions are best assessed as NO_X. Table 2-38 displays that the Build Alternative would result in less NO_x emissions than the No Build Alternative and Existing Conditions because of improvements in vehicle delay. No minimization measures have been identified as necessary to reduce long-term emissions

A qualitative analysis was performed and derived in part from a study conducted by the FHWA entitled, "A Methodology for Evaluating Mobile Source Air Toxic Emissions Among Transportation Project Alternatives," which provided a basis for identifying and comparing the potential differences among MSAT emissions, if any, from the Build and No Build Alternatives.

For the Build Alternative, the amount of MSATs emitted would be proportional to the VMT and total vehicle delay, assuming that other variables such as fleet mix are the same for each alternative. The Build Alternative would improve congestion throughout the project corridor, as evidenced by the increases in forecasted average speeds along The Old Road. In addition, the Build Alternative would reduce congestion and corresponding vehicle delay at study area intersections, thereby reducing MAST emissions associated with vehicle idling. Furthermore, emissions will likely be lower than present levels in the design year as a result of EPA's national control programs that are projected to reduce annual MSAT emissions by 76 percent between 2020 and 2060 (FHWA, 2023). Local conditions may differ from these national projections in terms of fleet mix and turnover, VMT growth rates, and local control measures. However, the

magnitude of the EPA-projected reductions is so great (even after accounting for VMT growth) that MSAT emissions in the study area are likely to be lower in the future in nearly all cases.

This proposed project has been determined to generate minimal air quality impacts for FCAA criteria pollutants and has not been linked with any special MSAT concerns. As such, this proposed project will not result in changes in traffic volumes, vehicle mix, basic project location, or any other factor that would cause an increase in MSAT impacts based on VMT, vehicle mix, and speed. In addition, no sensitive receptors are located with 500 feet of the Build Alternative.

For the Build Alternative, the amount of MSATs emitted would be proportional to the VMT and total vehicle delay, assuming that other variables such as fleet mix are the same for each alternative. The Build Alternative would improve congestion throughout the project corridor, as evidenced by the increases in forecasted average speeds along The Old Road. In addition, the Build Alternative would reduce congestion and corresponding vehicle delay at study area intersections, thereby reducing MAST emissions associated with vehicle idling. Furthermore, emissions will likely be lower than present levels in the design year as a result of EPA's national control programs that are projected to reduce annual MSAT emissions by 76 percent between 2020 and 2060 (FHWA, 2023). Local conditions may differ from these national projections in terms of fleet mix and turnover, VMT growth rates, and local control measures. However, the magnitude of the EPA-projected reductions is so great (even after accounting for VMT growth) that MSAT emissions in the study area are likely to be lower in the future in nearly all cases.

It should be noted, however, that current scientific techniques, tools, and data are not sufficient to accurately estimate human health impacts from transportation projects in a way that would be useful to decision-makers. A discussion of incomplete or unavailable information is provided in 40 CFR 1502.21 and provided below:

> *Sec. 1502.22 Incomplete or Unavailable Information*
>
> *(a) When an agency is evaluating reasonably foreseeable significant adverse effects on the human environment in an environmental impact statement and there is incomplete or unavailable information, the agency shall make clear that such information is lacking.*
>
> *(b) If the incomplete but available information relevant to reasonably foreseeable significant adverse impacts is essential to a reasoned choice among alternatives and the overall costs of obtaining it are not unreasonable, the agency shall include the information in the environmental impact statement.*
>
> *(c) If the information relevant to reasonably foreseeable significant adverse impacts cannot be obtained because the overall costs of obtaining it are unreasonable or the means to obtain it are not known, the agency shall include within the environmental impact statement:*
>
> 1. *a statement that such information is incomplete or unavailable;*
> 2. *a statement of the relevance of the incomplete or unavailable information to evaluating reasonably foreseeable significant adverse impacts on the human environment;*
> 3. *a summary of existing credible scientific evidence that is relevant to evaluating the reasonably foreseeable significant adverse impacts on the human environment; and*

4. *the agency's evaluation of such impacts based upon theoretical approaches or research methods generally accepted in the scientific community. For the purposes of this section, "reasonably foreseeable" includes impacts that have catastrophic consequences, even if their probability of occurrence is low, provided that the analysis of the impacts is supported by credible scientific evidence, is not based on pure conjecture, and is within the rule of reason.*

Incomplete or Unavailable Information for Project Specific MSAT Health Impacts Analysis

In FHWA's view, information is incomplete or unavailable to credibly predict the project-specific health impacts due to changes in mobile source air toxic (MSAT) emissions associated with a proposed set of highway alternatives. The outcome of such an assessment, adverse or not, would be influenced more by the uncertainty introduced into the process through assumption and speculation rather than any genuine insight into the actual health impacts directly attributable to MSAT exposure associated with a proposed action.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is responsible for protecting the public health and welfare from any known or anticipated effect of an air pollutant. They are the lead authority for administering the Clean Air Act and its amendments and have specific statutory obligations with respect to hazardous air pollutants and MSAT. The EPA is in the continual process of assessing human health effects, exposures, and risks posed by air pollutants. They maintain the Integrated Risk Information System (IRIS), which is "a compilation of electronic reports on specific substances found in the environment and their potential to cause human health effects" (EPA, https://www.epa.gov/iris/). Each report contains assessments of non-cancerous and cancerous effects for individual compounds and quantitative estimates of risk levels from lifetime oral and inhalation exposures with uncertainty spanning perhaps an order of magnitude.

Other organizations are also active in the research and analyses of the human health effects of MSAT, including the Health Effects Institute (HEI). A number of HEI studies are summarized in Appendix D of FHWA's Updated Interim Guidance on Mobile Source Air Toxic Analysis in NEPA Documents. Among the adverse health effects linked to MSAT compounds at high exposures are: cancer in humans in occupational settings; cancer in animals; and irritation to the respiratory tract, including the exacerbation of asthma. Less obvious is the adverse human health effects of MSAT compounds at current environmental concentrations (HEI Special Report 16, https://www.healtheffects.org/publication/mobile-source-air-toxics-critical-reviewliterature-exposure-and-health-effects) or in the future as vehicle emissions substantially decrease.

The methodologies for forecasting health impacts include emissions modeling; dispersion modeling; exposure modeling; and then final determination of health impacts – each step in the process building on the model predictions obtained in the previous step. All are encumbered by technical shortcomings or uncertain science that prevents a more complete differentiation of the MSAT health impacts among a set of project alternatives. These difficulties are magnified for lifetime (i.e., 70 year) assessments, particularly because unsupportable assumptions would have to be made

regarding changes in travel patterns and vehicle technology (which affects emissions rates) over that time frame, since such information is unavailable.

It is particularly difficult to reliably forecast 70-year lifetime MSAT concentrations and exposure near roadways; to determine the portion of time that people are actually exposed at a specific location; and to establish the extent attributable to a proposed action, especially given that some of the information needed is unavailable. There are considerable uncertainties associated with the existing estimates of toxicity of the various MSAT, because of factors such as low-dose extrapolation and translation of occupational exposure data to the general population, a concern expressed by HEI (Special Report 16, https://www.healtheffects.org/publication/mobile-source-air-toxicscritical-review-literature-exposure-and-health-effects). As a result, there is no national consensus on air dose-response values assumed to protect the public health and welfare for MSAT compounds, and in particular for diesel PM. The EPA states that with respect to diesel engine exhaust, "[t]he absence of adequate data to develop a sufficiently confident dose-response relationship from the epidemiologic studies has prevented the estimation of inhalation carcinogenic risk." (EPA IRIS database, Diesel Engine Exhaust, Section II.C. https://iris.epa.gov/static/pdfs/0642_summary.pdf*).*

There is also the lack of a national consensus on an acceptable level of risk. The current context is the process used by the EPA as provided by the Clean Air Act to determine whether more stringent controls are required in order to provide an ample margin of safety to protect public health or to prevent an adverse environmental effect for industrial sources subject to the maximum achievable control technology standards, such as benzene emissions from refineries. The decision framework is a two-step process. The first step requires EPA to determine an "acceptable" level of risk due to emissions from a source, which is generally no greater than approximately 100 in a million. Additional factors are considered in the second step, the goal of which is to maximize the number of people with risks less than 1 in a million due to emissions from a source. The results of this statutory two-step process do not guarantee that cancer risks from exposure to air toxics are less than 1 in a million; in some cases, the residual risk determination could result in maximum individual cancer risks that are as high as approximately 100 in a million. In a June 2008 decision, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit upheld EPA's approach to addressing risk in its two-step decision framework. Information is incomplete or unavailable to establish that even the largest of highway projects would result in levels of risk greater than deemed acceptable.
(https://www.cadc.uscourts.gov/internet/opinions.nsf/284E23FFE079CD5985257800005 0C9DA/$file/07-1053-1120274.pdf).

Because of the limitations in the methodologies for forecasting health impacts described, any predicted difference in health impacts between alternatives is likely to be much smaller than the uncertainties associated with predicting the impacts. Consequently, the results of such assessments would not be useful to decision makers, who would need to weigh this information against project benefits, such as reducing traffic congestion, accident rates, and fatalities plus improved access for emergency response, that are better suited for quantitative analysis.

As such, this proposed project will not result in changes in traffic volumes, vehicle mix, basic project location, or any other factor that would cause an increase in MSAT impacts based on VMT, vehicle mix, and speed. In addition, no sensitive receptors are located with 500 feet of the Build Alternative.

Cumulative Impact Analysis

The cumulative impact analysis is conducted based on a summary of projections of future development and impacts contained in an adopted general planning or related planning document, or in a prior environmental document that has been certified. The proposed project is included in the SCAG Connect SoCal. The associated Air Quality Conformity Analysis verifies that Connect SoCal and the 2023 FTIP conform with the latest U.S. EPA transportation conformity regulations and the Conformity SIP. Therefore, there is no potential for the proposed project to interfere with air quality plans that are designed to reduce cumulative air quality impacts in the proposed project area. In addition, O_3, secondary PM_{10}, and secondary $PM_{2.5}$ are normally regional issues because they are formed by photochemical and chemical reactions over time in the atmosphere. Formation of O_3 and secondary PM are a function of ROG/VOC and NO_x emissions. As shown in Table 2-38, the Build Alternative would result in lower ROG/VOC and NO_X emissions than the No-Build Alternative.

Table 2-38: Summary of Comparative Emissions Analysis.

Scenario/Analysis Year	NOx (lbs./day)	CO (lbs./day)	PM_{10} (lbs./day)	$PM_{2.5}$ (lbs./day)	ROG/VOC (lbs./day)
Baseline (Existing Conditions) 2022	11.5	117.9	6.8	1.5	2.5
No-Build 2028	7.1	92.9	7.4	1.6	1.7
Build Alternative 2028	6.7	88.5	7.4	1.6	1.5
No-Build 2048	6.1	95.3	10.0	2.1	1.8
Build Alternative 2048	4.4	79.8	9.9	2.1	1.1

Source: Air Quality Report, TAHA 2023a

Transportation Conformity

The proposed project is listed in the 2020–2045 financially constrained RTP/SCS, which was determined to satisfy Transportation Conformity requirements by FHWA and FTA on June 5, 2020. The Build Alternative is also accurately listed in the 2023 FTIP documents under FTIP ID LAF3136, which was determined to satisfy Transportation Conformity requirements by FHWA and FTA on December 16, 2022. The design concept and scope of the Project is consistent with the project description in the 2020–2045 RTP and the 2023 FTIP.

2.3.6.4 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

The Build Alternative would result in less pollutant emissions than the No-Build Alternative because of improvements in vehicle delay. No minimization measures have been identified as necessary to reduce long-term emissions. Implementation of the following measures, some of which may also be required for other purposes such as storm water pollution control, will reduce air quality impacts resulting from construction activities.

> **AQ-1:** Construction Emissions. Site preparation and roadway construction would involve clearing, cut-and-fill activities, grading, removing or improving existing roadways, and paving roadway surfaces. During construction, short-term degradation of air quality is expected from the release of particulate emissions (airborne dust) generated by excavation, grading, hauling, and other activities related to construction. Implementation of the following avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures would minimize construction emissions:

- The construction contractor must comply with LACPW Special Provisions. Section 14-9-02 specifically requires compliance by the contractor with all applicable laws and regulations related to air quality, including air pollution control district and air quality management district regulations and local ordinances.

- Construction equipment and vehicles will be properly tuned and maintained. All construction equipment will use low-sulfur fuel as required by Title 17, CCR, Section 93114.

- The construction contractor must comply with SCAQMD rules, including Rule 401 (Visible Emissions), Rule 402 (Nuisance), Rule 403 (Fugitive Dust), and Rule 1403 (Asbestos Emissions from Demolition/Renovation Activities).

- Diesel-powered off-road equipment will limit idling in accordance with the ARB "Regulation for In-Use Off-Road Diesel-Fueled Fleets" (Title 13, CCR, Section 2449) and Approved Amendments.

- Diesel-powered on-road vehicles and trucks will limit idling in accordance with the ARB "Airborne Toxic Control Measure to Limit Diesel-Fueled Commercial Motor Vehicle Idling" (Title 13, CCR, Section 2485)."

Climate Change

Neither U.S. EPA nor FHWA has issued explicit guidance or methods to conduct project-level GHG analysis. FHWA emphasizes concepts of resilience and sustainability in highway planning, project development, design, operations, and maintenance. Because there have been requirements set forth in California legislation and EOs on climate change, the issue is addressed in the CEQA chapter of this document. The CEQA analysis may be used to inform the NEPA determination for the proposed project.

2.3.7 Noise

2.3.7.1 Regulatory Setting

NEPA of 1969 and CEQA provide the broad basis for analyzing and abating highway traffic noise effects. The intent of these laws is to promote the general welfare and to foster a healthy environment. The requirements for noise analysis and consideration of noise abatement and/or mitigation, however, differ between NEPA and CEQA.

California Environmental Quality Act

CEQA requires a strictly baseline versus build analysis to assess whether a proposed project will have a noise impact. If a proposed project is determined to have a significant noise impact under CEQA, then CEQA dictates that mitigation must be incorporated into the project unless the mitigation is not feasible. The rest of this section will focus on the NEPA/Title 23 Part 772 of the CFR noise analysis. Chapter 3 of this document contains further information on noise analysis under CEQA.

National Environmental Policy Act

For highway transportation projects with FHWA involvement (and Caltrans, as assigned), the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1970 and its implementing regulations (23 CFR 772) govern the analysis and abatement of traffic noise impacts. The regulations require that potential noise impacts in areas of frequent human use be identified during the planning and design of a highway project. The regulations include NAC that are used to determine when a noise impact would occur. The NAC differ depending on the type of land use under analysis. For example, the NAC for residences (67 dBA) is lower than the NAC for commercial areas (72 dBA). The following table lists the NAC for use in the NEPA/23 CFR 772 analysis.

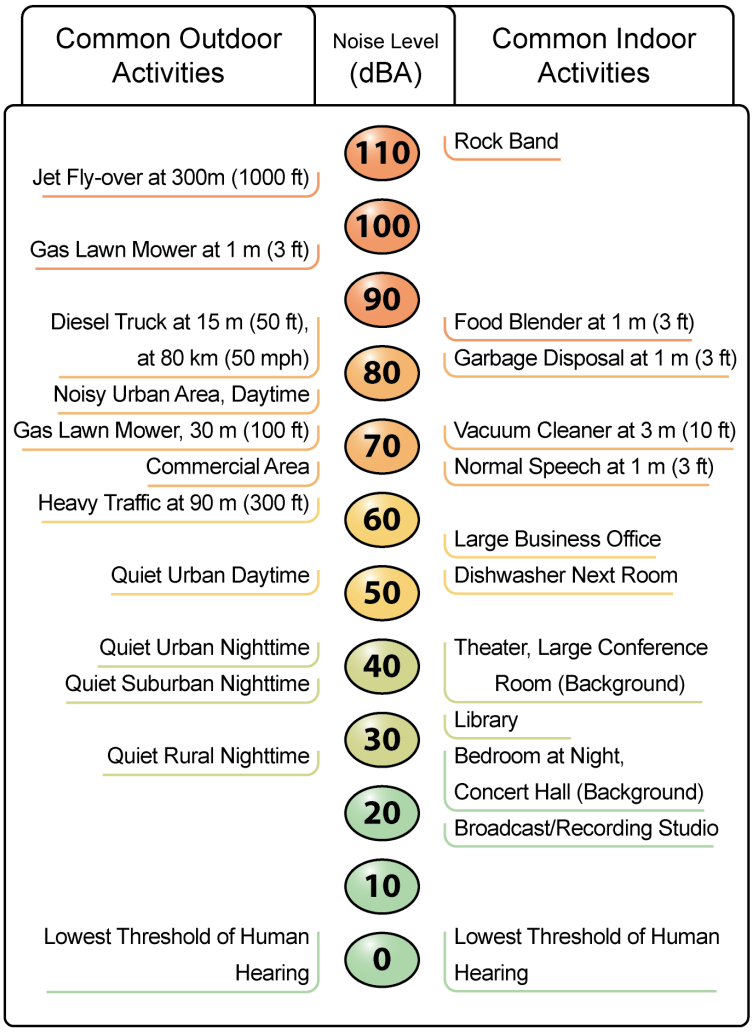
Table 2-39: Noise Abatement Criteria

Activity Category	NAC, Hourly A-Weighted Noise Level, Leq(h)	Description of Activity Category
A	57 (Exterior)	Lands on which serenity and quiet are of extraordinary significance and serve an important public need and where the preservation of those qualities is essential if the area is to continue to serve its intended purpose.
B[1]	67 (Exterior)	Residential.
C[1]	67 (Exterior)	Active sport areas, amphitheaters, auditoriums, campgrounds, cemeteries, day care centers, hospitals, libraries, medical facilities, parks, picnic areas, places of worship, playgrounds, public meeting rooms, public or nonprofit institutional structures, radio studios, recording studios, recreation areas, Section 4(f) sites, schools, television studios, trails, and trail crossings.
D	52 (Interior)	Auditoriums, day care centers, hospitals, libraries, medical facilities, places of worship, public meeting rooms, public or nonprofit institutional structures, radio studios, recording studios, schools, and television studios.
E	72 (Exterior)	Hotels, motels, offices, restaurants/bars, and other developed lands, properties, or activities not included in A–D or F.
F	No NAC—reporting only	Agriculture, airports, bus yards, emergency services, industrial, logging, maintenance facilities, manufacturing, mining, rail yards, retail facilities, shipyards, utilities (water resources, water treatment, electrical, etc.), and warehousing.
G	No NAC—reporting only	Undeveloped lands that are not permitted.

Notes:
[1] Includes undeveloped lands permitted for this activity category.

Figure 11 lists the noise levels of common activities to enable readers to compare the actual and predicted highway noise levels discussed in this section with common activities.

Figure 11: Noise Levels of Common Activities



According to the Caltrans Traffic Noise Analysis Protocol (Caltrans 2020), a noise impact occurs when the predicted future noise level with the project substantially exceeds the existing noise level (defined as a 12 dBA or more) or when the future noise level with the project approaches or exceeds the NAC. A noise level is considered to approach the NAC if it is within 1 dBA of the NAC.

If it is determined that the project will have noise impacts, then potential abatement measures must be considered. Noise abatement measures that are determined to be reasonable and feasible at the time of final design are incorporated into the project plans and specifications. This document discusses noise abatement measures that would likely be incorporated in the proposed project.

Caltrans's Traffic Noise Analysis Protocol sets forth the criteria for determining when an abatement measure is reasonable and feasible. Feasibility of noise abatement is basically an engineering concern. Noise abatement must be predicted to reduce noise by at least 5 dB at an

impacted receptor to be considered feasible from an acoustical perspective. It must also be possible to design and construct the noise abatement measure for it to be considered feasible. Factors that affect the design and constructability of noise abatement include, but are not limited to, safety, barrier height, topography, drainage, access requirements for driveways, presence of local cross streets, underground utilities, other noise sources in the area, and maintenance of the abatement measure. The overall reasonableness of noise abatement is determined by the following three factors: 1) the noise reduction design goal of 7 dB at one or more impacted receptors; 2) the cost of noise abatement; and 3) the viewpoints of benefited receptors (including property owners and residents of the benefited receptors).

2.3.7.2 Affected Environment

This section is based in part on the Noise Study Report (TAHA 2023b).

Existing Noise Environment

A field investigation was conducted to identify land uses that could be subject to traffic and construction noise impacts from the proposed project. The following land uses were identified in the proposed project area:

- Places of worship and medical facilities: Activity Category C (exterior), Activity Category D (interior);
- Future Multi-Use Trail: Activity Category C (exterior);
- Hotel and restaurants: Activity Category E; and
- Commercial retail uses: Activity Category F.

No residential land uses (Activity Category B) are located within the proposed project area.

Although all developed land uses are evaluated in this analysis, noise abatement is only considered for areas of frequent human use that would benefit from a lowered noise level. Accordingly, this impact analysis focuses on locations with defined outdoor activity areas, such as outdoor use areas associated with trails, exterior seating area at restaurants and outdoor activity areas at the hotel.

Land uses in the proposed project area were grouped into a series of numbered NSAs, NSA-1 through NSA-3:

NSA-1 is located on the southern end of the proposed project area north of Magic Mountain Parkway and between The Old Road and I-5. This area consists of a Hilton Garden Inn hotel property. Identified receptors areas included the main entrance (which includes a bench), a rear entrance, and two interior courtyards. The courtyards are completely surrounded by the hotel structure but open to the sky above. South of the Hilton Garden Inn hotel property is a coffee shop with outdoor seating and a McDonalds with outdoor seating.

NSA-2 is located toward the center of the proposed project area on either side of The Old Road, generally between Rye Canyon Road on the south and a set of I-5 on- and off-ramps to the north. On the eastern side of The Old Road in this area is a strip of commercial properties, including three casual restaurants with outdoor seating areas (Activity Category E). On the eastern side of The Old Road and north of Rye Canyon Road in this area is an

urgent care facility with no exterior uses (Activity Category D). On the western side of The Old Road in this area is the Valencia Water Reclamation Plant (Activity Category F). Between the roadway and the Reclamation plant is a thin strip of land (approximately 150 feet) which would include the future Multi-Use Trail (Activity Category C).

NSA-3 is located towards the northern end of the proposed project area in between The Old Road and I-5 by Henry Mayo Road. On the eastern side of the Old Road in this area is Higher Vision Church and Beth Ariel LA with no exterior uses (Activity Category D).

Short-Term Monitoring

Table 2-40 summarizes the results of the short-term (ST) monitoring conducted in the proposed project area.

Table 2-40: Summary of Short-Term Measurements

Location Information				Measurement Information			The Old Road Observed Traffic		I-5 Observed Traffic	
Position	**Location**	**NSA**	**Land Uses**	**Start Time**	**Duration (minutes)**	**Measured L_{eq}**	**Hourly (NB/SB)**	**Speed (mph)**	**Hourly (NB/SB)**	**Speed (mph)**
ST-1	Hilton, front entrance	1	Hotel	14:55	15	69.1	1080/552	55	3024/3336	65
ST-2	Hilton, rear entrance	1	Hotel	10:10	20	60.8	1320/472	55	3612/3480	65
ST-3	Tommy Burger	2	Restaurant	15:55	15	69.9	900/528	40	3612/3948	65
ST-4	Valencia Water Reclamation Plant (VWRP) Parking	2	Future Trail	11:40	20	65.0	900/528	40	3612/3948	65
ST-5	Open Area West of The Old Road	2	Future Trail	16:40	20	61.2	816/828	40	3312/5220	65/60
ST-6	Open Area West of The Old Road	2	Future Trail	16:40	20	61.8	816/828	40	3312/5220	65/60
ST-7	Hotel Courtyard	1	Hotel	9:45	15	58.6	384/744	55	2940/3768	65
ST-8	Hilton Courtyard	1	Hotel	9:45	15	60.7	384/744	55	2940/3768	65

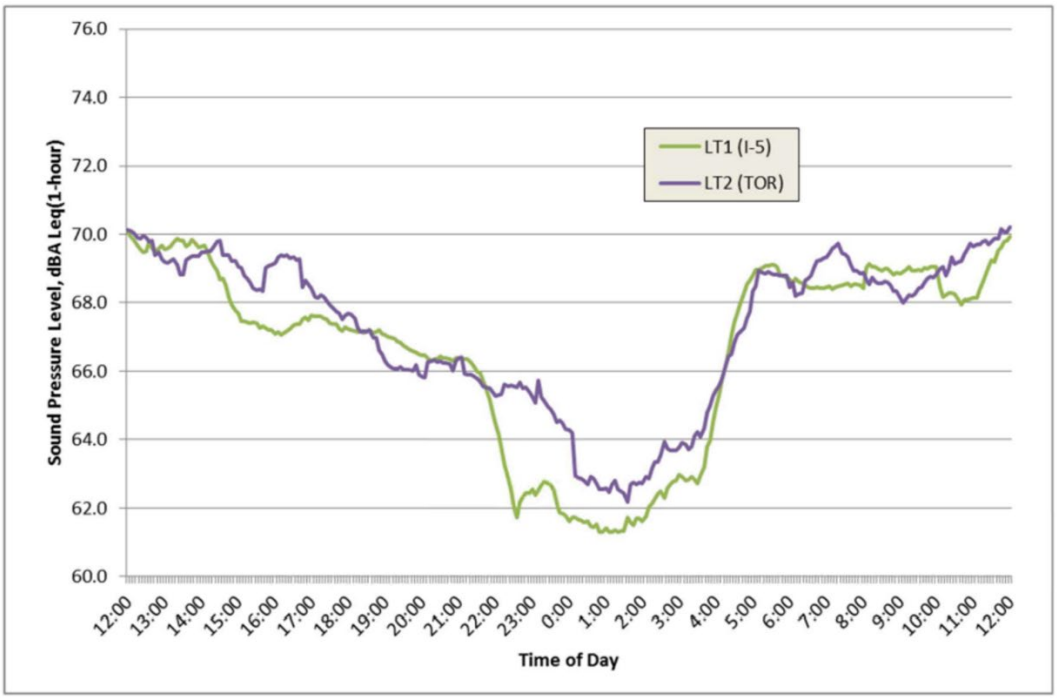
Source: TAHA 2023b
NB/SB: northbound/southbound

Long-Term Monitoring

The long-term (LT) sound level data were collected over one consecutive 24-hour monitoring period, beginning midday, May 30, 2018, and ending midday, May 31, 2018. Location LT-1 was behind a commercial area near the northern end of the proposed project area (to measure isolated diurnal noise level for I-5), about 50 feet from the edge of pavement. LT-2 was located near the southbound side of The Old Road in NSA-2, to measure a more isolated diurnal noise

level for The Old Road. Figure 12 and Table 2-41 below show the hourly levels for both LT-1 and LT-2 along with each hourly level's difference from the loudest hour.

Figure 12: Long-Term-Monitoring LT-1 and LT-2, May 30–31, 2018



Source: TAHA 2023b

Traffic Noise Model (TNM) Version 2.5 was used to compare measured traffic noise levels to modeled noise levels at field measurement locations. Table 2-42 compares measured and modeled noise levels at each measurement location. The predicted sound levels are within 2 dB of the measured sound levels and are, therefore, considered to be in reasonable agreement with the measured sound levels. The analysis was restarted in 2022, and the modeling was imported into TNM 3.1. The calculations were run in TNM 3.1 for future Build Alternative to verify the model was still calibrated after import. Noise levels were found to be within 2 dB of the TNM 2.5 results. Slight deviations in noise levels compared to TNM 2.5 are attributed to improved acoustical algorithms in TNM 3.1. Therefore, no further adjustment of the model was necessary.

Table 2-41: Summary of Long-Term Monitoring

Hour Beginning	LT-1 (dBA L_{eq}[h])	Difference from Loudest Hour (dB)	LT-2 (dBA L_{eq}[h])	Difference from Loudest Hour (dB)
12:00 p.m.	**70.1**	0.0	**70.1**	0.0
1:00 p.m.	69.6	-0.5	69.2	-0.9
2:00 p.m.	69.6	-0.5	69.5	-0.6
3:00 p.m.	67.7	-2.4	69.1	-1.0
4:00 p.m.	67.1	-3.0	69.2	-0.9
5:00 p.m.	67.6	-2.5	68.4	-1.7
6:00 p.m.	67.2	-2.9	67.7	-2.4
7:00 p.m.	67.1	-3.0	66.3	-3.8
8:00 p.m.	66.5	-3.6	65.8	-4.3
9:00 p.m.	66.4	-3.7	66.4	-3.7
10:00 p.m.	64.5	-5.6	65.3	-4.8
11:00 p.m.	62.5	-7.6	65.2	-4.9
12:00 a.m.	61.6	-8.5	64.3	-5.8
1:00 a.m.	61.4	-8.7	62.6	-7.5
2:00 a.m.	61.6	-8.5	62.7	-7.4
3:00 a.m.	63.0	-7.1	63.8	-6.3
4:00 a.m.	64.9	-5.2	65.5	-4.6
5:00 a.m.	68.8	-1.3	68.3	-1.8
6:00 a.m.	68.7	-1.4	68.4	-1.7
7:00 a.m.	68.5	-1.6	69.3	-0.8
8:00 a.m.	68.4	-1.7	68.9	-1.2
9:00 a.m.	68.9	-1.2	68.2	-1.9
10:00 a.m.	69.1	-1.0	68.8	-1.3
11:00 a.m.	68.1	-2.0	69.6	-0.5

Note: Worst noise hour noise level is bolded.
Source: TAHA 2023b

Table 2-42: Comparison of Measured to Predicted Sound Levels in the TNM Model

Measurement Position	Measured Sound Level (dBA)	Predicted Sound Level (dBA)	Measured minus Predicted (dB)
ST-1	69.1	67.4	1.7
ST-2	60.8	60.7	0.1
ST-3	69.9	69.8	0.1
ST-4	65.3	67.4	-2.1
ST-5	61.2	61.6	-0.4
ST-6	61.8	63.4	-1.6
ST-7	58.6	59.4	-0.8
ST-8	60.7	59.3	1.4

Source: TAHA 2023b

2.3.7.3 Environmental Consequences

2.3.7.3.1 Alternative 1: No-Build Alternative

The Old Road is currently operating under constrained flow conditions, and this condition is expected to continue under the No-Build Alternative. While overall average daily traffic volumes may continue to increase under the No-Build condition, the conditions that are currently producing the loudest hour noise conditions would not change; therefore, loudest hour noise conditions are expected to remain the same for existing and future No-Build alternatives. The No-Build Alternative would not increase noise or vibration in the proposed project area.

2.3.7.3.2 Alternative 2: Build Alternative

Under 23 CFR 772.7, projects are categorized as Type I, Type II projects, or Type III projects. FHWA defines a Type I project as a proposed federal or federal-aid highway project for the construction of a highway on a new location, or the physical alteration of an existing highway which significantly changes either the horizontal or vertical alignment or increases the number of through-traffic lanes. Based on the above brief description of the alternatives, this proposed project has been deemed to be a Type I project. As such, traffic noise analysis has been conducted for the proposed project in accordance with the FHWA Protocol for Type I projects.

Future Noise Environment

As discussed in the Noise Study Report (TAHA 2023b), no interior traffic noise impacts are expected in all noise study areas (NSAs).

Noise Abatement Analysis

As discussed in the Noise Study Report (TAHA 2023b), No traffic noise impacts are predicted for NSA-1 or NSA-3 and noise abatement does not need to be considered in these areas. Traffic noise impacts in NSA-2 are predicted at Activity Category E land uses on the northeastern side of The Old Road and at Activity Category C land uses on the southwestern side of The Old Road.

The impacted receptors on the northeastern side of The Old Road are two of three fast-food/casual restaurants with outdoor seating/dining areas, Original Tommy's at R2-1 and Jimmy Dean's Charbroiled Burgers at R2-3. A third restaurant in this area, Del Taco at R2-2, also has outdoor seating, but predicted levels at Del Taco are below the impact level due to acoustical shielding. However, noise abatement in the form of a noise barrier at this location would not be feasible for two reasons. First, a barrier in this area would need to have several (at least five) wide openings to provide two-way vehicle access for the restaurants and other businesses in the areas (e.g., gas stations, car washes, etc.). These gaps would provide a significant acoustical flanking path that would prevent the barriers from providing the minimum-required 5-dBA noise reduction at impacted receptors. Any barriers in this area would also provide a potential safety risk by reducing driver's line of sight near the access openings onto the very busy The Old Road. Second, the impacted receptors in this area are exposed to The Old Road on the southwest, and I-5 at a similar distance to the northeast. A barrier designed to provide noise reduction from the proposed project roadway would do nothing to block noise from the non-project roadway and would, therefore, be acoustically ineffective. For these reasons, a noise barrier in this area would be considered not feasible.

The impacted receptors on the southwestern side of The Old Road are all associated with the planned future extension of the Multi-Use Trail (represented by modeled receivers R2-4, R2-5, and R2-6). This land use would be considered Activity Category C with an impact threshold of 67 dBA, L_{eq}(h) loudest hour. Three out of four modeled receptors in this area, R2-4, R2-5, and R2-6, are considered impacted under both existing and future Build and No-Build alternatives. The fourth modeled receiver representing the Multi-Use Trail (R2-7) has predicted levels that are below the impact level due to acoustical shielding.

A noise barrier in this area would not be considered feasible for a variety of reasons. A noise barrier would need to include several wide gaps to provide two-way access to the Valencia Water Reclamation Plant (just to the southwest of the proposed trail location) and to the trail itself. There are currently two two-way driveways (each approximately 35 feet wide and about

175 feet apart) providing access to the water plant. In addition to these existing driveways, if a wall were built, at least one and perhaps more additional access points would need to be provided for trail users to access the trail. These gaps would result in a significant flanking path that would reduce the wall's ability to provide the minimum-required 5-dBA noise reduction to large sections of the trail. Second, there is substantial noise produced by the water reclamation facility itself that was noted during short-term noise measurements as an audible noise source in addition to the highway noise. The sound from the plant was quite noticeable and would provide a limit to how much noise reduction the barrier could provide. Finally, while not technically a feasibility issue, it is noted that the cost of this barrier would be extraordinarily expensive because the Caltrans policy states that only one receptor should be used for each formal trail in considering the cost per benefited receptor. Considering these three issues taken together, it is determined that a noise barrier in this location would not be feasible.

Construction Noise

During construction of the proposed project, noise from construction activities may intermittently dominate the noise environment in the immediate area of construction. Noise associated with construction is controlled by Caltrans Standard Specification Section 14-8.02, "Noise Control," which states the following:

> Do not exceed 86 dBA L_{max} at 50 feet from the job site activities from 9 p.m. to 6 a.m.
>
> Equip an internal combustion engine with the manufacturer-recommended muffler. Do not operate an internal combustion engine on the job site without the appropriate muffler.

Table 2-43 summarizes noise levels produced by construction equipment that is commonly used on roadway construction projects. Construction equipment is expected to generate noise levels ranging from 70 to 90 dB at a distance of 50 feet, and noise produced by construction equipment would be reduced over distance at a rate of about 6 dB per doubling of distance.

Table 2-43: Construction Equipment Noise

Equipment	Maximum Noise Level (dBA at 50 feet)
Scrapers	89
Bulldozers	85
Heavy Trucks	88
Backhoe	80
Pneumatic Tools	85
Concrete Pump	82

Source: Federal Transit Administration, 2006. See also: http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/noise/construction_noise/handbook/handbook09.cfm

No adverse noise impacts from construction are anticipated because construction would be conducted in accordance with Caltrans Standard Specifications Section 14.8-02. Construction noise would be short-term, intermittent, and overshadowed by local traffic noise.

2.3.7.4 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

The Build Alternative would not result in adverse effects related to noise; therefore, no AMMs are required.

2.3.8 Energy

2.3.8.1 Regulatory Setting

NEPA (42 USC Part 4332) requires the identification of all potentially significant impacts to the environment, including energy impacts.

The CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2(b) and Appendix F, Energy Conservation, require an analysis of a project's energy use to determine if the project may result in significant environmental effects due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary use of energy, or wasteful use of energy resources.

2.3.8.2 Affected Environment

Non-renewable energy resources used in California include petroleum, natural gas, and nuclear power, while renewable energy resources include hydroelectric, biomass, wind, solar, and geothermal heat (i.e., heat given off by the Earth). According to U.S. Energy Information Administration, California is rich in energy resources and is second only to Texas in the combined total electricity generation from all renewable sources. With California being the third-largest state by land area, transportation accounts for the largest share of the state's energy consumption. The transportation sector in California consumes more energy than any other sector (residential, commercial, and industrial), representing over 35% of total statewide energy consumed, as shown in Table 2-44. The state has the most registered motor vehicles and the most VMT of any state. Consumption by source estimates from the U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA) showed motor gasoline being the second largest (EIA 2023).

Table 2-44: California Energy Consumption by End-Use Sector, 2021

End-Use Sector	Energy Consumption (Trillion British Thermal Unit)	Percent of Total Energy Consumption
Residential	1,473	20.0
Commercial	1,397	19.0
Industrial	1,704	23.2
Transportation	2,785	37.8
Total	**7,359**	**100.00**

Source: EIA 2023

Alternatives to fossil fuels for transportation have helped decrease the dependence on gasoline and other fossil fuels. In addition to traditional petroleum fuels, California currently uses the following "alternative" fuels and energy sources: compressed natural gas, electric, ethanol, hydrogen, liquefied natural gas, and liquefied petroleum gas.

As discussed in Section 1.2.2, current traffic demand in the proposed project area meets or exceeds roadway capacity for many arterial roadways. Significant increases in traffic demand are anticipated over the next few years, based on projected growth in the area. Traffic congestion reduces vehicle fuel economy and increases excess fuel consumption, leading to higher direct energy consumption. The Build Alternative is anticipated to curb these effects by increasing the efficiency of the transportation system in the proposed project area, thus reducing congestion and energy consumption.

2.3.8.3 Environmental Consequences

2.3.8.3.1 Alternative 1: No-Build Alternative

Under the No-Build Alternative, there would be no improvements to the proposed project area. The Old Road, Rye Canyon Road, and Sky View Lane would not be reconstructed and widened, and The Old Road over Santa Clara River would not be replaced. The No-Build Alternative would not have any effects related to construction energy consumption.

2.3.8.3.2 Alternative 2: Build Alternative

Direct energy consumption was quantified by leveraging data from the VMT Analysis Memorandum (AECOM 2023c) and the Air Quality Study (TAHA 2023a). The study area for both reports encompasses portions of I-5 and SR-126 (mainline segment, on- and off-ramps) and local street facilities (The Old Road, Henry Mayo Drive, Gateway Drive, Rye Canyon Road, Sky View Lane, and Magic Mountain Parkway).

The future forecast volumes for the study area were developed using the SCAG model. Forecasts were developed for the Opening Year (2028) and Design Year (2048) for the No-Build and Build Alternatives.

Construction

Construction of the Build Alternative would primarily consume diesel and gasoline through operation of heavy-duty construction equipment, material deliveries, and debris hauling. Proposed project construction would occur for 12 hours a day, 7 days per week, over the span of approximately 4.5 years.

Proposed project construction would be a temporary commitment of energy, necessary for any infrastructure improvement project. Energy consumption during construction would be conserved and minimized to the maximum extent feasible. Energy conservation in construction activities is assumed, as the construction contractor would have a financial incentive and statutory mandate to minimize waste and externalities, respectively. Regulations that stipulate the reduction of energy-related externalities include Title 13, CCR, Section 2485. This regulation limits the idling time of diesel construction equipment to 5 minutes.[4]

Direct energy from construction sources is the energy that is consumed during construction activities by vehicles and equipment. The proposed project would require a one-time energy commitment for construction, which is an unavoidable energy investment for any major infrastructure project. However, it is anticipated that the proposed project would not substantially increase direct energy consumption in the proposed project area. Therefore, the proposed project is not anticipated to result in adverse direct energy impacts during construction.

Operation

Energy consumption based on VMT is anticipated to increase over time due to increased travel demand in the proposed project area, as shown in Table 2-45. However, better energy efficiency and standards are anticipated to apply over time as older vehicles are replaced by increasingly more fuel-efficient cars and trucks.

[4] This restriction is superseded by the AMMs for air quality, which limit idling to two minutes.

The SCAG model is used for the No-Build Alternative and Build Alternative conditions in order to analyze the Opening Year (2028) and Design Year (2048). When compared to the No-Build Alternative, daily VMT would decrease for the Build Alternative by 0.06% in Opening Year (2028) and 0.46% in the Design Year (2048).

Table 2-45: Total VMT Changes for Regional Area

Area	Open Year				Design Year			
	No-Build VMT (vehicle miles)	Build VMT (vehicle miles)	VMT Change (vehicle miles)	VMT Change (%)	No-Build (vehicle miles)	Build (vehicle miles)	VMT Change (vehicle miles)	VMT Change (%)
Regional Area	217,849,258	217,729,337	-119,921	-0.06%	225,893,139	224,856,168	-1,036,971	-0.46%

Source: AECOM 2023c

Operational improvements that would improve existing traffic operations, accommodate future traffic projections and eliminate choke points. Operational improvements would also decrease traffic congestion, such as those improvements proposed for this proposed project, would improve traffic operations to be consistent with LACPW highway design speed safety standards and decrease travel time on the congested roadway system, which would result in a more efficient use of energy. The proposed project would enable The Old Road corridor to maximize productivity through improvements to the capacity of the roadway lanes allowing for more flexibility in traffic movement and higher efficiencies. In addition, the proposed project would construct a Class IV bikeway, which would improve safety for cyclists and provide additional options for non-motorized travel. Therefore, the proposed project is not anticipated to result in adverse direct energy impacts during operation.

Indirect Energy

Indirect energy usage is primarily associated with project maintenance, i.e., fuel used by equipment for periodic maintenance of the system. Many other sources contribute indirectly to the energy consumption of a transportation system, but they can be difficult to reliably quantify at the project level. Maintenance and landscaping activities are anticipated to be minimal and are necessary in order to maintain the integrity of the system. Therefore, the proposed project is not anticipated to result in adverse indirect energy impacts.

2.3.8.4 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

The Build Alternative would not result in adverse effects related to energy; therefore, no AMMs are required.

2.4 Biological Environment

2.4.1 Natural Communities

This section of the document discusses vegetation communities, natural communities of concern, and wildlife corridors. The focus of this section is on biological communities, not individual plant or animal species. This section also includes information on fish passage, wildlife corridors, and habitat fragmentation. Wildlife corridors are areas of habitat used by wildlife for seasonal or daily migration. Habitat fragmentation involves the potential for dividing sensitive habitat and thereby lessening its biological value.

Habitat areas that have been designated as critical habitat under the Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA) are discussed below in Section 2.4.5. Wetlands and other waters are also discussed below in Section 2.4.2.

2.4.1.1 Regulatory Setting

CDFW inventories sensitive vegetation alliances (natural communities) for tracking purposes in the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB). A vegetation alliance assigned with global ranking codes of G1 through G3 means that all the vegetation associations within that alliance are considered high inventory priority by CDFW. Vegetation alliances identified by CNDDB as sensitive are considered by CDFW to be significant resources; these alliances will be avoided to the maximum extent possible.

2.4.1.2 Affected Environment

The following analysis is based on the most recent 2024 Natural Environment Study (NES) prepared for the proposed project (AECOM 2023g). Technical surveys for the proposed project were performed within the biological study area (BSA). The BSA is defined as the proposed project limits of disturbance (LOD) and a surrounding 500-foot radius buffer. The BSA was established to encompass all areas that may be directly or indirectly affected by proposed project construction activities, including construction staging and laydown. The BSA is the same for both the No-Build and Build Alternatives. A portion of the BSA coincides with a County of Los Angeles SEA located along Santa Clara River. The BSA covers the proposed The Old Road improvements from its intersection with existing Henry Mayo Drive in the north to its intersection with Magic Mountain Parkway in the south, and the inclusion of a study area buffer to account for the potential indirect effects of noise, light, glare, and the deposit of fill material.

Biological surveys for the proposed project were conducted within the BSA in 2018 and 2023 as detailed in Table 2-46. Additional survey data from 2017 through 2022 conducted by Woodstar Biological LLC/Compliance Biology, Inc. (hereafter Woodstar and Compliance Biology) were reviewed for the proposed project. Biological surveys by Woodstar and Compliance Biology were conducted on behalf of Five Points as part of their Natural River Management Plan and include riparian bird surveys. The BSA was established to encompass all areas that may be directly or indirectly affected by proposed project construction activities, including construction staging and laydown. The BSA is the same for both the No-Build and Build Alternatives.

Table 2-46: Biological Surveys Conducted for the Proposed Project

Survey Personnel	Date	Survey Activity	Survey Report Reference
2018 Surveys			
Julie Niceswanger Hickman, Chris Hargreaves, Wynter Dawson	June 5 and 18, 2018	Vegetation mapping and rare plant surveys	AECOM 2019a
Arthur Popp, Chris Hargreaves	July 13, 27, and October 8, 2018	Oak tree survey	AECOM 2019b
Erik Larsen, Chris Hargreaves	July 26 and 27, 2018	General reconnaissance of survey area, field survey, and sampling to perform formal jurisdictional delineation	AECOM 2019c
Woodstar and Compliance Biology	Eight site visits between April 11 and July 25 of 2018	Least Bell's vireo (LBVI) protocol survey	AECOM 2018
Woodstar and Compliance Biology	Five site visits between May 18 and July 17 of 2018	Southwestern willow flycatcher (SWFL) survey	AECOM 2018
Woodstar and Compliance Biology, James McMorran, Tom Sullivan, Vanessa Tucker, John Parent	Four site visits between June 26 and August 8 of 2018	Western yellow-billed cuckoo (YBCU) survey	AECOM 2018
John Parent, Vanessa Tucker, Arthur Popp	July 12 and 23, 2018	Bat surveys	AECOM 2019d
John Parent, Vanessa Tucker, Shannon Mueller	October 8 and 30, 2018	General reconnaissance of survey area to follow up on and confirm existing conditions	Not applicable
2023 Surveys			
Jonathan Dunn, Claire Jorgensen	May 1 and 2, 2023; June 21, 2023	Vegetation mapping and rare plant surveys	AECOM 2023b
Andrew Borcher, Madeline Bailey, Billy Splittstoesser, Vanessa Tucker, Rob Conohan, and Aubrey Mathews	Six site visits between April 25 and June 26 of 2023	Arroyo toad protocol surveys	AECOM 2023c
Vanessa Tucker, Brianna Quirarte, Aubrey Mathews	May 25, June 21, and July 6, 2023	Bat surveys	AECOM 2023d
Erik Larsen, Natasha Foti	July 10 and 11, 2023	Updated aquatic resources delineation	AECOM 2024;
Vanessa Tucker, Brianna Quirarte	June 22 and July 6, 2023	Southwestern pond turtle surveys	AECOM 2023e
Merkel & Associates, Inc., USFWS, and CDFW	October 26, 2023	Unarmored threespine stickleback surveys	Merkel & Associates, Inc. 2023; Appendix G-4

The BSA supports three natural communities of special concern in additional to other natural communities. Collectively, these communities provide important habitat for special-status plant species, nesting/foraging habitats for migratory birds, habitat for CDFW species of special concern, and habitat for state and federally listed wildlife species. These species are discussed in subsequent sections below.

Natural communities within the BSA also connect adjacent habitats and support wildlife movement. The Santa Clara River is a major wildlife movement corridor as it provides natural habitat for many species within a, urbanized context. Specific wildlife use of these communities is noted in the individual sections, as applicable.

2.4.1.2.1 Vegetation Communities and Land Cover Types

Vegetation and other land cover types within the BSA were mapped based on field reconnaissance and recent aerial photographs. Updated field investigations were conducted by AECOM in June 2018 and again in May and June of 2023 (AECOM 2023b).

The BSA has experienced varying levels of historic and ongoing anthropogenic disturbance. Therefore, deviation from the published standards were expected and encountered. Vegetation classifications have been subdivided below into shrubland, herbaceous, and riparian alliances. Other cover types are also noted.

A total of three shrubland, two herbaceous, six riparian, and five other cover types were mapped within the BSA. The extent of communities within the BSA is depicted in Figures 13a through 13c and acreages of each are provided in Table 2-47.

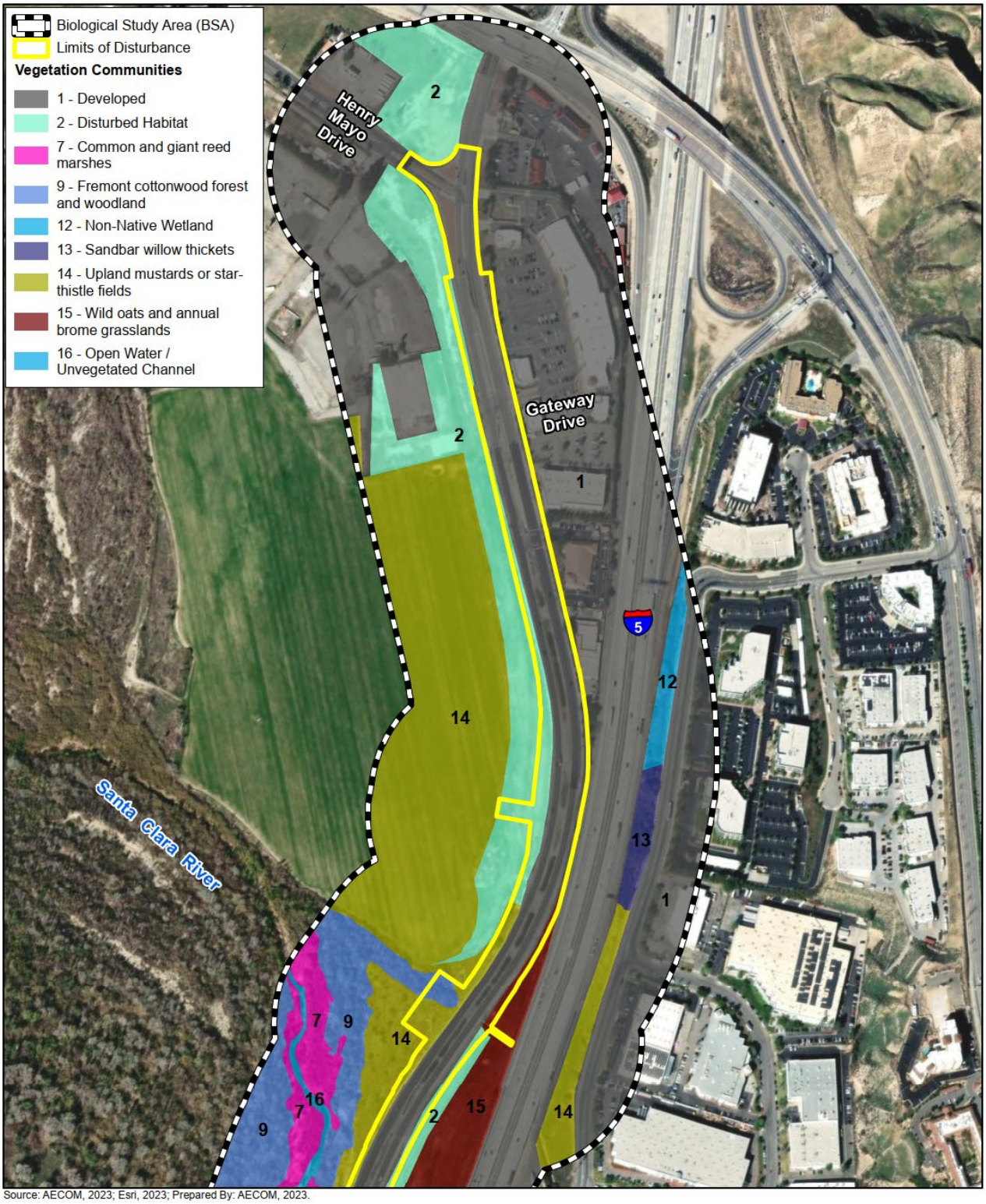
Table 2-47: Vegetation Communities and Land Cover Types within the BSA (acres)

Vegetation Community/ Land Cover Type	Permanent Impact within LOD		Temporary Impact	Outside of LOD	BSA
	Ground Disturbance	Bridge Span[1]	Within LOD	Within BSA	Total
Shrubland Alliances					
Artemisia tridentata Shrubland Alliance Big sagebrush scrub	0.2	0	0.6	3.2	4.0
Baccharis pilularis Shrubland Alliance Coyote brush scrub	0.1	0	0.4	0.2	0.7
Eriogonum fasciculatum Shrubland Alliance California buckwheat scrub*	0.6	0.1	0.1	6.3	7.2
Shrubland Subtotal	***0.9***	***0.1***	***1.1***	***9.7***	***11.9***
Herbaceous Alliances					
Avena spp. - Bromus spp. Herbaceous Semi-Natural Alliance Wild oats and annual brome grasslands	0.4	0	0.5	16.2	17.4

Table 2-47: Vegetation Communities and Land Cover Types within the BSA (acres)

	Permanent Impact within LOD		Temporary Impact	Outside of LOD	BSA
Brassica nigra - Centaurea (solstitialis, melitensis) Herbaceous Semi-Natural Alliance Upland mustards or star-thistle fields	1.5	0.3	1.1	34.8	37.6
Herbaceous Subtotal	***1.9***	***0.3***	***1.6***	***51.0***	***55.0***
Riparian Alliance					
Baccharis salicifolia Shrubland Alliance / Baccharis salicifolia - Sambucus nigra Association Elderberry Stands*	0.5	0	0.2	3.4	4.2
Non-native Wetland (Nonconforming MCV type)	0	0	0	1.1	1.1
Open Water / Unvegetated Channel (Nonconforming MCV type)	0	0.1	0.1	2.4	2.6
Phragmites australis - Arundo donax Herbaceous Semi-Natural Alliance Common and giant reed marshes	0	0	0	4.5	4.5
Populus fremontii - Fraxinus velutina - Salix gooddingii Forest & Woodland Alliance Fremont cottonwood forest and woodland*	0.2	0.8	1.1	32.5	34.1
Salix exigua Shrubland Alliance Sandbar willow thickets	0	0	0	1.0	1.0
Riparian Subtotal	***0.7***	***0.9***	***1.4***	***44.9***	***47.5***
Other Cover Types					
Agriculture	0	0	0	3.3	3.3
Bare Ground / Graded	0.03	0	0.1	0.9	1.0
Developed	8.0	0.3	4.7	177.1	217.1
Disturbed Habitat	1.3	0	1.4	17.6	20.8
Unpaved Roads	0.5	0.1	0.4	1.5	2.4
Other Cover Types Subtotal	***9.8***	***0.4***	***6.6***	***200.4***	***244.6***
TOTALS	**13.3**	**1.7**	**10.7**	**306.0**	**359.0**

Notes: * = Considered a sensitive vegetation community on the current list of California Sensitive Natural Communities (CDFW 2022c)
[1] = Permanent impacts to vegetation beneath the bridge due to shading, potentially affecting habitat quality, are accounted for under the Bridge Span column.

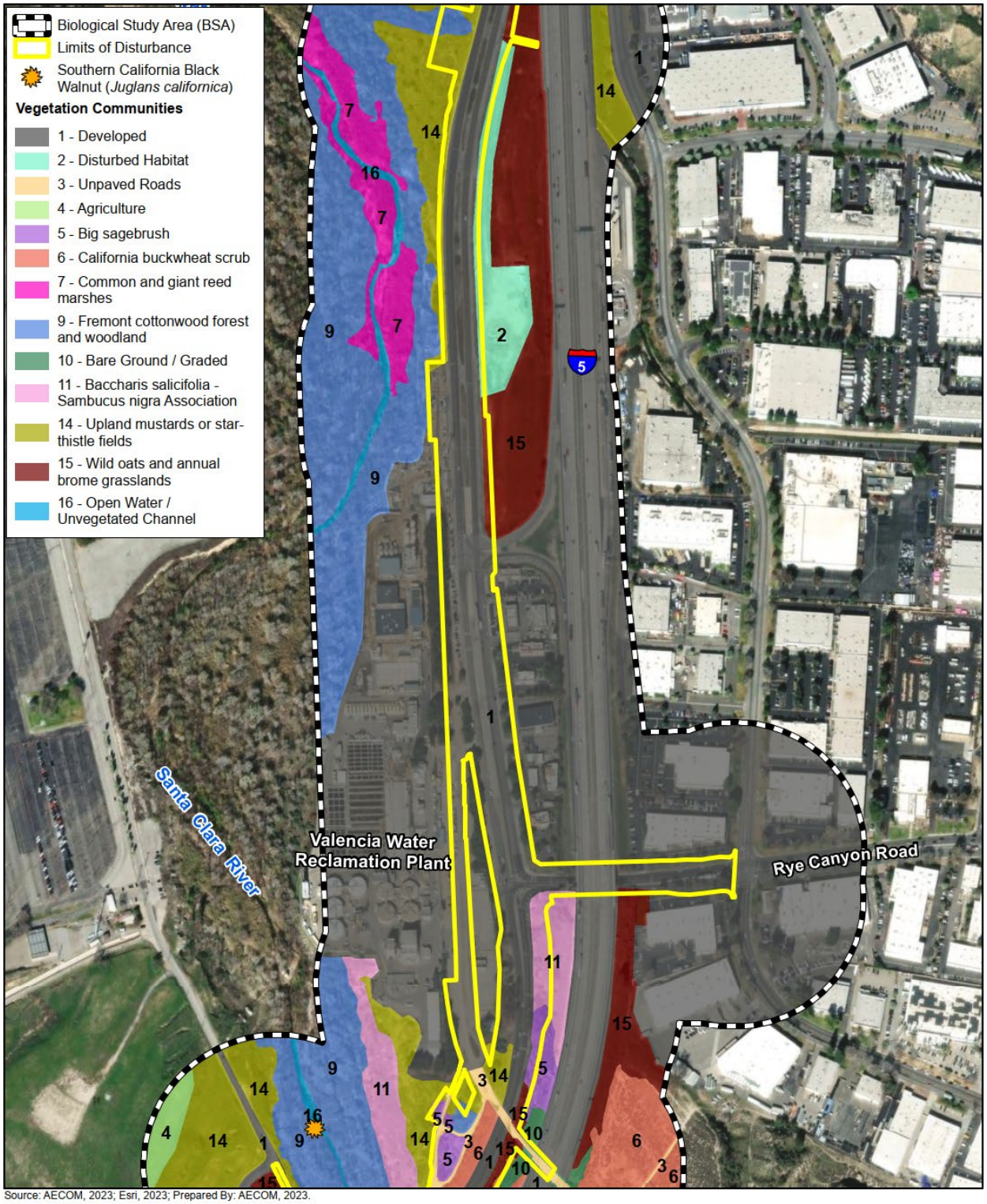


Source: AECOM, 2023; Esri, 2023; Prepared By: AECOM, 2023.

0 250 500 Feet

Figure 13a

Vegetation Communities and Land Cover Types

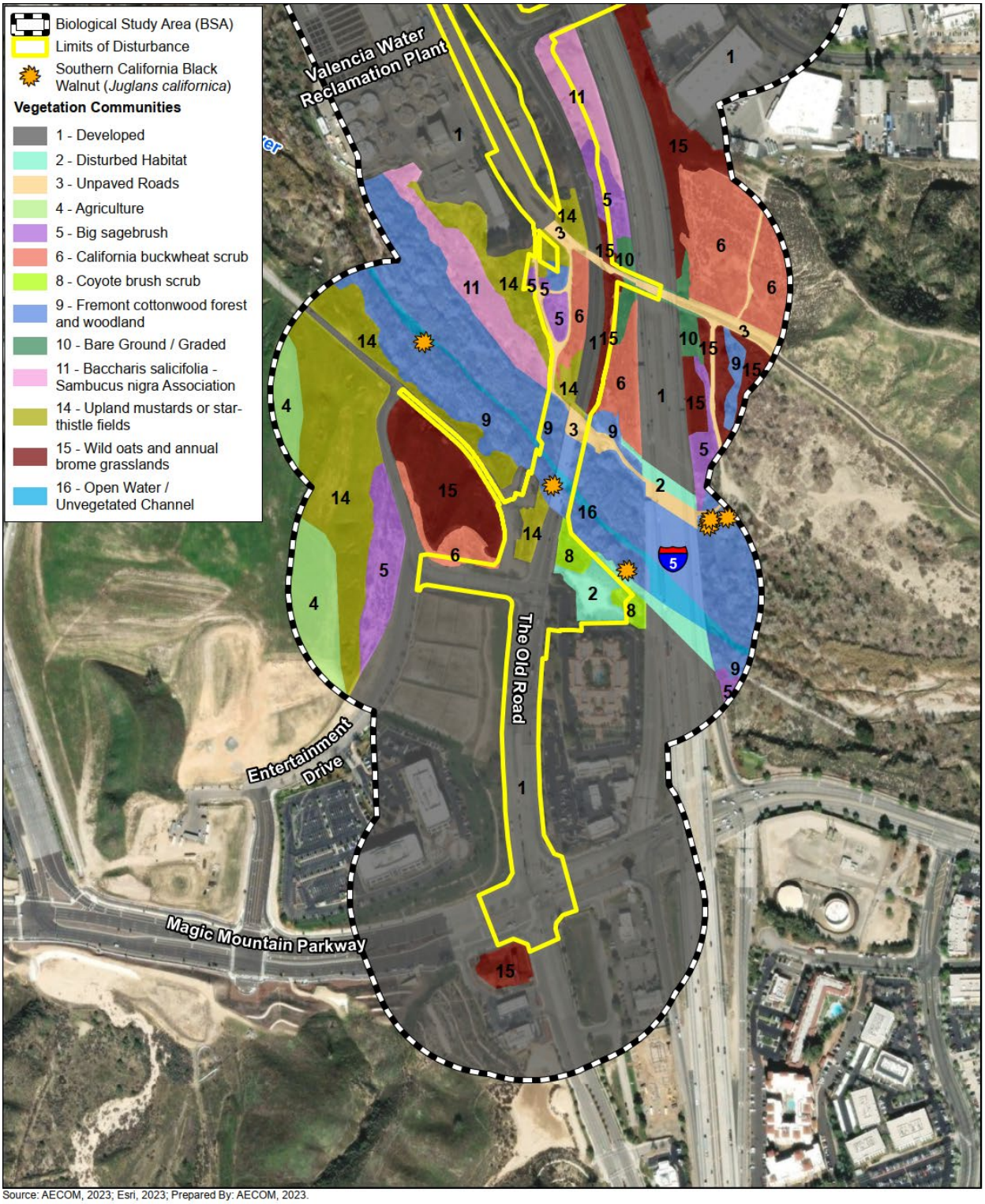


Source: AECOM, 2023; Esri, 2023; Prepared By: AECOM, 2023.

0 250 500 Feet

Figure 13b

Vegetation Communities and Land Cover Types



Source: AECOM, 2023; Esri, 2023; Prepared By: AECOM, 2023.

Figure 13c

Vegetation Communities and Land Cover Types

California Buckwheat Scrub, Fremont Cottonwood Forest and Woodland, and Elderberry Stand are considered sensitive vegetation communities by CDFW (CDFW 2020). Sensitive vegetation communities are plant associations within California that are on the decline, considered rare or locally important, or support special-status plants and animals. These vegetation communities usually require mitigation for any acreage impacted, and the requirements for mitigation are finalized in conjunction with CDFW.

2.4.1.2.2 Migration Corridors

In an urban context, a wildlife migration corridor can be defined as a linear landscape feature of sufficient width and buffer to allow animal movement between two patches of comparatively undisturbed habitat, or between a patch of habitat and some vital resources. Regional corridors are defined as those corridors linking two or more large patches of habitat, and local corridors are defined as those corridors allowing resident animals to access critical resources (food, cover, and water) in a smaller area that might otherwise be isolated by urban development.

The BSA spans Santa Clara River, which functions as both a local and regional corridor. The Santa Clara River corridor is considered an SEA by Los Angeles County. The SEA program was developed to help conserve the genetic and physical diversity within Los Angeles County by designating biological resource areas capable of sustaining themselves into the future (LADRP 2018). Historically, the riparian corridor along Santa Clara River has served as the primary east-west linkage between the Pacific coastline, coast ranges, interior ranges, high desert, and southern Sierra Mountain Range (via the Transverse and Tehachapi Range). Animals moving through Santa Clara River at one time had unobstructed passage along the river and within its tributaries. The present configuration of the tributary drainages has reduced connectivity from the Santa Clarita Valley to the north, but Santa Clara River remains relatively intact and open.

Within and adjacent to the BSA, the Santa Clara River corridor supports dense and mature southern riparian scrub and riparian woodland formations, along with small areas of freshwater marsh, providing essential wintering areas and resident habitat for waterfowl, wading birds, marshland birds, and a variety of other vertebrate species. It provides habitat and serves as a major local corridor supporting numerous species and providing multi-layered riparian habitat for a wide diversity of wildlife species, particularly birds of prey and riparian-obligate songbirds. Santa Clara River also provides important connectivity for various mammal species, including the mountain lion (*Puma concolor*; state candidate species for the Southern California/Central Coast evolutionary significant unit). Based on email dialogue with biologists at the National Park Service (Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area), they have global positioning system collars on multiple mountain lions to track their movements and several mountain lions have been recorded along the Santa Clara River in the vicinity of the proposed project (Riley 2023). According to the National Park Service, the crossing under I-5 and The Old Road Bridge are currently functional (but have not been monitored by wildlife camera) as multiple mountain lions have been tracked along the Santa Clara River east of I-5, but in most cases, they turn around and head back west. In one instance a GPS-collared mountain lion went east all the way up San Francisquito Canyon to the San Gabriel Mountains in the Angeles National Forest (Riley 2023). The movements of mountain lions along the Santa Clara River indict the riparian corridor is relatively intact and bridges allow for movement beneath them. However, much of the adjacent upland habitat along Santa Clara River has been developed, further restricting wildlife to the river drainage. Also, the fringes of Santa Clara River have been clogged with the nonnative species giant reed (*Arundo donax*), which creates dense stands of nearly impenetrable vegetation, thereby further constricting movement within Santa Clara River.

2.4.1.3 Environmental Consequences

This subsection discusses the potential direct, indirect, temporary, and permanent effects on natural communities and wildlife corridors within the BSA from the proposed project. Direct effects are caused by the project and occur at the same time and place as the action. Indirect effects are caused by the project but are later in time or farther removed in distance but are still reasonably foreseeable. Temporary effects are those that are short in duration and can be restored to their pre-project condition or better. Permanent effects are those that result in a permanent change in natural communities or otherwise permanently alter the natural environment when compared to pre-disturbance conditions.

2.4.1.3.1 Alternative 1: No-Build Alternative

The No-Build Alternative would not affect natural communities because no construction activities would occur. Under the No-Build Alternative, there would be no improvements to the proposed project area. The Old Road, Rye Canyon Road, and Sky View Lane would not be reconstructed and widened, and The Old Road over Santa Clara River would not be replaced. Therefore, no natural communities would be disturbed, and wildlife corridors and migration routes would not be affected.

2.4.1.3.2 Alternative 2: Build Alternative

Vegetation

Implementation of the Build Alternative would result in permanent and temporary direct impacts to California Buckwheat Scrub, Fremont Cottonwood Forest and Woodland, and Elderberry Stand, which are summarized by acreage in Table 2-48.

Table 2-48: Permanent and Temporary Direct Impacts to Sensitive Vegetation Communities

Sensitive Vegetation Community	Permanent (ground-disturbing) Impacts (Acres and [Percent of the total Sensitive Vegetation Community within the BSA])	Permanent (bridge span) Impacts (Acres and [Percent of the total Sensitive Vegetation Community within the BSA])[1]	Temporary Direct Impacts (Acres)
California Buckwheat Scrub	(0.6 [8.3])	(0.1 [1.4])	0.1
Elderberry Stands	(0.5 [11.9])	0.0	0.2
Fremont Cottonwood Forest and Woodland	(0.2 [0.6])	(0.8 [2.3])	1.1

Notes: [1] = Permanent impacts to vegetation beneath the bridge due to shading, potentially affecting habitat quality, are accounted for under the Bridge Span column.

There is approximately 7.2 acres of California Buckwheat Scrub within the BSA. The proposed project would result in temporary impacts to 0.1 acres of California Buckwheat Scrub, which is associated with proposed project construction access routes and temporary work areas. The proposed project would result in permanent (ground-disturbing) impacts to 0.6 acres of California Buckwheat Scrub due to sidewalk and retaining wall construction, and expansion of The Old Road, as well as additional permanent (non-ground-disturbing) impacts to 0.1 acres of California Buckwheat Scrub due to the proposed bridge span expansion.

There is approximately 4.2 acres of Elderberry Stand within the BSA. The proposed project would result in temporary impacts to 0.2 acres of Elderberry Stand associated with construction access routes and temporary work areas. The proposed project would also result in permanent (ground-disturbing) impacts to 0.5 acres of Elderberry Stand associated with the Multi-Use Trail, sidewalk and retaining wall construction, and the expansion of The Old Road. No permanent impacts would occur due to the proposed bridge expansion.

There is approximately 34.1 acres of Fremont Cottonwood Forest and Woodland within the BSA. The proposed project would result in temporary impacts to 1.1 acres of Fremont Cottonwood Forest and Woodland associated with expansion of The Old Road Bridge construction access routes and temporary work areas. The proposed project would result in permanent (ground-disturbing) impacts to 0.2 acres of California Fremont Cottonwood Forest and Woodland associated with the culvert, riprap, retaining wall, sidewalk construction, and the expansion of The Old Road, as well as additional permanent (non-ground-disturbing) impacts to 0.8 acres of California Fremont Cottonwood Forest and Woodland due to the proposed bridge expansion.

Indirect impacts to sensitive vegetation communities may also occur from construction and use of the proposed project. Temporary indirect impacts, such as construction fugitive dust (which can coat vegetation and reduce photosynthesis), sedimentation and erosion, and construction-generated trash/debris and unauthorized trespass could all adversely impact vegetation. The proposed project also has the potential for longer term impacts, such as the proliferation of invasive species through ground disturbing activities, which may indirectly degrade adjacent native vegetation communities. Indirect impacts may also occur in the form of increased potential for wildland fire and pollution in Santa Clara River. There is also the potential for disturbance to the root zones of adjacent native trees.

Migration Corridors

Approximately 52.92 acres of the BSA intersect the Santa Clara River SEA (Table 11). The project would result in temporary impacts to 0.64 acres of the Santa Clara River SEA, which is associated with the bridge expansion temporary work area. The project would result in permanent (ground-disturbing) impacts to 0.60 acres of the Santa Clara River SEA associated with pile and riprap installation, as well as additional permanent (non-ground-disturbing) impacts to 1.37 acres Santa Clara River SEA due to the proposed bridge span expansion.

Table 2-49: Temporary and Permanent Impacts within the Santa Clara River SEA

SEA	Total	Within the LOD			Outside of the LOD
	BSA (Acres)	Temporary Impacts (Acres)	Permanent Impact (Ground Disturbance) (Acres)	Permanent Impact (Bridge Span[1]) (Acres)	BSA (Acres)
Santa Clara River SEA	52.92	0.64	0.60	1.37	49.64

Notes: [1] = Permanent impacts to vegetation beneath the bridge deck due to shading, potentially affecting habitat quality, are accounted for under the Bridge Span column. This acreage includes the existing The Old Road bridge over the Santa Clara River plus the expanded portion of the new bridge.

The proposed project would result in permanent and temporary direct impacts to the following plant communities within the Santa Clara River SEA: Annual Brome Grassland and Upland

Mustard; California Bulrush Marsh, Big Sage Brush Scrub; Fremont Cottonwood Forest (Upland and Riparian); and California Buckwheat Scrub. Table 2-50 summarizes impacts within the BSA to each of the plant community equivalents associated with the Santa Clara SEA, as well as the acreage associated with the proposed project's temporary and permanent impacts.

Table 2-50: Temporary and Permanent Impacts Associated with Plant Community Equivalents Santa Clara River SEA Plant Communities

Plant Communities Associated with the Santa Clara River SEA within the BSA	Total Acres within SEA that occur in BSA (Acres)	Inside of LOD			Outside of LOD
		Temporary Impact (Acres)	Permanent Impact (Ground Disturbance) (Acres)	Permanent Impact (Bridge Span[1]) (Acres)	BSA (Acres)
Baccharis salicifolia - Sambucus nigra Association	2.15	0.01	0.00	0.00	2.15
Big sagebrush scrub	0.25	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.25
Common and giant reed marshes	4.54	0.00	0.00	0.00	4.54
Coyote brush scrub	0.07	0.01	0.00	0.0003	0.03
Fremont cottonwood forest and woodland	33.27	0.08	0.16	0.85	31.83
Upland mustards or star-thistle fields	6.22	0.35	0.43	0.12	5.11
Wild oats and annual brome grasslands	0.63	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.63
Disturbed Habitat	0.80		0.00		0.80
Unpaved Roads	0.81	0.03	0.001	0.17	0.58
Developed	1.59	0.16	0.01	0.11	1.27
Open Water / Unvegetated Channel	2.55	0.00	0.00	0.09	2.44
Total[2]	52.88	0.64	0.60	1.34	49.63

Notes: [1] = Permanent impacts to vegetation beneath the bridge due to shading, potentially affecting habitat quality, are accounted for under the Bridge Span column. [2] Total acreages may not sum completely compared with Table 2-49, above due to minor differences in rounding.

During construction of the Build Alternative, incremental increases in night lighting, noise, human activity, and impacts to water quality could temporarily impact the Santa Clara SEA. However, BMPs will be implemented during construction and the proposed project will be subject to the typical restrictions and requirements that address dust control, erosion, and runoff, including the federal CWA and NPDES. Therefore, construction of the Build Alternative is not anticipated to result in substantial adverse temporary impacts to wildlife movement.

Permanent impacts to the Santa Clara SEA would occur through increased habitat loss and fragmentation. While The Old Road Bridge would be 9 feet higher on the northern end and 15 feet higher on the southern end than the existing bridge, vegetation underneath the expanded bridge is not anticipated to regrow to the same extent as pre-disturbance levels due to shading. The adjacent I-5 Bridge does not have dense riparian vegetation undergrowth and the reconstructed The Old Road Bridge would be a similar height but not quite as wide as the current I-5 Bridge. Hence, there may be a large gap in vegetation cover along Santa Clara River as it courses underneath The Old Road Bridge. This gap may cause some wildlife species that require cover for movement to be hesitant to cross under the bridge. Some species of small mammals, reptiles, and amphibians may be exposed to increased predation (from racoons, striped skunks, and coyotes) due to lack of vegetated cover under the bridge. Also, avian species may be more hesitant to fly under the bridge due to a lack of vegetation. The Santa Clara River SEA is an important linear migration corridor through an urbanized context, and birds often move along the tree canopy while foraging during migration. The expansion of The Old Road Bridge would further fragment the canopy of Santa Clara River and expose birds to increased potential for injury and mortality from vehicle collisions. Habitat fragmentation and potential for injury and mortality would be a permanent impact to wildlife.

Furthermore, the expanded and slightly elevated The Old Road Bridge may cause increased noise and potential night lighting into the Santa Clara River SEA. In a recent study of mountain lions in the coastal mountain ranges of Southern California, researched looked at the effects of nearby night lighting on habitat selection by mountain lions and found they avoided directly lit zones on the landscape (Barrientos et al. 2023). Noise has also been linked as a potential cause of avoidance by wildlife to otherwise suitable crossing locations. In particular sensitive species are less common at underpasses with greater maximum noise levels and higher traffic volumes. Species consider sensitive to disturbance in urban environments include coyotes, bobcats, mountain lions, and other species. One study that assessed traffic disturbance and wildlife presence in Southern California found that bobcats were sensitive to elevated traffic noise levels, while other species seemed unconcerned (Shilling et al. 2020). The Old Road Bridge may increase the level of noise (due to increased traffic volumes) within the Santa Clara River SEA, thereby disturbing wildlife movement under the bridge for certain sensitive species. As discussed in Section 2.2.11, new permanent lighting will be installed on the bridge and along the roadway as part of the proposed project. As such, to reduce potential impacts, LION-1 would be implemented to ensure that lighting is directed downward and shielded to prevent light trespass into the Santa Clara River.

2.4.1.4 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

Vegetation

To minimize impacts of the proposed project on sensitive vegetation communities, the following measures will be incorporated into the proposed project design:

> **VEG-1**: Bridge construction activities will occur during dry portions of the year to reduce impacts to the low flow channel. The limits of grading and temporary work areas will be demarked with construction exclusion fencing adjacent to areas with sensitive vegetation communities to avoid unintentional encroachment into these sensitive areas. Signage will be posted identifying the excluded areas as Environmentally Sensitive Areas.
>
> **VEG-2:** The project will incorporate storm drain systems to facilitate meeting water quality requirements and for stormwater management, which will minimize erosion and degradation of habitat around the bridge.

VEG-3: Standard fugitive dust BMPs, and those required by a SWPPP e.g., a water truck, will be utilized to reduce impacts of construction-generated erosion and sedimentation into the adjacent Environmentally Sensitive Areas.

VEG-4: BMPs will be implemented to ensure invasive plant material is not spread from the proposed project site to other areas by disposal off-site or by tracking seed on equipment, clothing, and shoes. Equipment/material imported from an area of invasive plants must be identified and measures must be implemented to prevent importation and spreading of non-native plant material within the proposed project site. All construction equipment will be thoroughly cleaned to remove dirt, seeds, vegetative material, or other debris that could contain or hold seeds of noxious weeds before arriving to and leaving the proposed project site. Weeds removed will be appropriately bagged and disposed of in a sanitary landfill.

VEG-5: A Vegetation Management and Restoration Plan will be prepared for agency review and approval prior to initiating project impacts. The final plan will include the following information and conditions:

a. All habitat restoration/enhancement sites will be prepared for planting in a way that mimics natural habitat to the maximum extent practicable. All planting will be installed in a way that mimics natural plant distribution, and not in rows. Native plants will be used.

b. Planting will be accomplished through planting palettes of container plants (and plan will specify plant species, size, and number/acre) and planting seed mix (and plan will specify plant species and pounds/acre). The upland plant palette proposed in the draft plans will include native species specifically associated with existing habitat types. The source and proof of local nativeness of plant material and seed will be provided.

c. Container plant survival will be 80% of the initial plantings for the first 5 years. At the first and second anniversaries of plant installation, all dead plants will be replaced unless their function has been replaced by natural recruitment.

d. The final restoration/enhancement plan will outline the irrigation schedule to the extent practical, to prevent overwatering, runoff, and plants that are artificially robust (compared with the nearby native vegetation). Irrigation will cease after year 2 or 3 except in cases of extreme drought.

e. A final implementation schedule will indicate when all habitat impacts, as well as on-site and off-site restoration/enhancement planting and irrigation, will begin and end. Off-site restoration/enhancement planting and irrigation will be completed during the concurrent or next planting season (i.e., late fall to early spring) after initiating project impacts. On-site habitat restoration/enhancement planting and irrigation (if required) will be completed during the concurrent or next planting season (i.e., late fall to early spring) after finishing each phase of project impacts within the restoration/ enhancement area. Any temporary loss of habitat caused by delays in restoration/enhancement will be mitigated through habitat preservation or restoration/enhancement at a 0.5:1 ratio for every 6 months of delay (1:1 for 12 months' delay, 1.5:1 for 18 months' delay, etc.). In the event that the project applicant is wholly or partly prevented from performing obligations under the final plans (causing temporary loss due to delays) because of unforeseeable circumstances or causes beyond reasonable control, and without the fault or

negligence of the project applicant, the project applicant will be excused by such unforeseeable cause(s).

f. Five years of success criteria for restoration/enhancement areas will include a total of 40% to 65% absolute native cover (compared with adjacent native vegetation communities) or greater, depending on the native vegetation community being restored/enhanced; evidence of the natural recruitment of multiple species; 0% coverage for California Invasive Plant Council "Invasive Plant Inventory" species that are rated "High," and no more than 10% coverage for other exotic/weed species. Each vegetation community restored/enhanced will have a separate percent absolute native cover appropriate for the specific vegetation community. For example, this percent will vary, with riparian woodland and marsh vegetation communities having a higher native coverage percent. The final restoration/enhancement plan will detail the specific success criteria with the target percent absolute native cover for each vegetation community.

g. A qualitative and quantitative vegetation monitoring plan with a map of proposed sampling locations will be included. Photo points will be used for qualitative monitoring, and stratified random sampling will be used for all quantitative monitoring.

h. Annual mitigation and monitoring reports will be submitted to the appropriate regulatory agency after the monitoring period no later than March 1 of each year.

i. If maintenance of the habitat restoration/enhancement area is necessary between March 15 and March 31, a qualified biologist will survey for nesting birds within the restoration/enhancement area, access paths to it, and other areas susceptible to disturbances by site maintenance. Surveys will consist of three visits separated by 2 weeks starting on March 1 of each maintenance/monitoring year. Work will be allowed to continue on the site during the survey period. However, if sensitive avian species are found during any of the visits, the applicant will notify and coordinate with regulatory agencies to identify measures to avoid and/or minimize effects to the sensitive species (e.g., nests and an appropriate buffer will be flagged by the biologist and avoided by the maintenance work).

Permanent and temporary impacts to sensitive vegetation communities will be compensated as specified below.

VEG-6: Permanent and temporary impacts to sensitive vegetation communities will be replaced by creating or restoring habitats of similar functions and values in the BSA, or credits will be purchased through an applicable mitigation bank. Restoration will be in-kind and at a minimum 1:1 replacement ratio or other ratio determined in consultation with the resource agencies. All mitigation activities will be conducted in accordance with a Habitat Mitigation and Monitoring Plan due to USACE, RWQCB, and CDFW before the issuance of permits. The Habitat Mitigation and Monitoring Plan will outline the identification and location of areas that could be used for creation, restoration, or habitat enhancement. The plan will include lists of native plant species, by habitat-type, that may be used in potential on-site revegetation efforts (e.g., planting and seeding). In addition, if needed to meet mitigation needs, the plan will identify opportunities for additional enhancements of habitats in temporary impact areas, such as supplemental planting of trees, weeding of adjacent buffer habitat, or other opportunities. The enhancement opportunities will include acreage estimates of treated areas, acreage of

invasive removal, and figures to illustrate the treatment area and mapped invasive species. A habitat restoration specialist will determine the optimal areas for habitat establishment and restoration and prepare the Habitat Mitigation and Monitoring Plan that provides details on the concept. The plan will specifically discuss habitat restoration implementation, including plant establishment methods, performance standards, maintenance and monitoring period, and reporting.

VEG-7: As an alternative to the restoration of habitats to compensate for permanent and/or temporary removal of riparian habitats, the applicant (at the discretion of USACE and CDFW) may remove exotic plant species from the BSA in the following locations: (1) where there is an infestation of exotics such as giant reed such that the natural habitat functions and values are substantially degraded and at risk, and where the cover of exotics is equal to or exceeds 25% of the ground; or (2) other areas where exotic removal would be strategic in a watershed approach to weed management, as determined by USACE and CDFW. The weed removal sites will be selected in a logical manner to ensure that the eradication of weeds from specific sites will contribute to the overall control of exotics in the watercourses. Removal areas will be kept free of exotic plant species for 5 years after initial treatment. In addition, native riparian vegetation must become established through natural colonization and, after 5 years, meet the revegetation plant cover goals established by USACE and CDFW.

Migration Corridors

Avoidance and minimization measures, and compensatory mitigation, described previously under VEG-1 through VEG-5, would be implemented. These measures include use of BMPs and water trucks to minimize fugitive dust and other impacts.

Compensation mitigation described previously for VEG-6 and VEG-7 would be implemented. Additional measures would be incorporated based on input from the County of Los Angeles internal SEA impact review process. Additional measures may include the use of light shields to prevent light intrusion into adjacent natural habitats (especially along the Old Road Bridge over the Santa Clara River).

2.4.2 Wetlands and Other Waters

Wetlands and other waters provide valuable habitat to fish and wildlife. Wetlands also attenuate flooding, collect sediment, and filter nutrients and contaminants. This section analyzes impacts to potentially jurisdictional wetlands and WOTUS regulated by USACE, WOTS regulated by RWQCB, and streambed and riparian areas under the jurisdiction of CDFW.

2.4.2.1 Regulatory Setting

Wetlands and other waters are protected under a number of laws and regulations. At the federal level, the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, more commonly referred to as CWA (33 USC 1344), is the primary law regulating wetlands and surface waters. One purpose of CWA is to regulate the discharge of dredged or fill material into WOTUS, including wetlands. WOTUS includes navigable waters, interstate waters, territorial seas, and other waters that may be used in interstate or foreign commerce. The lateral limits of jurisdiction over non-tidal water bodies extend to the ordinary high water mark (OHWM), in the absence of adjacent wetlands. When adjacent wetlands are present, CWA jurisdiction extends beyond the OHWM to the limits of the adjacent wetlands. To classify wetlands for the purposes of CWA, a three-parameter approach is used that includes the presence of hydrophytic (water-loving) vegetation, wetland hydrology, and hydric soils (soils formed during saturation/inundation). All three parameters must be

present, under normal circumstances, for an area to be designated as a jurisdictional wetland under CWA.

CWA Section 404 establishes a regulatory program that provides that discharge of dredged or fill material cannot be permitted if a practicable alternative exists that is less damaging to the aquatic environment or would cause significant degradation. The Section 404 permit program is run by USACE with oversight by U.S. EPA. In general, there are two main types of 404 permits-Nationwide Permits (NWP) and Individual Permits (IP). The NWPs are for projects with minimal impacts, while the IPs are for projects with impacts over particular thresholds (e.g., more than minimal).

For Individual permits, the USACE decision to approve is based on compliance with U.S. EPA's Section 404(b)(1) Guidelines (40 CFR Part 230), and whether permit approval is in the public interest. The Guidelines were developed by U.S. EPA in conjunction with the USACE, and allow the discharge of dredged or fill material into the aquatic system (WOTUS) only if there is no practicable alternative which would have less adverse effects. The Guidelines state that USACE may not issue a permit if there is a LEDPA to the proposed discharge that would have lesser effects on WOTUS and not have any other significant adverse environmental consequences.

The EO for the Protection of Wetlands (EO 11990) also regulates the activities of federal agencies with regard to wetlands. Essentially, EO 11990 states that a federal agency, such as FHWA and/or Caltrans, as assigned, cannot undertake or provide assistance for new construction located in wetlands unless the head of the agency finds: (1) that there is no practicable alternative to the construction and (2) the proposed project includes all practicable measures to minimize harm. A Wetlands Only Practicable Alternative Finding must be made.

At the state level, wetlands and waters are regulated primarily by SWRCB, RWQCBs, and CDFW. In certain circumstances, the Coastal Commission (or Bay Conservation and Development Commission or the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency) may also be involved. Sections 1600-1607 of the California Fish and Game Code require any agency that proposes a project that will substantially divert or obstruct the natural flow of or substantially change the bed or bank of a river, stream, or lake to notify CDFW before beginning construction. If CDFW determines that the proposed project may substantially and adversely affect fish or wildlife resources, a Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement will be required. CDFW jurisdictional limits are usually defined by the tops of the stream or lake banks, or the outer edge of riparian vegetation, whichever is wider. Wetlands under the jurisdiction of USACE may or may not be included in the area covered by a Streambed Alteration Agreement obtained from CDFW.

RWQCBs were established under the Porter-Cologne Act to oversee water quality. Discharges under the Porter-Cologne Act are permitted by WDRs and may be required even when the discharge is already permitted or exempt under CWA. In compliance with CWA Section 401, RWQCBs also issue water quality certifications for activities which may result in a discharge to WOTUS. This certification is most frequently required in tandem with a Section 404 permit request. Section 2.3.2 above includes more details.

2.4.2.2 Affected Environment

The following analysis is based on the NES (AECOM 2023g) and the Jurisdictional Delineation and Wetland Assessment (AECOM 2024) prepared for the proposed project. A jurisdictional delineation was conducted by AECOM in 2018, and later updated in summer 2023, in accordance with current USACE and CDFW criteria.

The Jurisdictional Delineation (AECOM 2024) surveyed areas of the BSA along the reaches of Santa Clara River and an associated tributary drainage to determine the limits of (1) USACE and RWQCB jurisdiction pursuant to CWA Sections 404 and 401, and (2) CDFW jurisdiction pursuant to the California Fish and Game Code Division 2, Chapter 6, Section 1600.

Survey Results

Areas in the BSA under the jurisdiction of USACE, RWQCB, and CDFW include:

- 5.78 acres of jurisdictional non-wetland WOTUS and WOTS within Santa Clara River;
- 0.76 acres of wetland WOTUS and WOTS within Santa Clara River;
- 28.67 acres of CDFW-only (riparian) streambeds within Santa Clara River;
- 0.30 acre of jurisdictional non-wetland WOTUS and WOTS in the northern drainage;
- 0.98 acres of CDFW-only (riparian) streambeds within the northern drainage;
- 0.01 acre of jurisdictional non-wetland WOTUS and WOTS in Drainage A;
- 0.08 acre of CDFW-only (riparian) streambeds within Drainage A; and
- 0.01 acre of jurisdictional non-wetland WOTUS and WOTS in Drainage B;
- 0.05 acre of CDFW-only (riparian) streambeds within Drainage B.
- 0.07 acre of isolated wetland (WOTS, CDFW riparian) and 1.29 acres of riparian habitat (CDFW) within two isolated features located along the northern edge of the BSA.

The extent of waters and wetlands mapped are shown in Table 2-51.

A total of 5.78 acres and 0.76 acre of USACE and RWQCB jurisdictional waters and wetlands (respectively) and an additional 28.67 acres of CDFW-only jurisdictional waters were mapped within the BSA (Santa Clara River). The northern drainage to Santa Clara River along the northern portion of the proposed project site includes 0.30 acre of non-wetland waters and 0.98 acre of CDFW streambed. Drainages A and B include 0.02 acre of non-wetland waters and 0.13 acre of CDFW streambeds. Isolated riparian areas include 0.07 acre (RWQCB, CDFW) and 1.29 acres (CDFW). A total of 38.00 acres of CDFW jurisdictional (inclusive of USACE jurisdiction) waters was mapped within the subject reach of Santa Clara River and associated tributary drainage, as shown in Figures 14, 14a, and 14b.

Table 2-51: Jurisdictional Waters of the U.S./State within The Old Road BSA

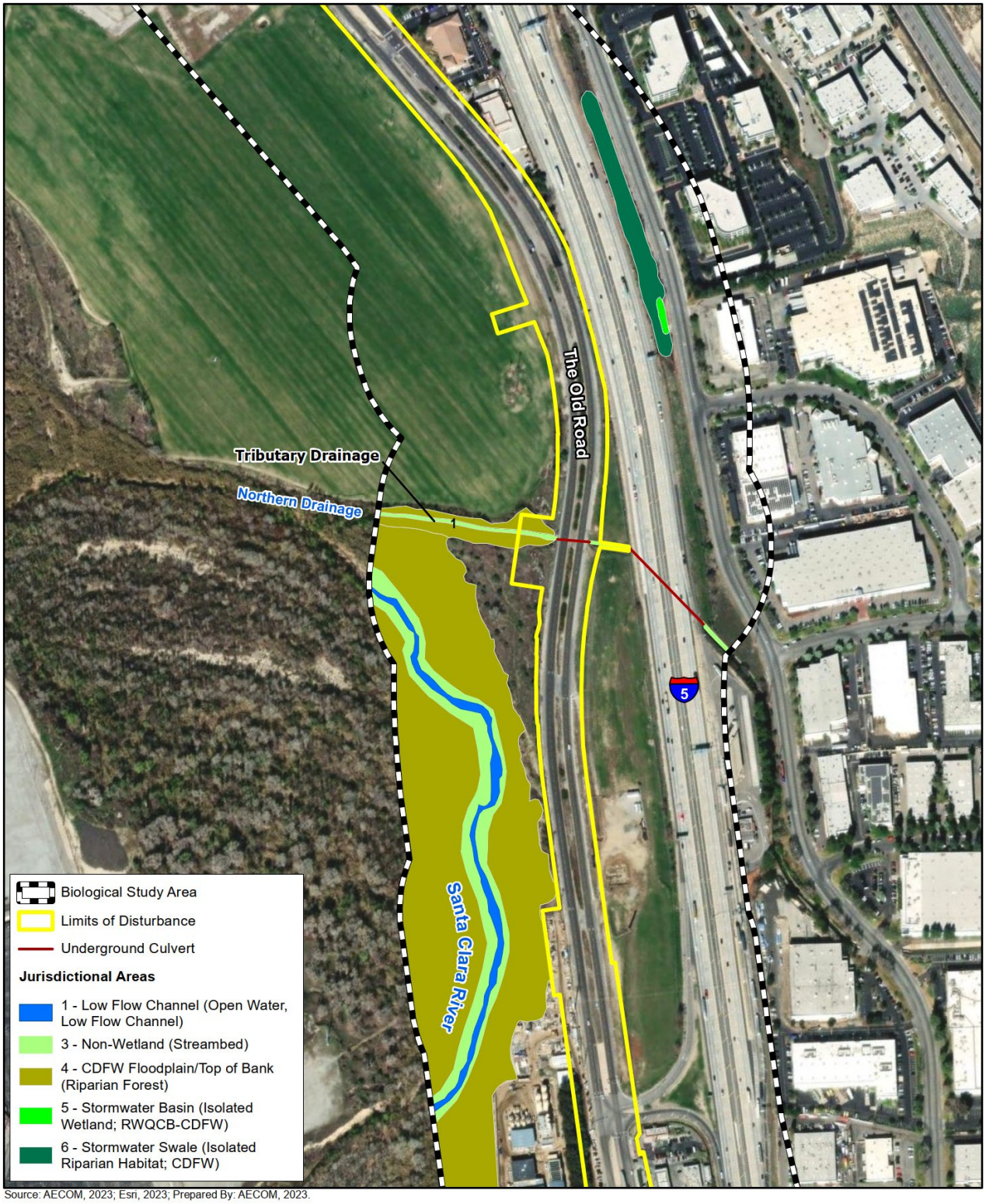
	USACE/RWQCB/ CDFW (acres)	RWQCB-Only (acres)	CDFW-Only (acres)	Total CDFW (acres)	Linear Feet
Santa Clara River					
Non-wetland waters (OHWM)	5.78	-	-	5.78	4,312
Wetland waters	0.76	-	-	0.76	4,312
Riparian habitat	-	-	28.67	28.67	n/a
Sub-total	*6.54*	*0.00*	*28.67*	*35.21*	*12,936*
Northern Drainage					
Non-wetland waters (OHWM)	0.30	-	-	0.30	639
Streambed-TOB-Riparian habitat	-	-	0.98	0.98	n/a
Sub-total	*0.30*	*0.00*	*0.98*	*1.28*	*639*
Drainage A					
Non-wetland waters (OHWM)	0.01	-	-	0.01	285
Streambed-TOB	-	-	0.08	0.08	n/a
Sub-total	*0.01*	*0.00*	*0.08*	*0.09*	*285*
Drainage B					
Non-wetland waters (OHWM)	0.01	-	-	0.01	97
Streambed-TOB	-	-	0.05	0.05	n/a
Sub-total	*0.01*	*0.00*	*0.05*	*0.06*	*97*
Isolated Features					
Isolated Wetland (RWQCB, CDFW)	-	0.07	-	0.07	n/a
Isolated Riparian (CDFW)	-	-	1.29	1.29	n/a
Sub-total	*n/a*	*0.07*	*1.29*	*1.36*	*n/a*
TOTAL	**6.86**	**0.07**	**31.07**	**38.00**	**13,957**

Note: OHWM = Ordinary High Water Mark; TOB = Top of Bank.

Source: AECOM, 2023; Prepared By: AECOM, 2023.

0 600 1,200 Feet

Figure 14
Jurisdictional Delineation Map

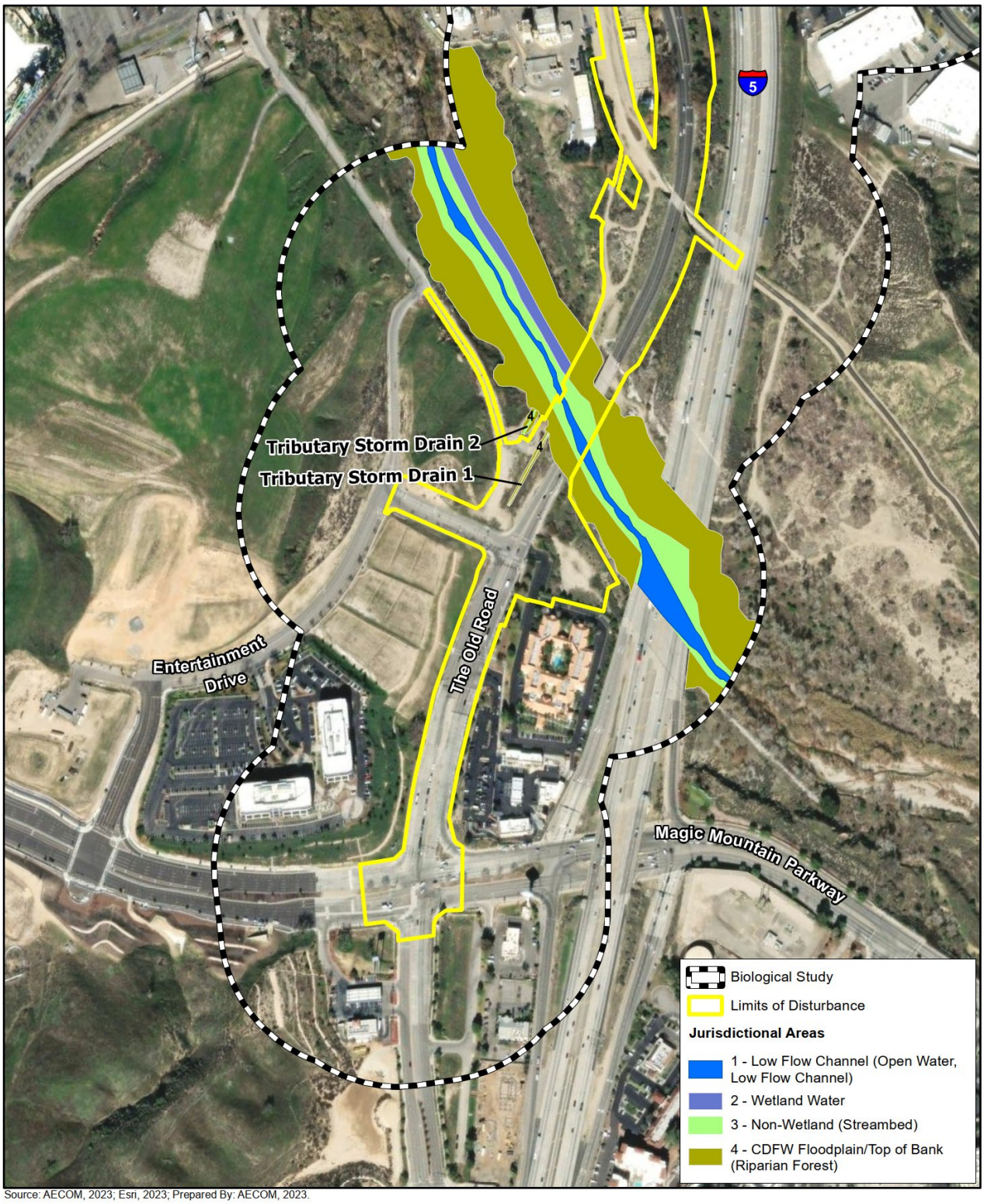


Source: AECOM, 2023; Esri, 2023; Prepared By: AECOM, 2023.

0 250 500 Feet

Figure 14a

Jurisdictional Delineation Map



Source: AECOM, 2023; Esri, 2023; Prepared By: AECOM, 2023.

0 250 500 Feet

Figure 14b

Jurisdictional Delineation Map

2.4.2.3 Environmental Consequences

2.4.2.3.1 Alternative 1: No-Build Alternative

None of the improvements to The Old Road, Rye Canyon Road, and Sky View Lane proposed under the Build Alternative would be constructed under the No-Build Alternative. Therefore, the No-Build Alternative would not result in adverse impacts to USACE, CDFW, or RWQCB areas in the BSA.

2.4.2.3.2 Alternative 2: Build Alternative

As indicated in the Jurisdictional Delineation and Wetland Assessment prepared by AECOM (2019, 2024), there are 5.78 acres and 0.76 acre of USACE and RWQCB jurisdictional waters and wetlands, respectively and an additional 28.67 acres of CDFW-only jurisdictional waters within the BSA (Santa Clara River). An unnamed tributary to the Santa Clara River along the northern portion of the proposed project site includes 0.30 acre of non-wetland waters and 0.98 acre of CDFW streambed (and adjacent riparian habitat). Drainages A and B include 0.02 acre of non-wetland waters and 0.13 acre of CDFW streambeds. Isolated riparian areas include 0.07 acre (RWQCB, CDFW) and 1.29 acres (CDFW).

The proposed project is adjacent to portions of Santa Clara River; as such, remaining jurisdictional areas may be impacted by runoff from the road and increased trash and litter. In addition, the river may be indirectly impacted by non-native species (i.e., roadside weeds), exposure to urban pollutants (fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides, and other hazardous materials), soil erosion, and hydrological changes (e.g., surface and groundwater level and quality).

Permanent impacts are proposed to occur at three features- the Santa Clara River, the Northern Tributary, and Drainage A. The project may permanently impact up to 0.05 acre, and temporarily impact 0.53 acre, of WOTUS. New indirect impact from expanded bridge shading is 0.30 acre of WOTUS. Total impacts to CDFW-jurisdictional streambeds and riparian habitat include approximately 0.21 acre of permanent impacts and 1.3 acre of temporary impacts, as well as 0.75 acre of new bridge shading and 0.014 acre due to bridge columns. Impacts are shows in Table 2-52.

For the Old Road Bridge over the Santa Clara River, the only permanent features are the bridge pilings (0.014 acre across both WOTUS and CDFW jurisdiction). Otherwise, the current and proposed bridge span areas (shading impacts) will result in 1.2 acre (0.50-acre over WOTUS; 0.70-acre over adjacent CDFW-Only streambed and riparian habitat). The shading impacts are considered temporary with respect to aquatic resources; the riparian vegetation impact analysis considers the new shading impacts to be permanent, but because the waters still exist under the bridge, then they are considered still present (and thus not permanently impacted).

As discussed in Section 2.3.2 above, there is also the potential for temporary indirect water quality impacts through sediment introduction and transport downstream. BMPs will be implemented, and all proposed project-related grading will be subject to the typical restrictions and requirements that address dust control, erosion, and runoff, including the federal CWA and NPDES to avoid or minimize indirect impacts to jurisdictional areas during construction.

With implementation of VEG-1 through VEG-6, potential impacts to jurisdictional areas would not be adverse.

2.4.2.4 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

Extensive AMMs and BMPs will be employed at the banks of Santa Clara River. Avoidance and minimization measures, and compensatory mitigation, described previously under VEG-1 through VEG-5, would be implemented. These measures include use of BMPs and water trucks to minimize fugitive dust and other impacts.

Compensation mitigation described previously for VEG-6 and VEG-7 would be implemented and provide the necessary compensation for impacts to the Santa Clara River. All mitigation activities will be conducted in accordance with a Habitat Mitigation and Monitoring Plan due to USACE, RWQCB, and CDFW as part of the regulatory permit process.

Table 2-52: Permanent and Temporary Impacts to Jurisdictional Waters of the U.S./State within The Old Road BSA

Jurisdictional Feature	Total Area within BSA (acres)	Permanent[1] (acres)	Permanent Bridge Piles (acres)	Temporary Impacts Outside of Existing Bridge (acres)	New Bridge Shading from Expanded Bridge (acres)
Santa Clara River					
Non-wetland waters (USACE, RWQCB, CDFW)	5.78	-	0.0058	0.20	0.30
Wetland waters (USACE, RWQCB, CDFW)	0.76	-	-	-	-
Adjacent Riparian Habitat (CDFW)	28.67	-	0.0081	0.25	0.45
Subtotal	35.21	-	0.014	0.45	0.75
Northern Drainage					
Non-wetland waters (USACE, RWQCB, CDFW)	0.30	0.04	-	0.03	-
Streambed-TOB-Riparian habitat (CDFW)	0.98	0.11	-	0.06	-
Subtotal	1.28	0.15	-	0.09	-
Drainage A					
Non-wetland waters (USACE, RWQCB, CDFW)	0.01	0.007	-	0.003	-
CDFW Streambeds	0.08	0.04	-	0.02	-
Subtotal	0.09	0.047	-	0.023	-
Drainage B					

Non-wetland waters (USACE, RWQCB, CDFW)	0.01	-	-	-	-
Streambed-TOB-Riparian habitat (CDFW)	0.05	-	-	-	-
Subtotal	0.06	-	-	-	-
Isolated Features					
Isolated Wetland (RWQCB, CDFW)	0.07	-	-	-	-
Isolated Riparian (CDFW)	1.29	-	-	-	-
Subtotal	1.36	-	-	-	-
Impacts					
Impacts - USACE, RWQCB, CDFW	-	0.047	0.0058	0.23	0.30
Total Perm & Temp	-	**0.05**		**0.53**	-
Impacts – CDFW-Only	-	0.15	0.0081	0.33	0.45
Total Perm & Temp	-	**0.16**		**0.78**	-
Impacts – Total CDFW	**-**	0.197	0.014	0.55	0.75
Total Perm & Temp	**-**	**0.21**		**1.30**	-

Note: TOB = Top of Bank. [1] Permanent impacts from ground disturbance (e.g. rip rap) that are separate from the permanent bridge pile footprints.

2.4.3 Plant Species

2.4.3.1 Regulatory Setting

The USFWS and CDFW have regulatory responsibility for the protection of special-status plant species. Special-status species are selected for protection because they are rare and/or subject to population and habitat declines. Special-status is a general term for species that are provided varying levels of regulatory protection. The highest level of protection is given to threatened and endangered species; these are species that are formally listed or proposed for listing as endangered or threatened under the FESA and/or the California Endangered Species Act (CESA).

This section of the document discusses all other special-status plant species, including CDFW species of special concern and California Native Plant Society (CNPS) rare and endangered plants.

The regulatory requirements for FESA can be found at 16 United States Code (USC) Section 1531, et seq. See also 50 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 402. The regulatory requirements for CESA can be found at California Fish and Game Code, Section 2050, et seq. Caltrans projects are also subject to the Native Plant Protection Act, found at California Fish and Game Code, Section 1900-1913, and CEQA, found at California Public Resources Code, Sections 21000-21177.

2.4.3.2 Affected Environment

The following analysis is based on the Natural Environment Study (AECOM 2023g) prepared for the proposed project and is supported by several plant surveys conducted specifically for the proposed project (AECOM 2023h). A literature review and records search were conducted to identify the existence or potential occurrence of sensitive or special-status plant species located within or in the vicinity of the BSA. A total of 42 non-listed special-status plant species were identified in the USFWS (2022) species list, as well as the review of the CNDDB and CNPS database. Based on an evaluation of the habitat types present relative to the habitat requirements of the special-status plant species known to occur in the BSA, and previous botanical surveys in 2006 (PCR 2006), 2018 and 2023 surveys (AECOM 2018), one special-status plant species, Southern California black walnut (*Juglans californica*), was confirmed present within the LOD and BSA (Figure 13c). The additional seven species identified in Table 2-53 with some potential to occur were not detected and are not expected to occur.

Additional special-status plant surveys were conducted across the BSA in spring and summer 2023 to provide updated survey results. Of the eight special-status plant species that had potential to occur, only Southern California black walnut was encountered in the BSA during 2023, despite abundant rainfall during the preceding winter. Southern California black walnut was also observed by survey efforts in 2018, outside of the LOD and 500-foot buffer area. Seven individuals, ranging from approximately two meters to seven meters in height, were observed in 2023 botanical surveys in the vicinity of The Old Road Bridge adjacent to Santa Clara River. One Southern California black walnut is located within the LOD near The Old Road and would be directly affected. The other walnuts are outside of the LOD and would not be directly affected.

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Table 2-53: Regional Special-Status Plant Species with Potential to Occur within the Biological Study Area

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status[1]			Peak Blooming Period	Preferred General Habitat Types and Elevation Range (feet amsl)	Associated Micro Habitat	Potential to Occur within BSA[2]
		Federal	State	CRPR				
Calystegia peirsonii	Peirson's morning-glory	_	_	4.2	Apr-Jun	Chaparral, Chenopod scrub, Cismontane woodland, Coastal scrub, Lower montane coniferous forest, Valley and foothill grassland. 95 to 4,920 feel amsl	_	Not Detected
Chorizanthe parryi var. *fernandina*	San Fernando Valley spineflower	FC	CE	1B.1	Apr-Jul	Coastal scrub (sandy), Valley and foothill grassland. 490 to 4,005 feet amsl	_	Not Detected
Deinandra paniculata	paniculate tarplant	_	_	4.2	(Mar) April-Nov	Coastal scrub, Valley and foothill grassland, Vernal pools. 80-3,085 feet amsl	Usually vernally mesic, sometimes sandy	Not Detected
Harpagonella palmeri	Palmer's grapplinghook	_	_	4.2	Mar-May	Chaparral, Coastal scrub, Valley and foothill grassland. 65 to 3,135 feet amsl	Clay; open grassy areas within shrubland	Not Detected
Helianthus inexpectatus	Newhall sunflower	_	_	1B.1	Aug-Oct	Marshes and swamps, Riparian woodland. 1,000 feet amsl	Freshwater, seeps	Not Detected
Juglans californica	Southern California black walnut	_	_	4.2	Mar-Aug	Chaparral, Cismontane woodland, Coastal scrub, Riparian woodland. 160 to 2,955 feet amsl	Alluvial	**Present –** Seven individuals observed adjacent to the Santa Clara River within the BSA
Malacothamnus davidsonii	Davidson's bush-mallow	_	_	1B.2	Jun-Jan	Chaparral, Cismontane woodland, Coastal scrub, Riparian woodland. 605 to 3,740 feet amsl	_	Not Detected
Pseudognaphalium leucocephalum	white rabbit-tobacco	_	_	2B.2	(Jul) Aug-Nov (Dec)	Chaparral, Cismontane woodland, Coastal scrub, Riparian woodland. 0 to 6,890 feet amsl	Sandy, gravelly	Not Detected

Notes: [1] Status:

Federal

FE = Species listed as Endangered under the Federal Endangered Species Act (ESA)
FT = Species listed as Threatened under FESA
FC = Species considered a candidate for listing under FESA

California

CE = Species listed as Endangered under CESA
CT = Species listed as Threatened under CESA
CR = Species listed as Rare under the Native Plant Protection Act (plants only)

As required by the County of Los Angeles and pursuant to Section 22.56.2050-2260 of the Los Angeles County Code, AECOM prepared an Oak Tree Report (AECOM 2019b) in June 2019 to provide information to the County on oak trees that may be removed or impacted by the proposed project. AECOM surveyed 59 native oak trees (56 valley oak [*Quercus lobata*] and three coast live oak [*Quercus agrifolia*] subject to the Los Angeles County Oak Tree Ordinance within the BSA, which included the proposed LOD and all areas within 500 feet of the LOD. Most of the oak trees recorded in the BSA were documented within the LOD along both sides of The Old Road just south of the intersection of The Old Road and Rye Canyon Road. Of the 59 native oak trees surveyed, 15 valley oak trees are planned for permanent removal by the proposed project. The oak trees planned for removal are valley oak trees, two of which are heritage trees under Los Angeles County Oak Tree Ordinance (36 inches in diameter or greater). Fourteen oak trees are located within temporary impact areas associated with construction access and temporary work areas and will be avoided to the greatest extent possible during proposed project construction-related activities. Thirty native oak trees occur within 500 feet of the LOD; none of which would be removed or encroached upon by construction-related activities.

2.4.3.3 Environmental Consequences

2.4.3.3.1 Alternative 1: No-Build Alternative

There would be no operational or construction impacts to plant species from the No-Build Alternative.

2.4.3.3.2 Alternative 2: Build Alternative

There is the potential for permanent or temporary impacts to several Southern California black walnut trees located in the vicinity of The Old Road Bridge (Figure 13c). One Southern California black walnut would be directly removed or shaded out by expansion of the Old Road bridge. One additional Southern California black walnut is in close proximity to the LOD between the Old Road and I-5, but could likely be avoided by installation of environmental protective fencing. The five other Southern California black walnuts are located far enough away from the LOD (located on the east side of I-5) that they are unlikely to be impacted by the proposed project.

As indicated above, 15 valley oak trees will be directly removed as a result of proposed project implementation and are subject to the Los Angeles County Oak Tree Ordinance. It may be necessary to obtain an oak tree permit for the permanent removal of the 15 valley oak trees.

2.4.3.4 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

Avoidance and minimization measures for potential impacts to the two Southern California black walnut trees in and around The Old Road Bridge are detailed below.

> **WALNUT-1**: The project is expected to directly impact one Southern California black walnut, and indirectly impact one additional tree. A pre-construction survey is required to fence the exact LOD, during which protective fencing will be placed around the one tree that may be indirectly impacted. If feasible, the one Southern California black walnut within the direct footprint of the expanded bridge will be transplanted and replanted outside of the LOD along the bank of Santa Clara River. In addition, because transplanting is not always successful, any Southern California black walnut trees that are directly impacted will be mitigated for at a 2:1 ratio (as individuals, not acreage). The

mitigated trees are to be planted nearby at an acceptable location for this species. Ideally, any replacement may be grown in a nursery and re-planted before proposed project implementation. Otherwise, purchasing walnut plants from a native plant nursery would be acceptable, preferably from stock originating in Los Angeles County.

Measures to minimize impacts to oak trees that will not be removed, but occur within proximity of construction activities, are provided below. These measures are intended to preserve and protect the remaining oak trees in the proposed project area.[5]

OAK-1: Protective Fencing. A plan will be developed for protecting oak trees during construction. The intent is to install protective fencing along the boundary of The Old Road ROW in areas adjacent to oak trees. For any oak trees located outside of The Old Road ROW, this plan will be approved by the Forestry Division of the County of Los Angeles. For any oak trees located within The Old Road ROW, this plan will be approved by LACPW.

Equipment damage to limbs, trunks, and roots of all remaining trees will be avoided during proposed project construction. Even slight trunk injuries can result in susceptibility to long-term pathogenic maladies.

Protective fencing not less than 4 feet in height will be placed at the limits of The Old Road ROW where the protective zone of any individual oak tree or dense stand of oak trees within 200 feet of the grading limits. Oak tree protective fencing will be in accordance with the Los Angeles County Code, Chapter 22.176. The protective zone is defined as within the dripline of an oak tree and extending from there to a point at least 5 feet outside of the dripline, or 15 feet from the trunk of a tree, whichever distance is greater. This fencing will be inspected prior to commencement of proposed project construction in the area and will remain in place until construction is completed.

OAK-2: Grading Restrictions near Protective Zones. Care must be taken to limit grade changes near the protective zone of an oak tree. Grade changes can lead to plant stress from oxygen deprivation or oak root fungus at the root collar of oaks. Minor grade changes farther from the trunk are not as critical but can negatively affect the health of the tree if not carefully monitored by a County-approved certified arborist.

- The grade will not be lowered or raised around the trunk (i.e., within the protective zone) of any oak tree without the approval of the Los Angeles County Forester or LACPW (as applicable), or a County-certified arborist as specified in an approved oak tree permit. A certified arborist will supervise all excavation or grading proposed within the protective zone of a tree.

- Trenching, excavation, or clearance of vegetation within the protective zone of an oak tree will be accomplished by the use of hand tools or small handheld power tools. Any major roots encountered will be conserved to the greatest extent possible and treated as recommended by the certified arborist.

- No utility trenches will be routed within the protective zone of an oak tree unless no feasible alternative locations are available and will be approved by the County Forester or LACPW, as determined appropriate.

[5] Any oaks in The Old Road ROW are not subject to the oak tree ordinance and replacement ratios.

OAK-3: Equipment Storage.

- No storage of equipment, supplies, vehicles, or debris will be permitted within the protective zone of an oak tree.
- No dumping of construction wastewater, paint, stucco, concrete, or any other cleanup waste will occur within the protective zone of an oak tree.
- No temporary structures will be placed within the protective zone of any remaining oak tree.

OAK-4: Maintenance.[6] Healthy trees, if not maintained, often grow beyond their ability to support themselves and fail at their naturally occurring weakest point. This point is typically at a branch union or near the main crotch of the tree. Weight-reduction pruning and/or cabling is important in any tree preservation program.

- Pruning of replacement oak trees and preserved oak trees will include the removal of dead wood and stubs, and medium pruning of branches measuring 2 inches in diameter or less.
- Pruning of replacement oak trees and preserved oak trees will be in accordance with the guidelines published by the National Arborist Association. In no case will more than 25% of the overall tree canopy and 10% of the overall root mass of any oak tree be removed. After pruning, installation of support cables to prevent future main crotch failures may be necessary based on a County-certified arborist's determination.
- All replacement oak trees will be maintained in accordance with the principles set forth in the publication, Oak Trees: Care and Maintenance prepared by the Forestry Division of the Fire Caltrans of the County of Los Angeles.
- A 5-year maintenance period will begin upon the start of planting the replacement trees. All replacement trees failing to survive within this period will be replaced.

OAK-5: Frequency of Watering. Care should be taken to avoid placing any irrigation devices within watering distance of the protected zone of oak trees. Oak trees survive and thrive on annual rainfall alone and generally do not require supplemental irrigation except during periods of extreme drought or for establishment of newly planted trees (i.e., replacement trees).

- Irrigation water will not reach within 15 feet of any oak trunk.
- Neither grass nor ground covers will be planted under the canopy of oak trees.

OAK-6: Control of Diseases and Pests. A County-approved arborist will evaluate the effects of mistletoe, pathogens, and insect pests on the preserved and planted oak trees within the 5-year maintenance period, in addition to the overall health and structural integrity of the trees, to ensure longevity of remaining oak trees.

[6] If LACPW replaces oaks and/or otherwise plants oaks, it will be at a designated mitigation site, and maintenance will be per the agreement with the site. As a general rule, LACPW does not maintain oaks in natural areas.

OAK-7: Construction Monitoring. Damage to remaining trees must be avoided by workers and equipment during construction activities.

- A qualified biologist or County-certified arborist will monitor on-site construction and grading activities occurring near all identified oak tree protection zones to ensure that damage to oak trees does not occur.

- Prior to initiation of construction activities, the qualified biologist or County-certified arborist will schedule a field meeting to inform personnel involved in construction where all protective zones are located and the importance of avoiding encroachment within the protective zones.

2.4.3.5 Compensatory Mitigation

As detailed previously under WALNUT-1, any Southern California black walnut trees that are directly impacted will be mitigated for at a 2:1 ratio (as individuals, not acreage).

Pursuant to Section 22.56.2050-2260 of the Los Angeles County Oak Tree Ordinance, the following compensatory MM is proposed to compensate for the 15 valley oak trees to be permanently removed by the proposed project.

OAK-8: Replacement Trees. All oak trees removed will be replaced by a tree of the same species at a ratio of 2:1. All heritage trees that will be removed will be replaced at a 10:1 ratio. All replacement trees will be at least 24-inch box trees and measure 1 inch or more in diameter, as measured from 1 foot above the base. Free-form trees with multiple stems are permissible; the combined diameter of the two largest stems of such trees will measure a minimum of 1 inch in diameter, as measured from 1 foot above the base. Replacement trees will consist exclusively of indigenous oak trees and be certified as being grown from a seed source collected in Los Angeles County or Ventura County.

2.4.4 Wildlife Species

2.4.4.1 Regulatory Setting

Many state and federal laws regulate impacts to wildlife species. USFWS, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), and CDFW are responsible for implementing these laws. This section discusses potential impacts and permit requirements associated with wildlife not listed or proposed for listing under the federal or state Endangered Species Act. Species listed or proposed for listing as threatened or endangered are discussed in Section 2.4.5 below. All other special-status wildlife species are discussed here, including CDFW fully protected species and species of special concern.

Federal laws and regulations relevant to non-federally listed wildlife include the following:

- NEPA

- Migratory Bird Treaty Act

- Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act

- Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act

State laws and regulations relevant to wildlife include the following:

- CEQA
- Sections 1600–1603, 2000, 2002, 2014, 3503, 3503.3, 3511, 4150 4152, 4700, 5050, and 5515 of the California Fish and Game Code.

2.4.4.2 Affected Environment

The following analysis is based on the NES (AECOM 2023g) prepared for the proposed project which is supported by a variety of species-specific focused biological surveys. Biological surveys in support of the proposed project were conducted in 2018, with additional and updated surveys conducted in 2023. Table 2-46, above, provides a list of the biological surveys conducted to date for the proposed project.

The list of special-status wildlife species occurring in the region was evaluated for their potential to occur within the BSA, which consists of the footprint of the proposed project, and areas that may be affected directly or indirectly by the proposed project. Over six fish, four amphibian, six reptile, 41 bird, and seven mammal species have been documented within the BSA.

Santa Clara River has perennial flow, maintaining moist soil throughout the year that provides habitat for fish, amphibian, reptile, avian, and mammalian species. Common fish species detected include arroyo chub (*Gila orcuttii*), mosquito fish (*Gambusia affinis*), largemouth bass (*Micropterus salmoides*), common carp (*Cyprinus carpio*), California killifish (*Fundulus parvipinnis*), and Santa Ana sucker (*Catostomus santaanae*). Common amphibian species detected within the BSA include western toad (*Anaxyrus boreas*), Baja California treefrog (*Pseudacris hypochondriaca*), American bullfrog (*Lithobates catesbeiana*), and African clawed frog (*Xenopus laevis*).

Reptile species detected include western fence lizard (*Sceloporus occidentalis*), side-blotched lizard (*Uta stansburiana*), coastal whiptail (*Aspidoscelis tigris stejnegeri*), two-striped garter snake (*Thamnophis hammondii*), red racer (*Coluber flagellum piceus*), and red-eared slider (*Trachemys scripta elegans*).

The riparian vegetation communities and adjacent upland vegetation provide high-quality habitat for common bird species that include mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*), turkey vulture (*Cathartes aura*), red-tailed hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*), Cooper’s hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*), green heron (*Butorides virescens*), common yellowthroat (*Geothlypis trichas*), mourning dove (*Zenaida macroura*), Anna's hummingbird (*Calypte anna*), northern flicker (*Colaptes auratus*), western scrub jay (*Aphelocoma californica*), black phoebe (*Sayornis nigricans*), American crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*), bushtit (*Psaltriparus minimus*), ruby-crowned kinglet (*Regulus calendula*), spotted towhee (*Pipilo maculata*), California towhee (*Pipilo crissalis*), song sparrow (*Melospiza melodia*), white-crowned sparrow (*Zonotrichia leucophrys*), and house finch (*Carpodacus mexicanus*) among others.

The BSA provides foraging and cover habitat for the following common mammal species: coyote (*Canis latrans*), Virginia opossum (*Didelphis virginianus*), bobcat (*Lynx rufus*), striped skunk (*Mephitis mephitis*), dusky-foot woodrat (*Neotoma fuscipes*), mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*), deer mouse (*Peromyscus californicus*), raccoon (*Procyon lotor*), California ground squirrel (*Otospermophilus beecheyi*), Botta's pocket gopher (*Thomomys bottae*), Mexican free-tailed bat (*Tadarida brasiliensis*), big brown bat (*Eptesicus fascus*), silver haired bat

(*Lasionycteris noctivagans*), western pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus hesperus*), and California myotis (*Myotis californicus*).

Non-listed Special-Status Wildlife Species

This section discusses non-listed special-status wildlife species that have been detected within the BSA or are likely to occur within the BSA and be impacted by the proposed project. Species that do not occur or are unlikely to occur are listed in Table 2-54, but not described below. This section includes fish, reptiles and amphibians, birds (species protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act), and mammals.

Fish

Arroyo chub is a CDFW Species of Special Concern in its native range, which includes Los Angeles, San Gabriel, San Luis Rey, Santa Ana and Santa Margarita rivers, and Malibu and San Juan creeks (CDFW 2024). It prefers slow-moving or backwater sections of warm to cool streams with muddy or sandy bottoms, but sometimes tolerates fairly fast-moving sections of stream with coarse substrate. This species was introduced to many river systems in southern California outside of its native range and is a dominant fish species in Santa Clara River and its tributaries, where perennial aquatic habitat is present. During the most recent fish surveys conducted within the northern drainage (hereafter Northern Drainage (Merkel & Associates, Inc. 2023), arroyo chub were commonly observed, and are known throughout Santa Clara River within the BSA.

Amphibians and Reptiles

Southern California legless lizard (*Anniella stebbinsi*) is identified as a CDFW Species of Special Concern (CDFW 2024). The species is typically associated with deserts and semi-arid habitat but can also be found in coastal sage scrub habitats. It is frequently found in sandy soils or leaf litter. As indicated in Table 2-54, suitable sandy soils and leaf litter are present within the BSA. The species was detected just west of the BSA at the southern end of Commerce Center Drive during construction of the interchange with SR-126. Therefore, the species is known to occur along Santa Clara River, and there is a high potential for the species to be present in riparian vegetation within the BSA.

California glossy snake (*Arizona elegans occidentalis*) is identified as a CDFW Species of Special Concern (CDFW 2024). The species is typically associated with sparse vegetation and sandy or loose, loamy soils and inhabits stabilized dunes, beaches, dry washes, chaparral, pine, oak, and riparian woodlands. While the species has not been detected within the BSA, as indicated in Table 2-54, suitable sandy soils and riparian woodland are present within the BSA.

Coastal whiptail (*Aspidoscelis tigris stejnegeri*) is identified as a CDFW Species of Special Concern (CDFW 2024). The species inhabits open areas in semiarid grasslands, scrublands, and woodlands. As indicated in Table 2-54, this species was encountered as an incidental observation during 2018 surveys (AECOM 2023g). The species was also regularly detected during riparian bird surveys from 2017 through 2022 (Woodstar and Compliance Biology 2017 through 2022).

Table 2-54: Regional Special-Status Wildlife Species with Potential to Occur within the Biological Survey Area

Common Name *Scientific Name*	Sensitivity Status[1]	General Habitat Description[2]	Potentially Suitable Habitat Present/Absent	Potential to Occur in the BSA[3, 4]
INVERTEBRATES				
Crotch bumble bee *Bombus crotchii*	CDFW: CE	Occurs at relatively warm and dry sites, including the inner Coast Range of California and the margins of the Mojave Desert. Requires large patches of nectar source flowers.	Absent	Unlikely. Based on 2023 botanical surveys after a wet winter/spring, parge patches of nectar source flowers are absent from the BSA. The habitat is primarily urban/developed and disturbed followed by riparian vegetation, with patches of nonnative grassland. This habitat is generally not conducive for native bee species.
Vernal pool fairy shrimp *Branchinecta lynchi*	USFWS: FT	Occurs primarily in vernal pools, seasonal wetlands that fill with water during fall and winter rains and dry up in spring and summer. The majority of pools in any vernal pool complex are not inhabited by the species at any one time. Different pools within or between complexes may provide habitat for the fairy shrimp in alternative years, as climatic conditions vary.	Absent	Does not occur. No suitable vernal pool habitat is present within the BSA.
Monarch- California overwintering population *Danaus plexippus* pop. 1 (California overwintering population)	USFWS: FC	Overwinters in coastal California, generally in large Eucalyptus or other tree groves. Life cycle relies on milkweed host plant to be present.	Present	Unlikely. Based on 2023 botanical surveys, an isolated occurrence of narrow-leaf milkweed was detected within the BSA, which is a larval host plant. The occurrence was in a weedy patch along the road edge and is unlikely to support breeding monarch butterflies. Furthermore, there are no forest groves (usually Eucalyptus) where the species can overwinter in or around the BSA. The species generally prefers coastal sites for overwintering.

Table 2-54: Regional Special-Status Wildlife Species with Potential to Occur within the Biological Survey Area

Common Name *Scientific Name*	Sensitivity Status[1]	General Habitat Description[2]	Potentially Suitable Habitat Present/Absent	Potential to Occur in the BSA[3, 4]
Quino checkerspot butterfly *Euphydryas editha quino*	USFWS: FE	Occurs in coastal sage scrub habitats in southern California and northern Baja California. Larvae rely on host plants *Plantago erecta* or *Castilleja exserta* found in meadows and upland sage scrub/chaparral.	Absent	Does not occur. This species is considered extirpated from the County of Los Angeles and the BSA is outside of the current species range.
FISH				
Santa Ana sucker *Catostomus santaanae*	USFWS: FT (however this designation does not apply to the population in Santa Clara River)	Typically found in pools and runs of small to medium size, shallow, permanent streams with cool, unpolluted water and coarse substrates of boulder, rubble, and sand. Sometimes occurs on sand/mud bottom. Can inhabit reservoirs. Prefers areas with riparian vegetation that provides cover and refuge from floods.	Present	**Occurs.** Suitable habitat in the form of Santa Clara River occurs within the BSA. Santa Ana sucker was detected in 2023 fish surveys of the Northern Drainage. However, the population is considered transplanted in Santa Clara River and not considered FT.
Unarmored threespine stickleback *Gasterosteus aculeatus williamsoni*	USFWS: FE CDFW: SE, FP	Slow-moving sections of freshwater or brackish water stream habitat with protective cover. Optimal cover may include vegetation and filamentous algae, but any natural shelter (rocks, logs, stream banks) is sufficient.	Present	**Occurs.** Suitable habitat in the form of Santa Clara River occurs within the BSA. Unarmored threespine stickleback has historically been observed in the stretch of Santa Clara River that coincides with the BSA (Caltrans 2008). While 2023 fish surveys failed to detect the species in the Northern Drainage, CDFW assumes the species is present throughout Santa Clara River in the BSA including the Northern Drainage.

Table 2-54: Regional Special-Status Wildlife Species with Potential to Occur within the Biological Survey Area

Common Name *Scientific Name*	Sensitivity Status[1]	General Habitat Description[2]	Potentially Suitable Habitat Present/Absent	Potential to Occur in the BSA[3, 4]
Arroyo chub *Gila orcutti*	CDFW: SSC	Required habitat includes slow-moving or backwater sections of warm to cool (10 to 24 degrees Celsius) streams with mud or sand substrates. Depths of streams are typically greater than 16 inches.	Present	**Occurs.** Suitable habitat in the form of Santa Clara River occurs within the BSA. The species was detected during 2023 fish surveys in the Northern Drainage.
Southern California Steelhead Distinct Population Segment (DPS) *Oncorhynchus mykiss*	NMFS: FE CDFW: SSC	Found in Pacific Ocean tributaries from Aleutian Islands in Alaska south to southern California. Anadromous forms are known as steelhead, freshwater forms as rainbow trout.	Absent	Unlikely. Although potentially suitable habitat for this species occurs within the BSA, upstream migration from the ocean to the area of the BSA is restricted 10 miles from the coast by the Freeman Diversion Dam (the BSA occurs roughly 40 miles upstream of the coast). Counts of adults above the dam have been variable, but generally low since the late 1990s. The species is known primarily from lower reaches of Santa Clara River and Santa Paula, Sespe, Hopper, and Piru creeks, Recent drought years have further restricted upstream migration (NMFS 2016).
Santa Ana speckled dace *Rhinichthys osculus* ssp. 3 (Santa Ana speckled dace)	CDFW: SSC	Found primarily in shallow perennial streams fed by cool springs with water temperatures below 20 degrees Celsius.	Present	Unlikely. Attempts to establish additional populations of Santa Ana speckled dace have been made through introductions into the Santa Clara and Cuyama rivers. The introduction into Santa Clara River is thought to have failed and the species was not detected during 2023 fish surveys of the Northern Drainage.

Table 2-54: Regional Special-Status Wildlife Species with Potential to Occur within the Biological Survey Area

Common Name *Scientific Name*	Sensitivity Status[1]	General Habitat Description[2]	Potentially Suitable Habitat Present/Absent	Potential to Occur in the BSA[3, 4]
AMPHIBIANS				
Arroyo toad *Anaxyrus californicus*	USFWS: FE CDFW: SSC	Gravelly or sandy washes, stream and river banks, and arroyos. Also upland habitat near washes and streams such as sage scrub, mixed chaparral, Joshua tree woodland, and sagebrush habitats.	Present	Unlikely. Suitable habitat is present within the BSA and federal designated critical habitat for this species is located within the BSA. A single individual was captured and released within Santa Clara River, just east of I-5 in 1994. Tadpoles were historically found just west of The Old Road Bridge. Focused surveys conducted in 2023, did not detect the species and it is likely extirpated from the BSA.
Foothill yellow-legged frog-south coast DPS *Rana boylii* pop. 6	USFWS: PE CDFW: SE, SSC	Inhabits partly-shaded, shallow streams and riffles with a rocky substrate in a variety of habitats. Requires some cobble-sized substrate for egg-laying.	Absent	Does not occur. Although habitat potentially suitable for this species is present within the BSA, historical records of this species are from 1966 and 1977 from Piru Creek, approximately 10 miles west of the BSA. These occurrences are currently assumed extirpated.
California red-legged frog *Rana draytonii*	USFWS: FT CDFW: SSC	Lowlands and foothills in or near permanent sources of deep water with dense, shrubby or emergent riparian vegetation. Requires 11 to 20 weeks of permanent water for larval development and must have access to aestivation habitat. Endemic to California and Baja California, at elevations ranging from sea level to 5,000 feet amsl. Has a distinct aquatic and upland habitat requirement which includes pools of slow-moving streams, perennial or ephemeral ponds and upland sheltering habitats.	Absent	Does not occur. Although riparian habitat is present, other distinct aquatic and upland features are not present within the BSA.

Table 2-54: Regional Special-Status Wildlife Species with Potential to Occur within the Biological Survey Area

Common Name *Scientific Name*	Sensitivity Status[1]	General Habitat Description[2]	Potentially Suitable Habitat Present/Absent	Potential to Occur in the BSA[3, 4]
Southern mountain yellow-legged frog *Rana muscosa*	USFWS: FE CDFW: SE, WL	Found in the southern Sierra Nevada mountains in lakes, ponds, and streams. Requires breeding habitat that does not dry out year round.	Absent	Does not occur. Suitable mountain streams do not occur in the BSA.
Western spadefoot *Spea hammondii*	USFWS: proposed threatened CDFW: SSC	Occurs in grasslands, oak woodlands, coastal sage scrub, and chaparral habitats. Vernal pools or other ephemeral ponded waters that are relatively still are essential for breeding and egg-laying.	Absent	Unlikely. Marginal upland aestivation habitat is present within the BSA, but temporary ponded areas required for breeding are absent. Several old records outside the BSA along San Francisquito Creek at confluence of Santa Clara River in 2001. Species was not detected during focused arroyo toad surveys in 2023.
Coast Range newt *Taricha torosa*	CDFW: SSC	Found in the coast ranges from Mendocino County to Northern San Diego County. Occurs primarily in valley-foothill hardwood, valley-foothill hardwood-conifer, coastal scrub and mixed chaparral, but is also known from annual grassland and mixed conifer types. Elevation range extends from near sea level to about 6,000 feet amsl.	Absent	Does not occur.
REPTILES				
Southern California legless lizard *Anniella stebbinsi*	CDFW: SSC	Occurs in loose sand, loam, or humus substrates. Frequently found in leaf litter. Burrows in washes, dune sand and loose soils near slopes and streams.	Present	**Likely**. Suitable sandy soils and riparian woodland are present on the site. Species has been detected recently along the banks of Santa Clara River just west by Commerce Center Drive.
California glossy snake *Arizona elegans occidentalis*	CDFW: SSC	Occurs in deserts and semi-arid habitats but can also be found in coastal sage scrub or chaparral habitats. Frequently found in sandy soils, or leaf litter, in elevation from below sea level to 6,000 feet amsl.	Present	**Likely**. Sage scrub habitat and Suitable sandy soils and leaf litter are present within the BSA. There are several historic occurrences within Santa Clara River and

Table 2-54: Regional Special-Status Wildlife Species with Potential to Occur within the Biological Survey Area

Common Name *Scientific Name*	Sensitivity Status[1]	General Habitat Description[2]	Potentially Suitable Habitat Present/Absent	Potential to Occur in the BSA[3, 4]
				tributaries between Interstates 5 and 14. Population is presumed extant.
Coastal whiptail *Aspidoscelis tigris stejnegeri*	CDFW: SSC	Occurs in deserts and semi-arid habitats. Soils may be firm, sandy or rocky. Found in areas with sparse vegetation.	Present	**Occurs.** This species was encountered as an incidental observation during 2018 surveys.
Southwestern pond turtle *Actinemys pallida*	USFWS: proposed threatened CDFW: SSC	Inhabits permanent or nearly permanent bodies of water and requires basking sites such as partially submerged logs, vegetation mats, or open mud banks.	Present	**Occurs**. Suitable riparian habitat present within the BSA and this species has been historically detected in the Santa Clara River. Multiple occurrences (2015) are located within the Santa Clara River, between The Old Road and Castaic Junction and within the BSA. In addition, this species was detected during 2023 survey efforts within the BSA, in the Northern Drainage.
Coast horned lizard *Phrynosoma blainvillii*	CDFW: SSC	Found in scrubland, grassland, coniferous forests, and broadleaf woodland. Prefers sandy washes with scattered cover. Needs areas of loose soil for concealment.	Present	**Likely**. Suitable sandy soils are present within the BSA. A single occurrence (2015) is located between I-5 and State Route 126, within the BSA.
Two-striped garter snake *Thamnophis hammondii*	CDFW: SSC	Permanent or semi-permanent bodies of water in a variety of habitats.	Present	**Occurs**. Historical survey data from 2008 confirmed species presence. However, it has not been detected more recently in 2023 during focused surveys for other reptile and amphibian species.
BIRDS				
Cooper's hawk *Accipiter cooperii*	CDFW: WL	Found in woodlands, chiefly of open, interrupted or marginal type. Nest sites are mainly in riparian growths of deciduous trees, as in canyon bottoms on river flood-plains. Also known to nest in live oaks.	Present	**Occurs**. Suitable nesting habitat is present throughout the BSA. Species was observed regularly along Santa Clara River during surveys in 2006 (Caltrans 2008) and there are historic occurrences upstream and

Table 2-54: Regional Special-Status Wildlife Species with Potential to Occur within the Biological Survey Area

Common Name *Scientific Name*	Sensitivity Status[1]	General Habitat Description[2]	Potentially Suitable Habitat Present/Absent	Potential to Occur in the BSA[3, 4]
				downstream of the BSA. Additionally, the species was most recently detected incidentally during the 2023 survey efforts.
Southern California rufous-crowned sparrow *Aimophila ruficeps canescens*	CDFW: WL	Resident in southern California coastal sage scrub and sparse mixed chaparral. Frequents relatively steep, often rocky hillsides with grass and forb patches.	Present	**Likely**. Marginal suitable habitat occurs in the BSA scrub habitat. In 2006, one individual of this species was observed along Castaic Creek, west of the study area (Caltrans 2008).
Grasshopper sparrow *Ammodramus savannarum*	CDFW: SSC	Associated with dense grasslands on rolling hills, lowland plains, in valleys and on hillsides on lower mountain slopes. Prefers native grasslands with a mix of grasses, forbs, and scattered shrubs. This species is loosely colonial when nesting.	Absent	Does not occur. Suitable grassland habitat is absent from the BSA.
Western burrowing owl *Athene cunicularia*	CDFW: SSC	Burrow sites are open, dry annual or perennial grasslands, deserts and scrublands characterized by low-growing vegetation. Subterranean nester dependent on burrowing mammals, including the California ground squirrel.	Present	**Likely**. Agricultural and grassland areas of the BSA could potentially support nesting or overwintering individuals. Known to occur (2007) within 2 miles of the BSA. Several recent records from the Six Flags Magic Mountain vicinity, but all from the winter/migration period. Species is unlikely to occur within the BSA as a breeding bird. It may occasionally be detected in winter or during migration.
Swainson's hawk *Buteo swainsoni*	CDFW: ST	Large, open grasslands with abundant prey in association with suitable nest trees. Foraging habitat includes native grasslands or lightly grazed pastures, alfalfa and other hay crops, and certain grain and row croplands. Nesting areas may be found in mature riparian forest.	Absent	Does not occur. This species is not known to nest or breed within the Los Angeles area, possibly extirpated. The closest breeding locations are within the Antelope Valley. The species is known to

Table 2-54: Regional Special-Status Wildlife Species with Potential to Occur within the Biological Survey Area

Common Name *Scientific Name*	Sensitivity Status[1]	General Habitat Description[2]	Potentially Suitable Habitat Present/Absent	Potential to Occur in the BSA[3, 4]
				migrate through Santa Clara River but does not breed in the area.
Western yellow-billed cuckoo *Coccyzus americanus occidentalis*	USFWS: FT CDFW: SE	Summer resident of valley foothill and desert riparian habitats in California. Found along broad, lower flood bottoms of larger river systems. Colorado River, Sacramento and Owens valleys, South Fork of the Kern River, Santa Ana River, Armargosa River, and possibly San Luis Rey River.	Absent	Unlikely. Large, dense stands of mature riparian vegetation are generally lacking from the BSA. The species is a rare breeder in Southern California, mainly restricted to the Colorado River Basin. A YBCU was detected in unsuitable habitat east of the BSA in Santa Clara River in 2018. It was assumed to be a migrant.
White-tailed kite *Elanus leucurus*	CDFW: FP	Associated with rolling foothills and valley margins with scattered oaks and river bottomlands or marshes next to deciduous woodland. Prefers open grasslands, meadows, or marshes for foraging close to isolated, dense-topped trees for nesting and perching.	Present	**Likely**. The BSA contains suitable nesting habitat in the form of riparian vegetation. There is foraging habitat near the south end of the BSA. The nearest previously recorded CNDDB occurrence is an active nest located approximately 1 mile upstream of the BSA along Santa Clara River in 2005.
Southwestern willow flycatcher *Empidonax traillii extimus*	USFWS: FE CDFW: SE	Typically nests in riparian woodlands that are marshy or at water's edge.	Present	Unlikely. While suitable habitat for this species occurs in the BSA, no confirmed SWFL have been detected within Santa Clara River in the vicinity of the BSA despite annual surveys conducted from 2017-2022 (Woodstar and Compliance Biology 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, and 2022). However, there is potential for SWFL to use the areas within the BSA as stop-over habitat during migration, and designated critical habitat for

Table 2-54: Regional Special-Status Wildlife Species with Potential to Occur within the Biological Survey Area

Common Name *Scientific Name*	Sensitivity Status[1]	General Habitat Description[2]	Potentially Suitable Habitat Present/Absent	Potential to Occur in the BSA[3, 4]
				this species is located within the BSA.
California horned lark *Eremophila alpestris actia*	CDFW: WL	Associated with short-grass prairie, "bald" hills, mountain meadows, open coastal plains, fallow grain fields, and alkali flats within coastal regions from Sonoma County to San Diego County and within San Joaquin Valley.	Present	**Likely**. Suitable foraging habitat is located within the grasslands associated with the BSA. This species was observed within proximity to the proposed project during 2006 avian surveys (Caltrans 2008).
Yellow-breasted chat *Icteria virens*	CDFW: SSC	Found in valley foothill riparian and desert riparian habitats in coastal and the foothills of Sierra Nevada.	Present	**Occurs.** This species was encountered as an incidental observation within the BSA during 2018 surveys and was regularly detected during surveys from 2017-2022 (Woodstar and Compliance Biology 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, and 2022).
Loggerhead shrike *Lanius ludovicianus*	CDFW: SSC	Associated with broken woodlands, savannah, pinyon-juniper, Joshua tree, and riparian woodlands, desert oases, scrub and washes. Prefers open country for hunting, with perches for scanning, and fairly dense shrubs and brush for nesting.	Present	**Likely**. Suitable nesting habitat is present throughout the BSA.
Coastal California gnatcatcher *Polioptila californica californica*	USFWS: FT CDFW: SSC	A permanent resident of coastal sage scrub, dominated by California sagebrush (*Artemesia californica*) and flat-topped buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*), in arid washes, mesas, and slopes, generally below 1,500 feet in elevation. When nesting, typically avoids tall dense vegetation or slopes greater than 25%.	Absent.	Unlikely. The BSA does not contain suitable coastal sage scrub habitat for this species. Potentially suitable coastal sage scrub habitat is present within the vicinity of the BSA; however, slopes are steeper than 25%, and the elevation of the suitable habitat is over 1,500 feet. The nearest previously recorded CNDDB occurrence is from

Table 2-54: Regional Special-Status Wildlife Species with Potential to Occur within the Biological Survey Area

Common Name *Scientific Name*	Sensitivity Status[1]	General Habitat Description[2]	Potentially Suitable Habitat Present/Absent	Potential to Occur in the BSA[3, 4]
				approximately 3.5 miles southwest of the BSA in 2001.
Bank swallow *Riparia*	CDFW: ST	Relies on riparian habitat for breeding. Will typically nest in vertical eroded banks, cliffs, bluffs, or roadcuts. Nesting site must have fine-textured, sandy or loamy soil that is suitable for burrowing.	Absent	Does not occur. Species may migrate through the BSA, but no suitable breeding habitat is present.
Yellow warbler *Setophaga petechia*	CDFW: SSC	Habitat preference includes the edges of marshes and swamps, willow-lined streams, and leafy bogs. Will also inhabit dry areas such as farmlands, orchards, gardens, and suburban edges. Prefers to nest in areas of dense shrubs with scattered trees.	Present	**Occurs.** This species was encountered as an incidental observation within the BSA during 2018 LBVI protocol surveys and was regularly detected during surveys from 2017-2022 (Woodstar and Compliance Biology 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, and 2022). It was again detected incidentally during 2023 surveys.
Least Bell's vireo *Vireo bellii pusillus*	USFWS: FE CDFW: SE	Summer resident of low riparian growth in the vicinity of water or in dry river bottoms. Nests are placed along the margins of bushes, usually *Salix*, *Baccharis*, or *Prosopis*.	Present	**Occurs.** This species was encountered within the BSA during 2018 protocol surveys and was again detected incidentally during 2023 surveys. Designated critical habitat for this species is located adjacent to and within the BSA. The species has also been detected annually throughout the BSA from 2017-2022 (Woodstar and Compliance Biology 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, and 2022).
MAMMALS				
Pallid bat *Antrozous pallidus*	CDFW: SSC WBWG: H	Inhabits grasslands, shrublands, woodlands, and forests from sea level up through mixed conifer forests. Most common in open, dry habitats with rocky areas for roosting.	Present	**Likely**. The BSA and vicinity contain areas of potentially suitable shrublands, woodlands, and rocky areas for roosting and foraging.

Table 2-54: Regional Special-Status Wildlife Species with Potential to Occur within the Biological Survey Area

Common Name *Scientific Name*	Sensitivity Status[1]	General Habitat Description[2]	Potentially Suitable Habitat Present/Absent	Potential to Occur in the BSA[3, 4]
Townsend's big-eared bat *Corynorhinus townsendii*	CDFW: SSC WBWG: H	Lives in a variety of communities, including coastal conifer and broad-leafed forests, oak and conifer woodlands, arid grasslands and deserts, and high-elevation forests and meadows. Throughout most of its geographic range, it is most common in mesic sites. Habitat must include appropriate roosting, maternity, and hibernacula sites, such as caves and cave-like formations, free from disturbances by humans.	Present	**Likely**. The BSA and vicinity provide potentially suitable roosting and foraging habitat.
Spotted bat *Euderma maculatum*	CDFW: SSC WBWG: H	Prefers arid areas, ranging from lowland deserts to ponderosa pines at higher elevations. Roosts in crevices in cliffs and canyon walls in the summer. Feeds over water and along washes. Feeds almost entirely on moths.	Present	**Likely**. The BSA and vicinity provide potentially suitable roosting and foraging habitat.
Western mastiff bat *Eumops perotis californicus*	CDFW: SSC WBWG: H	Found in southern California, from the Colorado River to the coast. Requires significant rock features that offer suitable roosting habitat. Found in a variety of habitats ranging from chaparral, oak woodland and ponderosa pine.	Present	**Likely**. The BSA and vicinity provide potentially suitable roosting and foraging habitat. A western mastiff bat was acoustically detected 3 miles southwest of The Old Road Bridge on August 7, 2006 (Caltrans 2008).
Western red bat *Lasiurus blossevillii*	CDFW: SSC WBWG: H	Found over a variety of habitats and locally common in southern California. Not found in desert areas. Typically roosts in trees adjacent to streams, fields, or urban areas used for foraging.	Present	**Occurs.** This species was detected during focused bat surveys conducted in 2018 (AECOM 2019c).
California leaf-nosed bat *Macrotus californicus*	CDFW: SSC WBWG: H	Prefers habitats with caves, mines, and rock shelters in Sonoran desert scrub.	Absent	Does not occur. Suitable roosting habitat is not present in the BSA for this species.

Table 2-54: Regional Special-Status Wildlife Species with Potential to Occur within the Biological Survey Area

Common Name *Scientific Name*	Sensitivity Status[1]	General Habitat Description[2]	Potentially Suitable Habitat Present/Absent	Potential to Occur in the BSA[3, 4]
Yuma myotis *Myotis yumanensis*	WBWG: LM	Occurs from sea level to 11,000 feet (3,300 meters), though uncommon above 8,000 feet (2,560 meters). Inhabits open forests and woodlands with water sources. Roosts in buildings, caves, mines, bridges, and abandoned swallow nests during the day. Roosts in more open areas at night.	Present	**Occurs.** This species was detected during focused bat surveys conducted in 2018 (AECOM 2019c).
San Diego desert woodrat *Neotoma lepida intermedia*	CDFW: SSC	Common in coastal scrub in southern California from San Diego to San Luis Obispo County. Moderate to dense canopies preferred. Species is particularly abundant in rock outcrops, rock cliffs, and slopes.	Present	Unlikely. Marginal suitable habitat occurs in the BSA scrub habitat. Incidental observations of woodrat middens (debris piles used as nests) were encountered during biological surveys. The woodrat middens were similar construction to those of the common non-sensitive dusky-footed woodrat (*Neotoma fuscipes*).
American badger *Taxidea taxus*	CDFW: SSC	This species is most abundant in drier open stages of most shrub, forest, and herbaceous habitats, with friable soils. Needs sufficient food, friable soils, and open, uncultivated ground. Preys on burrowing rodents. Digs burrows.	Present	**Likely**. Suitable habitat is present within the BSA. A single occurrence is located between I-5 and State Route 126, south of Castaic Junction in proximity of the BSA.
Mountain lion *Puma concolor*	CDFW: candidate species for Southern California/ Central Coast evolutionary significant unit	This species ranges widely across a variety of habitats from coastal sage scrub, chaparral, forests, riparian, and mountainous communities. Preys on a wide variety of species including mule deer and others. The species requires vast areas of intact habitat to persist on the landscape.	Present	**Likely**. While the species has not been detected during any recent biological surveys, they are wide ranging, uncommon, and difficult to detect. The species likely occurs in the adjacent foothills and along the Santa Clara River corridor.

Notes: [1] Sensitivity Status Codes
Federal USFWS/NMFS:
Federally Threatened (FT), Federally Endangered (FE), Proposed Endangered (PE)
State CDFW:

State Threatened (ST), State Endangered (SE), Species of Special Concern (SSC), Rare ®, Fully-Protected (FP), Candidate Endangered (CE).

Other Western Bat Working Group (WBWG 2007)
High Priority (H) – These species are imperiled or are at high risk of imperilment.
Medium Priority (M) – Indicates a level of concern that should warrant closer evaluation, more research, and conservation actions of both species and possible threats.

[2] General Habitat Descriptions

[3] The potential for occurrence ranking criteria are as follows:

Occurs – The species was observed during surveys of the BSA.

Likely – This species has potential to occur in the BSA based on presence of suitable habitat, and/or based on professional expertise specific to the site or species, and nearby, recent (in the last decade) recorded occurrences for the species.

Unlikely – This species may have been recorded in the proposed project vicinity, but the proposed project is on the periphery of the species range, or there are older records (greater than 10 years) on/near the proposed project site, but there is currently marginal suitable habitat on site (habitat is highly disturbed, degraded, or limited).

Does Not Occur – This species is not expected to occur in the BSA. Suitable habitat was not observed in the BSA during the survey. The BSA is outside of the currently known range of the species.

[4] Historical data from CDFW 2020a, unless otherwise referenced.

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Coast horned lizard (*Phrynosoma blainvillii*) is identified as a CDFW Species of Special Concern (CDFW 2024). The species prefers exposed gravelly-sandy soils with minimal shrubs, riparian woodland clearings, dry chamise chaparral and annual grasslands with scattered seepweed or saltbush. While the species has not been detected within the BSA, as indicated in Table 2-54, suitable sandy soils are present within the BSA.

The two-stripped garter snake (*Thamnophis hammondii*) is identified as a CDFW Species of Special Concern that can be found in perennial and intermittent streams with rocky or sandy beds and artificially-created aquatic habitats (man-made lakes and stock ponds); it requires dense riparian vegetation (CDFW 2022). The two-stripped garter snake is considered likely to occur near freshwater and riparian habitats throughout the BSA where water is present most of the year. A report prepared by Impact Sciences in 2001 states that during surveys conducted within the survey area, two-striped garter snakes were observed numerous times at unspecified sites. In addition, Ecological Sciences reports observing two-striped garter snakes during various focused arroyo toad surveys within the survey area (Caltrans 2008).

Birds

The white-tailed kite (*Elanus leucurus*) is designated by CDFW as a Fully Protected species. White-tailed kites forage and breed in lowland grasslands, agricultural, wetlands, oak-woodland and savannah habitats, and riparian areas associated with open areas. In February 2007, a small roost of eight white-tailed kites was observed in Castaic Creek between the confluence with Santa Clara River and State Route 126, approximately 2 miles west of The Old Road. In March 2007, there were six pairs of white-tailed Kites within the river channel between I-5 and the Las Brisas Bridge. Three of the six pairs stayed and ultimately nested, one of which was located near the proposed project site west of the Los Angeles County Sanitation District No. 32 Treatment Plant. Of those, only one nest, located near the county line, successfully fledged young (CDFW 2024).

Cooper's hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*) is a CDFW Watch List species. Cooper's hawk breeds primarily in riparian areas and oak woodlands. It frequents landscapes where wooded areas occur in patches and often uses patchy woodlands and edges with snags for perching. Seven Cooper's hawk territories were found within the river channel and tributaries of the survey area. Four territories occurred on the western side of I-5. Active nests were located in three of these territories, with one nest located approximately 1,500 feet south of the intersection of The Old Road and Henry Mayo Drive. Three nests were located on the eastern side of I-5, with the closest nest located approximately 2 miles east of The Old Road Bridge. Additionally, this species was detected incidentally within the BSA during the 2023 survey efforts (CDFW 2024).

California horned lark (*Eremophila alpestris actia*) is a CDFW Watch List species. It is a common resident in a variety of open habitats, usually where trees and large shrubs are absent. California horned larks breed primarily in open fields, short grasslands, and rangelands. Several horned larks were observed foraging on bare fields along Castaic Creek and near Santa Clara River at Castaic Junction within the proposed project vicinity. None were observed nesting during the bird surveys conducted in the spring/summer of 2006 (CDFW 2024).

Yellow warbler (*Setophaga petechia*) is listed as a CDFW Species of Special Concern. Yellow warbler prefers wet riparian habitat but is also found in large cottonwoods in drier riparian areas. Yellow warbler breeds in lowland and foothill riparian woodlands dominated by cottonwoods, alders, or willows and other small trees and shrubs typical of low, open-canopy riparian woodland. Yellow warbler was abundant in Santa Clara River during the 2007 surveys with 98 territories identified along a 13-mile segment from Bouquet Canyon Road Bridge west to Las

Brisas bridge with several territories located adjacent to The Old Road to the west (CDFW 2024). Yellow warbler was observed incidentally during the 2018 LBVI and SWFL focused surveys (AECOM 2018b). Furthermore, yellow warblers were commonly detected during riparian bird surveys from 2017 through 2022 in the BSA and surrounding habitats (Woodstar and Compliance Biology 2017 through 2022). Additionally, this species was detected incidentally within the BSA during the 2023 survey efforts.

Yellow-breasted chat (*Icteria virens*) is a CDFW Species of Special Concern. Yellow-breasted chat in southern California is primarily found in dense, relatively wide riparian woodlands and thickets of willows, vine tangles, and dense brush with a well-developed understory. Nesting areas are associated with streams, swampy ground, and the borders of small ponds (CDFW 2024). Yellow-breasted chat was common along most of the river on the western side of I-5 during the 2007 surveys. Thirty-five territories were detected within a 12-mile segment of the Santa Clara River watershed from McBean Parkway bridge west to Las Brisas bridge with several territories located adjacent to The Old Road to the west. This species was also encountered as an incidental observation within the BSA during the 2018 surveys (AECOM 2023g). Furthermore, yellow-breasted chats were commonly detected during riparian bird surveys from 2017 through 2022 in the BSA and surrounding habitats (Woodstar and Compliance Biology 2017 through 2022) (Caltrans 2006).

Southern California rufous-crowned sparrow (*Aimophila ruficeps canescens*) is a CDFW Watch List species. Optimal habitat consists of sparse, low brush or grass and hilly slopes preferably interspersed with boulders and outcrops. This species has a preference for south-facing slopes and an affinity for California sagebrush over other vegetative types. One individual of this species was observed along Castaic Creek, west of the BSA during the bird surveys conducted the spring/summer of 2006, and one individual of this species was observed approximately 2.6 miles southwest of the BSA during the 2007 surveys (CDFW 2024).

Loggerhead shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*) is a CDFW Species of Special Concern. This species prefers open ground including grassland, coastal scrub, broken chaparral, agriculture, and riparian and open woodland (CDFW 2024). As indicated in Table 2-54, suitable nesting habitat for this species is present throughout the BSA.

Western burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*) is a CDFW Species of Special Concern. Optimal habitat consists of grasslands, fallow agricultural fields, and open scrub, particularly with ground squirrel burrows (CDFW 2024). As indicated in Table 2-54, agricultural and grassland areas of the site could potentially support nesting or overwintering individuals and this species is known to occur regionally. However, the species has not been detected within the BSA despite many biological surveys in BSA and surrounding vicinity.

Mammals

Pallid bat (*Antrozous pallidus*) is widely distributed across the southwestern U.S., usually in arid desert habitat near rocky outcrops and water. This species typically day roosts in crevices in rock cliffs or buildings. The pallid bat is a CDFW Species of Special Concern and a Western Bat Working Group High Priority Species (CDFW 2024). Based on identifiable guano present under the I-5 bridge over Santa Clara River on May 3, 2006, pallid bats day roost in a crevice under the bridge deck. No sign of pallid bats was observed in or beneath The Old Road Bridge over Santa Clara River (Caltrans 2008). This species was not detected during 2018 or 2023 focused bat surveys (AECOM 2019d).

Townsend's big-eared bat (*Corynorhinus townsendii*) prefer scrub deserts, pine forests, as well as pinyon-juniper forests and generally roosts in nearby caves, mineshafts, other man-made structures. This species is a CDFW Species of Special Concern and a Western Bat Working Group High Priority Species (CDFW 2024). This species was not acoustically detected during bat surveys conducted for the proposed project in 2018 or 2023 (AECOM 2019d). However, as indicated in Table 2-54, suitable roosting and foraging habitat are present within the BSA.

The spotted bat (*Euderma maculatum*) is a cave and crevice dweller in many habitats from desert to forest and typically consumes noctuid moths and terrestrial insects. This species is a CDFW Species of Special Concern and a Western Bat Working Group High Priority Species (CDFW 2024). This species was not acoustically detected during bat surveys conducted for the proposed project in 2018 or 2023 (AECOM 2019d). However, as indicated in Table 2-54, suitable roosting and foraging habitat are present within the BSA.

Western mastiff bat (*Eumops perotis californicus*) occurs in low elevations in the coastal basins of southern California. The preferred habitat is rugged rocky areas, and day roosts are typically located in large crevices in granite or sandstone rock or buildings. This species is a CDFW Species of Special Concern and a Western Bat Working Group High Priority Species (CDFW 2024). A western mastiff bat was acoustically detected 3 miles southwest of The Old Road Bridge on August 7, 2006. This species was not acoustically detected during bat surveys conducted for the proposed project in 2018 or 2023 (AECOM 2019d).

The western red bat (*Lasiurus blossevillii*) is found over a variety of habitats and is locally common in southern California. Roosting occurs in forests and woodlands adjacent to streams, fields, or urban areas used for foraging. This species ranges from central to southern California and is tracked by CDFW in the CNDDB and a Western Bat Working Group High Priority Species (CDFW 2024). A western red bat was acoustically detected foraging in the Santa Clara River corridor under The Old Road Bridge in 2006 and during 2018 focused bat surveys (AECOM 2019d).

The hoary bat (*Lasiurus cinereus)* prefers open habitats or habitat mosaics, with access to trees for cover and open areas or habitat edges for feeding, requires water. Roosts in dense foliage of medium to large trees. Feeds primarily on moths. This species is a Western Bat Working Group Medium Priority species (CDFW 2024). Suitable habitat for this species occurs within the BSA. This species was not acoustically detected during bat surveys conducted for the proposed project in 2018 or 2023 (AECOM 2019d).

The Yuma myotis (*Myotis yumanensis*) typically forages in open forests and woodlands over water and roosts in buildings, crevices, and caves. This species is common throughout California except in the Mojave and Colorado deserts. This species is a Western Bat Working Group Low-Medium Priority Species (CDFW 2024). A Yuma myotis was observed flying under The Old Road Bridge at night in 2006. During the daytime survey in 2006, a Yuma myotis was observed roosting in an expansion joint of the culvert underneath the I-5 Bridge (Caltrans 2008). This species was also detected during the 2018 focused bat surveys (AECOM 2019d).

American badger (*Taxidea taxus*), a CDFW Species of Special Concern, prefers drier, open stages of most shrub, forest, and herbaceous habitats (including fallow agricultural fields) with friable soils (CDFW 2024). This species was not observed during the general wildlife surveys conducted within the BSA (Caltrans 2008). However, as indicated in Table 2-54, suitable habitat for this species occurs within the BSA.

2.4.4.3 Environmental Consequences

2.4.4.3.1 Alternative 1: No-Build Alternative

There would be no operational or construction impacts to non-listed wildlife species from the No-Build Alternative.

2.4.4.3.2 Alternative 2: Build Alternative

Temporary, direct impacts would result from the use of upland and aquatic habitat for equipment and materials staging, grading, as well as from clearing and tree removal for construction activities and access to construction sites. Permanent impacts would result from direct removal of occupied habitat for multiple species. Operation of the proposed project would have minor effects on special-status wildlife species within the BSA.

Fish

Arroyo chub has the potential to be directly and indirectly impacted by the proposed project. Increases or decreases in flows due to increased runoff or water impoundments, respectively, can affect habitat quality for this species, especially during the breeding season. Erosion or increased polluted runoff from roads during storm events can degrade water quality. Removal of shade-providing vegetation can alter solar exposures and the thermal regime of water and potentially adversely affect species distribution, physiology, and behavior.

The proposed project would use the cast-in-drilled-hole pile method, which reduces the potential for vibration impacts. As such, the potential for impacts to the arroyo chub are reduced because there is no vibratory pile driving or dewatering that may impact the species.

Amphibians and Reptiles

Numerous non-listed reptile and amphibian species have the potential to be directly and indirectly impacted by the proposed project, including direct injury and mortality during construction, loss of suitable aestivation and breeding habitat, increases or decreases in flows due to increased runoff or water impoundments, erosion and pollution from road runoff (which can reduce the water quality), and the removal of shade-providing vegetation, which can alter solar exposures and the thermal regime. Construction equipment within close proximity to Santa Clara River has the potential to introduce pollutants (from spills, fuel, grease and other lubricants) which can degrade the habitat quality. Construction of the bridge abutments and demolition/removal of the existing bridge has the potential to cause bank/slope erosion/destabilization, and further degrade the habitat.

Some of the more terrestrial reptiles that do not have an aquatic life stage are more likely to be impacted by the proposed project from the permanent removal of upland vegetation communities including annual brome grassland and ruderal areas along the edge of the current The Old Road that would be lost from expanding the highway. Some reptile and amphibian species may suffer injury and/or mortality during the construction phase of the proposed project (especially fossorial species such as the silvery legless lizard). Vegetation communities that support habitat for non-listed special-status reptile species include wild oats and annual brome grassland, ruderal, native upland vegetation communities, and aquatic and riparian vegetation communities. Proposed project impacts to these vegetation communities and land cover types would equate to 4.80 acres of permanent impacts and 4.10 acres of temporary impacts.

Birds

Habitat loss from the proposed project would result in the removal of vegetation that is currently used for migrating, foraging, breeding, and wintering habitat by a variety of avian species. There would be a permanent loss of habitat from along the edge of The Old Road, but most habitat would be lost around The Old Road Bridge over the Santa Clara River. The proposed project would result in the permanent loss of 2.6 acres of native upland and aquatic and riparian vegetation communities and temporary loss of 2.5 acres of the same vegetation communities. The disturbed land cover types are generally not considered suitable nesting habitat for many bird species, while some may use ornamental and ruderal vegetation.

The direct and indirect impacts to birds protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act include the potential for injury and/or mortality to nesting birds if not adequately buffered during construction activities or during clearing and grubbing. There is the potential for increased noise, visual, and pedestrian disturbance from the roadway expanding into Santa Clara River. By expanding the road closer to the river, roadway pollution and disturbance is moved closer to the center of the river and the vegetation buffer along the edge of the river is reduced. There is an increased potential for fire, spread of nonnative, invasive plant species, unauthorized trespass into the river, and additional roadway edge effects from the proposed project. There is also the potential for increased avian roadkill both along The Old Road and over the bridge because the bridge is wider and has more lanes, and vehicles are traveling faster.

Mammals

Similar to many of the direct and indirect impacts previously described for other non-listed special-status wildlife species, mammals would be impacted negatively by the proposed project. The proposed project would result in temporary loss of bat roosting habitat under the current Old Road Bridge (during construction while it is expanded) and permanent loss of roosting and foraging habitat from expansion of The Old Road Bridge (from tree removal). However, the expanded bridge may provide additional roosting habitat, pending the final design of the underside of the bridge.

Another direct impact is the potential for increased roadkill from the proposed project because there will be a wider road for wildlife to cross.

Permanent and temporary habitat impacts for mammal species would include 4.80 acres of permanent and 4.10 of temporary impacts.

2.4.4.4 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

Fish

Arroyo chub has the potential to be directly and indirectly impacted by the proposed project in similar ways to those for the unarmored threespine stickleback (UTS) because they occupy the same habitat within Santa Clara River and the Northern Drainage. The avoidance and minimization measure UTS-1 would be implemented for arroyo chub which restricts contact with surface water at the Northern Drainage and Santa Clara River. Hence, no impacts to arroyo chub are anticipated.

Amphibians and Reptiles

The general measures GEN-1 through GEN-14, arroyo toad-specific measures ARTO-1 through ARTO-4, and southwestern pond turtle-specific measures WPT-1 and WPT-2 would be implemented. These measures would reduce potential impacts to non-listed special-status reptile and amphibian species.

Birds

Avoidance and minimization measures detailed in Section 2.4.5 below (GEN-1 to GEN-14 and RIP-1 to RIP-3) would be implemented and provide impact avoidance for non-listed birds including those protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. In particular, to remain in compliance with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, pre-construction nesting bird surveys prior to vegetation clearing or grubbing during the avian breeding season will reduce the potential for injury or mortality to nesting birds. Furthermore, conducting ground-disturbing activities outside of the avian nesting season or noise monitoring for loud construction activities may be necessary if done during the avian nesting season.

Mammals

The avoidance and minimization measures detailed in Section 2.4.5 below (GEN-1 to GEN-14), would be incorporated into the proposed project and reduce potential impacts to special-status bat species. Additionally, implementation of AMMs BAT-1 through BAT-3 presented below would further reduce potential impacts to special-status bat species.

> **BAT-1**: No earlier than 20 days prior to the commencement of construction activities around the two bridge locations, a field survey will be conducted by a qualified biologist to determine if active roosts of bats are present on or within 300 feet of the proposed project boundaries. Should an active roost be identified, a determination will be made regarding whether the roost is used as a night-roost, day-roost, or maternity-roost. If an active roost would be removed, MM BAT-2 (below) will be implemented. Alternatively, if an active roost is identified within 300 feet of the disturbance boundary, but would not be removed, MM BAT-3 (below) will be implemented. Because the ambient noise levels already exceed acceptable noise levels due to surrounding construction activities and traffic noise, additional noise mitigation will not be implemented. Consequently, no interference will take place with bat echolocation and insect foraging.
>
> **BAT-2:** Should a night-roost be identified within the LOD, the roost structure will be removed during daylight hours while the roost is not in use. Should an active day-roost be identified, roosting bats will be evicted through the use of humane exclusionary devices. Prior to implementation, the proposed methods for bat exclusion will be approved by CDFW. The roost will not be removed until it has been confirmed by a qualified biologist that all bats have been successfully excluded. Should an active maternity-roost be identified (the breeding season of native bat species in California generally occurs from April 1 through August 31), the roost will not be disturbed and construction within 300 feet will be postponed or halted, at the discretion of the biological monitor, until the roost is vacated and juveniles have fledged, as determined by the biologist. CDFW will be consulted regarding the necessity to construct replacement roosting habitat or to modify the proposed project (as appropriate) to include features conducive to roosting. This determination will be based on the bat species to be displaced, the abundance of other roost sites in the area, and the size of the roost removed. All CDFW recommendations for roost replacement will be implemented.

BAT-3: Should a night-roost be identified within the 300-foot buffer of the LOD, construction-related activities will be conducted during daylight hours while the roost is not in use. Should an active day-roost be identified, a determination (in consultation with CDFW or a qualified bat expert) will be made regarding if construction-related activities (i.e., noise and vibrations) could substantially disturb roosting bats. This determination will be based on baseline noise/vibrations levels, anticipated noise-levels associated with the construction of the proposed project, and the sensitivity to noise-disturbances of the bat species present. If it is determined that noise could result in the temporary abandonment of a day-roost, construction-related activities will be scheduled to minimize the period the roost would be subject to noise-related disturbances. Should an active maternity-roost be identified (the breeding season of native bat species in California generally occurs from April 1 through August 31), construction within 300 feet of the roost will be postponed or halted, at the discretion of the biological monitor, until the roost is vacated and juveniles have fledged, as determined by the biologist.

2.4.4.5 Compensatory Mitigation

Compensatory mitigation for permanent and temporary loss of habitat occupied by non-listed special-status reptile, amphibian, bird, and mammal species will be provided in compensatory mitigation required for federally listed species impacts to species detailed in Section 2.4.5.4 below.

Additional compensatory mitigation may be necessary if bat roosts, or maternity colonies are detected under The Old Road Bridge and need to be removed. However, there is additional bat roosting habitat in the surrounding vicinity in the form of manmade bridges, including the adjacent I-5 overpass, that could provide roosting opportunities in the event there is bat dispersal. Additionally, the new bridge, once complete, has potential to provide roosting options or other features considered suitable for bats.

2.4.5 Threatened and Endangered Species

2.4.5.1 Regulatory Setting

The primary federal law protecting threatened and endangered species is FESA: 16 USC Section 1531, et seq.; 50 CFR Part 402 can also be referenced. This act and later amendments provide for the conservation of endangered and threatened species and the ecosystems upon which they depend. Under Section 7 of this act, federal agencies, such as FHWA (and Caltrans, as assigned), are required to consult with USFWS and NMFS to ensure that they are not undertaking, funding, permitting, or authorizing actions likely to jeopardize the continued existence of listed species or destroy or adversely modify federally-designated critical habitat. Critical habitat is defined as geographic locations critical that contain the physical and biological features necessary for the existence of a threatened or endangered species. The outcome of consultation under Section 7 may include a Biological Opinion with an Incidental Take Statement or a Letter of Concurrence. Section 3 of FESA defines take as “harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture or collect or any attempt at such conduct.” No species under the purview of NMFS occur within the BSA. Only listed species managed by USFWS are discussed herein.

California has enacted a similar law at the state level, CESA, California Fish and Game Code Section 2050, et seq. CESA emphasizes early consultation to avoid potential impacts to rare, endangered, and threatened species and to develop appropriate planning to offset project-caused losses of listed species populations and their essential habitats. CDFW is the agency

responsible for implementing CESA. Section 2080 of the California Fish and Game Code prohibits “take” of any species determined to be an endangered species or a threatened species. Take is defined in Section 86 of the California Fish and Game Code as “hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill, or attempt to hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill.” CESA allows for take incidental to otherwise lawful development projects; for these actions an incidental take permit is issued by CDFW. For species listed under both FESA and CESA requiring a Biological Opinion under Section 7 of FESA, CDFW may also authorize impacts to CESA species by issuing a Consistency Determination under Section 2080.1 of the California Fish and Game Code.

2.4.5.2 Affected Environment

The following analysis is based on the NES (AECOM 2023g) prepared for the proposed project and the species-specific surveys previously detailed in Table 2-52 in Section 2.4.1.1. Results of federally listed species surveys are detailed in the following sections. This section discusses federally and state threatened and endangered species as well as species being considered for federal or state listing that are known or likely to occur within the BSA.

Unarmored Threespine Stickleback

A focused survey for special-status fish species was conducted for Santa Clara River and tributary drainages in August 2006. Survey results revealed the presence of the federally endangered UTS along the reach of Santa Clara River that runs through the western side of the BSA (Caltrans 2008). Therefore, UTS (is considered present within the waters of Santa Clara River in the BSA. An additional fish survey was conducted in October 2023 to look for the present of UTS in the northern drainage (Merkel & Associates, Inc. 2023). While no UTS were found within the surveyed areas, USFWS and CDFW consider the Northern Drainage suitable habitat that retains the potential to be occupied now or in the future.

The UTS is listed by the federal and California state governments as Endangered and is considered Fully Protected by CDFW (CDFW 2024). Populations of UTS are restricted to three sections of the upper Santa Clara River, including the Newhall Ranch reach which represents the downstream demarcation of the unarmored subspecies. UTS are small fish that require shallow, slow, marginal stream flows with abundant aquatic vegetation for cover. The male guards territories and builds a small nest of decaying vegetation where he guards the eggs until they hatch. Large numbers of UTS can exist in the summer and fall with the long breeding season in southern California, and breeding can occur almost all year in dry years when a stream is minimally disrupted by storm flows. Under optimum conditions, up to a few hundred UTS can exist within approximately 10 meters of a stream. Strong storm flows can severely reduce localized populations until the streams stabilize in the spring and the numbers can build up again. Backwater habitats within Santa Clara River are utilized by UTS as refugia during storm events (Entrix 2007).

Arroyo Toad

The federally endangered arroyo toad is restricted to rivers with shallow, gravely pools adjacent to sandy terraces that have a nearly complete closure of cottonwoods, oaks or willows, and almost no herbaceous cover. The arroyo toad requires shallow pools with minimal current, little to no emergent vegetation and a sand or pea gravel substrate overlain with flocculent silt for egg deposition.

CNDDB records for the arroyo toad exist from Santa Clara River, just east of I-5, located approximately 2 miles east of the proposed project, and from Bear Canyon at Santa Clara River,

located approximately 11 miles east of the proposed project (CDFW 2022a). Arroyo toad was also found at the confluence of San Francisquito Creek and Santa Clara River. The Aquatic Consulting Services surveys conducted in 2000 reported arroyo toad tadpoles from pools adjacent to the Valencia Water Treatment Plant and from a pool just upstream of the proposed project (Aquatic Consulting Services, Inc. 2022). Therefore, based on the presence of arroyo toad tadpoles, the species was historically documented in the BSA.

A Special Status Aquatic Vertebrate Species Habitat Assessment for the proposed project was prepared on September 18, 2007, by Entrix, Inc. (Entrix 2007) The report assessed potential impacts of the proposed project on threatened and/or endangered aquatic species inhabiting the Newhall Ranch reach of Santa Clara River. This reach extends from the bluff at the northwest corner of the Magic Mountain parking lot at the downstream end to The Old Road Bridge at the upstream end (Caltrans 2008).

The existence of tributary records upstream and downstream of the BSA, as well as the in-channel Santa Clara River records west of I-5, place the BSA within the probable distribution of the arroyo toad in the Santa Clara River channel. The origin of many of the records indicates that the arroyo toad still inhabits suitable habitat within the Santa Clara River Basin, including the main channel. However, a focused arroyo toad protocol survey conducted on Newhall Land and Farming Company property in 2007 did not detect any arroyo toad adults, juveniles, eggs, or tadpoles over the course of the surveys. Focused surveys conducted on portions of Newhall Land and Farming Company property by Bloom Biological, Inc., occurred from April 19 through July 15 of 2007. Surveys were conducted according to USFWS survey protocol for this species. The survey area consisted of approximately 25 miles of Santa Clara River, in the County of Los Angeles, California. The survey area encompassed all habitats within the river channel and up to 700 meters from the river in some areas. Focused protocol surveys for arroyo toad were most recently conducted in the spring and summer of 2023 to determine the presence/absence of arroyo toad within the BSA. All suitable aquatic habitat within the BSA was included in the survey area, and the methodology was consistent with the latest USFWS protocol dated May 1999. Six total surveys (including both daytime and nighttime components) were conducted from April 25 through June 26 of 2023 (AECOM 2023i).

The standardized USFWS protocol surveys conducted both within and adjacent to the BSA, including the most recent 2023 survey effort noted above, showed that the components of arroyo toad habitat exist within the proposed project, but failed to document the occurrence of arroyo toad. The areas surveyed within the river channel provided sufficient low gradient segments to support shallow pools with suitable substrates for arroyo toad (AECOM 2023i). There are also some suitable upland terrace habitats between the banks of the river to support foraging and over-wintering arroyo toad. There are no manmade barriers present in this reach that could completely or substantially impede upland movement of arroyo toad. However, some stretches of the riverbank in the survey area are near vertical (e.g., southern cliff areas) and of a height that would significantly impede migration out of the stream channel. Furthermore, there was a prevalence of nonnative species that are known to prey on arroyo toads. Therefore, while the species was historically documented within the BSA, the species is considered unlikely to occur in the BSA and LOD given the lack of confirmed sightings in many years. The longest adult arroyo toads have been documented to survive is between 7 and 8 years (Hitchcock et al. 2022) and since no breeding has been documented since 2000, the species may be extirpated from the BSA. Causation is difficult to ascertain, but years of historical drought and the prevalence of nonnative species which consume all life stages of arroyo toads may be contributing factors.

In 2010, portions of Santa Clara River were designated as Critical Habitat for arroyo toad. The portion of Santa Clara River that intersects the proposed project falls within Critical Habitat Subunit 6b (of the Upper Santa Clara River Basin). Subunit 6b allows for natural population expansion and fluctuation of the Santa Clara River population by connecting arroyo toad habitat in Castaic Creek with San Francisquito Creek and the occupied reach of Santa Clara River. Subunit 6b contains the physical and biological features that are essential to the conservation of the species, including breeding pools in low-gradient stream segments with sandy substrates, seasonal flood flows, and riparian habitat and upland benches for foraging and dispersal (USFWS 2011). A total of 52.73 acres of arroyo toad critical habitat is located within the BSA.

Southwestern Pond Turtle

The southwestern pond turtle is a CDFW Species of Special Concern and is proposed for listing as threatened under the FESA. The species inhabits streams (with pools), ponds, freshwater marshes, and lakes with growth of aquatic vegetation (CDFW 2024). The species is generally more abundant in habitats that have basking sites (including rocks, sand, mud, downed logs, submerged branches, and emergent or submerged aquatic vegetation) and spends a considerable amount of time basking. In addition, the southwestern pond turtle will move onto land for nesting, aestivation, dispersal, and overwintering. The southwestern pond turtle is currently under evaluation for potential future federal listing in response to a number of threats contributing to a decline in population. Major factors limiting populations include loss and degradation of aquatic habitats, reduced availability of nest habitat, elevated predation, and the spread of disease. No critical habitat is designated for the southwestern pond turtle, as this species is not formally federally listed at this time (USFWS 2024).

Suitable habitat is present for the southwestern pond turtle within portions of the BSA where ponded or flowing water is present. As such, it is reasonable to predict that the length of the river within the BSA may contain southwestern pond turtles at any given time, as well as some of the moist canyons leading away from the river. The CNDDB includes multiple Santa Clara River records from 2015 of southwestern pond turtles, between The Old Road and Castaic Junction (CDFW 2022b). The Impact Sciences Report states that during surveys conducted within the survey area, pond turtles were observed numerous times at unspecified sites, presumably where sufficient water existed to satisfy the aquatic habitat requirements discussed previously (Caltrans 2008).

Surveys were conducted for the southwestern pond turtle throughout all suitable aquatic habitat within the BSA on June 22, 2023 and again on July 6, 2023; following the 2006 USGS Visual Survey Protocol. Qualified biologists surveyed throughout suitable habitat including Santa Clara River and adjacent tributaries, focusing on select areas with high basking potential and low-flow pools often preferred by the species. One individual was detected incidentally on June 26, 2023, during a daytime arroyo toad survey, and two additional individuals were later detected during the second focused southwestern pond turtle survey on July 6, 2023. All detections occurred within the Northern Drainage.

Survey results for the southwestern pond turtle provided evidence that the BSA includes suitable habitat for this species. Therefore, aquatic habitat through the BSA is considered occupied by the species with the upland areas immediately adjacent potentially suitable for nesting, aestivation, overwintering, and dispersal.

Least Bell's Vireo and Southwestern Willow Flycatcher

The federally and state endangered LBVI and the federally and state endangered SWFL have the potential to occur with riparian habitat along Santa Clara River in the BSA. These two species are grouped together herein due to their similarity in riparian breeding habitat and discussed in detail in the following sections.

One additional species, the federally threatened and state endangered YBCU was determined unlikely to occur within the BSA and has not been detected within or adjacent to the BSA in the past several years despite surveys from 2017 through 2022 (Woodstar and Compliance Biology 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, and 2022). The species is assumed to not occur within the BSA and is not discussed further.

Least Bell's Vireo

LBVI was listed as endangered by USFWS on May 2, 1986, with designated critical habitat in 1994 (USFWS 1986). A draft recovery plan was written by USFWS and circulated for review in 1998. CDFW listed this subspecies as endangered on October 2, 1980. Critical habitat for this species includes areas along Santa Clara River that coincide with the BSA.

Historically, this subspecies was a common summer visitor to riparian habitat throughout much of California. Currently, LBVI is found only in riparian woodlands in southern California, with the majority of breeding pairs in San Diego, Santa Barbara, and Riverside counties.

LBVI is migratory and generally arrives in southern California in late March/early April and leaves for its wintering grounds in September. LBVI primarily occupies riparian woodlands that include dense cover within 3 to 7 feet of the ground and a dense, stratified canopy. The subspecies inhabits low, dense riparian growth along water or along dry parts of intermittent streams. The understory is typically dominated by species of willow (*Salix sp.*) and mulefat. Overstory species typically include cottonwood (Populus sp.), western sycamore (*Platanus racemosa*), and mature willows. The subspecies typically builds nests in vegetation 3 to 4 feet above the ground where there is moderately open midstory cover with an overstory of willows, cottonwoods, sycamores, or coast live oaks (Salata, L. R. 1984). Nests are also often placed along internal or external edges of riparian thickets at an average of 3.3 feet above the ground (Unitt 2004). Riparian plant succession is an important factor in maintaining LBVI habitat.

The decline of LBVI is attributed to loss, degradation, and fragmentation of riparian habitat, combined with brood/nest parasitism by brown-headed cowbird (*Molothrus ater*; BHCO). LBVI is known to be sensitive to many forms of disturbance, including noise, night-lighting, and consistent human presence. Due to concerted programs focused on preserving, enhancing, and creating suitable nesting habitat, the LBVI population has steadily increased in size along several of its breeding drainages in southern California.

Project-specific surveys were conducted in 2018 within suitable habitat in the BSA. Two survey areas associated with Santa Clara River were identified as potentially suitable riparian habitat for LBVI and SWFL. Included were a "North" survey area that occurred along the western side of The Old Road, just north of the water reclamation plant; and a "South" survey area that occurred at The Old Road Bridge over Santa Clara River (shown in Figures 15 through 17). These survey areas were composed of willow-cottonwood woodland habitats and adjacent upland areas. Areas surrounding the survey areas were generally composed of roadways, commercial development, and agriculture.

Within the survey area, eight LBVI territories were detected during surveys in 2018. Five of these territories were located in the North survey area, and three were located in the South survey area. The locations of where LBVI was detected are depicted in Figures 15 and 16. Additional focused LBVI survey data from 2017 through 2022 within the BSA confirm that LBVI is present throughout suitable riparian habitat within the BSA on the western side of The Old Road (around Santa Clara River) and on both sides of The Old Road Bridge over Santa Clara River (AECOM 2023g). LBVI were also incidentally detected in 2023 within riparian vegetation along Santa Clara River and northern drainage during the course of other biological surveys.

Southwestern Willow Flycatcher

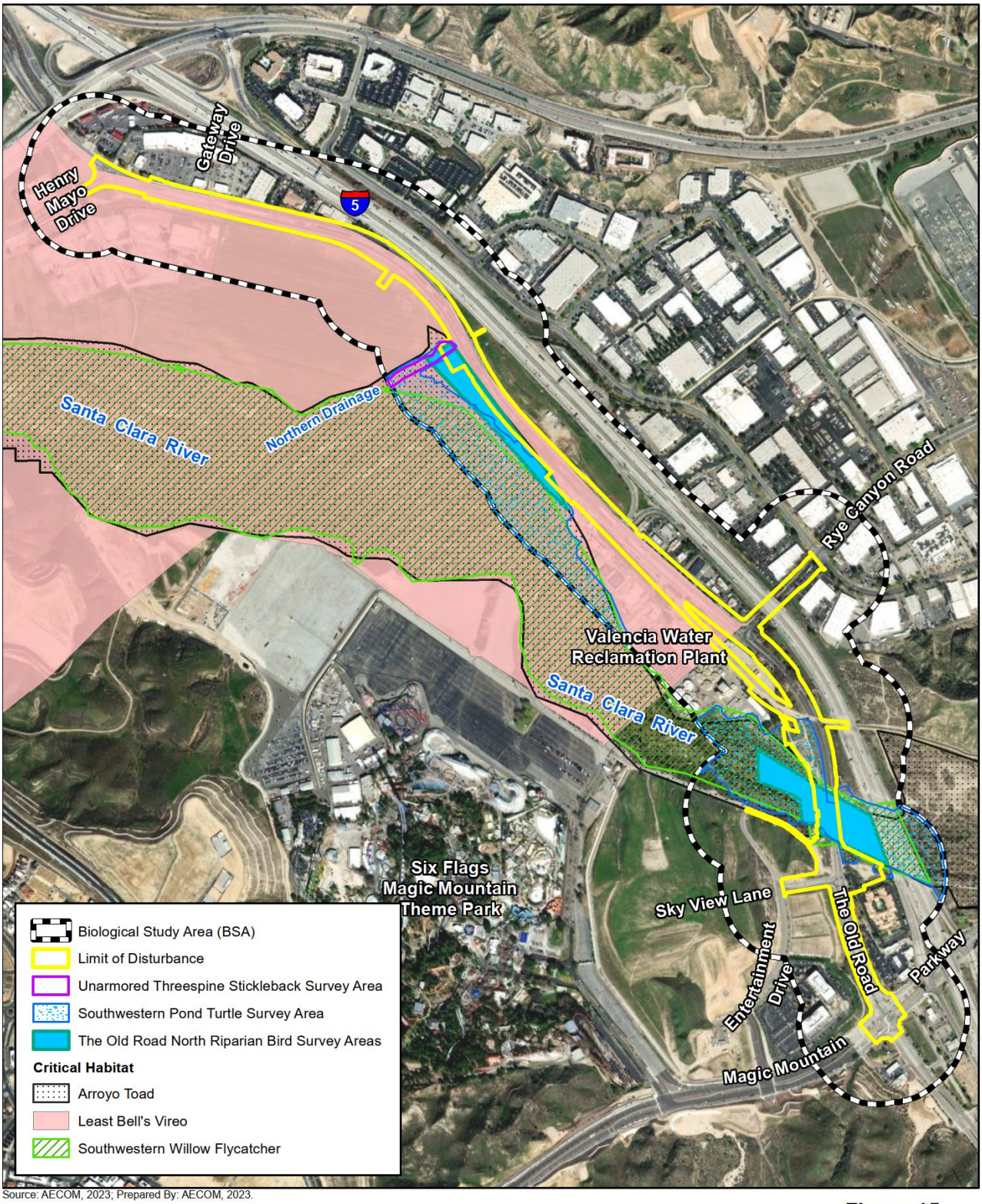
SWFL, a subspecies of willow flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii*), was listed by CDFW as endangered in California in 1991 as part of the state endangered listing of the full species (willow flycatcher). SWFL was also federally listed as endangered in 1995 (USFWS 1995). This subspecies can be separated from other willow flycatcher subspecies in the field only geographically by breeding range. SWFL breeds in New Mexico, Arizona, southern California, Nevada, Utah, and possibly west Texas. In 2013, USFWS issued a revised rule designating critical habitat for SWFL, which includes the portion of Santa Clara River within the BSA (USFWS 2013). The last remaining breeding populations of SWFL in Southern California occur around Lake Henshaw and the upper San Luis Rey River in San Diego County. Scattered individuals occur in a few other river drainages, but the species is a very rare breeder in Southern California outside of the Lake Henshaw Valley in northern San Diego County.

Because the breeding range of willow flycatcher encompasses a broad geographic area with much site variation, the Recovery Plan divides the willow flycatcher's range into six Recovery Units, each of which are further subdivided into four to seven Management Units. The portion of Santa Clara River that intersects the proposed project falls within the Santa Clara Management Unit (USFWS 2013). This Management Unit has been identified as containing one or more of the required essential physical or biological features for SWFL. A total of 38.60 acres of SWFL critical habitat is located within the BSA.

SWFL protocol surveys were conducted by Woodstar between May 18, 2018, and July 17, 2018. The areas surveyed by Woodstar included the same areas surveys for LBVI (Figures 15 through 17). No SWFL was observed during any survey (AECOM 2018).

Though no SWFL was observed during surveys, a single willow flycatcher was detected during survey 1; it was considered a migrant of the northern subspecies (*E. t. brewsteri*) (AECOM 2018).

Furthermore, surveys for LBVI and SWFL by Five Points have failed to detect any SWFL within the BSA from 2017 to 2022. Their surveys encompass all potentially suitable flycatcher habitat within the BSA; while several migrant willow flycatchers have been detected in May and early June on several years, no birds remained in the area to breed. Hence, it was determined that they were migrant willow flycatchers. Therefore, the species is unlikely to breed within the BSA.

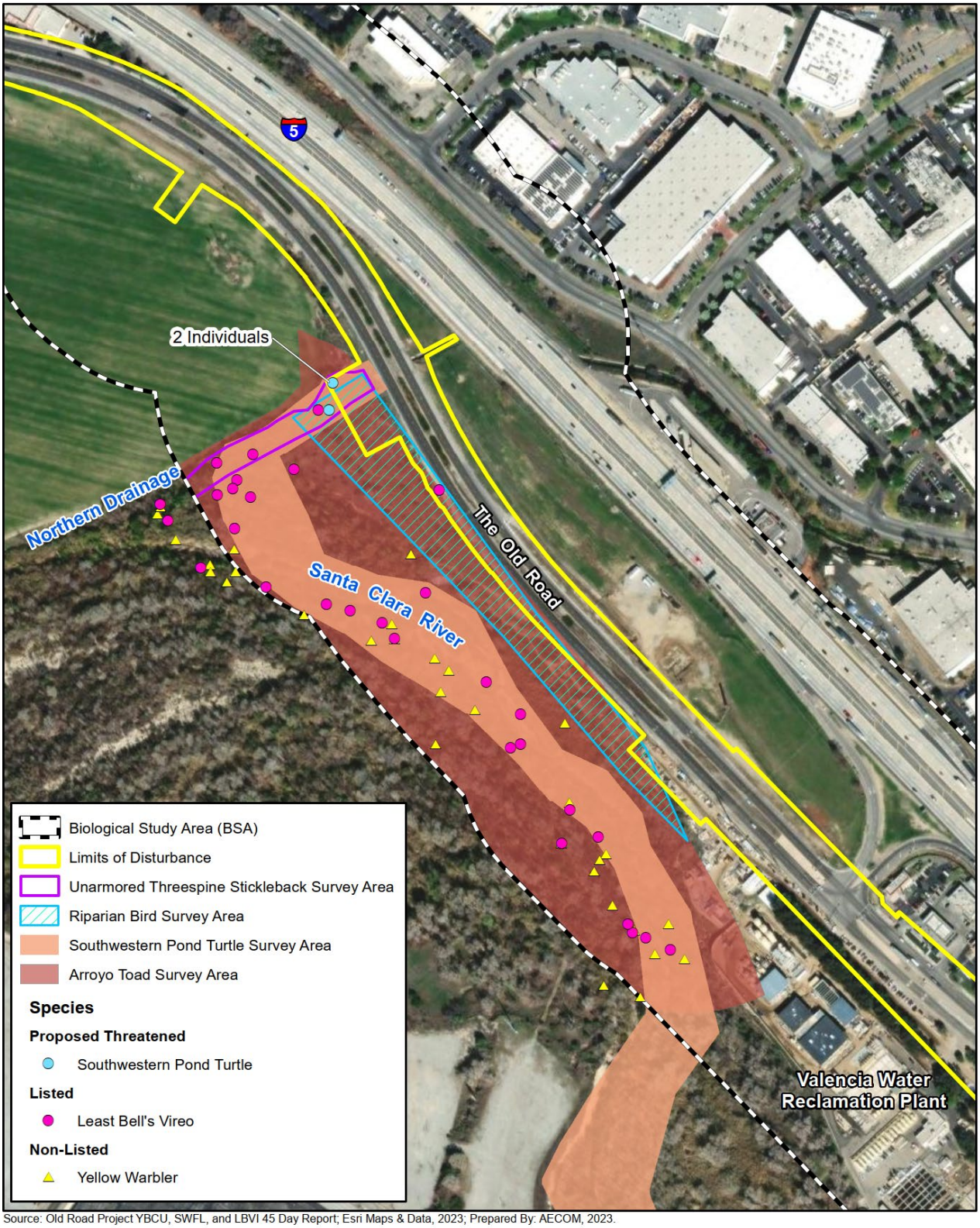


Source: AECOM, 2023; Prepared By: AECOM, 2023.

0 500 1,000 Feet

Figure 15

Species Survey Areas and Critical Habitats

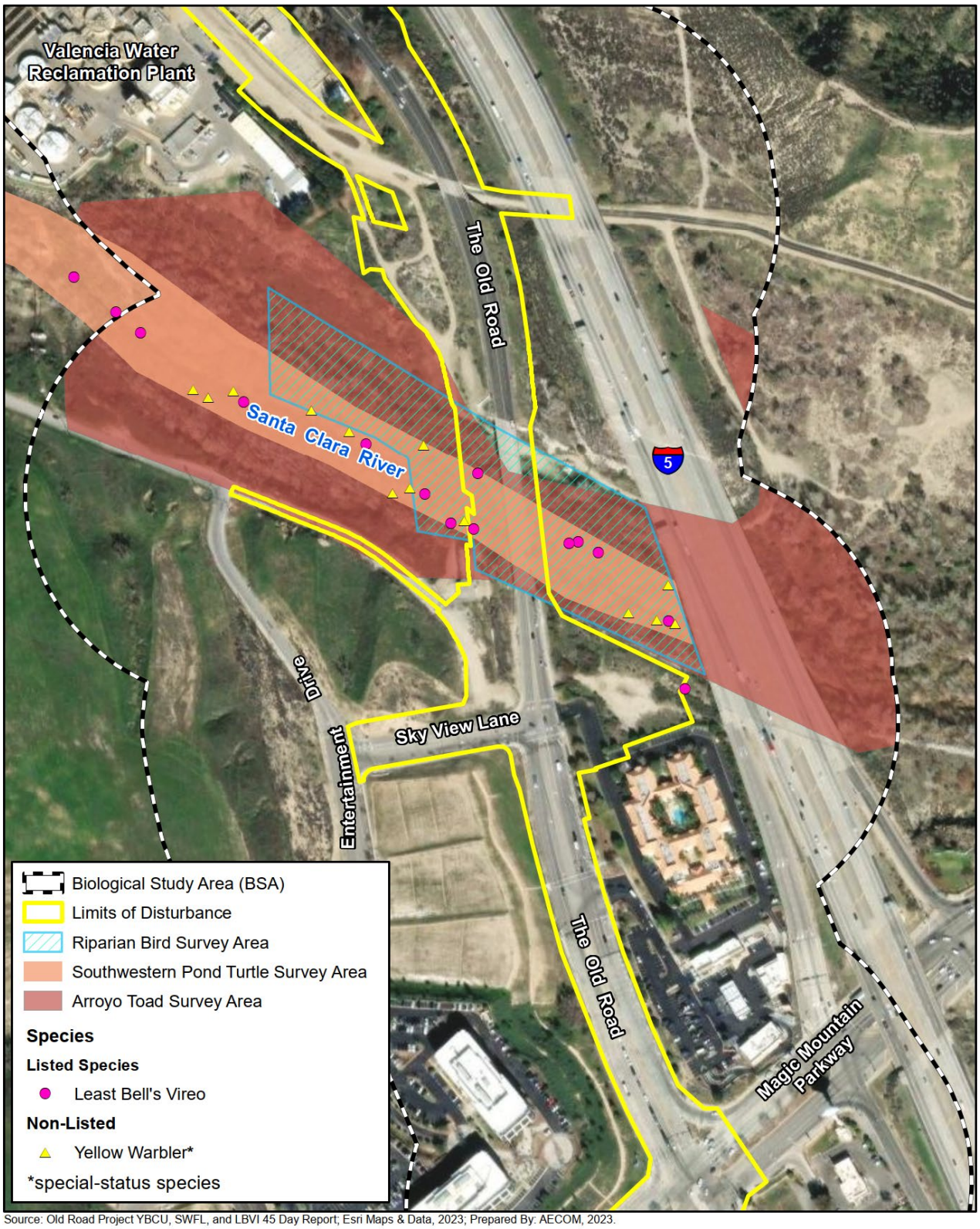


Source: Old Road Project YBCU, SWFL, and LBVI 45 Day Report; Esri Maps & Data, 2023; Prepared By: AECOM, 2023.

0 200 400 Feet

Figure 16

North Survey Area and Sensitive Species Observations



Source: Old Road Project YBCU, SWFL, and LBVI 45 Day Report; Esri Maps & Data, 2023; Prepared By: AECOM, 2023.

0 200 400 Feet

Figure 17

South Survey Area and Sensitive Species Observations

Mountain Lion

In July 2019, the Southern California/Central Coast Evolutionary Significant Unit (ESU) of mountain lion (*Puma concolor*) was proposed for listing as threatened under CESA. In April 2020, the California Fish and Game Commission found the listing may be warranted and designated the ESU as a candidate species. While the species is under review, it is considered a state candidate species and afforded the full protection of a listed species.

Mountain lions are wide ranging species that feed primarily on mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*) but will also eat smaller mammals including coyotes. They require vast areas of connected lands for their long-term persistence on the landscape. Currently in Southern California, they are constrained by urban development, and roadkill mortality is the leading cause of death for the species. Lack of connectivity, inbreeding depression, lack of recruitment from nearby populations, and urbanization all threaten the continued existence of mountain lions in southern California. While no mountain lions have been directly detected within the BSA during proposed project-specific surveys, the National Park Service has documented several mountain lions crossing I-5 (likely under the bridge) at the Santa Clara River based on global positioning system collared data (Riley pers comm 2023).

2.4.5.3 Environmental Consequences

2.4.5.3.1 Alternative 1: No-Build Alternative

There would be no operational or construction impacts to threatened or endangered species from the No-Build Alternative.

2.4.5.3.2 Alternative 2: Build Alternative

Temporary, direct impacts would result from the use of upland and aquatic habitat for equipment and materials staging, grading, as well as from clearing and tree removal for construction activities and access to construction sites. Permanent direct impacts include the removal of habitat during expansion of The Old Road and shading of Santa Clara River from the expanded Old Road Bridge.

Operation of the proposed project would have a minimal change to the habitat of threatened and endangered animals.

The following section discusses potential proposed project impacts to federally listed wildlife species. UTS, arroyo toad, and southwestern pond turtle are discussed first, following by a combined discussion on LBVI and SWFL. The section concludes with a discussion of potential impacts to mountain lions.

Unarmored Threespine Stickleback

UTS is assumed present within the mainstem Santa Clara River year-round and is therefore subject to effects that affect hydrology and water quality. If the species is present within the northern drainage, there is a potential for species take (including injury and mortality) during construction of the culvert extension and riprap placement within waters of the northern drainage. Furthermore, there is potential for take if the species is present within the Santa Clara River during construction of the piles within the riverbed. During construction, increases or decreases in flows due to increased runoff or water impoundments, respectively, can impact habitat quality for this species, especially during the breeding season. Erosion or increased

pollution from runoff from roads (from various fuel/oils/hydrocarbon sources, tire particulate material, etc.) during rain events can degrade water quality. Removal of shade providing vegetation (riparian vegetation removal along the banks of Santa Clara River and permanent bridge shading) can alter solar exposures and the thermal regime of water and potentially adversely affect species distribution, physiology, and behavior. Removal of shade-providing vegetation is considered an adverse effect on UTS.

To quantify potential impacts to UTS, acreages were estimated during the Jurisdictional Delineation and Wetland Assessment prepared by AECOM (2024) for both the northern drainage and The Old Road Bridge over the Santa Clara River. According to the Jurisdictional Delineation and Wetland Assessment, the project may permanently impact up to 0.04 acres and temporarily impact 0.03 acres of suitable UTS habitat within the northern drainage (listed as non-wetland waters in AECOM 2024) as detailed in Table 2-55, below. These acreages represent direct impacts to waters within the northern drainage and do not include the adjacent steam bank/riparian vegetation, which are an essential component of UTS habitat. Permanent impacts to the top of bank riparian habitat is 0.11 acres and temporary impacts amount to 0.06 acre. For The Old Road Bridge over the Santa Clara River, the new bridge piles would permanently impact 0.0058 acres of habitat (non-wetland waters). Furthermore, permanent impacts from bridge shading of the Santa Clara River equate to 0.3 acres of non-wetland waters. In addition to impacts to the Santa Clara riverbed itself (non-wetland waters), there would be impacts to adjacent riparian vegetation, which are an important component of UTS habitat. Impacts to adjacent riparian vegetation from the expanded The Old Road Bridge equate to 0.0081 acres from the bridge piles and 0.45 acres from bridge shading. These acreages represent both suitable habitat that could be occupied (at the northern drainage) and habitat that is assumed occupied (along the mainstem Santa Clara River).

Table 2-55: Temporary and Permanent Impacts to Unarmored Threespine Stickleback Habitat within the Project Area

Jurisdictional Feature	Permanent (acres)	Bridge Piles (acres)	Temporary (acres)	Bridge Deck Shading (acres)
Northern Drainage				
Non-wetland waters	0.04	-	0.03	-
Adjacent riparian habitat	0.11	-	0.06	-
Santa Clara River				
Non-wetland waters	-	0.0058	0.20	0.30
Adjacent riparian habitat	-	0.0081	0.25	0.45
Total	**0.15**	**0.014**	**0.54**	**0.75**

Vegetation removal under and adjacent to The Old Road Bridge will be conducted in a manner to prevent impacts to surface water. The piles for the expanded bridge will be installed when Santa Clara River is at its low flow levels and a biological monitor will be present during pile installation to ensure that BMPs remain in place and vibration impacts do not affect fish species within the Santa Clara River during pile installation. UTS-specific measures (UTS-1 and UTS-2) will be implemented to future minimize the potential for take of UTS.

Arroyo Toad

While arroyo toad is unlikely to occur within the BSA, if present, arroyo toad may be affected by the proposed project in a variety of ways including direct injury and mortality during construction, loss of suitable aestivation and breeding habitat, increases or decreases in flows due to increased runoff or water impoundments, erosion and pollution from road runoff (which can reduce the water quality), and the removal of shade-providing vegetation, which can alter solar exposures and the thermal regime. Construction equipment within close proximity to Santa Clara River has the potential to introduce pollutants (from spills, fuel, grease and other lubricants) which can degrade the habitat quality for arroyo toad. Construction of the bridge abutments and demolition/removal of the existing bridge has the potential to cause bank/slope erosion/destabilization and further degrade the habitat.

Noise and/or lighting along the roadway also can adversely affect the distribution and behavior of arroyo toad. This species uses vocalizations during breeding activities, which could be disrupted by short-term construction noise and long-term increased traffic noise. Arroyo toad also could be affected by lighting because it is primarily a nocturnal species. Lighting may disrupt both breeding and foraging activities and cause higher rates of predation. There is also a potential for increased nonnative invasive plant species spread within Santa Clara River, which may further degrade arroyo toad habitat.

Impacts to arroyo toad would occur through permanent and temporary disturbance to critical habitat. Approximately 52.73 acres of the BSA intersect arroyo toad critical habitat (see Table 2-56). The proposed project would result in approximately 1.42 acres of temporary impacts to arroyo toad critical habitat associated with The Old Road Bridge expansion temporary work area. The proposed project would result in approximately 0.57 acres of permanent (ground-disturbing) impact to arroyo toad critical habitat associated with pile and riprap installation and 1.53 acres of permanent (non-ground-disturbing) impact associated with The Old Road Bridge span expansion.

Table 2-56: Temporary and Permanent Impacts to Designated Arroyo Toad Critical Habitat

Designated Critical Habitat	Total	Inside LOD			Outside LOD
	BSA (Acres)	Temporary Impact (Acres)	Permanent Impact (Ground Disturbance) (Acres)	Permanent Impact (Bridge Span [1]) (Acres)	BSA (Acres)
Arroyo Toad	52.73	1.42	0.57	1.53	49.82

Notes: [1] = Permanent impacts to vegetation beneath the bridge due to shading, potentially affecting habitat quality, are accounted for under the Bridge Span column.

Because no arroyo toad has been detected directly within the BSA, as confirmed most recently per the results of the 2023 protocol surveys, the potential for direct take of an individual arroyo toad is unlikely. Furthermore, the arroyo toad-specific measures (ARTO-1 through ARTO-4) would be implemented to reduce potential direct impacts to individual arroyo toad.

Southwestern Pond Turtle

Southwestern pond turtles use the Santa Clara River for movement, foraging, dispersal, and breeding. They may be affected by the proposed action in a variety of ways including direct

injury and mortality during construction, loss of suitable aestivation and breeding habitat, increases or decreases in flows due to increased runoff or water impoundments, erosion and pollution from road runoff (which can reduce the water quality), and the removal of shade-providing vegetation, which can alter solar exposures and the thermal regime. Construction equipment within close proximity to the Santa Clara River has the potential to introduce pollutants (from spills, fuel, grease and other lubricants) and nonnative plant species which can degrade the habitat quality relied upon by this species. Construction of the bridge abutments and demolition/removal of the existing bridge has the potential to cause bank/slope erosion/destabilization, and further degrade the habitat. Removal of shade-providing vegetation can alter solar exposures and the thermal regime of water and potentially adversely impact species distribution, physiology, and behavior. Permanent and temporary impacts to southwestern pond turtle habitat are detailed in Table 2-57. Construction of the bridge abutments and demolition/removal of the existing bridge has the potential to cause bank/slope erosion/destabilization, and further degrade the habitat.

Table 2-57: Temporary and Permanent Impacts to Southwestern Pond Turtle Habitat

	Total BSA (Acres)	Temporary Impact (Acres)	Permanent Impact (Ground Disturbance) (Acres)	Permanent Impact (Bridge Span [1]) (Acres)
Southwestern Pond Turtle	49.43	1.50	1.31	0.96

Notes: [1] = Permanent effects to vegetation beneath the bridge due to shading, potentially affecting habitat quality, are accounted for under the Bridge Span column.

Potential direct impacts to this species can largely be avoided by the general avoidance and minimization measures (GEN-1 through GEN-14) and southwestern pond turtle specific measures (WPT-1 and WPT 2), referred to in Section 4.5.3.

Least Bell's Vireo and Southwest Willow Flycatcher

This section discusses the combined impacts to the two federally listed riparian bird species. Habitat is assumed occupied by LBVI and is considered suitable habitat for migrant SWFL (but not suitable breeding habitat).

During 2018 surveys, eight LBVI territories were identified within the BSA in riparian habitat associated with Santa Clara River (AECOM 2018). Surveys from 2017 through 2022, plus incidental detections from 2023 confirm that the riparian vegetation within the BSA remains occupied by multiple pairs of LBVI. The proposed project will impact LBVI habitat, including designated critical habitat plus additional occupied habitat under The Old Road Bridge. Removal of riparian vegetation would eliminate potential breeding and migrating habitat for LBVI.

Nesting LBVI, may be affected by construction-related impacts (from noise, dust, human presence adjacent to occupied habitat, etc.), resulting in temporary decreased reproductive success or abandonment of nesting habitat. Noise and/or lighting along the roadway may also adversely affect the distribution and behavior of LBVI. This species uses vocalizations during breeding activities, which could be disrupted by construction noise and increased traffic noise. By expanding The Old Road, effects such as trash (which can attract aerial and mammalian predators), potential for increased wildfire (from vehicles and cigarettes), runoff from the road, increase noise, and additional highway effects are moved spatially closer to occupied riparian habitat. These effects may cause habitat avoidance in areas close to the highway, thereby reducing the overall amount of suitable habitat for breeding within Santa Clara River. There is

also the potential for injury and mortality to LBVI from vehicle strike if they fly across the expanded The Old Road Bridge while migrating, dispersing, foraging, and during other life processes.

Finally, there is a potential for direct injury or mortality to nesting LBVI (including nests with eggs, young, and recently fledged young) if a nest in dense riparian vegetation is missed during preconstruction clearance surveys (if vegetation removal is conducted during the nesting season).

Approximately 113.30 acres of the BSA intersects LBVI critical habitat within the Santa Clara River Critical Habitat unit (USFWS 1994) (Table 2-57). Much of the designated Critical Habitat does not represent suitable LBVI habitat as the mapping is broad and includes non-habitat types (developed, disturbed, and agriculture). The proposed project would result in approximately 3.12 acres of temporary impacts to LBVI critical habitat associated with The Old Road widening and Multi-Use Trail construction temporary work areas. The proposed project would result in approximately 4.60 acres of permanent (ground-disturbing) impact to LBVI critical habitat associated with The Old Road widening and Multi-Use Trail construction. Therefore, the proposed project would result in impacts to designated LBVI critical habitat.

Because the extent of critical habitat stops at the Valencia Water Reclamation Plant (Figure 15) and does not extend east to The Old Road Bridge, additional occupied LBVI habitat would be permanently and temporarily impacted from bridge expansion that is not included as critical habitat. Impacts to LBVI habitat from the bridge expansion and shading would be similar to those for arroyo toad critical habitat detailed in Table 2-56, above. The arroyo toad critical habitat abuts the eastern edge of LBVI critical habitat by the Valencia Water Reclamation Plant and continues east to include the area under and adjacent to The Old Road Bridge, which is also suitable and occupied LBVI habitat. Therefore, to estimate the acreage of LBVI occupied habitat that would be permanently and temporarily removed by the proposed project, the acreage of vegetation communities that represent LBVI habitat (Open Water and Fremont Cottonwood Forest and Woodland) is a more accurate estimator of impacts. Based on Table 2-53 (Vegetation Communities and Land Cover Types within the BSA), permanent and temporary impacts to LBVI habitat would be similar to that for impacts to riparian alliances (Fremont Cottonwood Forest and Woodland and Open Water) which occurs within the Northern Drainage and under The Old Road Bridge. Approximately 1.1 acres of these vegetation alliances would permanently be removed from ground disturbance and The Old Road Bridge span expansion. Approximately 1.2 acres of Fremont Cottonwood Forest and Woodland and Open Water would also be temporarily impacted by the proposed project and may impact LBVI.

While no SWFL have been historically detected within the BSA based on surveys from 2017-2022, migrant willow flycatchers (which are state listed as endangered) are known to use Santa Clara River during migration. Based on the lack of breeding within the BSA, the proposed project is not anticipated to impact SWFL through construction activities. However, federally designated critical habitat for SWFL which contain some of the physical and biological features necessary to support the species would be removed (Table 2-58).

Approximately 38.60 acres of the BSA intersects SWFL critical habitat (Table 2-58). The proposed project would result in temporary impacts to 1.73 acres of SWFL Critical Habitat associated with The Old Road Bridge span expansion temporary work area. The proposed project would result in permanent (ground-disturbing) impacts to 0.02 acres of SWFL critical habitat associated with pile and riprap installation, as well as permanent (non-ground-disturbing) impacts to 1.43 acres of SWFL Critical Habitat associated with the proposed The Old Road Bridge span expansion. This Critical Habitat is primarily mature riparian forest which supports

an insect prey base, cover, and important migratory stop-over habitat for migrant willow flycatchers. Therefore, the proposed project would result in impacts to designated SWFL Critical Habitat.

Table 2-58: Temporary and Permanent Impacts to Least Bell's Vireo and Southwestern Willow Flycatcher Designated Critical Habitat

Designated Critical Habitat	Total	Inside of LOD			Outside of LOD
	BSA (Acres)	Temporary Impact (Acres)	Permanent Impact (Ground Disturbance) (Acres)	Permanent Impact (Bridge Span[1]) (Acres)	BSA (Acres)
Least Bell's Vireo	113.30	3.12	4.60	0.00	88.06
Southwestern Willow Flycatcher	38.60	1.73	0.02	1.43	36.35

Notes: [1] = Permanent impacts to vegetation beneath the bridge due to shading, potentially affecting habitat quality, are accounted for under the Bridge Span column.

To reduce impacts from the project on LBVI and SWFL, the species-specific riparian bird measures RIP-1 through RIP-3 will be implemented.

Mountain Lion

Temporary and permanent impacts to mountain lions may occur through habitat loss and removal and disturbance during construction. They are not restricted to any particular vegetation community and hence could use many of the vegetation communities detailed in Table 2-53. They are most likely to use habitat adjacent to Santa Clara River and less likely to use Other Cover Types (Agriculture, Bare Ground, Developed, Disturbed habitats, and Unpaved Roads). Therefore, the proposed project would permanently impact 4.8 acres and temporarily impact 4.1 acres of shrubland, herbaceous, and riparian alliances. Mountain lions may avoid using the area during construction; however, the proposed project would be conducted in two phases, and during phase II construction of The Old Road Bridge, the underside of the bridge would not be blocked off. Mountain lions would be able to pass under The Old Road Bridge as it is expanded, but may still avoid the area due to the presence of equipment, temporary security fencing, etc. Finally, the presence of street lights on The Old Road Bridge (where there are currently no lights) where it passes over the Santa Clara River may cause mountain lions to be more hesitant to cross under the bridge. However, to reduce potential impacts, LION-1 would be implemented to ensure that lighting is directed downward and shielded to prevent light trespass into the Santa Clara River.

2.4.5.4 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

General Measures

To reduce potential impacts from the proposed project on biological resources, the following measures will be applied:

GEN-1: The contractor(s) will be informed, prior to the bidding process, regarding the biological constraints of the project (will be included in Section EC of the special provisions). The proposed project limits will be clearly marked on project plans provided to the contractor(s), and areas outside of the proposed project limits will be designated as “no construction” zones. A construction manager will be present during all construction activities to ensure that work is limited to designated project limits.

GEN-2: ESA fencing and silt fencing with appropriate signs will be installed by the contractor prior to work to prevent habitat impacts and prevent the spread of silt from the construction zone into adjacent habitats. The fencing will be installed in a manner that does not impact habitats to be avoided and will be installed along the outer edge of work limits.

GEN-3: Employees will strictly limit their activities, vehicles, equipment, and construction materials to the fenced construction limits, staging areas, and routes between the construction limits and staging areas. Temporary construction fencing will be removed upon proposed project completion.

GEN-4: All workers must participate in a Worker Environmental Awareness Program for sensitive biological resources. Sign-in sheets will be maintained to document completion of the program by each worker. This program can be administered in person by a qualified biologist or through screening of a video/slide presentation prepared by a qualified biologist and overseen by an on-site manager. Contractor education will include a review of special-status species and protected habitats occurring/potentially occurring on-site. Identification of these resources and all biological avoidance and minimization measures relevant to the contractors’ work will be reviewed. Stop work and notification procedures will be outlined. The education program will include a section specific to UTS, southwestern pond turtle, arroyo toad, LBVI, and SWFL. Education handouts will be provided and posted at the work site.

GEN-5: A qualified biologist, defined as an individual with the appropriate federal and state permits to conduct the specified activities, will be available to relocate any listed species out of harm’s way, if detected within the project limits of construction. They have verified previous experience with the species for which they are conducting surveys and have been approved by USFWS to ensure that they are truly "qualified" to conduct species surveys, monitoring, and relocation activities.

In addition to a qualified biologist being available for species surveys, monitoring, and relocation activities, biological monitors will be present on a daily basis throughout the construction period when construction activities are adjacent to federally listed species habitat or have the potential to impact listed species. Biological monitors will be qualified for the monitoring activities and species in the area. A biological monitor will monitor the status of BMPs to ensure they continue to work after installation and prevent species that are in proximity to construction activities from being affected by the BMPs. In particular, construction monitoring will occur daily while ground-disturbing activities occur in/near the Santa Clara River. Biological monitors will ensure BMPs are operating effectively, conduct daily sweeps of the active construction areas to ensure no listed species are impacted, and conduct pre-activity clearance surveys ahead of vegetation/ground disturbance when in listed species habitat or critical habitat (that contains the necessary physical and biological features). Repeat pre-activity clearance surveys will be conducted when there is a lapse in activities in suitable listed species habitat longer than three days after vegetation removal or a previous survey.

GEN-6: All equipment maintenance; staging; and dispensing of fuel, oil, coolant, or any other such activities will occur in designated areas outside of jurisdictional wetlands or waters and within the fenced proposed project limits. These designated areas will be located in previously compacted and disturbed areas to the maximum extent practicable in such a manner as to prevent any runoff from entering jurisdictional wetlands or waters. Fueling of equipment will take place within existing paved areas, if feasible, greater than 100 feet from jurisdictional wetlands or waters. Contractor equipment will be checked for leaks prior to operation and repaired as necessary. "Fueling zones" will be designated on construction plans.

GEN-7: In areas that do not require excavation or grading, vegetation will be trampled instead of completely removed.

GEN-8: To reduce impacts to listed species critical and occupied habitat, prior to entering the proposed project site, all personnel will remove invasive species materials, propagules, seeds, individuals, etc. from project equipment, project materials, equipment, and clothes to reduce the proliferation of invasive species.

GEN-9: The project site will be kept as clean of debris as possible to avoid attracting predators of sensitive wildlife. All food-related trash items will be enclosed in sealed containers and regularly removed from the site.

GEN-10: Pets of project personnel will not be allowed on the proposed project site.

GEN-11: Disposal or temporary placement of excess fill, brush, or other debris will not be allowed in WOTUS or their banks along Santa Clara River.

GEN-12: The majority of construction is expected to be undertaken during daylight; however, when nighttime construction is necessary, lighting will be of the lowest illumination necessary for human safety, will be diverted away from any native vegetation communities, and will consist of low-sodium or similar lighting equipped with shields to focus light downward onto the appropriate subject area.

GEN-13: Exclusionary devices will be installed underneath The Old Road Bridge over Sanra Clara River to prevent birds and bats from nesting during construction. Installation of these devices will be completed prior to February 15 (beginning of bird breeding season) and remain until construction is completed. A qualified biologist will inspect the area prior to installation for nests and evidence of breeding activity. If breeding activity is not detected, inactive nests will be destroyed to prevent birds from establishing breeding. If breeding activity is confirmed, exclusionary devices will be installed in all other areas lacking active nests. Active nests will be monitored by the biologist until breeding is complete. Once breeding is complete, exclusionary devices will be installed in these areas.

GEN-14: Best efforts will be implemented (within the control of Los Angeles County, taking into consideration land ownership) to restrict public access into Santa Clara River that could adversely affect listed fish and wildlife resources. These actions will include, among other things, posting signs (along the Multi-Use Trail and other areas where the sidewalk abuts the Santa Clara SEA), identifying an ecologically sensitive area, promoting public education and awareness of such ecological sensitivities, and the maintenance of fences and barricades to prevent unauthorized or unrestricted access to the river bottom, as applicable.

Species-Specific Avoidance and Minimization Measures

These measures are proposed and may be refined, removed, or added to during consultation with the USFWS. Any measures issued in the biological opinion will supersede these species-specific avoidance and minimization measures.

Unarmored Threespine Stickleback

The following UTS-specific avoidance and minimization measure will be implemented during construction of the proposed project to reduce impacts:

UTS-1: Prior to the start of construction, thorough surveys for UTS will be conducted by a qualified biologist highly knowledgeable and experienced with identifying UTS. The qualified biologist and survey methodology will be approved by USFWS prior to survey commencement.

1. Immediately prior to the start of construction, the qualified biologist (in close coordination with USFWS) will conduct no-take visual-only surveys for UTS throughout the northern drainage (e.g., from the existing The Old Road culvert down to the stream's confluence with the mainstem of the Santa Clara River) to confirm absence.

    a. If UTS are detected during either survey, the northern drainage will be considered occupied by UTS. If this is the case, the project culvert extension option will not be considered, and an alternative design will be necessary.

    b. If UTS are not detected, the project could potentially begin.

2. Immediately following the UTS survey, a fish-excluding device will be installed and maintained. This device will be designed, installed, monitored, and maintained to (a) completely exclude UTS and other aquatic life from the project area in the northern drainage during the entire term of work in or near surface waters, and (b) avoid stranding, entrapment, or entanglement of wildlife. The fish-exclusion device will be regularly monitored by a qualified biologist to ensure it is functional.

3. A surface water diversion will also be designed, installed, monitored, and maintained in a manner that ensures that sufficient water flow continues to maintain aquatic life downstream from the project area in the northern drainage.

4. Additional BMPs will be implemented to avoid and minimize project impacts to water quality, aquatic life, nesting birds, and other natural resources. BMPs will be placed around the periphery of work areas to ensure no inadvertent spills, erosion, sedimentation, or construction-related effects occur.

5. If UTS are detected within the project area or northern drainage, work will be halted and USFWS and CDFW will be contacted immediately.

UTS-2: For the mainstem of the Santa Clara River where UTS are assumed present, work activities will be conducted in a way to ensure no surface water contact and a biological monitor will be present during all ground disturbing activities when near the Santa Clara River. Vegetation trimming and removal will be conducted in a way to prevent contact with surface water, and BMPs will be placed along the length of the Santa Clara River to ensure no inadvertent spills, erosion, or sedimentation occurs. A biological monitor will ensure that materials from concrete decking installation and concrete pouring do not fall into the Santa

Clara River and all construction personnel and equipment remain outside of the active channel. Construction of the piles within the Santa Clara River will occur during summer months to coincide with periods of low flow for the Santa Clara River to minimize the potential for impacts to surface water in the Santa Clara River. The cast-in-drilled-hole pile with slurry displacement installation method was specifically selected to avoid the need for dewatering and potential impacts to UTS. A biological monitor will be present during cast-in-drilled-hole pile installation when in proximity to the Santa Clara River to ensure that vibration impacts are not negatively affecting aquatic species. If unforeseen circumstances arise during construction of the bridge piles that may result in impacts to UTS, the USFWS will be contacted to discuss additional potential measures to avoid impacts.

Any additional measures developed in consultation with USFWS will be incorporated.

Arroyo Toad

The following arroyo toad-specific avoidance and minimization measures will be implemented during construction of the proposed project to reduce impacts:

ARTO-1: Prior to clearing, grubbing, and construction activities, arroyo toad exclusionary fencing will be installed around the perimeter of all work areas adjacent to potential arroyo toad breeding habitat as determined by a qualified arroyo toad biologist[7]. In areas without water flows, the fence will consist of woven nylon fabric or similar material at least 2 feet high, staked firmly to the ground. No fencing will be placed in areas of flowing water (due to the potential for UTS). In areas where soils are suitable for burrowing, the lower 1 foot of material will stretch outward along the ground and be secured with a continuous line of sandbags to prevent burrowing beneath the fence. Doubling this line (i.e., stacking sand or gravel bags two-deep) may reduce maintenance and should be considered to improve the integrity of the fencing. In areas where soils are not suitable for burrowing, (i.e., hardpack soils), fencing may be buried to reduce maintenance concerns and improve the integrity of the fencing over time. Decisions on the appropriate fencing installation method for a given reach will be made by the qualified arroyo toad biologist. All fencing will be removed following completion of project activities. Ingress and egress of equipment and personnel will use two identified access points to the site, which will be as narrow as possible and closed off by exclusionary fence when personnel are not present.

ARTO-2: Prior to vegetation grubbing or construction, but after exclusionary fence has been installed around the impact footprint, at least three surveys for arroyo toad of any life stages or clutches will be conducted within the fenced area by a qualified biologist knowledgeable of arroyo toad biology and ecology. Surveys will be conducted during the appropriate climatic conditions during the appropriate time of day or night to maximize the likelihood of encountering arroyo toad. If arroyo toad of any life stages or clutches is found within the proposed project area, it will be captured and translocated, by the biologist, to the closest area of suitable habitat within Santa Clara River. Before each workday begins, the qualified biologist will also check to see if arroyo toad has entered the impact footprint. If arroyo toad is found within the impact footprint, it will be moved outside of the impact footprint, if suitable habitat exists, or out of harm's way.

[7] A qualified arroyo toad biologist will be approved by USFWS and must be able to identify arroyo toad visually and vocally and should have experience in handling and translocating arroyo toad. In addition, the biologist should be familiar with all life stages and habitat of arroyo toad.

ARTO-3: The qualified biologist will be present during each morning before construction activities begin to inspect all arroyo toad exclusionary fencing for damage or holes, conduct a sweep of the work area for arroyo toad of any life stages, inspect any covered stockpiles for gaps or sign that arroyo toad has accessed the soils underneath and will be present when these covers are removed. If burrows characteristic of arroyo toad are found, the burrows will be hand-excavated. The qualified biologist will relocate any arroyo toad found to suitable habitat adjacent to the construction site but at least 200 feet away.

ARTO-4: Excavations or trenches created by construction activities that have the potential to trap arroyo toad will be covered with cover plates or other materials at the end of each workday. Excavations or trenches that are covered will have the edges sealed with sandbags, bricks, or boards to prevent arroyo toad from becoming trapped in excavations or trenches. The qualified biologist will inspect all excavations and trenches (covered and uncovered) for the presence of arroyo toad prior to disturbance of soils or removal of cover plates. The qualified biologist will be present when the cover plates are removed and will inspect and relocate any arroyo toad that may have entered the trench during the night to suitable habitat adjacent to the construction site but at least 200 feet away.

Southwestern Pond Turtle

WPT-1: A qualified biologist will survey the work site no more than 48 hours before the onset of activities for signs of southwestern pond turtle and/or southwestern pond turtle nesting activity (i.e., recently excavated nests, nest plugs) or nest depredation (partially to fully excavated nest chambers, nest plugs, scattered eggshell remains, eggshell fragments). Preconstruction surveys to detect western pond turtle nesting activity should be concentrated within suitable upland habitat in the BSA and should focus on areas along south- or west-facing slopes with bare hard-packed clay or silt soils or a sparse vegetation of short grasses or forbs. Survey efforts should focus on suitable aerial and aquatic basking habitat such as logs, branches, rootwads, and riprap, as well as the shoreline and adjacent warm, shallow waters where pond turtle may be present below the water surface beneath algal mats or other surface vegetation.

WPT-2: If southwestern pond turtle is observed during the preconstruction survey, it will be avoided to the greatest extent practicable. If avoidance is not feasible, LACPW will confer with USFWS to determine the best approach to ensure no take of the species, including additional measures such as the implementation of exclusion buffers, nest exclosures, silt fencing, screening, and additional BMP installation, as appropriate.

Least Bell's Vireo and Southwestern Willow Flycatcher

The following avoidance and minimization measures will be implemented during construction of the proposed project to reduce impacts to LBVI and SWFL.

RIP-1: To the greatest extent possible, construction activities (such as vegetation removal) will be timed to avoid the nesting season for riparian avian species (March 15 through September 15).

RIP-2: If work is scheduled during the riparian avian breeding season (March 15 through September 15), and within LBVI or SWFL suitable habitat, a qualified biologist will conduct a preconstruction nesting survey to ensure that no active bird nests are present

within 300 feet of construction activities. If no nests are detected, then vegetation removal will be permitted during the nesting season.

RIP-3: If an active nest is detected, no construction activities will be permitted within 300 feet of the nest. Work within nest buffers may not resume until the young fledge and disperse, or the nest has been determined to fail by the qualified biologist. Limits of construction to avoid a nest site will be established in the field with flagging and stakes or construction fencing.

Mountain Lion

The following avoidance and minimization measures will be implemented during construction of the proposed project to reduce impacts to mountain lions.

LION-1: During construction of The Old Road Bridge, any nighttime lighting necessary for work or placed around temporary work areas/laydown yards will be shielded away from the Santa Clara River. Security lights around temporarily fenced areas under or adjacent to the Santa Clara River will have motion-activated sensors to ensure they are not continually on throughout the night, but only trigger if someone enters the fenced work area.

LION-2: Any permanent streetlights installed on The Old Road Bridge or along the west side of The Old Road where it is adjacent to the Santa Clara River will be shielded so that light does not directly glare into native habitat within the Santa Clara River.

2.4.5.5 Compensatory Mitigation

Unarmored Threespine Stickleback

UTS-3: While the proposed project is anticipated to avoid direct take of UTS, there is still potentially occupied and assumed occupied habitat that may require mitigation. Impacts to occupied habitat may be mitigated through obtaining credits at an applicable mitigation bank, the creation or enhancement of similar riparian habitat at an approved mitigation site, or by the removal of exotic species from an area of existing similar habitat as determined by USFWS. The requirement for replacing suitable habitat by obtaining credits at an applicable mitigation bank, creating/restoring new habitat, and/or removing exotic species from existing habitat will be determined in consultation with USFWS.

Arroyo Toad

ARTO-5: To compensate for the direct loss of arroyo toad critical habitat, in consultation with USFWS, it may be necessary to acquire mitigation lands and/or conduct restoration (such as nonnative species removal) within Santa Clara River or other similar location. The specific mitigation ratio will be determined in consultation with USFWS. Critical habitat to be mitigated will be in-kind and contain the same physical and biological features that were present in the critical habitat removed by the proposed project.

Southwestern Pond Turtle

WPT-3: Pending the federal listing determination for this species, further consultation may be required with USFWS to determine the appropriate mitigation approach. Under its current status, compensatory mitigation for permanent and temporary loss of habitat

for southwestern pond turtle will be provided in compensatory mitigation required for federally listed species impacts to arroyo toad, LBVI, and SWFL, similar to the approach proposed for non-listed special-status wildlife species as described in Section 2.4.4, above.

Least Bell's Vireo and Southwestern Willow Flycatcher

RIP-4: The removal of LBVI and SWFL critical habitat will be mitigated through obtaining credits at an applicable mitigation bank, the creation or enhancement of similar riparian habitat at an approved mitigation site, or by the removal of exotic species from an area of existing similar habitat. The requirement for replacing suitable habitat by obtaining credits at an applicable mitigation bank, creating/restoring new habitat, and/or removing exotic species from existing habitat will be determined in consultation with USFWS.

Mountain Lion

LION-3: Pending the state listing status of mountain lion, impacts will be assessed by CDFW and any necessary mitigation will be acquired/implemented.

2.4.6 Invasive Species

2.4.6.1 Regulatory Setting

On February 3, 1999, President William J. Clinton signed EO 13112 requiring federal agencies to combat the introduction or spread of invasive species in the U.S. The order defines invasive species as "any species, including its seeds, eggs, spores, or other biological material capable of propagating that species, that is not native to that ecosystem whose introduction does or is likely to cause economic or environmental harm or harm to human health." FHWA guidance issued on August 10, 1999, directs the use of the State's invasive species list, maintained by the Invasive Species Council of California to define the invasive species that must be considered as part of the NEPA analysis for a proposed project.

2.4.6.2 Affected Environment

The following analysis is based on the NES (AECOM 2024) prepared for the proposed project.

Several non-native species of plants and wildlife in the BSA have the potential to be invasive, displacing native species and altering native habitat. These species include several exotic grass species including giant reed, several exotic herbaceous annual species, tamarisk (*Tamarix sp.*), largemouth bass, common carp, American bullfrog, red-eared slider, and African clawed frog which have been detected within the BSA.

Areas of ruderal, annual brome grassland, and upland mustard vegetation communities support the majority of invasive species located within the BSA. Several species of exotic grasses and herbaceous annuals have established themselves along the roadside in high concentrations (AECOM 2023g). Some of the invasive species observed include tocalote (*Centaurea meletensis*), yellow star thistle (*Centaurea solstitialis*), red brome, wild oats, foxtail barley (*Hordeum murinum*), black mustard, short-podded mustard, and Russian thistle.

Within the aquatic and riparian vegetation communities mapped within the BSA are two species that may pose a threat to the riparian environment; giant reed and tamarisk. Both of these species have proliferated in southern California's waterways, choking out native species and

using valuable water resources. Within the BSA, giant reed occurs in high densities along the edges of the Santa Clara River, often forming impenetrable walls of vegetation along the river.

In addition to the aforementioned plant species, largemouth bass, common carp, American bullfrog, red-eared slider, and African clawed frog are non-native species that prey on native species, including arroyo chub, UTS, and arroyo toad, and were detected within the BSA during biological surveys in 2023 (Caltrans 2008; AECOM 2024).

2.4.6.3 Environmental Consequences

2.4.6.3.1 Alternative 1: No-Build Alternative

The No-Build Alternative would not include construction or operation of any of the improvements proposed under the Build Alternative. However, the invasive species already present within the BSA would remain.

2.4.6.3.2 Alternative 2: Build Alternative

Implementation of the Build Alternative also has the potential to spread invasive species to adjacent native habitats in the BSA through the entering and exiting of contaminated construction equipment, the inclusion of invasive species in seed mixtures and mulch, and the improper removal and disposal of invasive species causing seed to be spread along the highway. With implementation of VEG-5 through VEG-7 discussed above, potential permanent impacts under the Build Alternative related to invasive species would not be adverse.

2.4.6.4 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

Avoidance and minimization measures, and compensatory mitigation, described previously under VEG-5 and VEG-6, would be implemented. These measures include use of BMPs to ensure invasive plant material is not spread from the proposed project site to other areas by disposal off-site or by tracking seed on equipment, clothing, and shoes.

Compensation mitigation described previously for VEG-7 would be implemented and provide the necessary compensation for impacts.

2.4.7 Cumulative Impacts

Cumulative impacts are those impacts that result from past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions, combined with the potential impacts of the proposed project. A cumulative effect assessment looks at the collective impacts posed by individual land use plans and projects. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor but collectively substantial impacts taking place over a period of time.

Cumulative impacts to resources in the proposed project area may result from residential, commercial, industrial, and highway development, as well as from agricultural development and the conversion to more intensive agricultural cultivation. These land use activities can degrade habitat and species diversity through consequences such as displacement and fragmentation of habitats and populations, alteration of hydrology, contamination, erosion, sedimentation, disruption of migration corridors, changes in water quality, and introduction or promotion of predators. They can also contribute to potential community impacts identified for the proposed project, such as changes in community character, traffic patterns, housing availability, and employment.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15130 describes when a cumulative impact analysis is necessary and what elements are necessary for an adequate discussion of cumulative impacts. The definition of cumulative impacts under CEQA is in Section 15355 of the CEQA Guidelines. A definition of cumulative impacts under NEPA is in 40 CFR Section 1508.7.

2.4.7.1 Cumulative Impact Analysis

This cumulative impact analysis determines whether the Build Alternative, in combination with other past, present, or reasonably foreseeable projects, would result in a cumulative effect and, if so, whether the Build Alternative's contribution to the cumulative impact would be considerable. Present and reasonably foreseeable future projects include land use developments, infrastructure, and other transportation improvements that are planned and funded and would be near the proposed Build Alternative improvements.

Table 2-59 lists the development projects in the proposed project vicinity that were used to analyze the cumulative impacts of the proposed project. These projects are in various stages of project development, from early conceptual planning and feasibility study to projects planned for approval.

Table 2-59: Cumulative Projects

Name	Jurisdiction	Proposed Uses	Status
I-5 Rye Canyon Ramps Project	County of Los Angeles	I-5 Ramps (connect The Old Road to I-5)	95-percent (%) Plans
Newhall Ranch Specific Plan	County of Los Angeles	15,000-acre Master Planned Community	Under construction
I-5 North County Enhancements Project	County of Los Angeles	Widen I-5 to include high-occupancy (HOV) lanes, truck climbing lanes, and additional auxiliary lanes	Under construction

2.4.7.2 Resource Areas with No Contribution to Cumulative Effects

The resources considered in the cumulative effects analysis follow Caltrans's Eight Step Guidance for identifying and assessing cumulative impacts (Caltrans 2016). If a proposed project would not result in a direct or indirect adverse effect on a resource, then it would not contribute to a cumulative impact on that resource and does not need to be further evaluated.

In the initial phases of the proposed project, the following resources were determined not to result in an adverse effect:

- Coastal Zone
- Section 4(f)
- Timberlands
- Wild and Scenic Rivers

Therefore, these resources would not contribute to a cumulative impact. Through the evaluation presented in Chapter 2, it was also determined that the proposed project would result in no impact or less-than-significant impacts, with incorporation of AMMs and, thus, no cumulative impacts on the following resources:

- Existing and Future Land Use

- Consistency with State, Regional, and Local Plans and Programs
- Parks and Recreational Facilities
- Farmlands
- Growth
- Community Character and Cohesion
- Environmental Justice
- Utilities/Emergency Services
- Transportation and Traffic/Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities
- Visual/Aesthetics
- Cultural Resources
- Hydrology and Floodplain
- Water Quality and Storm Water
- Geology/Soils/Seismic/Topography
- Hazardous Waste/Materials
- Air Quality
- Noise
- Energy
- Natural Communities
- Wetlands and other Waters
- Plant Species
- Wildlife Species
- Threatened and Endangered Species
- Invasive Species

Certain resources are not vulnerable to incremental/cumulative impacts. Examples include geologic and seismic hazards related to future developments in the proposed project resource study area. Geologic and seismic hazards are site-specific and relate to the type of building or structure proposed and soil composition and slope of a given site. No other planned projects in the vicinity would interact with the proposed project to increase the risk of geologic or seismic hazards. Therefore, no further cumulative impact analysis is warranted.

2.4.7.3 Resources Considered for Contribution to Cumulative Effects

2.4.7.3.1 Relocations and Real Property Acquisition

A cumulative analysis is required for any resource significantly impacted by a proposed project. Based on the analysis presented in this EIR/EA, the proposed project would not significantly impact the resource areas listed in Section 2.4.7.2. No project cumulative impacts would likely occur in conjunction with projects listed in Table 2-59 and with the proper implementation of AMMs.

However, as stated in Section 2.2.7 above, at this preliminary stage of project design, the Build Alternative is anticipated to require one full property acquisition; partial property acquisitions from 13 properties; and 20 temporary construction easements to accommodate roadway widening. All property owners and tenants will be made aware of any potential impacts to businesses and all businesses would be able to remain open during proposed project construction. The actual impacts to properties will be determined during the proposed project's final design phase.

The Build Alternative would require the full acquisition of one vacant parcel and partial acquisitions from vacant, public utility, and commercial/industrial properties. Adverse impacts as

a result of relocations and property acquisition are anticipated, and the property owner would be compensated for its loss in the property under the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970.

Although the acquisitions that are anticipated as part of the Build Alternative would represent adverse effects, they are not anticipated to contribute to cumulative impacts. The proposed full property acquisition partial acquisitions would occur primarily to vacant or public utility and commercial/industrial properties, as discussed above. The proposed project area is anticipated to undergo notable changes with the proposed developments, but no adverse cumulative impacts from relocations and real property acquisition are foreseeable.

As such, there would be no cumulative impacts because other current and reasonably foreseeable projects in the proposed project vicinity are distant from the proposed project area or would not interact with the proposed project in construction timing. Therefore, the Build Alternative would not have a cumulatively significant impact on any impacted resources. All potential impacts would be minimized through the proposed AMMs. Based on this cumulative impact analysis, no further AMMs are proposed.

Chapter 3 California Environmental Quality Act Evaluation

The project is subject to federal, as well as Los Angeles County Public Works and state environmental review requirements because the Los Angeles County Public Works proposes the use of federal funds from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and/or the project requires an approval from FHWA. Project documentation, therefore, has been prepared in compliance with both the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The Los Angeles County Public Works is the project proponent and the lead agency under CEQA. FHWA's responsibility for environmental review, consultation, and any other actions required by applicable Federal environmental laws for this project are being, or have been, carried out by Caltrans pursuant to 23 United States Code Section 327 (23 USC 327) and the Memorandum of Understanding dated May 27, 2022, and executed by FHWA and Caltrans.

One of the primary differences between NEPA and CEQA is the way significance is determined. Under NEPA, significance is used to determine whether an EIS, or a lower level of documentation, will be required. NEPA requires that an EIS be prepared when the proposed federal action (project) *as a whole* has the potential to "significantly affect the quality of the human environment." The determination of significance is based on context and intensity. Some impacts determined to be significant under CEQA may not be of sufficient magnitude to be determined significant under NEPA. Under NEPA, once a decision is made regarding the need for an EIS, it is the magnitude of the impact that is evaluated and no judgment of its individual significance is deemed important for the text. NEPA does not require that a determination of significant impacts be stated in the environmental documents.

CEQA, on the other hand, does require the Department to identify each "significant effect on the environment" resulting from the project and ways to mitigate each significant effect. If the project may have a significant effect on any environmental resource, then an EIR must be prepared. Each and every significant effect on the environment must be disclosed in the EIR and mitigated if feasible. In addition, the CEQA Guidelines list a number of "mandatory findings of significance," which also require the preparation of an EIR. There are no types of actions under NEPA that parallel the findings of mandatory significance of CEQA. This chapter discusses the effects of this project and CEQA significance.

3.1 CEQA Environmental Checklist

The CEQA Environmental checklist identifies physical, biological, social, and economic factors that might be affected by the proposed project. In many cases, background studies performed in connection with the projects will indicate that there are no impacts to a particular resource. A NO IMPACT answer in the last column reflects this determination. The words "significant" and "significance" used throughout the following checklist are related to CEQA, not NEPA, impacts. The questions in this form are intended to encourage the thoughtful assessment of impacts and do not represent thresholds of significance.

Project features, which can include both design elements of the proposed project, and standardized measures that are applied to all or most Caltrans projects such as BMPs and measures included in the Standard Plans and Specifications or as Standard Special Provisions, are considered to be an integral part of the proposed project and have been considered prior to any significance determinations documented below; Chapters 1 and 2 present a detailed discussion of these features. The annotations to this checklist are summaries of information contained in Chapter 2 in order to provide the reader with the rationale for significance determinations; Chapter 2 gives a more detailed discussion of the nature and extent of impacts. This checklist incorporates by reference the information contained in Chapters 1 and 2.

AESTHETICS

Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the project:	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less-Than-Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) 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 a 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?	☐	☒	☐	☐
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	☐	☒	☐	☐

CEQA Significance Determinations for Aesthetics

a, b) No Impact

The proposed project would not have a substantial adverse impact on a scenic vista or scenic resources because the proposed project area does not include any scenic vistas or resources.

c, d) Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated

As discussed in Section 2.2.11 above, the proposed project would be compatible with existing views, with the exception of the raised elevation of the I-5 southbound on-ramp. The additional proposed lanes would not expand the scale of the roadway substantially and would maintain the visual character of the roadway. Furthermore, corridor views would maintain continuity because the proposed project would introduce only compatible elements that already exist in some form within the proposed project area.

Construction views would temporarily include introduction of staging areas, equipment, and materials within the corridors, but these impacts would be limited in duration. In addition, proposed project construction would introduce construction lighting that could potentially increase lighting in the area temporarily. AMM VIS-1 would ensure that directional lighting would be aimed downward at the construction during proposed project construction, where appropriate within the proposed project construction area to ensure that the proposed project would comply with the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan.

Operationally, new permanent lighting would be installed along The Old Road and the proposed overcrossing structure, which would be finalized during the PS&E Phase. However, it is not anticipated that these elements would be a notable change to the existing lighting in the area, as the proposed project area is urbanized and has a moderate level of existing ambient lighting.

The proposed project would be consistent with existing vividness, intactness, and unity after construction. In addition, commercial and industrial viewers would be closer to the proposed project site than area residents and are less likely to notice compatible uses. Viewer sensitivity in the area is considered moderately low. AMM VIS-2 would also be implemented, which would include a textured finish on the proposed retaining wall on Rye Canyon Road at I-5 to discourage graffiti and ensure visual quality of the area.

Therefore, the proposed project as designed would not substantially degrade the visual character and quality of the site, and impacts due to light and glare would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

AGRICULTURE AND FOREST RESOURCES

In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Caltrans of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Caltrans of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment Project; and the forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by ARB.

Would the project:	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less-Than-Significant Impact 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 nonagricultural use, to non-agricultural use?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in PRC Section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by PRC Section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by California Government Code Section 51104(g))?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	☐	☐	☐	☒

CEQA Significance Determinations for Agriculture and Forest Resources

a, b) Less Than Significant

As discussed in Section 2.2.4 above, the proposed project would convert approximately 1.08 acres of Prime and Unique Farmland. However, the new ROW associated with the proposed project would not require acquisition of the entire parcel. Form AD-1006 was completed for the proposed project and submitted to the NRCS local field office to determine the farmland conversion impact rating.

The NRCS determined that the proposed project would traverse areas currently being devoted to a variety of agricultural uses, including hay, vegetables, and fruit and nut trees. However, the proposed project rated a combined score of 125 points on Form AD-1006, which is below the

threshold of 160. According to the instructions for completing Form AD-1006, sites receiving a total score of less than 160 points do not need to "consider alternative actions, as appropriate, that could reduce adverse impacts (e.g. Alternative Sites, Modifications or Mitigation)." Therefore, according to the results of Form AD-1006, no further analysis is needed for farmland issues under the FPPA. In addition, these areas are not currently used for agricultural purposes, and the surrounding area is highly urbanized. Therefore, the acquisition of Farmland of Statewide Importance would not be adverse due to the zoning of the proposed project site and the combined score of 125 on the Farmland Conversion Impact Rating Form. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant, and mitigation is not required.

c, d, e) No Impact

There are no parcels under a Williamson Act contract within the proposed project limits and no forest or timberlands within the proposed project limits. Additionally, there are no other changes anticipated to farmland or forest land. Therefore, no impacts would occur.

AIR QUALITY

Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management district or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations.				
Would the project:	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less-Than-Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐
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?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?	☐	☐	☒	☐

CEQA Significance Determinations for Air Quality

a, b, c) <u>Less Than Significant</u>

As discussed in Section 2.3 above, the proposed project is located in Attainment-Maintenance (Serious) for CO, Attainment – Maintenance (Serious) for $PM_{10,}$ and Nonattainment (Serious – 24 hour) for $PM_{2.5}$. The proposed project would not cause or contribute to any new localized CO, $PM_{2.5}$, and/or PM_{10} violations, or delay timely attainment of any NAAQS or any required interim emission reductions or other milestones during the timeframe of the transportation plan (or regional emissions analysis). The proposed project is included in SCAG's most recent RTP/SCS and FTIP both of which were found to be conforming). Additionally, there are no sensitive receptors within 500 feet of the proposed project limits.

The proposed project would address current and expected roadway deficiencies on The Old Road and adjacent roadway system such as congestion and inconsistency with jurisdictional plans and policies would improve since the proposed project would increase regional roadway capacity to accommodate expected future traffic growth projections.

The proposed project would result in less or similar criteria pollutant emissions due to improvements in vehicle delay. As such, the proposed project would not conflict with the AQMP, violate any air quality standard, result in a net increase of any criteria pollutant, or expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant and no mitigation is required.

d) <u>Less Than Significant</u>

Temporary construction activities could generate fugitive dust from the operation of construction equipment. The proposed project would comply with construction standards adopted by SCAQMD, as well as Caltrans standardized procedures for minimizing air pollutants during construction. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant, and no mitigation is required.

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Would the project:	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less-Than-Significant Impact 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 CDFW, USFWS, or NOAA Fisheries?	☐	☒	☐	☐
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 CDFW or USFWS?	☐	☒	☐	☐
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?	☐	☒	☐	☐
d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?	☐	☒	☐	☐
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	☐	☒	☐	☐
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

CEQA Significance Determinations for Biological Resources

a) Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated

Implementation of the proposed project would not impact any of the federally or state listed threatened, endangered, or candidate plant species that have a potential to occur within the BSA. Special-status plant surveys in 2023 were negative for listed plants. One non-listed special-status plant species, Southern California black walnut, was detected within the LOD and BSA. One Southern California black walnut would be directly removed by construction, and a second plant may be impacted due to its close proximity to the LOD. Measure WALNUT-1 would reduce impacts to less than significant.

For non-listed special-status wildlife species, multiple species have been detected within the BSA that have the potential to be impacted by the proposed project (Table 2-54, Section 2.4.4). The following non-listed special-status wildlife species are known to occur or have the potential

to occur within the LOD and be impacted by the proposed project. This includes arroyo chub, Southern California legless lizard, California glossy snake, coastal whiptail, coast horned lizard, two-striped garter snake, white-tailed kite, Cooper's hawk, California horned lark, yellow warbler, yellow-breasted chat, Southern California rufous-crowned sparrow, loggerhead shrike, western burrowing owl, pallid bat, Townsend's big-eared bat, spotted bat, western mastiff bat, western red bat, hoary bat, Yuma myotis, and American badger.

Temporary, direct impacts would result from the use of upland and aquatic habitat for equipment and materials staging, grading, as well as from clearing and tree removal for construction activities and access to construction sites. Permanent impacts would result from direct removal of occupied habitat for multiple species. Operation of the proposed project would have minor effects on special-status wildlife species within the BSA.

Impacts to special-status wildlife species would be avoided and minimized through a variety of measures including GEN-1 through GEN-14, and species-specific measures: UTS-1 and UTS-2, ARTO-1 through ARTO-4, WPT-1 and WPT-2, RIP-1 through RIP-3, and BAT-1 through BAT-3. Implementation of these measures would reduce impacts to less than significant for non-listed special-status wildlife species.

For federally and state listed wildlife species, including candidate species, the proposed project has the potential to impact UTS, arroyo toad, southwestern pond turtle, LBVI, SWFL, and mountain lion. UTS is assumed to occur in the mainstem of the Santa Clara River and may occur in the Northern Drainage. Arroyo toad has historically occurred in the area; however, after years of historic drought and the proliferation of nonnative invasive species, they have not been documented within the BSA in several decades and are likely extirpated. The southwestern pond turtle is known to occur throughout the BSA in both the mainstem of the Santa Clara River and the Northern Drainage. LBVI are common summer breeders throughout riparian vegetation within the BSA and eight territories were identified during focused surveys in 2018. There is also federally designated critical habitat for arroyo toad, LBVI and SWFL that would be permanently removed by the proposed project.

Both permanent and temporary impacts would result from habitat loss (including critical habitat for arroyo toad, LBVI, and SWFL) during construction of the proposed project. Acreages of impacts per listed species are previously detailed in Section 2.5.5 and are not repeated here. Impacts to listed species would be similar to those previously detailed for non-listed special-status wildlife species and include temporary direct impacts during construction and permanent impacts from removal of occupied habitat.

Impacts to listed wildlife species would be avoided and minimized through a variety of measures including GEN-1 through GEN-14, and species-specific measures: UTS-1, ARTO-1 through ARTO-4, WPT-1 and WPT-2, RIP-1 through RIP-3, BAT-1 through BAT-3, and LION-1 through LION-2. Implementation of these measures would reduce impacts to less than significant for listed wildlife species.

b) Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated

The proposed project would result in permanent and temporary impacts to riparian habitat and other sensitive natural communities. Implementation of the proposed project would result in permanent and temporary direct impacts to California Buckwheat Scrub, Fremont Cottonwood Forest and Woodland, and Elderberry Stand, which are summarized by acreage in Table 2-53. Indirect impacts to sensitive vegetation communities may also occur from construction and use of the proposed project. Temporary indirect impacts, such as construction fugitive dust (which

can coat vegetation and reduce photosynthesis), sedimentation and erosion, and construction-generated trash/debris and unauthorized trespass could all adversely impact vegetation. The proposed project also has the potential for longer term impacts, such as the proliferation of invasive species through ground disturbing activities, which may indirectly degrade adjacent native vegetation communities. Indirect impacts may also occur in the form of increased potential for wildland fire and pollution in Santa Clara River. Both permanent and temporary impacts would be reduced to less than significant with implementation of avoidance and minimization measures VEG-6 and VEG-7. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

c) Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated

As discussed in the NES (AECOM 2023g, 2023h), the proposed project includes bank stabilization and bridge replacement over Santa Clara River, requiring permits from USACE, RWQCB, and CDFW for impacts to jurisdictional waters, wetlands, and riparian habitat.

A jurisdictional delineation was completed for the proposed project site (initially in 2018, and updated in 2023; AECOM 2023k), which determined that Santa Clara River is considered WOTUS, and subject to regulation by ACOE and RWQCB under CWA Sections 404 and 401, respectively. Overall, 5.78 acres and 0.76 acre of USACE and RWQCB jurisdictional waters and wetlands, respectively, and an additional 28.67 acres of CDFW-only jurisdictional waters within the proposed project BSA (Santa Clara River). An unnamed tributary to Santa Clara River along the northern portion of the site includes 0.30 acre of non-wetland waters and 0.98 acre of CDFW streambed. Stormwater drainages A and B include 0.02 acre of non-wetland waters and 0.13 acre of CDFW streambeds. Isolated riparian areas include 0.07 acre (RWQCB, CDFW) and 1.29 acres (CDFW). Approximately 0.20 acre of permanent impacts and 0.13 acre of temporary impacts, as well as 0.94 acre of bridge shading and 0.014 acre of due to bridge columns, are expected to occur.

The proposed project is adjacent to portions of Santa Clara River and, as such, remaining jurisdictional areas may be impacted by runoff from the road and increased trash and litter. In addition, the river may be indirectly impacted by nonnative species (i.e., roadside weeds), exposure to urban pollutants (fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides, and other hazardous materials), soil erosion, and hydrological changes (e.g., surface and groundwater level and quality).

Extensive AMMs and proposed project BMPs will be employed for Santa Clara River and tributaries. Because the proposed project would impact USACE, RWQCB, and CDFW jurisdictional areas, avoidance and minimization measures, under Section 2.4.1 above, would be applicable (e.g., VEG-1 through VEG-5). These measures would be incorporated into the project design and, therefore, would minimize potential impacts to areas under USACE and CDFW jurisdiction. Compensatory mitigation would consist of the restoration of wetland and riparian vegetation communities, and will be further refined in the regulatory permitting process. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant with the implementation of mitigation.

d) Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated

The proposed project would span areas of open water within the Santa Clara River and Northern Drainage thereby eliminating any impacts to surface water that is occupied by UTS and other aquatic species. Therefore, the proposed project would not substantially interfere with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish. However, the expanded road and The Old Road Bridge have the potential to increase the noise and artificial nighttime light over the Santa Clara River, which is a wildlife corridor. This has the potential to interfere with the

movement of local wildlife along the Santa Clara River. With the incorporation of avoidance and minimization measures LION-1 and LION-2, impacts would be less than significant with the implementation of mitigation.

e) Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated

A detailed Oak Tree Survey was conducted by AECOM in June 2019 (AECOM 2019b) in accordance with the County of Los Angeles Oak Tree Ordinance (Section 22.56.2050-2260 of the Los Angeles County Code) to provide information to the County on oak trees that may be removed or damaged by the development of the proposed project.

The County recognizes oak trees for their historical, aesthetic, and ecological qualities, and seeks to preserve and propagate this unique, threatened plant community, especially those trees that may be classified as heritage oaks. Heritage oaks are oak trees with a diameter at breast height greater than 36 inches. The County's Oak Tree Ordinance requires an oak tree permit for any impacts to oak trees within their jurisdictions that meet certain requirements (e.g., size, age). Impacts include, but are not limited to, cutting, destroying, removing, relocating, inflicting damage, or encroaching into the protected zone of any oak tree. The protected zone is defined as the area within the canopy of an oak tree extending to a point at least 5 feet outside of the dripline or 25 feet from the trunk of a tree.

AECOM surveyed 59 native oak trees (56 - *Q. lobata* and 3 - *Q. agrifolia*) subject to the Los Angeles County Oak Tree Ordinance within The Old Road BSA, which includes the proposed grading limit line and all areas within 500 feet of the grading limit line. Approximately 50% of the BSA has already been developed. Most of the oak trees recorded in the BSA occur within the limit of disturbance along both sides of The Old Road just south of the intersection of The Old Road and Rye Canyon Road. Of the 59 native oak trees surveyed, 15 oak trees (*Q. lobata*) are planned for permanent removal as a result of The Old Road expansion. The oak trees planned for removal are valley oaks, two of which are heritage trees under Los Angeles County Oak Tree Ordinance (36 inches in diameter or greater). Fourteen oaks trees are located within temporary impact areas associated with construction access and temporary work areas. These areas would be avoided to the greatest extent possible during proposed project construction-related activities.

A total of 30 native oak trees occurs within 500 feet of the limit of disturbance, none of which would be removed or encroached upon by construction-related activities. As such, no specific avoidance efforts are feasible. However, AMMs OAK-1 through OAK-7 would be implemented to minimize impacts to trees that will not be removed, but occur within close proximity of construction activities. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

f) No Impact

The proposed project is not anticipated to conflict with the provisions of any adopted Habitat Conservation Plans, Natural Community Conservation Plans, or other applicable habitat conservation plans. While the proposed project is located within the County of Los Angeles Santa Clara River SEA, the SEA designation is not part of an adopted HCP or NCCP. The proposed project would be conducted in a manner consistent with the stipulations for working in an SEA; therefore, no impact is anticipated.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Would the project:	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less-Than-Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?	☐	☒	☐	☐
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?	☐	☒	☐	☐
c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?	☐	☒	☐	☐

CEQA Significance Determinations for Cultural Resources

a) Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated

As discussed in Section 2.2.12 above, based on the results of the HRER (AECOM 2023e) and the HPSR (AECOM 2023f), it was determined that eight built environment resources were identified within the APE. Of these eight resources, three were previously determined ineligible for the NRHP (The Old Road over Santa Clara River Bridge (P-19-190315); The Old Road Bridge over the SPT Co. (CA53C0328); and the Route 5/126 Separation Bridge (CA532928), and four resources, P-19-186567, PD-1 concrete culvert, P-19-186541, Valencia Water Reclamation Plant, were determined ineligible for listing in the NRHP as a result of the current studies. One resource, the SPRR SBL/SPB is assumed eligible for the purpose of this project, however, the section of the SPRR SBL/SPB that is within the APE is not eligible as a contributing element. Therefore, the proposed project achieves a finding of No Historic Properties Affected. In addition, the ASR (AECOM 2023g) and XPI investigation (AECOM 2023) determined that the project does exhibit archaeological sensitivity but the potential to encounter intact archaeological deposits is low. With implementation of the AMMs discussed Section 2.2.12.3, the impact would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

b) Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated

As discussed in Section 2.2.12 above, the ASR (AECOM 2023n) determined that no archaeological resources have been previously recorded in the APE. AMM CR-1, CR-2, and CR-3 would further reduce the potential for impacts to archaeological resources during construction. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant with mitigation.

c) Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated

There are no formal cemeteries or known burial sites in the proposed project area. Therefore, proposed project construction is not expected to disturb any human remains. AMM CR-3 would further reduce the potential for the disturbance of human remains and provides guidance in the event that any human remains are discovered during construction. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant with mitigation.

ENERGY

Would the project:	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less-Than-Significant Impact 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?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?	☐	☐	☐	☒

CEQA Significance Determinations for Energy

a) Less than Significant

Construction activities would result in short-term energy consumption from the use of petroleum fuels by off-road construction equipment, and from on-road vehicles used by construction workers to travel to and from the proposed project site during construction and to deliver construction materials. The proposed project is anticipated to improve existing traffic operations and accommodate future traffic projections, eliminate choke points, and decrease traffic congestion. These improvements would improve traffic operations to be consistent with LACPW highway design speed safety standards and decrease travel time on the congested roadway system. The proposed project would enable The Old Road corridor to maximize productivity through improvements to the capacity of the roadway lanes allowing for more flexibility in traffic movement and higher efficiencies to accommodate project expected future traffic growth. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in an inefficient, wasteful, and unnecessary consumption of energy, and impacts would be less than significant.

b) No Impact

This proposed project would not conflict with state and local plans for renewable energy and energy efficiency. The proposed project would address current and expected inconsistencies with jurisdictional plans and policies since the proposed project would increase regional roadway capacity to accommodate expected future traffic growth projections. There would be no impact.

GEOLOGY AND SOILS

Would the project:	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less-Than-Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.	☐	☐	☒	☐
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	☐	☐	☒	☐
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	☐	☐	☒	☐
iv) Landslides?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	☐	☒	☐	☐

CEQA Significance Determinations for Geology and Soils

ai, aii, aiii, b, c) Less than Significant

Although there are several active and potentially active earthquake faults and fault zones in the proposed project area, the proposed project site does not cross any of these faults and zones, and it is not within an Earthquake Zone of Required Investigation. Additionally, the proposed project would improve the bridges along The Old Road for earthquake protection. The proposed project site is within a Liquefaction Zone, and construction of the proposed project may increase the potential of soil erosion. However, implementation of minimization measures, construction-phase BMPs, and project design features would minimize potential soil erosion and the occurrence of liquefaction (as discussed in Section 2.3 above).

aiv, d, e) No Impact

The proposed project site was not found to be in any areas susceptible to expansive soil or in a landslide area. Additionally, the proposed project would not construct or modify a septic system or alternative wastewater system. Therefore, there would be no impact.

f) Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated

As detailed in Section 2.3.4, there are no known recorded fossil locations within one mile of the project. However, during construction, the proposed project could have direct or indirect impacts on paleontological resources, particularly at a depth where drilling or augering takes place, as well as any ground disturbance in old terrace sediments mapped as Qog.

However, AMM PAL-1 would be implemented to reduce impacts, which would require implementation of a Paleontological Resources Monitoring and Mitigation Plan prior to construction-related excavations. In addition, in the event of inadvertent discovery of paleontological resources, AMM PAL-2 would be implemented to reduce the potential for impacts to unknown, buried paleontological resources. AMM PAL-2 would require appropriate training for on-site construction crews regarding paleontological resources and paleontological monitoring in locations where there is a potential for paleontological resources. Therefore, with implementation of AMMs PAL-1 and PAL-2, impacts to paleontological resources would be less than significant.

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Would the project:	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less-Than-Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Generate GHG emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of GHG?	☐	☐	☒	☐

CEQA Significance Determinations for Greenhouse Gas Emissions

a, b) <u>Less than Significant</u>

The proposed project would result in GHG emissions during construction; however, that would be offset by the long-term improvements in operational GHG emissions compared with existing conditions. As detailed in Section 2.3 above, the Build Alternative would result in less emissions than the No-Build Alternative and Existing Conditions in the opening year of 2028 because of improvements in average vehicle speed and reductions in vehicle delay. Additionally, in the design/horizon year of 2048, ambient regional growth would result in higher GHG emissions for the Build Alternative than Existing Conditions in 2018, but the magnitude of emissions would be substantially lower than the No-Build Alternative in the same year. The proposed project would not conflict with any applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of GHG. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant, and no MMs are required.

HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Would the project:	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less-Than-Significant Impact 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?	☐	☒	☐	☐
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	☐	☒	☐	☐
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to California Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	☐	☒	☐	☐
e) Would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area (for a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport)?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒
g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?	☐	☐	☐	☒

CEQA Significance Determinations for Hazards and Hazardous Materials

a, b, d) Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated

The proposed project would involve the transport, use, and disposal of hazardous materials used for construction of the proposed project (e.g., fuels, paints, asphalt, and lubricants). Per Section 2.3 above, all applicable federal, state, and local regulations would be adhered to, and this practice would reduce the potential for incidents involving hazardous materials. The proposed project area is not a site which is included on the list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to California Government Code Section 65962. However, 24 accidental spills/incidents were identified along the proposed project, but they have not been identified as RECs. Additionally, two plugged and abandoned oil/gas wells were identified in and adjacent to the proposed project, with one located within the southbound lanes of The Old Road. This well was plugged and abandoned in 1968 and was not identified in an April 2023 geophysical survey.

In addition, as noted in the Aerial Deposited Lead Survey (Leighton Consulting, Inc. 2023) completed for the proposed project, no soils investigated during the survey were characterized as RCRA hazardous waste with the exception of soil in the vicinity of boring B97 and B103. AMMs would be incorporated for the excavation and transport of soils to an appropriate disposal facility, the soil within the remainder of the Phase II project limits is considered as nonhazardous/ unrestricted or suitable for reuse onsite.

The recommendations outlined in the ISA (AECOM 2023e) will be followed in order to avoid and/or minimize impacts associated with hazardous materials, which are listed as AMMs HAZ-1 through HAZ-15. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant with mitigation.

c, e, f, g) No Impact

There are no schools located within a 0.25-mile radius of the proposed project site. The proposed project is not located within an airport land use plan or within 2 miles of a public airport. Outreach will be coordinated to inform local jurisdictions, agencies, and the public of the times and locations of upcoming construction to avoid traffic disruptions especially for emergency response plans. Additionally, the proposed project improvements would enhance safety and increase capacity on roadways to provide for emergency overflow. The widening of The Old Road is critical for the passage of traffic and emergency vehicles in the area. The proposed project would expand existing facilities and land uses and not expose people or structures to significant risks involving wildland fires. Therefore, there would be no impact.

HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Would the project:	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less-Than-Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?	☐	☒	☐	☐
b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?	☐	☒	☐	☐
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:				
(i) result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site;	☐	☒	☐	☐
(ii) substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site;	☐	☒	☐	☐
(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	☐	☒	☐	☐
(iv) impede or redirect flood flows?	☐	☒	☐	☐
d) Risk release of pollutants due to project inundation (in flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones)?	☐	☒	☐	☐
e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?	☐	☒	☐	☐

CEQA Significance Determinations for Hydrology and Water Quality

a, b, ci through civ, d, e) <u>Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated</u>

The proposed project has the potential to impact water quality during construction through soil disturbance, exposing it to erosion and the release of pollutants such as sediment/turbidity, metals, oil and grease, and debris. As discussed in Section 2.3 above, with the implementation of construction-phase BMPs in compliance with the Construction General Permit, the potential for degradation of surface or groundwater quality would be reduced.

The approximately 43.1-acre increase in impervious surface as a part of the proposed project would not be anticipated to reduce groundwater recharge in the proposed project area. The increase in impervious surface area would be insignificant in comparison to the watershed area of Santa Clara River at The Old Road Bridge crossing. Additionally, implementation of design

measures and BMPs (e.g., bioswales) would minimize potential effects from the increase in impervious surface.

The proposed project would not significantly impact existing drainage patterns or exceed the capacity of existing stormwater drainage systems. The proposed drainage system would connect to the existing drainage system and improve storm water drainage and runoff treatment. Compliance with the standard requirements of the Construction General Permit and the County Municipal Permit for potential short-term and long-term impacts would be required. The proposed project would incorporate AMMs WQ-1 and WQ-2 (outlined in Section 2.3 above) to minimize impacts on hydrology and water quality. Impacts would be less than significant with mitigation.

LAND USE AND PLANNING

Would the project:	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less-Than-Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Physically divide an established community?	☐	☐	☒	☐
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?	☐	☐	☒	☐

CEQA Significance Determinations for Land Use and Planning

a, b) Less than Significant

The proposed project would not physically divide an established community. The proposed project would establish temporary detour routes for traffic, which would allow local roadways to remain accessible throughout the duration of construction. Access to local driveways along The Old Road and Henry Mayo Drive would be maintained. Once construction is complete, the new bridge would widen and increase the number of lanes to six-lanes.

However, the proposed project would not provide new access to an undeveloped area, nor would it influence development opportunities by expanding capacity. Although minority and low-income populations exist within and around the study area, the proposed project would benefit most area residents, including minority and low-income populations by improving mobility and circulation throughout the area. Overall, the proposed project would be built along an existing transportation corridor and would not divide existing neighborhoods/communities. Therefore, impacts related to the physical division of an established community would be less than significant.

In addition, as stated in Section 2.2.2 above, the proposed project would be generally consistent with all applicable State, Regional, and Local Plans and Programs. The proposed project would address current and expected roadway deficiencies on The Old Road and adjacent roadway system such as inconsistency with jurisdictional plans and policies since this alternative would increase regional roadway capacity and improve safety to accommodate expected future traffic growth projections to meet jurisdictional plans and policies.

Additionally, the proposed project would not conflict with the existing or planned land uses in the area.

MINERAL RESOURCES

Would the project:	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less-Than-Significant Impact 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?	☐	☐	☒	☐
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?	☐	☐	☒	☐

CEQA Significance Determinations for Mineral Resources

a, b) Less than Significant

As previously discussed in Section 2.3.3, a portion of the proposed project site is located within an MRZ-2 site, and the remainder of The Old Road is located within an MRZ-3 site. Although a portion of the proposed project site is located within an area of mineral resource significance, the amount of excavation needed for the proposed project would be insignificant in relation to the size of the entire MRZ-2 area that encompasses parts of the proposed project region. Adherence to the goals and policies regarding mineral resources from the Los Angeles County General Plan Conservation and Natural Resources Element and the City of Santa Clarita General Plan Conservation and Open Space Element will be followed to reduce impacts on any mineral resources. In addition, the 0.64-mile portion of The Old Road located within the Castaic Junction Oil and Gas Field contains only plugged wells, and the closest active well in this field is approximately 0.54 miles away from The Old Road. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in the substantial loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region or state or of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site. The impact would be less than significant.

NOISE

Would the project result in:	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less-Than-Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Generation of excessive ground-borne vibration or ground-borne noise levels?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Exposing people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels (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 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport)?	☐	☐	☐	☒

CEQA Significance Determinations for Noise

a, b) Less than Significant

CEQA requires a baseline versus build analysis to assess whether a proposed project will have a noise impact. If a proposed project is determined to have a significant noise impact under CEQA, then CEQA dictates that mitigation must be incorporated into the project unless the mitigation is not feasible. As detailed in table 2-42, the measured sound levels were compared to the predicted sound levels at measurement locations ST-1 through ST-8. The largest predicted difference was 2.1 dBA at ST-4, which would not be considered a significant impact. Further, as detailed in Section 2.3.7, land uses in the proposed project area were grouped into a series of Noise Study Areas, and a preliminary noise abatement analysis was conducted. Only one potential barrier location, in NSA-2, was identified and studied for noise abatement. However, it was found that a barrier would not be reasonable to construct and would be acoustically ineffective. The final decision on this determination is subject to change up until the final design phase, following public review and consideration of comments.

For any nighttime or weekend work, a variance from the County of Los Angeles would be sought to permit that work.

Short-term noise levels would result from construction methods, such as pile-driving, which would be temporarily higher than existing ambient noise levels. Similarly, generation of ground-borne noise levels would only have the potential to be exceeded during construction. Construction would be conducted in accordance with Caltrans Standard Specifications Section 14.8-02. Activities would be short-term, intermittent, and overshadowed by local traffic noise.

c) No Impact

The proposed project is not located in the vicinity of a private airstrip or within 2 miles of a public airport. Therefore, the proposed project would not expose people residing or working in the

proposed project area to excessive noise levels during construction or during the operation phase. There would be no impact.

POPULATION AND HOUSING

Would the project:	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less-Than-Significant Impact 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)?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	☐	☐	☒	☐

CEQA Significance Determinations for Population and Housing

a, b) Les Than Significant

As stated in Section 2.2.7 above, the proposed project would require temporary construction, permanent drainage, and roadway ROW easements on portions of several properties within the proposed project boundaries. However, the proposed project would not provide any access to previously inaccessible parcels or remove access to any properties. It would also provide additional bicycle and pedestrian access along The Old Road from surrounding communities.

In addition, the proposed project does not require changes to land use designations or contain elements that would influence the type or location of growth beyond what is already planned. None of the above changes would induce unplanned population growth in the area.

Further, the proposed project would not change the distribution of existing or planned housing. There is no existing housing in the proposed project area. Project construction would not displace any residential units or nonresidential properties. Therefore, the proposed project would not displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing that would necessitate the construction of replacement housing, and impacts would be less than significant.

PUBLIC SERVICES

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

CEQA Significance Determinations for Public Services

a) Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated

The proposed project would not involve the construction of any infrastructure of developments that would increase the local population, thereby necessitating the provision of new of physically altered government facilities. During construction, temporary impacts to traffic are anticipated due to possible lane closures and detours. However, as discussed in Section 2.2.9, AMMs COM-2 through COM-4 would be implemented to reduce or eliminate temporary effects on emergency services. In addition, as stated in AMM COM-5, coordination would occur with utility service providers, and a public outreach program would be implemented to minimize impacts to surrounding communities. As such, impacts to public services would minimal. Therefore, the proposed project would not cause existing public services to provide additional services or create new associated facilities, and impacts would be less than significant with mitigation.

RECREATION

	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less-Than-Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	☐	☐	☐	☒

CEQA Significance Determinations for Recreation

a, b) No Impact

As discussed in Section 2.2.3, *Parks and Recreational Facilities*, the public use of parks and recreational facilities would not be affected by the proposed project because there are no recreational activities occurring at these locations. Additionally, the Build Alternative would construct bike lanes, pedestrian pathways, an equestrian trail, as well as an extension of the Multi-Use Trail, which would improve connectivity and increase recreational opportunities in the area. No other park or recreation areas are in the immediate proposed project area; therefore, no impacts on parks and recreation would occur.

TRANSPORTATION

Would the project:	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less-Than-Significant Impact 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?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, Subdivision (b)?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	☐	☒	☐	☐
d) Result in inadequate emergency access?	☐	☒	☐	☐

CEQA Significance Determinations for Transportation

a, b) <u>Less than Significant</u>

As discussed in Section 2.2.10 above, the proposed project is expected to be positive for roadway circulation, decreasing congestion and delays and improving traffic flow. Roadway capacity analysis determined that traffic demand on The Old Road justifies a six-lane facility in order to operate more efficiently. Bicycle and pedestrian facilities would also be improved as part of the proposed project. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing circulation.

As discussed in the VMT Analysis Memorandum (TAHA 2023b), the total regional VMT decreases by 93,346 VMT for the open year and decreases by 1,010,396 VMT for the design year. Based on the results provided in Section 2.2.10 above, the proposed project has a less than significant project level and cumulative level VMT impact for the regional area. Therefore, impacts during proposed project operation would be less than significant.

c, d) <u>Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</u>

The proposed project would not alter the alignment of The Old Road or any other roadways. However, temporary impacts to traffic would occur during construction of the proposed project. As discussed in Section 2.2.9, AMMs COM-2 through COM-4 would be implemented to reduce or eliminate temporary effects on traffic and emergency services. Current traffic demand in the proposed project area meets or exceeds roadway capacity for many arterial roadways. The Old Road and adjacent roadway system in the proposed project area is heavily used and characterized by roadway congestion. Once operational, the proposed project would improve traffic flow and, therefore, enhance emergency access in the area. As such, impacts would be less than significant with mitigation.

TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in PRC 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:	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less-Than-Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in PRC Section 5020.1(k), or	☐	☒	☐	☐
b) 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 PRC Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of PRC Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.	☐	☒	☐	☐

CEQA Significance Determinations for Tribal Cultural Resources

a, b) Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated

In compliance with AB 52, the NAHC was contacted in July 2018, briefly describing the proposed project, attaching a map showing the APE, and asking the NAHC to review its Sacred Lands File (SLF) for any Native American cultural resources that potentially could be affected by the proposed project. A request also was made for the CEQA Tribal Consultation List, which includes the names of Native Americans who may have information or concerns about the APE and have requested notice about projects from CEQA lead agencies.

The NAHC provided a list of 16 Native American representatives from 11 tribal entities who may have interest in or knowledge of the proposed project area. Tribes identified by the NAHC include:

- Barbareno/Ventureno Band of Mission Indians (BVBMI)
- Fernandeno Tataviam Band of Mission Indians (FTBMI)
- Gabrieleno Band of Mission Indians – Kizh Nation (GBMIKN)
- Gabrielino/Tongva Nation (GTN)
- Gabrieleno/Tongva San Gabriel Band of Mission Indians (GTSGBMI)
- Gabrielino-Tongva Tribe (GTT)
- Kern Valley Indian Community (KVIC)
- Kitanemuk & Yowlumne Tejon Indians (KYTI)
- Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians (Santa Ynez)
- Soboba Band of Luiseno Indians (Soboba)
- Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation (formerly San Manuel Band of Mission Indians) (San Manuel)

These individuals were contacted by letter in August 2018. An attempt was made to contact those who had not responded to the letter by phone. As a result of these initial contact efforts, seven responses were received. Four tribes (BVBMI, GBMIKN, San Manuel and Soboba) stated that the APE lies outside of their tribal territory or deferred to other Native American groups. Three tribes (BVBMI, FTBMI, and GTSGBMI) said that the proposed project APE was sensitive for cultural resources and recommended monitoring. No specific resources were identified within the APE as a result of outreach.

In July 2020 an invitation to consult under AB52 was mailed to two tribes (FTBMI and GTSGBMI). FTBMI responded requesting formal consultation under CEQA and a meeting once the Cultural Resources Report, as well as grading and excavation details were made available. No response was received from GTSGBMI at the time.

In December 2021 letters were sent to the initial tribal representatives identified by the NAHC in 2018 to provide them with an update on the status of the project in support of AB52 consultation efforts. As a result of these re-notification letters, Santa Ynez requested formal consultation, two representatives (BVBMI and Santa Ynez) requested Native American monitoring, and one tribe (San Manuel) indicated that the project is outside of the tribe's ancestral territory, and they would not request consulting party status.

Between April 18 and May 3, 2023, representatives identified by the NAHC were provided with an update on the status of the project and an opportunity to review the Extended Phase I (XPI) proposal for the project. As a result, one tribe concluded consultation (Santa Ynez), one tribe deferred consultation to a local tribe (BVBMI), one tribe (San Manuel) requested the opportunity to consult on placement of environmentally sensitive areas, should they be needed, and one tribe (FTBMI) indicated they were interested in providing Native American monitoring for future work. The FTBMI provided a monitor for fieldwork in support of the XPI testing in August and September 2023.

As discussed in Section 2.2.12 above, the ASR (AECOM 2023g) determined that no precontact archaeological resources have been previously recorded in the APE. In addition, the ASR (AECOM 2023g) and XPI investigation (AECOM 2023) determined that the project does exhibit archaeological sensitivity but the potential to encounter intact archaeological deposits is low. No tribal cultural resources were identified within the APE as a result of tribal consultation, though the APE does exhibit sensitivity for tribal cultural resources. AMM CR-1 and CR-2 would further reduce the potential for impacts to archaeological or tribal cultural resources during construction. In addition, AMM CR-3 would further reduce the potential for the disturbance of human remains and provides guidance in the event that any human remains are discovered during construction. Based on the consultation and research listed above, as well as the AMMs, impacts would be less than significant with mitigation.

UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

Would the project:	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less-Than-Significant Impact 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?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?	☐	☐	☒	☐
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?	☐	☐	☒	☐
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??	☐	☐	☒	☐
e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	☐	☐	☒	☐

CEQA Significance Determinations for Utilities and Service Systems

a) <u>Less than Significant</u>

As discussed in Section 2.2.9 above, the proposed project would require the relocation of several utilities in the proposed project area. Relocation of utilities would include telecommunication, natural gas, wastewater, electrical, and oil facilities. Additionally, stormwater systems would be added and extended to accommodate for the roadway widening. Utility relocations would not exceed a maximum depth of 30 feet and would not go outside of the footprint of the existing ROW. The relocation of utilities would result in localized construction impacts; however, impacts would be less than significant.

b, c, d, e) <u>Less Than Significant</u>

The proposed project would not include new development or uses than what currently exists and that would require water supplies. The proposed project would add additional impervious area, which could contribute to added runoff and intensity as described in Section 2.3 above. The proposed drainage system would be designed to collect the runoff and connect to the existing drainage system. The proposed project would not generate solid waste, other than during construction. Construction BMPs would ensure that waste generation does not exceed state or local standards, the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals. The proposed project would also comply with all federal, state, and

local statutes and regulations related to solid waste. Therefore, there would be a less than significant impact.

WILDFIRE

If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less-Than-Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☒	☐	☐
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

CEQA Significance Determinations for Wildfire

a) <u>Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</u>

Current traffic demand in the proposed project area meets or exceeds roadway capacity for many arterial roadways. The Old Road and adjacent roadway system in the proposed project area is heavily used and characterized by roadway congestion. Operationally, the proposed project improvements would enhance safety and increase capacity on roadways to provide for emergency overflow.

The proposed project will not cause any permanent road closures but will cause temporary lane closures during construction. However, as discussed in Section 2.2.9, AMMs COM-2 through COM-4 would be implemented to reduce or eliminate temporary effects on traffic and emergency services. Additionally, although the proposed project area is susceptible to wildfire risks, standard construction practices and regulatory safety compliance measures would reduce the risks to less than significant with mitigation.

b, c, d) <u>No Impact</u>

The proposed project area consists of an existing roadway and would remain a roadway post-implementation with improved multi-modal facilities. Improvements would not result in installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure that may exacerbate fire risk as proposed improvements are not anticipated to be flammable. The proposed project site is not located in a landslide area or adjacent to hillside areas that would be subject to instability or increased runoff as result of a wildfire. No impact would occur.

MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Does the project have:	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less-Than-Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
a) 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?	☐	☒	☐	☐
b) Impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	☐	☒	☐	☐

CEQA Significance Determinations for Mandatory Findings of Significance

a) Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated

As stated above in the previous CEQA Checklist items, impacts due to the proposed project would be avoided and minimized through a variety of measures. Impacts to special-status wildlife species would be avoided and minimized through implementation of AMMs GEN-1 through GEN-14, and species-specific AMMs: UTS-1, ARTO-1 through ARTO-4, WPT-1 and WPT-2, RIP-1 through RIP-3, and BAT-1 through BAT-3. Impacts to listed wildlife species would be avoided and minimized through implementation of AMMs GEN-1 through GEN-14, and species-specific AMMs: UTS-1, ARTO-1 through ARTO-4, WPT-1 and WPT-2, RIP-1 through RIP-3, BAT-1 through BAT-3, and LION-1 through LION-2. In addition, impacts to plant species and USACE, RWQCB, and CDFW jurisdictional areas would be avoided and minimized with implementation of AMMs VEG-1 through VEG-5 and OAK-1 through OAK-7. With implementation of the AMMs discussed above, impacts to habitat, plant, and wildlife species would be less than significant.

Further, the Archaeological Survey Report (AECOM 2023n) determined that no archaeological resources have been previously recorded in the APE. AMM CR-1 would further reduce the potential for impacts to archaeological resources during construction. In addition, AMM CR-2 would further reduce the potential for the disturbance of human remains and provides guidance in the event that any human remains are discovered during construction. With implementation of the AMMs discussed above, impacts to important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory would be less than significant.

b) Less Than Significant

The proposed project has been evaluated for cumulative impacts and is found to not contribute to a cumulatively considerable impact, as detailed in Section 2.4.7. Potential cumulative impacts to relocations and real property acquisition were studied, however, it was determined that the project would not lead to cumulatively considerable impacts in conjunction with the related projects listed in Table 2-59. Therefore, the impact would be less than significant.

c) Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated

Project construction could cause temporary effects on human beings, including traffic delays and localized noise. However, these impacts would be temporary, and lessened by the AMMs discussed above. Therefore, with implementation of the AMMs discussed above, impacts would be less than significant.

3.2 Wildfire

3.2.1.1 Regulatory Setting

SB 1241 required the Office of Planning and Research, Natural Resources Agency, and California Caltrans of Forestry and Fire Protection to develop amendments to the “CEQA Checklist” for the inclusion of questions related to fire hazard impacts for projects located on lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones (VHFHSZs). The 2018 updates to the CEQA Guidelines expanded the thresholds to include projects “near” these VHFHSZs.

3.2.1.2 Affected Environment

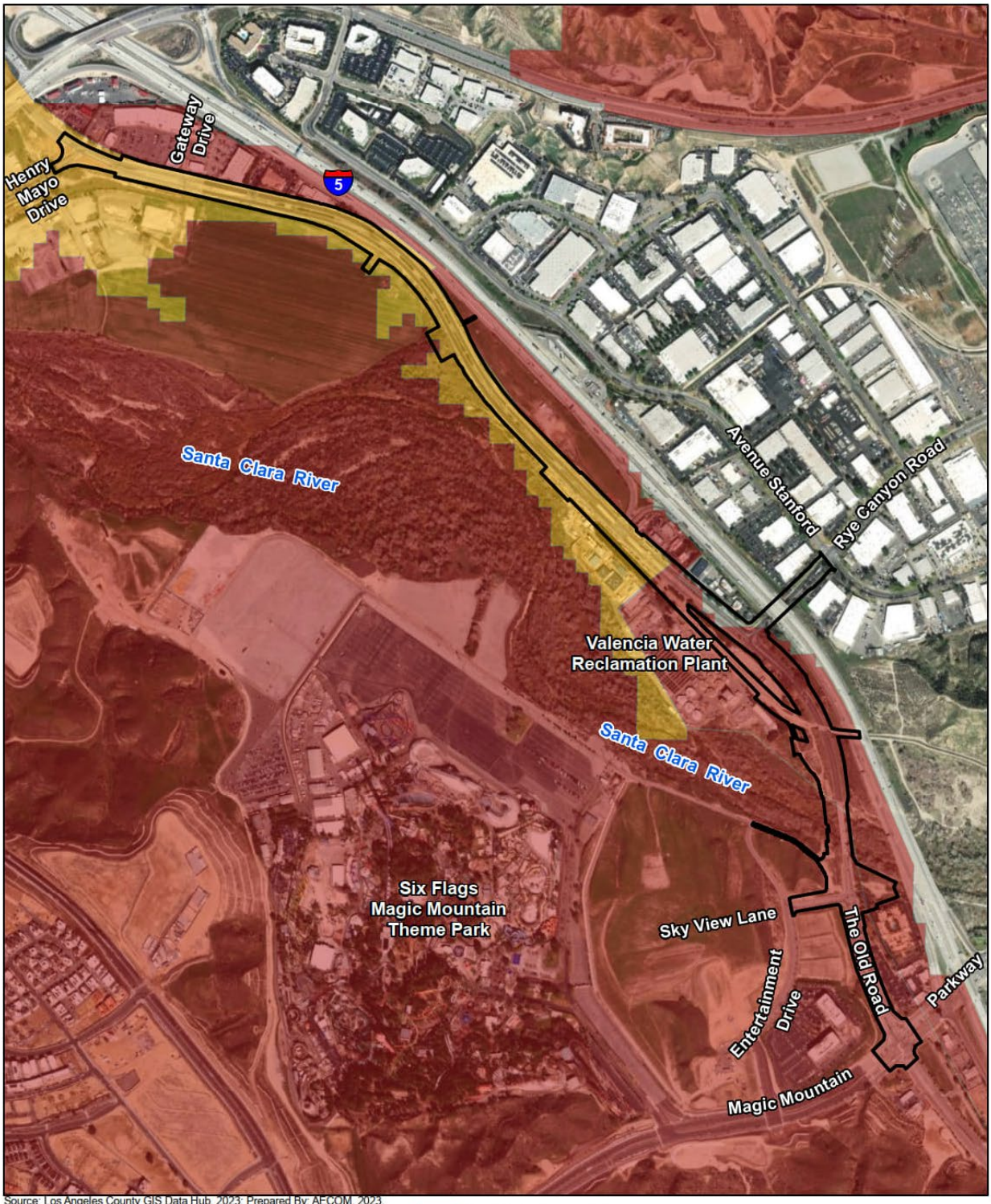
Fire protection in the Santa Clarita Valley is provided by Los Angeles County Fire Caltrans and U.S. Forest Service. Fire Caltrans has classified 80 to 90% of the planning area as a VHFHSZ. Portions of Newhall and Canyon Country, areas surrounding San Canyon, portions of Pico Canyon, Placerita Canyon, Hasley Canyon, Whites Canyon, Bouquet Canyon and all areas at the interface between native vegetation with urban development are prone to wildland fire. The area on the southern side of The OId Road is characterized primarily by undeveloped land. The surrounding areas include Six Flags Magic Mountain Amusement Park, I-5 to the north, Valencia Water Reclamation Plant, and commercial use areas. The developed areas around the proposed project site have a low potential for providing fuel for wildfires. However, the undeveloped land adjacent to the proposed project site contains vegetation and fuel sources that have some potential to result in wildfire ignitions and the uncontrolled spread of wildfires. The majority of proposed project is located within a VHFHSZ in State Responsibility Area in Los Angeles County (LACDRP 2012).Only the southernmost portion of the proposed project, near the intersection of The Old Road and Rye Canyon Road, is located in Local Responsibility Area. Figure 18 shows the location of the proposed project within the VHFHSZ.

The County of Los Angeles designates disaster routes within the County, including within the City. In the event of an emergency, these routes would be utilized to evacuate the area. Within the proposed project area, The Old Road and Henry Mayo Drive are designated as primary disaster routes.

3.2.1.3 Environmental Consequences

No-Build Alternative

This alternative would not result in the construction of any of the proposed improvements and, therefore, would not result in an increase in regional roadway capacity and enhancement of safety through the provision of emergency overflow. Therefore, conditions would remain the same and there would be no impacts related to wildfire.



Source: Los Angeles County GIS Data Hub, 2023; Prepared By: AECOM, 2023.

0 500 1,000 Feet

Very High Severity Zone
High Severity Zone
Project Limit

Figure 17
Fire Hazard Severity Zone Map

Build Alternative

Construction

The proposed project would not cause any permanent road closures, however, temporary lane closures during construction would occur. LACPW and Caltrans would work to prepare a traffic notification procedure for the proposed project and coordinate with local jurisdictions and public transportation providers through the final design of the proposed project to identify emergency service routes to be maintained during construction. The construction of the proposed project would not impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. Certain construction activities, such as the use of equipment has the potential to accidently ignite fire. This risk would be managed by the implementation of standard construction practices and regulatory compliance measures related to safeguards for construction, alteration, and demolition activities in order to provide reasonable safety to life and property from fire during such activities. These practices include prohibiting smoking unless in approved areas, requiring permits and implementing a fire watch for hot work construction activities, and implementing partitions to prevent the passage of sparks, slag, and heat from the hot work area.

Operation

The proposed project does not include a proposed change in land use, the development of new habitable structures, or modifications to landscaping that would increase fire risk. The widening of roadways would benefit mobility and evacuation abilities in the area. Additionally, the proposed project site is not located in a landslide area or adjacent to hillside areas that would be subject to instability or increased runoff as result of a wildfire. Current traffic demand in the proposed project area meets or exceeds roadway capacity for many arterial roadways. The Old Road and adjacent roadway system; in the proposed project area is heavily used and characterized by roadway congestion. Operationally, the proposed project improvements would enhance safety and increase capacity on roadways to provide for emergency overflow.

Therefore, the operation of the proposed project would not exacerbate wildfire risks or result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment.

3.2.1.4 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

The Build Alternative would not result in adverse effects related to wildfire; therefore, no AMMs are required.

3.3 Climate Change

Climate change refers to long-term changes in temperature, precipitation, wind patterns, and other elements of the Earth's climate system. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, established by the United Nations and World Meteorological Organization in 1988, is devoted to GHG emissions reduction and climate change research and policy. Climate change in the past has generally occurred gradually over millennia, or more suddenly in response to cataclysmic natural disruptions. The research of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and other scientists over recent decades, however, has unequivocally attributed an accelerated rate of climatological changes over the past 150 years to GHG emissions generated from the production and use of fossil fuels.

Human activities generate GHGs consisting primarily of CO_2, methane (CH4), nitrous oxide (N_2O), tetrafluoromethane, hexafluoroethane, sulfur hexafluoride, and various hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs). CO_2 is the most abundant GHG; while it is a naturally occurring and necessary component of Earth’s atmosphere, fossil-fuel combustion is the main source of additional, human-generated CO_2 that is the main driver of climate change. In the U.S. and specifically California, transportation is the largest source of GHG emissions, mostly CO_2.

The impacts of climate change are already being observed in the form of sea-level rise, drought, more intense heat, extended and severe fire seasons, and historic flooding from changing storm patterns. Both mitigation and adaptation strategies are necessary to address these impacts. The most important mitigation strategy is to reduce GHG emissions. In the context of climate change (as distinct from CEQA and NEPA), “mitigation” involves actions to reduce GHG emissions or to enhance the “sinks” that store them (such as forests and soils) to lessen adverse impacts. “Adaptation” is planning for and responding to impacts to reduce vulnerability to harm, such as by adjusting transportation design standards to withstand more intense storms, heat, and higher sea levels. This analysis will include a discussion of both in the context of this transportation project.

Regulatory Setting

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

Federal

To date, no national standards have been established for nationwide mobile-source GHG reduction targets, nor have any regulations or legislation been enacted specifically to address climate change and GHG emissions reduction at the project level.

NEPA (42 USC Part 4332) requires federal agencies to assess the environmental effects of their proposed actions prior to making a decision on the action or project.

FHWA recognizes the threats that extreme weather, sea-level change, and other changes in environmental conditions pose to valuable transportation infrastructure and those who depend on it. FHWA, therefore, supports a sustainability approach that assesses vulnerability to climate risks and incorporates resilience into planning, asset management, project development and design, and operations and maintenance practices (FHWA 2022). This approach encourages planning for sustainable highways by addressing climate risks while balancing environmental, economic, and social values— “the triple bottom line of sustainability” (FHWA n.d.). Program

and project elements that foster sustainability and resilience also support economic vitality and global efficiency, increase safety and mobility, enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, and improve the quality of life.

The federal government has taken steps to improve fuel economy and energy efficiency to address climate change and its associated effects. The most important of these was the Energy Policy and Conservation Act of 1975 (42 USC Section 6201) as amended by the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007; and Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) Standards. This act established fuel economy standards for on-road motor vehicles sold in the U.S. The U.S. Caltrans of Transportation's National Highway Traffic and Safety Administration (NHTSA) sets and enforces the CAFE standards based on each manufacturer's average fuel economy for the portion of its vehicles produced for sale in the U.S. U.S. EPA calculates average fuel economy levels for manufacturers, and also sets related GHG emissions standards under the Clean Air Act. Raising CAFE standards leads automakers to create a more fuel-efficient fleet, which improves our nation's energy security, saves consumers money at the pump, and reduces GHG emissions (USDOT 2014).

U.S. EPA published a final rulemaking on December 30, 2021, that raised federal GHG emissions standards for passenger cars and light trucks for model years 2023 through 2026, increasing in stringency each year. The updated GHG emissions standards will avoid more than 3 billion tons of GHG emissions through 2050. In April 2022, NHTSA announced corresponding new fuel economy standards for model years 2024 through 2026, which will reduce fuel use by more than 200 billion gallons through 2050 compared to the old standards and reduce fuel costs for drivers (U.S. EPA 2022a; NHTSA 2022).

State

California has been innovative and proactive in addressing GHG emissions and climate change by passing multiple Senate and Assembly bills and EOs including, but not limited to, the following:

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

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

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

EO B-30-15 (April 2015): This order establishes an interim statewide GHG emission reduction target of 40% below 1990 levels by 2030 to ensure California meets its target of reducing GHG emissions to 80% below 1990 levels by 2050. It further orders all state agencies with jurisdiction

over sources of GHG emissions to implement measures, pursuant to statutory authority, to achieve reductions of GHG emissions to meet the 2030 and 2050 GHG emissions reductions targets. It also directs ARB to update the Climate Change Scoping Plan to express the 2030 target in terms of million metric tons (MMT) of CO_2 equivalent (CO_2e) ($MMTCO_2e$). GHGs differ in how much heat each traps in the atmosphere, called global warming potential, or GWP. CO_2 is the most important GHG, so amounts of other gases are expressed relative to CO_2, using metric CO_2e. The GWP of CO_2 is assigned a value of 1, and the GWP of other gases is assessed as multiples of CO_2. Finally, it requires the Natural Resources Agency to update the state's climate adaptation strategy, Safeguarding California, every 3 years, and to ensure that its provisions are fully implemented.

SB 32, Chapter 249, 2016: This bill codifies the GHG reduction targets established in EO B-30-15 to achieve a mid-range goal of 40% below 1990 levels by 2030.

SB 1386, Chapter 545, 2016: This bill declares "it to be the policy of the state that the protection and management of natural and working lands … is an important strategy in meeting the state's greenhouse gas reduction goals, and would require all state agencies, Caltrans, boards, and commissions to consider this policy when revising, adopting, or establishing policies, regulations, expenditures, or grant criteria relating to the protection and management of natural and working lands."

SB 743, Chapter 386 (September 2013): This bill changes the metric of consideration for transportation impacts pursuant to CEQA from a focus on automobile delay to alternative methods focused on vehicle miles traveled, to promote the state's goals of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and traffic related air pollution and promoting multimodal transportation while balancing the needs of congestion management and safety.

SB 150, Chapter 150, 2017, Regional Transportation Plans: This bill requires ARB to prepare a report that assesses progress made by each metropolitan planning organization in meeting their established regional greenhouse gas emission reduction targets.

EO B-55-18 (September 2018) sets a new statewide goal to achieve and maintain carbon neutrality no later than 2045. This goal is in addition to existing statewide targets of reducing GHG emissions.

AB 1279, Chapter 337, 2022, The California Climate Crisis Act: This bill mandates carbon neutrality by 2045 and establishes an emissions reduction target of 85% below 1990 level as part of that goal. This bill solidifies a goal included in EO B-55-18. It requires ARB to work with relevant state agencies to ensure that updates to the scoping plan identify and recommend measures to achieve these policy goals and to identify and implement a variety of policies and strategies that enable CO_2 removal solutions and carbon capture, utilization, and storage technologies in California, as specified.

Environmental Setting

The proposed project area lies within the western portion of Los Angeles County with a well-developed road and street network. The proposed project area is characterized by commercial buildings, the Los Angeles County Sanitation District No. 32 Treatment Plant, and rolling terrain. The land use within the proposed project corridor is primarily urban commercial, with urban residential areas to the northwest and southwest of the proposed project area. The Old Road and adjacent roadway system in the proposed project area is heavily used and characterized by roadway congestion. The Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) by Los Angeles County

Metropolitan Transportation Authority guides transportation development in the proposed project area. The Unincorporated Los Angeles County Community Climate Action Plan 2020 addresses GHGs in the proposed project area.

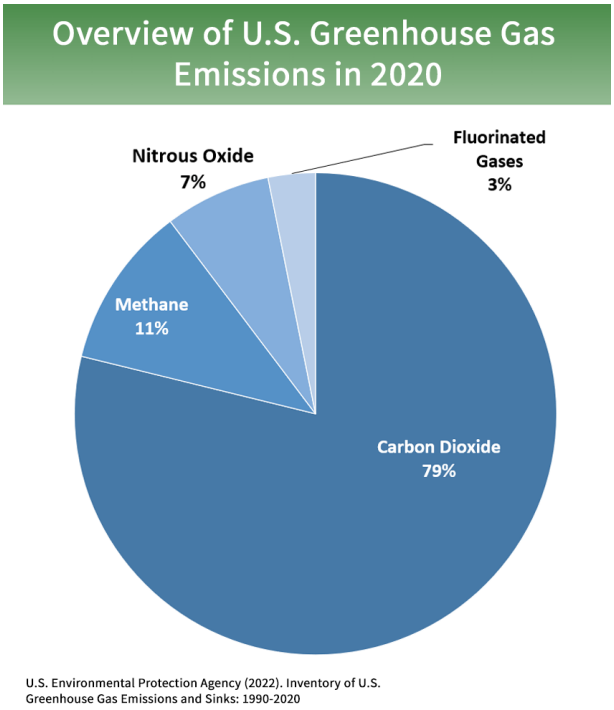
GHG Inventories

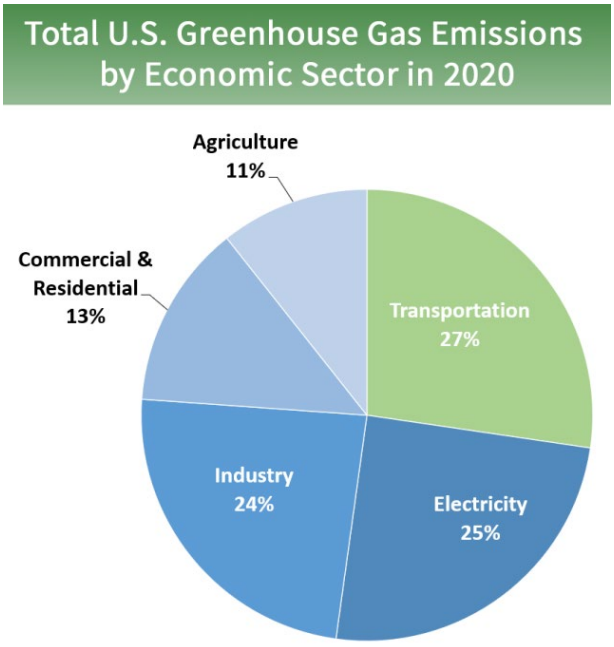
A GHG emissions inventory estimates the amount of GHGs discharged into the atmosphere by specific sources over a period of time. Tracking annual GHG emissions allows countries, states, and smaller jurisdictions to understand how emissions are changing and what actions may be needed to attain emission reduction goals. U.S. EPA is responsible for documenting GHG emissions nationwide, and ARB does so for the state, as required by State Health and Safety Code Section 39607.4. Cities and other local jurisdictions may also conduct local GHG inventories to inform their GHG reduction or climate action plans.

National GHG Inventory

The annual GHG inventory submitted by U.S. EPA to the United Nations provides a comprehensive accounting of all human-produced sources of GHGs in the U.S. Total GHG emissions from all sectors in 2020 were 5,222 MMT, factoring in deductions for carbon sequestration in the land sector. Of these, 79% were CO_2, 11% were CH_4, and 7% were N_2O; the balance consisted of fluorinated gases. Total GHGs in 2020 decreased by 21% from 2005 levels and 11% from 2019. The change from 2019 resulted primarily from less demand in the transportation sector during the COVID-19 pandemic. The transportation sector was responsible for 27% of total U.S. GHG emissions in 2020, more than any other sector (Figure 19), and for 36% of all CO_2 emissions from fossil fuel combustion. Transportation CO_2 emissions for 2020 decreased 13% from 2019 to 2020, but were 7% higher than transportation CO_2 emissions in 1990 (U.S. EPA 2022b).

Figure 19: U.S. 2020 Greenhouse Gas Emissions





U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (2022). Inventory of U.S. Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Sinks: 1990-2020

STATE GHG INVENTORY

ARB collects GHG emissions data for transportation, electricity, commercial/residential, industrial, agricultural, and waste management sectors each year. It then summarizes and highlights major annual changes and trends to demonstrate the state's progress in meeting its GHG reduction goals. The 2022 edition of the GHG emissions inventory reported emissions trends from 2000 to 2020. Total California GHG emissions in 2020 were 369.2 $MMTCO_2e$, a reduction of 35.3 $MMTCO_2e$ from 2019 and 61.8 $MMTCO_2e$ below the 2020 statewide limit of 431 $MMTCO_2e$. Much of the decrease from 2019 to 2020, however, is likely due to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the transportation sector, during which VMT declined under stay-at-home orders and reductions in goods movement. Nevertheless, transportation remained the largest source of GHG emissions, accounting for 37% of statewide emissions (Figure 20). Including upstream emissions from oil extraction, petroleum refining, and oil pipelines in California, transportation was responsible for about 47% of statewide emissions in 2020; however, those emissions are accounted for in the industrial sector. California's gross domestic product (GDP) and GHG intensity (GHG emissions per unit of GDP) both declined from 2019 to 2020 (Figure 21). It is expected that total GHG emissions will increase as the economy recovers over the next few years (ARB 2022a).

Figure 20: California 2020 Greenhouse Gas Emissions by Scoping Plan Category

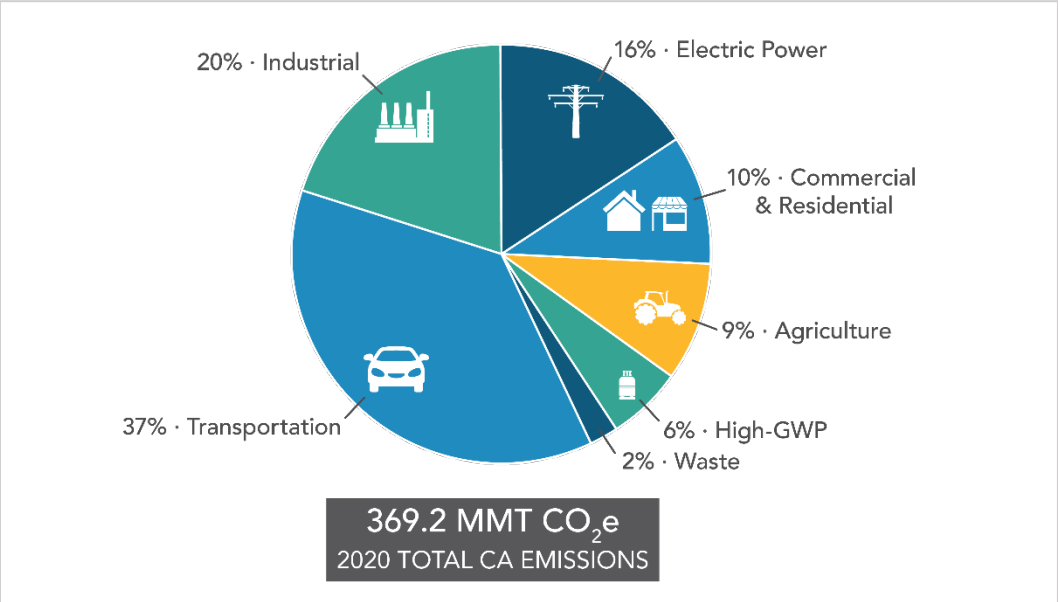
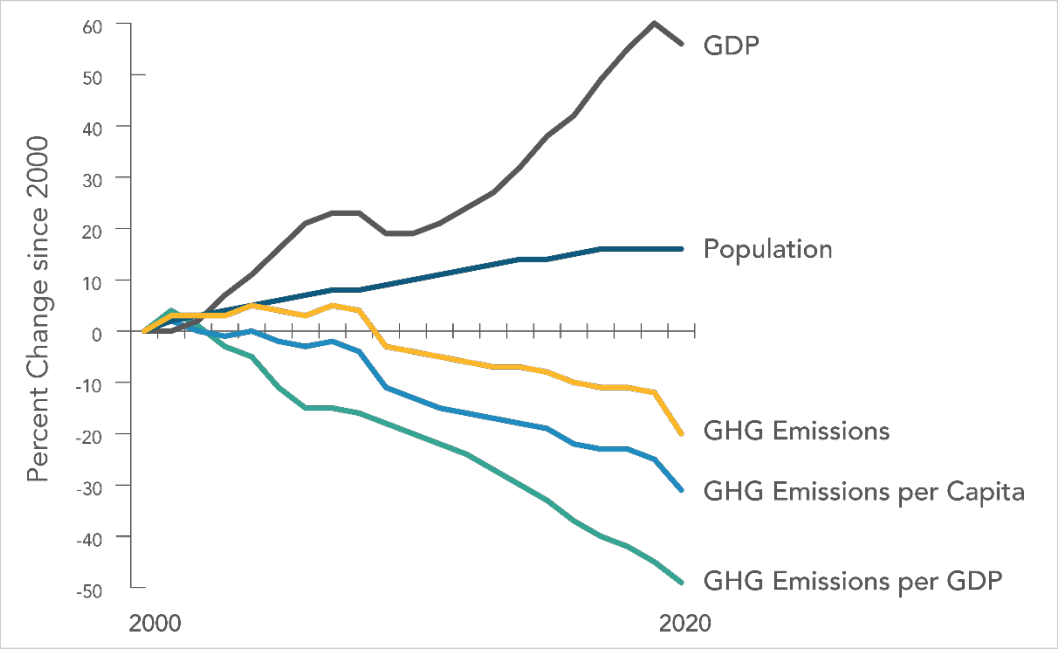


Figure 21: Change in California GDP, Population, and GHG Emissions since 2000



AB 32 required ARB to develop a Scoping Plan that describes the approach California will take to achieve the goal of reducing GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020, and to update it every 5 years. ARB adopted the first scoping plan in 2008. The second updated plan, California's 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan, adopted on December 14, 2017, reflects the 2030 target established in EO B-30-15 and SB 32. The draft 2022 Scoping Plan Update additionally lays out a path to achieving carbon neutrality by 2045 (ARB 2022b).

Regional Plans

ARB sets regional GHG reduction targets for California's 18 MPOs to achieve through planning future projects that will cumulatively achieve those goals, and reporting how they will be met in the RTP/SCS. Targets are set at a percent reduction of passenger vehicle GHG emissions per person from 2005 levels. The proposed project is included in the SCAG Connect SoCal financially constrained RTP and SCAG financially constrained 2023 FTIP. The regional reduction target for SCAG is -19% by 2035 (ARB 2022c).

Table 3-1: Regional and Local Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plans

Title	GHG Reduction Policies or Strategies
County of Los Angeles, Caltrans of Regional Planning Final Unincorporated Los Angeles County Community Climate Action Plan 2020 (adopted August 2015)	• LUT-1: Bicycle Programs and Supporting Facilities • LUT-2: Pedestrian Network • LUT-3: Transit Expansion
Our County, Los Angeles Countywide Sustainability Plan (adopted August 2019)	Strategy 3B: Implement transit-oriented development
Los Angeles County General Plan 2035 (adopted October 2015)	Air Quality Element

PROJECT ANALYSIS

GHG emissions from transportation projects can be divided into those emissions produced during operation and use of the State Highway System (operational emissions) and those emissions produced during construction. The primary GHGs produced by the transportation sector are CO_2, CH_4, N_2O, and HFCs. CO_2 emissions are a product of burning gasoline or diesel fuel in internal combustion engines, along with relatively small amounts of CH_4 and N_2O. A small amount of HFC emissions related to refrigeration is also included in the transportation sector.

The CEQA Guidelines generally address GHG emissions as a cumulative impact due to the global nature of climate change (PRC Section 21083(b)(2)). As the California Supreme Court explained, "because of the global scale of climate change, any one project's contribution is unlikely to be significant by itself." (Cleveland National Forest Foundation v. San Diego Assn. of Governments (2017) 3 Cal.5th 497, 512.) In assessing cumulative impacts, it must be determined if a project's incremental effect is "cumulatively considerable" (CEQA Guidelines Sections 15064(h)(1) and 15130).

To make this determination, the incremental impacts of the proposed project must be compared with the effects of past, current, and probable future projects. Although climate change is ultimately a cumulative impact, not every individual project that emits greenhouse gases must necessarily be found to contribute to a significant cumulative impact on the environment.

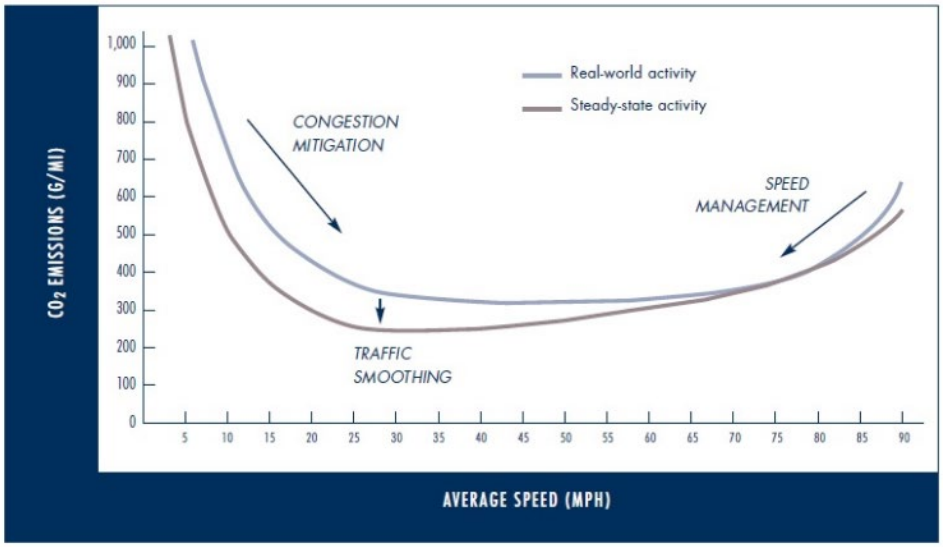
Operational Emissions

CO_2 from fossil fuel combustion is the largest component of U.S. GHG emissions, and transportation is the largest contributor of CO_2. The largest emitters of transportation CO_2 emissions in 2020 were passenger cars (38.5%), freight trucks (26.3%), and light-duty trucks (18.9%). The remainder came from other modes of transportation, including aircraft, ships, boats, and trains, as well as pipelines and lubricants (U.S. EPA 2022b). Because CO_2 emissions represent the greatest percentage of GHG emissions, it has been selected as a proxy for the following analysis of potential climate change impacts.

The highest levels of CO_2 from mobile sources such as automobiles occur at stop-and-go speeds (0 to 25 mph) and speeds over 55 mph; the most severe emissions occur from 0 to 25 mph (Figure 22). To the extent that a project enhances operational efficiency and improves travel times in high-congestion travel corridors, GHG emissions, particularly CO_2, may be reduced, provided that improved travel times do not induce additional VMT.

Four primary strategies can reduce GHG emissions from transportation sources: (1) improving the transportation system and operational efficiencies, (2) reducing travel activity (e.g. vehicle miles travelled), (3) transitioning to lower GHG emitting fuels, and (4) improving vehicle technologies and efficiency. To be most effective, all four strategies should be pursued concurrently.

Figure 22: Possible Use of Traffic Operation Strategies in Reducing On-road CO_2 Emissions



The proposed project is listed in and conforms with the SCAG Connect SoCal financially constrained RTP and the SCAG financially constrained 2023 FTIP. The design concept and scope of the proposed project is consistent with the project description in the SCAG Connect SoCal, 2023 FTIP, and the "open to traffic" assumptions of the SCAG regional emissions analysis. The RTP includes several guiding principles that address land use and transportation investments/strategies. Principles that are consistent with the proposed project include:

- Place high priority for transportation funding in the region on projects and programs that improve mobility, accessibility, reliability and safety, and that preserve the existing transportation system;

- Encourage RTP/SCS investments and strategies that collectively result in reduced non-recurrent congestion and demand for single-occupancy vehicle use, by leveraging new transportation technologies and expanding travel choices; and

- Encourage transportation investments that will result in improved air quality and public health, and reduced GHG emissions.

The Build Alternative widens The Old Road, Sky View Lane, and Rye Canyon Road from four to six lanes, reconstructs The Old Road Bridge over Santa Clara River, constructs a Class IV Bikeway, and extends the Multi-Use Trail to improve multi-modal travel facilities. The proposed project will improve mobility in the area, improve existing traffic operations and accommodate future traffic projections and decrease travel time on the congested roadway system, and result in less pollutant emissions than the No-Build Alternative because of improvements in vehicle delay.

The proposed project would enable the Old Road corridor to maximize productivity through improvements to the capacity of the roadway lanes allowing for more flexibility in traffic movement and higher efficiencies. Table 3-2 summarizes VMT for both the local and regional area for No-Build and Build scenarios in the Open Year (2028) and Design Year (2045). The table shows that the VMT change percentage between No-Build Alternative and Build Alternative are minor (less than ±1%). For open year Build Alternative scenarios, due to the increase in the number of lanes on The Old Road, the volume on The Old Road slightly increases in the local area. However, in the design year, VMT decreases in the local and regional areas. This would be due to improved congestion on alternative routes or more motorists utilizing transit modes of travel. This reduction in VMT shows the proposed project's consistency with the RTP principles focused on reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Table 3-2: VMT Changes for Local Area and Regional Area

Area	Open Year VMT (vehicle miles)			Design Year VMT (vehicle miles)		
	No-Build	Build	Change (%)	No-Build	Build	Change (%)
Local Area	1,217,386	1,223,760	0.52%	1,654,698	1,652,187	-0.15%
Regional Area	217,849,258	217,729,337	-0.06%	225,893,139	224,856,168	-0.46%

Quantitative Analysis

The latest CT-EMFAC 2021 and VMT data are utilized in estimating GHG emissions for the 2022 baseline as well as for all future year alternatives. CT-EMFAC 2021 provides emission

factors for such gases as CO_2, CH4, N2O, and HFCs, which cause greenhouse effect with varying GWPs. The table below provides a summary of GHG emissions for each Alternative in CO_2.

As shown in Table 3-3, the Build Alternative would result in less emissions than the No-Build Alternative and Existing Conditions in the opening year of 2028 because of improvements of traffic operations to be consistent with LACPW highway design speed safety standards and reductions in vehicle delay at study area intersections. In the design/horizon year of 2048, ambient regional growth would result in higher GHG emissions for the Build Alternative than Existing Conditions in 2018, but the magnitude of emissions would be substantially lower than the No-Build Alternative in the same year.

Table 3-3: Modeled Annual CO_2 Emissions and Vehicle Miles Traveled, by Alternative

Alternative	CO_2e Emissions (metric tons/year)	Annual VMT[a]
Existing/Baseline 2022	5,286	16,209,874
Open to Traffic 2028		
No-Build	5,172	18,019,307
Build Alternative	4,941	18,055,345
20-Year Horizon 2048		
No-Build	6,463	24,050,748
Build Alternative	5,519	24,139,736

Source: CT-EMFAC (2021)
[a] Annual VMT values derived from Daily VMT values multiplied by 347, per ARB methodology (ARB 2008: I-19).

ARB developed the EMFAC model to facilitate preparation of statewide and regional mobile source emissions inventories. The model generates emissions rates that can be multiplied by vehicle activity data from all motor vehicles, including passenger cars to heavy-duty trucks, operating on highways, freeways, and local roads in California. EMFAC has a rigorous scientific foundation, has been approved by U.S. EPA, and has been vetted through multiple stakeholder reviews. Caltrans developed CT-EMFAC to apply project-specific factors to ARB's model.

EMFAC's GHG emission rates are based on tailpipe emissions test data and the model does not account for factors such as the rate of acceleration and vehicle aerodynamics, which influence the amount of emissions generated by a vehicle. GHG emissions quantified using CT-EMFAC are, therefore, estimates and may not reflect actual on-road emissions. Furthermore, the model does not account for induced travel. Nevertheless, modeling GHG estimates with EMFAC or CT-EMFAC remains the most precise means of estimating future GHG emissions. While CT-EMFAC is currently the best available tool for calculating GHG emissions from mobile sources, it is important to note that the GHG results are only useful for a comparison of alternatives. Federal CAFE and GHG emissions standards continue to evolve, and models will be updated to account for regulatory changes.

Construction Emissions

Construction GHG emissions would result from material processing and transportation, on-site construction equipment, and traffic delays due to construction. These emissions will be produced at different levels throughout the construction phase; their frequency and occurrence

can be reduced through innovations in plans and specifications and by implementing better traffic management during construction phases.

Use of long-life pavement, improved traffic management plans, and changes in materials can also help offset GHG emissions produced during construction by allowing longer intervals between maintenance and rehabilitation activities.

Construction emissions were estimated for the Build Alternative using detailed equipment inventories and proposed project construction scheduling information provided by LACPW (2022) combined with emissions factors from the EMFAC 2021 and OFFROAD models that are built into the RCEM. Table 3-4 shows construction-related emissions

Table 3-4: Construction-Related Emissions for the Build Alternative.

Phase/Activity	PM_{10} (lbs./day)	$PM_{2.5}$ (lbs./day)	CO (lbs./day)	NO_x (lbs./day)	CO_2 (tons/day)
2024 Construction Activity Emissions					
West Bridge Replacement – Site Prep	11.4	3.2	28.0	33.2	5.0
The Old Road (N) – Clearing/Grubbing	21.3	5.3	26.0	28.3	3.1
The Old Road (N) – Excavation/Grading	22.2	5.7	35.3	56.7	10.2
2025 Construction Activity Emissions					
The Old Road (N) – Excavation/Grading	22.2	5.7	35.3	56.7	10.2
The Old Road (N) – Utilities/Sub-Grade	21.0	5.0	24.3	21.6	3.2
2026 Construction Activity Emissions					
The Old Road (N) – Utilities/Sub-Grade	21.0	5.0	24.3	21.6	3.2
The Old Road (N) – Paving/Restoration	1.1	0.8	24.4	25.2	4.7
West Bridge Replacement – Foundations	11.0	2.9	24.8	21.4	3.3
West Bridge Replacement – Bridge Deck	10.9	2.8	27.4	20.4	3.1
The Old Road (S) – Clearing/Grubbing	21.2	5.2	25.2	24.8	3.1
2027 Construction Activity Emissions					
West Bridge Replacement – Bridge Deck	10.9	2.8	27.4	20.4	3.1
The Old Road (S) – Clearing/Grubbing	21.2	5.2	25.2	24.8	3.1
The Old Road (S) – Excavation/Grading	22.1	5.6	34.3	54.0	10.0
East Bridge Replacement – Site Prep	11.0	2.9	24.5	22.2	3.4
East Bridge Replacement – Foundations	11.0	2.9	29.1	21.8	3.2
The Old Road (S) – Utilities/Sub-Grade	21.0	5.0	23.9	21.6	3.2
2028 Construction Activity Emissions					
The Old Road (S) – Utilities/Sub-Grade	21.0	5.0	23.9	21.6	3.2
East Bridge Replacement – Bridge Deck	10.9	2.8	27.1	20.4	3.1
The Old Road (S) – Paving/Restoration	1.1	0.8	24.1	25.1	4.6
Emissions Analysis					
2024 Maximum Daily Emissions (lbs./day)	32.7	8.5	54.0	61.5	8.1
2025 Maximum Daily Emissions (lbs./day)	22.2	5.7	35.3	56.7	10.2
2026 Maximum Daily Emissions (lbs./day)	32.1	8.0	52.6	46.6	8.0

Phase/Activity	PM_{10} (lbs./day)	$PM_{2.5}$ (lbs./day)	CO (lbs./day)	NO_x (lbs./day)	CO_2 (tons/day)
2027 Maximum Daily Emissions (lbs./day)	33.1	8.5	63.4	76.2	13.4
2028 Maximum Daily Emissions (lbs./day)	31.9	7.8	51.2	45.5	7.7
All Maximum Daily Emissions (lbs./day)	33.1	8.5	63.4	76.2	13.4
Total Build Alternative Emissions (tons)	17.4	4.5	32.9	35.6	11,797.3
Annual Average Emissions (tons)	*3.9*	*1.0*	*7.3*	*7.9*	*2,621.6*

Source: Terry A. Hayes Associates Inc., Road Construction Emissions Model (Version 9.0.1).

All construction contracts include Caltrans Standard Specifications related to air quality. Section 7-1.02A and Section 7 1.02C, Emissions Reduction, require contractors to comply with all laws applicable to the project and to certify they are aware of and will comply with all ARB emission reduction regulations. Section 14-9.02, Air Pollution Control, requires contractors to comply with all air pollution control rules, regulations, ordinances, and statutes. Certain common regulations, such as equipment idling restrictions, that reduce construction vehicle emissions also help reduce GHG emissions.

CEQA Conclusion

While the proposed project would result in GHG emissions during construction, it is anticipated that the proposed project would not result in an increase in operational GHG emissions. The Build Alternative would result in less CO_2 emissions due to improved traffic flow when compared to the No-Build Alternative and Existing Conditions in 2028, and lower CO_2 emissions than the No-Build Alternative in 2048. The proposed project does not conflict with any applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of GHGs. With implementation of construction GHG-reduction measures, the impact would be less than significant.

Caltrans is firmly committed to implementing measures to help reduce GHG emissions. These measures are outlined in the following section.

GREENHOUSE GAS REDUCTION STRATEGIES

Statewide Efforts

In response to AB 32, California is implementing measures to achieve emission reductions of GHGs that cause climate change. Climate change programs in California are effectively reducing GHG emissions from all sectors of the economy. These programs include regulations, market programs, and incentives that will transform transportation, industry, fuels, and other sectors, to take California into a sustainable, low-carbon and cleaner future, while maintaining a robust economy (ARB 2022d).

Major sectors of the California economy, including transportation, will need to reduce emissions to meet 2030 and 2050 GHG emissions targets. The Governor's Office of Planning and Research identified five sustainability pillars in a 2015 report: (1) increasing the share of renewable energy in the State's energy mix to at least 50% by 2030; (2) reducing petroleum use by up to 50% by 2030; (3) increasing the energy efficiency of existing buildings by 50% by 2030; (4) reducing emissions of short-lived climate pollutants; and (5) stewarding natural resources, including forests, working lands, and wetlands, to ensure that they store carbon, are resilient,

and enhance other environmental benefits (OPR 2015). OPR later added strategies related to achieving statewide carbon neutrality by 2045 in accordance with EO B-55-18 and AB 1279 (OPR 2022).

The transportation sector is integral to the people and economy of California. To achieve GHG emission reduction goals, it is vital that the state build on past successes in reducing criteria and toxic air pollutants from transportation and goods movement. GHG emission reductions will come from cleaner vehicle technologies, lower-carbon fuels, and reduction of VMT. Reducing today's petroleum use in cars and trucks by 50% is a key state goal for reducing GHG emissions by 2030 (California Environmental Protection Agency 2015).

In addition, SB 1386 (Wolk 2016) established as state policy the protection and management of natural and working lands and requires state agencies to consider that policy in their own decision making. Trees and vegetation on forests, rangelands, farms, and wetlands remove CO_2 from the atmosphere through biological processes and sequester the carbon in above- and below-ground matter.

Subsequently, Governor Gavin Newsom issued EO N-82-20 to combat the crises in climate change and biodiversity. It instructs state agencies to use existing authorities and resources to identify and implement near- and long-term actions to accelerate natural removal of carbon and build climate resilience in our forests, wetlands, urban greenspaces, agricultural soils, and land conservation activities in ways that serve all communities and in particular low-income, disadvantaged, and vulnerable communities. To support this order, the California Natural Resources Agency (2022a) released Natural and Working Lands Climate Smart Strategy, with a focus on nature-based solutions.

Caltrans Activities

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

CLIMATE ACTION PLAN FOR TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE

The California Action Plan for Transportation Infrastructure (CAPTI) builds on EOs signed by Governor Newsom in 2019 and 2020 targeted at reducing GHG emissions in transportation, which account for more than 40% of all polluting emissions, to reach the state's climate goals. Under CAPTI, where feasible and within existing funding program structures, the state will invest discretionary transportation funds in sustainable infrastructure projects that align with its climate, health, and social equity goals (California State Transportation Agency 2021).

CALIFORNIA TRANSPORTATION PLAN

The *California Transportation Plan* (CTP) is a statewide, long-range transportation plan to meet California' future mobility needs and reduce GHG emissions. It serves as an umbrella document for all the other statewide transportation planning documents. The CTP 2050 presents a vision of a safe, resilient, and universally accessible transportation system that supports vibrant communities, advances racial and economic justice, and improves public and environmental health. The plan's climate goal is to achieve statewide GHG emissions reduction targets and increase resilience to climate change. It demonstrates how GHG emissions from the

transportation sector can be reduced through advancements in clean fuel technologies; continued shifts toward active travel, transit, and shared mobility; more efficient land use and development practices; and continued shifts to telework (Caltrans 2021a).

CALTRANS STRATEGIC PLAN

The Caltrans *2020–2024 Strategic Plan* includes goals of stewardship, climate action, and equity. Climate action strategies include developing and implementing a Caltrans Climate Action Plan; a robust program of climate action education, training, and outreach; partnership and collaboration; a VMT monitoring and reduction program; and engaging with the most vulnerable communities in developing and implementing Caltrans climate action activities (Caltrans 2021b).

CALTRANS POLICY DIRECTIVES AND OTHER INITIATIVES

Caltrans Director's Policy 30 (DP-30) Climate Change (June 22, 2012) established a Caltrans policy to ensure coordinated efforts to incorporate climate change into Caltrans decisions and activities. Caltrans's *Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Mitigation Report* (Caltrans 2020) provides a comprehensive overview of Caltrans's emissions. The report documents and evaluates current Caltrans procedures and activities that track and reduce GHG emissions and identifies additional opportunities for further reducing GHG emissions from Caltrans-controlled emission sources, in support of Caltrans and state goals.

Project-Level GHG Reduction Strategies

The following measures will also be implemented in the proposed project to reduce GHG emissions and potential climate change impacts from the proposed project. Most of the construction impacts to air quality are short-term in duration and, therefore, will not result in long-term adverse conditions. Implementation of the following measures, some of which may also be required for other purposes such as storm water pollution control will reduce any air quality impacts resulting from construction activities.

- The construction contractor must comply with LACPW Special Provisions and Procedures, which specifically require compliance by the contractor with all applicable laws and regulations related to air quality, including air pollution control district and air quality management district regulations and local ordinances.

- Construction equipment and vehicles will be properly tuned and maintained. All construction equipment will use low sulfur fuel as required by Title 17, CCR, Section 93114.

- The construction contractor must comply with SCAQMD rules, including Rule 401 (Visible Emissions), Rule 402 (Nuisance), Rule 403 (Fugitive Dust), and Rule 1403 (Asbestos Emissions from Demolition/Renovation Activities).

- Diesel-powered off-road equipment will limit idling in accordance with ARB "Regulation for In-Use Off-Road Diesel-Fueled Fleets" (Title 13, CCR, Section 2449) and Approved Amendments.

- Diesel-powered on-road vehicles and trucks will limit idling in accordance with ARB "Airborne Toxic Control Measure to Limit Diesel-Fueled Commercial Motor Vehicle Idling" (Title 13, CCR, Section 2485)."

No AMMs are needed to reduce operational air quality impacts or GHG emissions. The proposed project is not anticipated to cause or contribute to any new violation of the state and federal standards of the criteria pollutants.

ADAPTATION

Reducing GHG emissions is only one part of an approach to addressing climate change. Caltrans must plan for the effects of climate change on the state's transportation infrastructure and strengthen or protect the facilities from damage. Climate change is expected to produce increased variability in precipitation, rising temperatures, rising sea levels, variability in storm surges and their intensity, and in the frequency and intensity of wildfires. Flooding and erosion can damage or wash out roads; longer periods of intense heat can buckle pavement and railroad tracks; storm surges combined with a rising sea level can inundate highways. Wildfire can directly burn facilities and indirectly cause damage when rain falls on denuded slopes that landslide after a fire. Effects will vary by location and may, in the most extreme cases, require that a facility be relocated or redesigned. Accordingly, Caltrans must consider these types of climate stressors in how highways are planned, designed, built, operated, and maintained.

Federal Efforts

Under NEPA Assignment, Caltrans is obligated to comply with all applicable federal environmental laws and FHWA NEPA regulations, policies, and guidance.

The *Fourth National Climate Assessment*, published in 2018, presents the foundational science and the "human welfare, societal, and environmental elements of climate change and variability for 10 regions and 18 national topics, with particular attention paid to observed and projected risks, impacts, consideration of risk reduction, and implications under different mitigation pathways."

The USDOT Policy Statement on Climate Adaptation in June 2011 committed the federal Caltrans of Transportation to "integrate consideration of climate change impacts and adaptation into the planning, operations, policies, and programs of USDOT in order to ensure that taxpayer resources are invested wisely, and that transportation infrastructure, services and operations remain effective in current and future climate conditions" (USDOT 2011). The USDOT Climate Action Plan of August 2021 followed up with a statement of policy to "accelerate reductions in greenhouse gas emissions from the transportation sector and make our transportation infrastructure more climate change resilient now and in the future," following this set of guiding principles (USDOT 2021):

- Use best-available science,
- Prioritize the most vulnerable,
- Preserve ecosystems,
- Build community relationships, and
- Engage globally.

USDOT developed its climate action plan pursuant to the federal EO 14008, *Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad* (January 27, 2021). EO 14008 recognized the threats of climate change to national security and ordered federal government agencies to prioritize actions on climate adaptation and resilience in their programs and investments (White House 2021).

FHWA Order 5520 (Transportation System Preparedness and Resilience to Climate Change and Extreme Weather Events, December 15, 2014) established FHWA policy to strive to identify the risks of climate change and extreme weather events to current and planned transportation systems. FHWA has developed guidance and tools for transportation planning that foster resilience to climate effects and sustainability at the federal, state, and local levels (FHWA 2019).

State Efforts

Climate change adaptation for transportation infrastructure involves long-term planning and risk management to address vulnerabilities in the transportation system. A number of state policies and tools have been developed to guide adaptation efforts.

California's Fourth Climate Change Assessment (Fourth Assessment) (2018) is the state's effort to "translate the state of climate science into useful information for action." It provides information that will help decision makers across sectors and at state, regional, and local scales protect and build the resilience of the state's people, infrastructure, natural systems, working lands, and waters. The state's approach recognizes that the consequences of climate change occur at the intersections of people, nature, and infrastructure. The Fourth Assessment reports that if no measures are taken to reduce GHG emissions by 2021 or sooner, the state is projected to experience a 2.7 to 8.8 degrees Fahrenheit increase in average annual maximum daily temperatures, with impacts on agriculture, energy demand, natural systems, and public health; a two-thirds decline in water supply from snowpack and water shortages that will impact agricultural production; a 77% increase in average area burned by wildfire, with consequences for forest health and communities; and large-scale erosion of up to 67% of Southern California beaches and inundation of billions of dollars' worth of residential and commercial buildings due to sea level rise (State of California 2018).

Sea-level rise is a particular concern for transportation infrastructure in the coastal zone. Major urban airports will be at risk of flooding from sea-level rise combined with storm surge as early as 2040; San Francisco airport is already at risk. Miles of coastal highways vulnerable to flooding in a 100-year storm event will triple to 370 by 2100, and 3,750 miles will be exposed to temporary flooding. The Fourth Assessment's findings highlight the need for proactive action to address these current and future impacts of climate change.

In 2008, then-governor Arnold Schwarzenegger recognized the need when he issued EO S-13-08, focused on sea-level rise. Technical reports on the latest sea level rise science were first published in 2010 and updated in 2013 and 2017. The 2017 projections of sea-level rise and new understanding of processes and potential impacts in California were incorporated into the *State of California Sea-Level Rise Guidance Update* in 2018. This EO also gave rise to the *California Climate Adaptation Strategy* (2009), updated in 2014 as *Safeguarding California: Reducing Climate Risk* (Safeguarding California Plan), which addressed the full range of climate change impacts and recommended adaptation strategies. The Safeguarding California Plan was updated in 2018 and again in 2021 as the *California Climate Adaptation Strategy*, incorporating key elements of the latest sector-specific plans such as the *Natural and Working Lands Climate Smart Strategy*, *Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Plan*, *Water Resilience Portfolio,* and the CAPTI (described above). Priorities in the 2021 California Climate Adaptation Strategy include acting in partnership with California Native American Tribes, strengthening protections for climate-vulnerable communities that lack capacity and resources, nature-based climate solutions, use of best available climate science, and partnering and collaboration to best leverage resources (California Natural Resources Agency 2022b).

EO B-30-15, signed in April 2015, requires state agencies to factor climate change into all planning and investment decisions. This EO recognizes that effects of climate change in addition to sea level rise also threaten California's infrastructure. At the direction of EO B-30-15, the Office of Planning and Research published *Planning and Investing for a Resilient California: A Guidebook for State Agencies* in 2017, to encourage a uniform and systematic approach.

AB 2800 (Quirk 2016) created the multidisciplinary Climate-Safe Infrastructure Working Group to help actors throughout the state address the findings of California's Fourth Climate Change Assessment. It released its report, *Paying it Forward: The Path Toward Climate-Safe Infrastructure in California*, in 2018. The report provides guidance to agencies on how to address the challenges of assessing risk in the face of inherent uncertainties still posed by the best available science on climate change. It also examines how state agencies can use infrastructure planning, design, and implementation processes to address the observed and anticipated climate change impacts (Climate Change Infrastructure Working Group 2018).

Caltrans Adaptation Efforts

CALTRANS VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENTS

Caltrans completed climate change vulnerability assessments to identify segments of the State Highway System vulnerable to climate change effects of precipitation, temperature, wildfire, storm surge, and sea level rise.

The climate change data in the assessments were developed in coordination with climate change scientists and experts at federal, state, and regional organizations at the forefront of climate science. The findings of the vulnerability assessments guide analysis of at-risk assets and development of Adaptation Priority Reports as a method to make capital programming decisions to address identified risks.

3.3.1.1.1 Sea Level Rise

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

PRECIPITATION AND FLOODING

As discussed in Section 2.3 above, the proposed project lies within the Santa Clara Watershed. The proposed project site is located within the within FIRM parcels 06037C0805G and 06037C0815G, in Zone X, which is defined by FEMA as an area of minimal flood hazard. A portion of the proposed project, The Old Road Bridge, would be constructed within FEMA's regulatory 100-year base floodplain, within Zone AE (FEMA 2022). The District 7 Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment indicates the potential for a 0.0 to 4.9% increase in 100-year storm precipitation depth in the proposed project vicinity by 2025 and 2085 and 5 to 9.9% by 2055. A number of local geomorphic variables affect how a given precipitation event would affect streamflow, making it difficult to assess potential impacts at a particular location. The Old Road Bridge replacement is anticipated to cause a maximum increase of 6 inches to the FEMA 100-year BFE. Hydraulic Analysis results indicated that BFEs decreased upstream of the proposed bridge compared to existing conditions. Additionally, results showed no rise in BFEs downstream. The corresponding increase in the horizontal extents of the existing base floodplain is maximum of 5 feet in width; occurring predominantly within the floodplains upstream of the I-5 Bridge. The proposed project would reconstruct The Old Road Bridge over

Santa Clara River at an elevation approximately 9 feet higher on the northern end and 15 feet higher on the southern end than the existing bridge to meet County Capital Storm Floodway requirements. The proposed project would also implement temporary construction site BMPs to reduce the amount of pollutants being discharged into receiving water bodies and avoid storing hazardous and non-hazardous materials within the Zone AE floodplain. The new bridge is not likely to be affected by future changes in storm precipitation, and the risk of interrupting traffic flow or emergency vehicles or access on The Old Road is low.

WILDFIRE

The majority of proposed project is located within a VHFHSZ in State Responsibility Area in Los Angeles County (CAL FIRE 2022). The Caltrans Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment for District 7 evaluated roads at risk for future wildfire and determined that I-5, which parallels The Old Road, is a moderate level of concern for wildfire exposure for 2023 and 2055. However, for 2085, the northern portion of I-5 that lies adjacent to The Old Road is a moderate level of concern for wildfire exposure, but the southern portion of I-5 that lies adjacent to the proposed project area is a high level of concern for wildfire exposure (Caltrans 2019b). No portion of The Old Road, Rye Canyon Road, or Sky View Lane are determined to be concerns for wildfire exposure by Caltrans. As discussed in the previous wildfire section of Chapter 3, the proposed project will be constructed in an area prone to wildfire risk. Potential wildfire risk would be managed by the implementation of standard construction practices and regulatory compliance measures related to safeguards for construction. Similarly, the additional lanes as part of the proposed project would act as firebreaks and reduce vegetation that is prone to wildfire. The proposed project would ultimately expand the existing facilities in the proposed project area and would not exacerbate wildfire risks.

TEMPERATURE

Caltrans' Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment for District 7 determined that the average maximum temperature over 7 days is expected to increase by up to 3.9 degrees Fahrenheit around 2025 and 11.9 degrees Fahrenheit towards the end of the century (Caltrans 2019b). These projections are for the ambient air temperature only and don't include additional heat effects, such as those from the Urban Heat Island. As discussed in the Caltrans Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment, pavement design can be altered based on climate change vulnerability. Caltrans divided the state into nine pavement climate regions to help determine the best pavement types for each area. The proposed project lies within the Inland Valley pavement region. Pavement design guidelines would be followed during the construction of the proposed project to ensure impacts related to increasing temperatures are minimized.

Chapter 4 Comments and Coordination

Early and continuing coordination with the general public and public agencies is an essential part of the environmental process. It helps planners determine the necessary scope of environmental documentation and the level of analysis required, and to identify potential impacts and avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures and related environmental requirements. Agency and tribal consultation and public participation for this proposed project have been accomplished through a variety of formal and informal methods, including interagency coordination meetings, public meetings, public notices, Project Development Team meetings, correspondence with other interested parties. This chapter summarizes the results of Caltrans's efforts to fully identify, address, and resolve project-related issues through early and continuing coordination.

Scoping Process

The formal scoping period was initiated with the preparation and distribution of a Notice of Preparation (NOP) (Appendix E). A NOP is required under Section 15082 of the CEQA Guidelines and is used to notify responsible agencies, trustee agencies, federal agencies, and the public that the lead agency intends to prepare an EIR for a project. The NOP was posted at the State Clearinghouse No. 2023030209 on March 6, 2023, and circulated to the public agencies responsible for environmental resources affected by the proposed project.

LACPW held a virtual scoping meeting for the proposed project on March 16, 2023, at 6 p.m. Pacific Standard Time, which could be accessed via a Zoom meeting link or Zoom telephone number. In addition to the publication of the NOP and virtual scoping meeting, the following public notification efforts were conducted:

- A project-specific web presence was established for convenient public access and outreach (https://pw.lacounty.gov/pmd/TheOldRoad-over-SantaClaraRiver/).
- The NOP was made available at Public Works Transportation Planning and Programs Division: 11th floor, 900 South Fremont Avenue, Alhambra, California, 91803.
- A total of 15 copies of the NOP was mailed to appropriate local, state, and federal agencies and elected officials representing the proposed project area.
- LACPW mailed the NOP to 10 tribal governments and applicable agencies.

Consultation and Coordination with Public Agencies

The NOP was circulated to the following agencies:

- CDFW,
- USACE,
- ARB,
- California State Office of Historic Preservation,
- California Caltrans of Toxic Substances,
- SWRCB Division of Drinking Water,
- County of Los Angeles Sanitation Districts,
- Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department,

- NAHC,
- Los Angeles RWQCB,
- SCAG, Inter-Governmental Review,
- South Coast Air Quality Management District – CEQA Review,
- Southern California Regional Rail Authority,
- Los Angeles County Fire Caltrans – Planning Division, and
- Los Angeles County Parks and Recreation.

Comment letters received were the following:

CDFW. CDFW provided recommendations to discuss the need and purpose of the proposed project, design a range of feasible alternatives, and guidance for avoiding and minimizing impacts to sensitive biological resources.

NAHC. NAHC provided recommendations for consultation.

Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts. The Districts provided requests to incorporate its facilities in proposed project plans and address concerns on access to the VWRP and the Multi-Use Trail bisecting the VWRP creating hazards.

Los Angeles County Caltrans of Parks and Recreation. Caltrans provided a copy of the Board of Supervisors-approved Caltrans of Parks and Recreation Trail Plan for the Newhall Land Entrada North subdivision. A request was made to include this information in the document analysis.

SCAG. SCAG provided information resources to facilitate project consistency with applicable plans and strategies, demographic and growth factor statistics for the county, and recommended using the Final Program EIR for Connect SoCal as guidance for mitigation.

The proposed project has completed Interagency Consultation for Transportation Conformity on May 23, 2023. The proposed project was presented to the Transportation Conformity Working Group (TCWG)—comprised of representative members from the USEPA, FTA, FHWA, SCAG, LA Metro, Caltrans (HQ, Districts 7, 8, 9, 12) RCTC, County of Los Angeles, LA County Public Works, Ventura County APCD, OCTA, ARB, South Coast AQMD, and Antelope Valley AQMD. A review of PM Hot Spot Interagency Review Form, was conducted.

Circulation, Review, and Comment on the Draft Environmental Document

Public input on the proposed project will be solicited during the review period for this Draft EIR/EA, which will last a minimum of 45 days. The review period, information about public meetings, and instructions for submitting comments are included on the first page of this document. All formal comments will be addressed and responses published in the Final EIR/EA. After receiving comments from the public and reviewing agencies, a Final EIR/EA will be prepared. Caltrans may prepare additional environmental and/or engineering studies to address comments. The Final EIR/EA will include responses to comments received on the Draft EIR/EA and will identify the preferred alternative. If the decision is made to approve the proposed project, a Notice of Determination will be published for compliance with CEQA, and Caltrans will decide whether to issue a FONSI or require an EIS for compliance with NEPA. A Notice of Availability of the FONSI will be sent to the affected units of federal, state, and local government, and to the State Clearinghouse, in compliance with EO 12372.

Chapter 5 List of Preparers

The preparation of this environmental document and project design involved a team of Caltrans personnel and consultants.

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Distribution List

This Draft Environmental Impact Report/ Environmental Assessment and/or a Notice of Availability was distributed to federal, State, regional, and local agencies. In addition, all property owners and occupants within a 0.25-mile radius of the project limits were provided the Notice of Availability.

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DEME PROPERTIES LLC
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CO SANITATION DIST NO 32
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PICO LLC
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GATEWAY PROMENADE PARTNERS LLC
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PALISADES RETAIL LLC
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SCORPION REAL ESTATE LLC
27750 ENTERTAINMENT DR
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TPI PROPERTIES
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E SUITES LLC
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SANTA BARBARA, CA 93103

28042 B AVENYE STANFORD LLC
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APPENDICES

Appendix A. Title VI Policy Statement

STATE OF CALIFORNIA—CALIFORNIA STATE TRANSPORTATION AGENCY Gavin Newsom, Governor

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Making Conservation a California Way of Life.

September 2021

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY STATEMENT

The California Department of Transportation, under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, ensures *"No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance."*

Caltrans will make every effort to ensure nondiscrimination in all of its services, programs and activities, whether they are federally funded or not, and that services and benefits are fairly distributed to all people, regardless of race, color, or national origin. In addition, Caltrans will facilitate meaningful participation in the transportation planning process in a nondiscriminatory manner.

Related federal statutes, remedies, and state law further those protections to include sex, disability, religion, sexual orientation, and age.

For information or guidance on how to file a complaint, or obtain more information regarding Title VI, please contact the Title VI Branch Manager at (916) 324-8379 or visit the following web page: https://dot.ca.gov/programs/civil-rights/title-vi .

To obtain this information in an alternate format such as Braille or in a language other than English, please contact the California Department of Transportation, Office of Civil Rights, at 1823 14th Street, MS-79, Sacramento, CA 95811; PO Box 942874, MS-79, Sacramento, CA 94274-0001; (916) 324-8379 (TTY 711); or at Title.VI@dot.ca.gov.

Toks Omishakin
Director

"Provide a safe and reliable transportation network that serves all people and respects the environment."

Appendix B. List of Technical Studies

The following technical studies were prepared in support of this document and the proposed project.

Air Quality Report, Terry A. Hayes Associates Inc., October 2023

Archaeological Survey Report, AECOM, February 2024

Biological Assessment, AECOM, February 2024

Community Impact Assessment, AECOM, September 2023

Historic Property Survey Report, AECOM, February 2024

Historic Resource Evaluation Report, AECOM, February 2024

Initial Site Assessment (Hazardous Materials), AECOM, November 2023

Jurisdictional Delineation and Wetland Assessment, AECOM, January 2019 (Rev 2023)

Supplemental Aquatic Resources Delineation Report (ARDR) Technical Memorandum, February 2024

Location Hydraulic Study and Floodplain Evaluation Report, AECOM, January 2023

Natural Environment Study, AECOM, February 2024

Noise Study Report, Terry A. Hayes Associates Inc., October 2022

Santa Clara River Bridge Scour Analysis at The Old Road Bridge, AECOM, May 2022

Transportation Assessment Report, AECOM, November 2023

Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Analysis Memorandum, AECOM, November 2023

Visual Impact Assessment (Minor Level), AECOM, December 2022

Water Quality Assessment Report, AECOM, October 2022

Appendix C. Environmental Commitment Record

To be sure that all of the environmental measures identified in this document are executed at the appropriate times, the following mitigation program (as articulated on the proposed Environmental Commitments Record [ECR] which follows) would be implemented. During project design, avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures will be incorporated into the project's final plans, specifications, and cost estimates, as appropriate. All permits will be obtained prior to implementation of the project. During construction, environmental and construction/engineering staff will ensure that the commitments contained in this ECR are fulfilled. Following construction and appropriate phases of project delivery, long-term mitigation maintenance and monitoring will take place, as applicable. As the following ECR is a draft, some fields have not been completed, and will be filled out as each of the measures is implemented. Note: Some measures may apply to more than one resource area. Duplicative or redundant measures have not been included in this ECR.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITMENTS RECORD (ECR)

The Old Road over Santa Clara River and the Southern Pacific Transportation Company Bridge, et al.
Project -- LOS ANGELES COUNTY, CALIFORNIA
DISTRICT 7 – LA – BRLS-5953(601) & STPL-5953(682)

Date: February 2024

TASK #	TASK AND BRIEF DESCRIPTION	REFERENCE	TIMING/PHASE	COMMENTS	ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE INITIAL/DATE
1	Maintain access and parking throughout construction. Before construction, LACPW would reconfigure access and parking to residential and commercial lots, to allow continued availability of that parking and access.	EIR/EA, AMM COM-1 (Land Use)	Pre-Construction		
2	Provision will be made for motorist information (i.e., existing changeable message signs [CMSs], portable CMSs, stationary ground mounted signs).	EIR/EA, AMM COM-2 (Utilities/Emergency Systems, Public Services, Transportation, Wildfire)	Construction		
3	Incorporation of traffic circulation construction strategies will be implemented (i.e., lane closure restrictions during holidays and special local events, closure of secondary streets during construction to allow quick construction and reopening, lane modification to maintain the number of lanes needed, allowing night work and extended weekend work, maintaining business access, and maintaining pedestrian and bicycle access).	EIR/EA, AMM COM-3 (Utilities/Emergency Systems, Public Services, Transportation, Wildfire)	Construction		
4	Implementation of alternate and detour routes strategies, and street/intersection improvements will occur (e.g., widening, pavement rehabilitation, removal of median), to provide added capacity to handle detour traffic; signal improvements; make adjustments in signal timing, and/or signal coordination to increase vehicle throughput, improve traffic flow, and optimize intersection capacity; set restrictions at intersections and roadways necessary to reduce congestion and improve safety; and enforce parking restrictions on alternate and detour routes during work hours to increase capacity, reduce traffic conflicts, and improve access.	EIR/EA, AMM COM-4 (Utilities/Emergency Systems, Public Services, Transportation, Wildfire)	Construction		
5	Close coordination will occur with utility service providers and emergency service providers, and a public outreach program will be implemented to minimize impacts on surrounding communities.	EIR/EA, AMM COM-5 (Utilities/Emergency Systems)	Construction		
6	Where acquisition is unavoidable, the provisions of the Uniform Act and the 1987 Amendments, as implemented by the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Regulations for Federal and Federally Assisted Programs adopted by USDOT (March 2, 1989) and where applicable, the California Public Park Preservation Act of 1971, will be followed. An appraisal of the affected property will be obtained, and an offer for the full appraisal will be made.	EIR/EA, AMM REL-1 (Relocations and Real Property Acquisition)	Pre-Construction		
7	Advance notice would be provided to property owners and business owners on the proposed project construction schedule to minimize disruptions.	EIR/EA, AMM REL-2 (Relocations and Real Property Acquisition)	Pre-Construction		
8	Directional lighting aimed downward at the construction site will be used during proposed project construction where appropriate within the proposed project construction area.	EIR/EA, AMM VIS-1 (Visual.Aesthetics)	Construction		
9	A textured finish on the proposed retaining wall on Rye Canyon Road at I-5 will be included to discourage graffiti.	EIR/EA, AMM VIS-2 (Visual.Aesthetics)	Construction		
10	All workers must participate in a Worker Environmental Awareness Program for cultural resources. Sign-in sheets will be maintained to document completion of the program by each worker. This program can be administered in person by or under the supervision of a Secretary of Interior (SOI) qualified archaeologist or through screening of a video/slide presentation prepared by a SOI-qualified archaeologist and overseen by an on-site manager. Contractor education will include the legal framework protecting cultural resources, typical kinds of cultural resources that may be found during construction, artifacts that would be considered potentially significant, and proper procedures and notifications if cultural resources are discovered. The training will review types of cultural resources and artifacts that would be considered potentially significant to support operator recognition of these materials during construction. Contingent upon the results of AB 52 consultation, Native American representatives shall be afforded the opportunity to participate in the cultural resource training to provide project personnel with tribal perspectives on working in areas sensitive for Tribal Cultural Resources.	EIR/EA, AMM CR-1 (Cultural/Tribal)	Construction		
11	If cultural materials are discovered during construction, all earthmoving activity within 50 feet of the find will be diverted until a SOI-qualified archaeologist can assess the significance of the find and, if necessary, develop appropriate treatment measures.	EIR/EA, AMM CR-2 (Cultural/Tribal)	Construction		
12	If human remains are discovered, State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 states that further disturbances and activities will cease in any area or nearby area suspected to overlie remains, and the County Coroner will be contacted. Pursuant to PRC Section 5097.98, if the remains are thought to be Native American, the Coroner will notify the California Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC), which will then notify the Most Likely Descendant (MLD). At this time, the person who discovered the remains will also contact the District 7 Environmental Branch Chief so that they may work with the MLD on the respectful treatment and disposition of the remains. Further provisions of PRC Section 5097.98 are to be followed as applicable.	EIR/EA, AMM CR-3 (Cultural/Tribal)	Construction		
13	Any disturbed aquatic or wetland habitat would need to be restored or enhanced from existing conditions such as revegetation, BMPs, and other applicable actions that meet the requirements of the environmental permitting of the proposed project. Where temporary disturbance areas are unavoidable, the disturbance would be minimized to the maximum extent possible, and the area would be restored or enhanced as compared to existing conditions upon completion of the bridge construction. Permanent impact areas would be mitigated by restoring and enhancing nearby degraded areas of wetland/riparian habitat.	EIR/EA, AMM HYD-1 (Hydrology and Floodplain)	Post-Construction		
14	The Old Road Bridge would be designed to maintain current or improved levels of fish passage in the mainstem of Santa Clara River. The Old Road Bridge would also be designed such that the proposed piers would not encroach into the active channel during the summer construction season from June through September.	EIR/EA, AMM HYR-2 (Hydrology and Floodplain)	Pre-Construction		

15	In accordance with the Construction General Permit, Order WQ 2022-0057-DWQ, NPDES NO. CAS000002, a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) would be prepared and implemented to address all construction-related activities, equipment, and materials that have the potential to impact water quality. The SWPPP would identify the sources of pollutants that may affect the quality of storm water; include construction site BMPs to control pollutants and sediment; and provide for construction materials management and non-stormwater BMPs. All construction site BMPs would follow the latest edition of the Los Angeles County Public Works Construction Site BMP Manual to control and minimize the impacts of construction-related activities, materials, and pollutants on the watershed. These BMPs include temporary sediment controls, temporary soil stabilization, scheduling management, waste management, materials handling, and other non-stormwater BMPs.	EIR/EA, AMM WQ-1 (Hydrology, Water Quality and Floodplain)	Pre-Construction		
16	In compliance with Municipal Permit Order No. R4-2021-0105 requirements, a final project-specific Standard Urban Storm Water Mitigation Plan would be prepared. Bioswales would be constructed in roadway medians to provide water quality treatment in addition to conveying storm water runoff. Swales provide pollutant removal through settling and filtration in the vegetation lining the channels and also provide the opportunity for volume reduction through infiltration and evapotranspiration. DSAs, including slopes, would be reseeded using a California native plant seed blend. An erosion control seed mix (hydroseed) would be applied on all select material areas and slopes flatter than 1:1. Erosion control (bonded fiber matrix) would be applied on all cut slopes steeper than 1:1. As vegetation establishes in disturbed areas and cut slopes stabilize, potential for suspended sediments coming from the proposed project area into receiving waters would gradually be reduced.	EIR/EA, AMM WQ-2 (Hydrology, Water Quality and Floodplain)	Pre-Construction		
17	Paleontological Resources Monitoring and Mitigation Plan. Prior to construction-related excavations, a qualified paleontologist meeting the 2010 Society of Vertebrate Paleontology standards shall be retained to develop a Paleontological Resources Monitoring and Mitigation Plan (PRIMMP). The plan shall address qualifications of paleontological monitors and shall stipulate that the qualified paleontologist and the paleontological resource monitors are empowered to stop excavation activity in order to investigate or safely remove possible fossils. The plan shall incorporate findings of the project geotechnical report and construction plans to formulate what construction activities should be monitored and shall include wet screening of boring or drilling spoils. Many paleontological mitigation efforts have recovered significant paleontological resources, especially microvertebrate fossils, from screening of such spoils. It shall also address unexpected discoveries of paleontological resources.	EIR/EA, AMM PAL-1 (Paleontology)	Pre-Construction		
18	Paleontological Monitoring and Mitigation of Impacts from Construction. The qualified paleontologist shall attend the preconstruction meeting and shall present a worker environmental awareness program (WEAP) to the construction crew. The WEAP shall discuss the types of fossils that may potentially be uncovered during project excavations, laws protecting paleontological resources, and appropriate actions to be taken when fossils are discovered. The qualified paleontologist shall see that the PRIMMP instructions are implemented. The qualified paleontologist shall produce a final paleontological monitoring report that discusses the paleontological monitoring program, any paleontological discoveries, and the preparation, curation, and accessioning of any fossils into a suitable paleontological repository.	EIR/EA, AMM PAL-2 (Paleontology)	Pre-Construction		
19	If the plugged oil/gas well within the central portion of the proposed project is disturbed during construction of the proposed project, it would need to be re-abandoned in accordance with current California Geologic Energy Management Division (CalGEM) regulations. In addition, as a result of the informal agreement between CalGEM and LACPW's Environmental Programs Division (EPD), a gas mitigation plan would need to be obtained and submitted to CalGEM.	EIR/EA, AMM HAZ-1 (Hazardous Waste/Materials)	Post-Construction		
20	Crude oil/liquid petroleum pipelines run along The Old Road within the proposed project. If the pipelines are to be exposed and/or relocated, impacts to the subsurface may be encountered. Impacts to the subsurface discovered from these pipelines and any repairs to the pipelines would be the responsibility of the pipeline owner.	EIR/EA, AMM HAZ-2 (Hazardous Waste/Materials)	Post-Construction		
21	The proposed project includes upgrades to traffic signal equipment and relocation/installation of traffic pole standards and traffic signal equipment as necessary due to new lane configurations, which may generate universal wastes and electronic wastes (E-wastes). Universal wastes and E-wastes generated as part of the proposed project should be properly disposed in accordance with applicable regulations.	EIR/EA, AMM HAZ-3 (Hazardous Waste/Materials)	Post-Construction		
22	Aerially deposited lead (ADL) may be present in the unpaved areas adjacent to the roadway, which, if disturbed should be evaluated to ensure worker safety. If excavated/excess soils are to be transported from the area of the proposed project, they should be sampled and handled in accordance with applicable regulations to ensure worker safety and for classification purposes. The potential presence of ADL will be addressed during the Plan, Specifications, & Estimates (PS&E) phase of the proposed project and would be handled in accordance with LACPW Special Provisions. LACPW Special Provisions would be required during construction when handling lead contaminated soils.	EIR/EA, AMM HAZ-4 (Hazardous Waste/Materials)	Construction		
23	The proposed project includes the replacement of two bridges (over Santa Clara River and the abandoned UPRR tracks). Demolition of the two existing bridges will be subject to the National Emissions Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants regulations. The regulations require notification to the delegated air district prior to demolition of concrete structures regardless of whether asbestos was detected. The regulations require that an Asbestos-containing material (ACM) Survey be conducted and that the Survey report be part of the notification submittal to the regulatory agency. The ACM Survey should be conducted by a Certified Asbestos Consultant (CAC), and samples should be collected from concrete, brown fibrous expansion joint fill material, and other materials the CAC suspects to contain asbestos.	EIR/EA, AMM HAZ-5 (Hazardous Waste/Materials)	Pre-Construction		
24	Suspect lead-based paint (LBP) associated with painted curbs, poles, protective bollards, and fire hydrants within the proposed project including railings, fencing, metal beams, and other exposed metal elements associated with the bridges should be sampled and handled in accordance with applicable regulations to ensure worker safety and for classification purposes. The removal and testing of bridge paint and pavement markings including painted curbs will be managed during construction under specific LACPW Special Provisions. A Lead Compliance Plan under LACPW Special Provision would be required during construction when removal of lead-based paint, thermoplastic, painted traffic stripe, and/or pavement marking.	EIR/EA, AMM HAZ-6 (Hazardous Waste/Materials)	Pre-Construction & Construction		
25	Thermoplastic paint and yellow-painted traffic stripes/pavement markings, which typically contain lead chromate, have been used for marking within the proposed project (roadway and curbs) and, as such, would require special removal, handling, and disposal. The removal and testing of all thermoplastic paint and pavement markings will be managed during construction under LACPW Special Provisions.	EIR/EA, AMM HAZ-7 (Hazardous Waste/Materials)	Construction		

26	Utility relocations are needed at several intersections proposed for improvements along The Old Road due to widening of The Old Road and for the proposed bridge improvements. The proposed project would also include the reconstruction of existing drainage facilities and catch basins and construction of new drainage facilities and catch basins, as needed. Dewatering activities are not anticipated as part of the utility relocations within the proposed project.	EIR/EA, AMM HAZ-8 (Hazardous Waste/Materials)	Construction		
27	If soil in the area of the abandoned UPRR railroad tracks and proposed Multi-Purpose Trail extension is planned for excavation and off-site disposal as part of the proposed project, soil should be sampled and analyzed for the potential presence of petroleum hydrocarbons, volatile organic compounds (VOCs), metals, herbicides, and pesticides. During construction, soil excavations conducted on-site should be monitored for visible soil staining and odor. Impacted soil should be disposed off-site in accordance with pertinent local, state, and federal regulatory guidelines.	EIR/EA, AMM HAZ-9 (Hazardous Waste/Materials)	Pre-Construction & Construction		
28	Treated Waste Wood (TWW) such as utility poles, roadside wooden signposts, metal beam guardrail posts, or former railroad ties should be handled properly in accordance with applicable regulations and may require special removal, handling, and disposal. All TWW should be managed during construction under LACPW Special Provisions if TWW is generated.	EIR/EA, AMM HAZ-10 (Hazardous Waste/Materials)	Construction		
29	Contractors working at the proposed project or removing soil materials and/or groundwater from the proposed project site, should be aware of appropriate handling and disposal methods or options. Higher levels of potential contaminants could be present at some locations; therefore, material moved or removed may require individual or specific testing to verify it is at levels below regulatory action limits.	EIR/EA, AMM HAZ-11 (Hazardous Waste/Materials)	Pre-Construction		
30	It is anticipated that construction of the bridge piles could encounter groundwater based on the 1997 Seismic Hazard Report for the Newhall Quadrangle. Therefore, the slurry displacement method of construction will be utilized and will be specified in Section B of the bridge specifications. Once groundwater is encountered, drilling slurry would be placed in the hole to an elevation of 10 feet above the groundwater. As drilling progresses, drilling slurry would be added to the hole to maintain the same elevation of 10 feet above the groundwater. The slurry displacement method would contain any debris with concrete barriers and plastic sheeting. Groundwater is not anticipated from the slurry displacement method of construction, and any debris will be placed into Baker tanks.	EIR/EA, AMM HAZ-12 (Hazardous Waste/Materials)	Construction		
31	California Government Code Section 4216 requires that any operator or excavator call Underground Services Alert of California ("DigAlert") 2 working days before any planned excavation by dialing 811. Delineation of the proposed excavation area is mandatory. The area to be excavated should be marked with water soluble or chalk-based white paint on paved surfaces or with other suitable markings such as flags or stakes on unpaved areas prior to calling DigAlert.	EIR/EA, AMM HAZ-13 (Hazardous Waste/Materials)	Construction		
32	A site-specific Health and Safety Plan (HSP) should be prepared consistent with LACPW Special Provisions. The HSP should include identification of key personnel; summary of risk assessment for workers, the community, and the environment; air monitoring plan; and emergency response plan.	EIR/EA, AMM HAZ-14 (Hazardous Waste/Materials)	Pre-Construction		
33	As is the case for any project that proposes excavation, the potential exists for unknown hazardous contamination to be revealed during project construction. For any previously unknown hazardous waste/material encountered during construction, the procedures outlined in LACPW Special Provisions and Procedures should be followed and implemented during construction activities as well as SCAQMD Rule 1166 and SCAQMD Rule 1466.	EIR/EA, AMM HAZ-15 (Hazardous Waste/Materials)	Construction		
34	During construction activities, Best Management Practices (BMPs) should be implemented including temporary construction site BMPs and the regulatory permit compliance component for the State's Construction General Permit for applicability of a SWPPP (based in part on the soil DSAs shown on the phased plans) and compliance with the County's MS4 NPDES permit as well as adherence to the County's Construction Site BMP Manual and SWPPP preparation manual. All the storm water requirements specified are a standard contract requirement specified in Section EC.	EIR/EA, AMM HAZ-16 (Hazardous Waste/Materials)	Construction		
35	Construction Emissions. Site preparation and roadway construction would involve clearing, cut-and-fill activities, grading, removing or improving existing roadways, and paving roadway surfaces. During construction, short-term degradation of air quality is expected from the release of particulate emissions (airborne dust) generated by excavation, grading, hauling, and other activities related to construction. Implementation of the following avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures would minimize construction emissions: •The construction contractor must comply with LACPW Special Provisions in Section 14-9 (2018). Section 14-9-02 specifically requires compliance by the contractor with all applicable laws and regulations related to air quality, including air pollution control district and air quality management district regulations and local ordinances. •Construction equipment and vehicles will be properly tuned and maintained. All construction equipment will use low-sulfur fuel as required by Title 17, CCR, Section 93114. •The construction contractor must comply with SCAQMD rules, including Rule 401 (Visible Emissions), Rule 402 (Nuisance), Rule 403 (Fugitive Dust), and Rule 1403 (Asbestos Emissions from Demolition/Renovation Activities). •Diesel-powered off-road equipment will limit idling in accordance with the ARB "Regulation for In-Use Off-Road Diesel-Fueled Fleets" (Title 13, CCR, Section 2449) and Approved Amendments. •Diesel-powered on-road vehicles and trucks will limit idling in accordance with the ARB "Airborne Toxic Control Measure to Limit Diesel-Fueled Commercial Motor Vehicle Idling" (Title 13, CCR, Section 2485)."	EIR/EA, AMM AQ-1 (Air Quality)	Construction		

36	Bridge construction activities shall occur during dry portions of the year to reduce impacts to the low flow channel. The limits of grading and temporary work areas will be demarked with construction exclusion fencing adjacent to areas with sensitive vegetation communities to avoid unintentional encroachment into these sensitive areas. Signage will be posted identifying the excluded areas as Environmentally Sensitive Areas.	EIR/EA, AMM VEG-1 (Biology)	Construction		
37	The project will incorporate storm drain systems to facilitate meeting water quality requirements and for stormwater management, which will minimize erosion and degradation of habitat around the bridge.	EIR/EA, AMM VEG-2 (Biology)	Construction		
38	Standard fugitive dust BMPs and those required by a SWPPP, e.g., a water truck, will be utilized to reduce impacts of construction-generated erosion and sedimentation into the adjacent Environmentally Sensitive Areas.	EIR/EA, AMM VEG-3 (Biology)	Construction		
39	BMPs will be implemented to ensure invasive plant material is not spread from the project site to other areas by disposal off site or by tracking seed on equipment, clothing, and shoes. Equipment/material imported from an area of invasive plants must be identified and measures implemented to prevent importation and spreading of non-native plant material within the project site. All construction equipment will be thoroughly cleaned to remove dirt, seeds, vegetative material, or other debris that could contain or hold seeds of noxious weeds before arriving to and leaving the project site. Weeds removed will be appropriately bagged and disposed of in a sanitary landfill.	EIR/EA, AMM VEG-4 (Biology)	Construction		
40	A Vegetation Management and Restoration Plan will be prepared for agency review and approval prior to initiating project impacts. The final plan will include the following information and conditions: a.All habitat restoration/enhancement sites will be prepared for planting in a way that mimics natural habitat to the maximum extent practicable. All planting will be installed in a way that mimics natural plant distribution, and not in rows. Native plants will be used. b.Planting will be accomplished through planting palettes of container plants (and plan shall specify plant species, size, and number/acre) and planting seed mix (and plan shall specify plant species and pounds/acre). The upland plant palette proposed in the draft plans will include native species specifically associated with existing habitat types. The source and proof of local nativeness of plant material and seed will be provided. c.Container plant survival will be 80 percent of the initial plantings for the first 5 years. At the first and second anniversaries of plant installation, all dead plants will be replaced unless their function has been replaced by natural recruitment. d.The final restoration/enhancement plan will outline the irrigation schedule to the extent practical, to prevent overwatering, runoff, and plants that are artificially robust (compared with the nearby native vegetation). Irrigation will cease after year 2 or 3 except in cases of extreme drought. e.A final implementation schedule will indicate when all habitat impacts, as well as on-site and off-site restoration/enhancement planting and irrigation, will begin and end. Off-site restoration/enhancement planting and irrigation will be completed during the concurrent or next planting season (i.e., late fall to early spring) after initiating project impacts. On-site habitat restoration/enhancement planting and irrigation (if required) will be completed during the concurrent or next planting season (i.e., late fall to early spring) after finishing each phase of project impacts within the restoration/enhancement area. Any temporal loss of habitat caused by delays in restoration/enhancement will be mitigated through habitat preservation or restoration/enhancement at a 0.5:1 ratio for every 6 months of delay (1:1 for 12 months' delay, 1.5:1 for 18 months' delay, etc.). In the event that the project applicant is wholly or partly prevented from performing obligations under the final plans (causing temporal loss due to delays) because of unforeseeable circumstances or causes beyond reasonable control, and without the fault or negligence of the project applicant, the project applicant will be excused by such unforeseeable cause(s). f.Five years of success criteria for restoration/enhancement areas will include a total of 40 to 65 percent absolute native cover (compared with adjacent native vegetation communities) or greater, depending on the native vegetation community being restored/enhanced; evidence of the natural recruitment of multiple species; 0 percent coverage for Cal-IPC's "Invasive Plant Inventory" species that are rated "High," and no more than 10 percent coverage for other exotic/weed species. Each vegetation community restored/enhanced will have a separate percent absolute native cover appropriate for the specific vegetation community. For example, this will vary with riparian woodland and marsh vegetation communities having a higher native coverage percent. The final restoration/enhancement plan will detail the specific success criteria with the target percent absolute native cover for each vegetation community. g.A qualitative and quantitative vegetation monitoring plan with a map of proposed sampling locations will be included. Photo points will be used for qualitative monitoring, and stratified random sampling will be used for all quantitative monitoring. h.Annual mitigation and monitoring reports will be submitted to the appropriate regulatory agency after the monitoring period no later than March 1 of each year. i.If maintenance of the habitat restoration/enhancement area is necessary between March 15 and March 31, a qualified biologist will survey for nesting birds within the restoration/enhancement area, access paths to it, and other areas susceptible to disturbances by site maintenance. Surveys will consist of three visits separated by 2 weeks starting March 1 of each maintenance/monitoring year. Work will be allowed to continue on the site during the survey period. However, if sensitive avian species are found during any of the visits, the applicant will notify and coordinate with regulatory agencies to identify measures to avoid and/or minimize effects to the sensitive species (e.g., nests and an appropriate buffer will be flagged by the biologist and avoided by the maintenance work).	EIR/EA, AMM VEG-5 (Biology)	Construction		
41	Permanent and temporary impacts to sensitive vegetation communities shall be replaced by creating or restoring habitats of similar functions and values in the BSA, or credits shall be purchased through an applicable mitigation bank. Restoration shall be in-kind and at a minimum 1:1 replacement ratio or other ratio determined in consultation with the resource agencies. All mitigation activities will be conducted in accordance with a Habitat Mitigation and Monitoring Plan due to USACE, RWQCB, and CDFW before the issuance of permits. The Habitat Mitigation and Monitoring Plan will outline the identification and location of areas that could be used for creation, restoration, or habitat enhancement. The plan will include lists of native plant species, by habitat-type, that may be used in potential on-site revegetation efforts (e.g., planting and seeding). In addition, if needed to meet mitigation needs, the plan will identify opportunities for additional enhancements of habitats in temporary impact areas, such as supplemental planting of trees, weeding of adjacent buffer habitat, or other opportunities. The enhancement opportunities will include acreage estimates of treated areas, acreage of invasive removal, and figures to illustrate the treatment area and mapped invasive species. A habitat restoration specialist will determine the optimal areas for habitat establishment and restoration and prepare the Habitat Mitigation and Monitoring Plan that provides details on the concept. The plan will specifically discuss habitat restoration implementation, including plant establishment methods, performance standards, maintenance and monitoring period, and	EIR/EA, Compensatory Mitigation VEG-6 (Biology)	Pre-Construction, Construction, and Post-Construction		
42	As an alternative to the restoration of habitats to compensate for permanent and/or temporary removal of riparian habitats, the applicant (at the discretion of USACE and CDFW) may remove exotic plant species from the BSA in the following locations: (1) where there is an infestation of exotics such as giant reed such that the natural habitat functions and values are substantially degraded and at risk, and where the cover of exotics is equal to or exceeds 25 percent of the ground; or (2) other areas where exotic removal would be strategic in a watershed approach to weed management, as determined by USACE and CDFW. The weed removal sites shall be selected in a logical manner to ensure that the eradication of weeds from specific sites will contribute to the overall control of exotics in the watercourses. Removal areas shall be kept free of exotic plant species for 5 years after initial treatment. In addition, native riparian vegetation must become established through natural colonization and, after 5 years, meet the revegetation plant cover goals established by USACE and CDFW.	EIR/EA, Compensatory Mitigation VEG-7 (Biology)	Pre-Construction		
43	The project is expected to directly impact one Southern California black walnut, and indirectly impact one additional tree. A pre-construction survey is required to fence the exact LOD, during which protective fencing will be placed around the one tree that may be indirectly impacted. If feasible, the one Southern California black walnut within the direct footprint of the expanded bridge will be transplanted and replanted outside of the LOD along the bank of Santa Clara River. In addition, because transplanting is not always successful, any Southern California black walnut trees that are directly impacted will be mitigated for at a 2:1 ratio (as individuals, not acreage). The mitigated trees are to be planted nearby at an acceptable location for this species. Ideally, any replacement may be grown in a nursery and re-planted before project implementation. Otherwise, purchasing walnut plants from a native plant nursery would be acceptable, preferably from stock originating in Los Angeles County.	EIR/EA, AMM WALNUT-1 (Biology)	Pre-Construction		

44	Protective Fencing. A plan will be developed for protecting oak trees during construction. The intent is to install protective fencing along the boundary of The Old Road ROW in areas adjacent to oak trees. For any oak trees located outside of The Old Road ROW, this plan will be approved by the Forestry Division of the County of Los Angeles. For any oak trees located within The Old Road ROW, this plan will be approved by LACPW. Equipment damage to limbs, trunks, and roots of all remaining trees will be avoided during proposed project construction. Even slight trunk injuries can result in susceptibility to long-term pathogenic maladies. Protective fencing not less than 4 feet in height will be placed at the limits of The Old Road ROW where the protective zone of any individual oak tree or dense stand of oak trees within 200 feet of the grading limits. Oak tree protective fencing will be in accordance with the Los Angeles County Code, Chapter 22.176. The protective zone is defined as within the dripline of an oak tree and extending from there to a point at least 5 feet outside of the dripline, or 15 feet from the trunk of a tree, whichever distance is greater. This fencing will be inspected prior to commencement of proposed project construction in the area and will remain in place until construction is completed.	EIR/EA, AMM OAK-1 (Biology)	Pre-Construction		
45	Grading Restrictions near Protective Zones. Care must be taken to limit grade changes near the protective zone of an oak tree. Grade changes can lead to plant stress from oxygen deprivation or oak root fungus at the root collar of oaks. Minor grade changes farther from the trunk are not as critical but can negatively affect the health of the tree if not carefully monitored by a County-approved certified arborist. •The grade will not be lowered or raised around the trunk (i.e., within the protective zone) of any oak tree without the approval of the Los Angeles County Forester or LACPW (as applicable), or a County-certified arborist as specified in an approved oak tree permit. A certified arborist will supervise all excavation or grading proposed within the protective zone of a tree. •Trenching, excavation, or clearance of vegetation within the protective zone of an oak tree will be accomplished by the use of hand tools or small handheld power tools. Any major roots encountered will be conserved to the greatest extent possible and treated as recommended by the certified arborist. •No utility trenches will be routed within the protective zone of an oak tree unless no feasible alternative locations are available and will be approved by the County Forester or LACPW, as determined appropriate.	EIR/EA, AMM OAK-2 (Biology)	Construction		
46	Equipment Storage. •No storage of equipment, supplies, vehicles, or debris will be permitted within the protective zone of an oak tree. •No dumping of construction wastewater, paint, stucco, concrete, or any other cleanup waste will occur within the protective zone of an oak tree. •No temporary structures will be placed within the protective zone of any remaining oak tree.	EIR/EA, AMM OAK-3 (Biology)	Construction		
47	Maintenance. Healthy trees, if not maintained, often grow beyond their ability to support themselves and fail at their naturally occurring weakest point. This point is typically at a branch union or near the main crotch of the tree. Weight-reduction pruning and/or cabling is important in any tree preservation program. •Pruning of replacement oak trees and preserved oak trees will include the removal of dead wood and stubs, and medium pruning of branches measuring 2 inches in diameter or less. •Pruning of replacement oak trees and preserved oak trees will be in accordance with the guidelines published by the National Arborist Association. In no case will more than 25% of the overall tree canopy and 10% of the overall root mass of any oak tree be removed. After pruning, installation of support cables to prevent future main crotch failures may be necessary based on a County-certified arborist's determination. •All replacement oak trees will be maintained in accordance with the principles set forth in the publication, Oak Trees: Care and Maintenance prepared by the Forestry Division of the Fire Caltrans of the County of Los Angeles. •A 5-year maintenance period will begin upon the start of planting the replacement trees. All replacement trees failing to survive within this period will be replaced.	EIR/EA, AMM OAK-4 (Biology)	Construction & Post-Construction		
48	Frequency of Watering. Care should be taken to avoid placing any irrigation devices within watering distance of the protected zone of oak trees. Oak trees survive and thrive on annual rainfall alone and generally do not require supplemental irrigation except during periods of extreme drought or for establishment of newly planted trees (i.e., replacement trees). •Irrigation water will not reach within 15 feet of any oak trunk. •Neither grass nor ground covers will be planted under the canopy of oak trees.	EIR/EA, AMM OAK-5 (Biology)	Construction & Post-Construction		
49	Control of Diseases and Pests. A County-approved arborist will evaluate the effects of mistletoe, pathogens, and insect pests on the preserved and planted oak trees within the 5-year maintenance period, in addition to the overall health and structural integrity of the trees, to ensure longevity of remaining oak trees.	EIR/EA, AMM OAK-6 (Biology)	Post-Construction		
50	Construction Monitoring. Damage to remaining trees must be avoided by workers and equipment during construction activities. •A qualified biologist or County-certified arborist will monitor on-site construction and grading activities occurring near all identified oak tree protection zones to ensure that damage to oak trees does not occur. •Prior to initiation of construction activities, the qualified biologist or County-certified arborist will schedule a field meeting to inform personnel involved in construction where all protective zones are located and the importance of avoiding encroachment within the protective zones. Pursuant to Section 22.56.2050-2260 of the Los Angeles County Oak Tree Ordinance, the following compensatory MM is proposed to compensate for the 15 valley oak trees to be permanently removed by the proposed project.	EIR/EA, AMM OAK-7 (Biology)	Construction & Post-Construction		
51	Replacement Trees. All oak trees removed will be replaced by a tree of the same species at a ratio of 2:1. All heritage trees that will be removed will be replaced at a 10:1 ratio. All replacement trees will be at least 24-inch box trees and measure 1 inch or more in diameter, as measured from 1 foot above the base. Free-form trees with multiple stems are permissible; the combined diameter of the two largest stems of such trees will measure a minimum of 1 inch in diameter, as measured from 1 foot above the base. Replacement trees will consist exclusively of indigenous oak trees and be certified as being grown from a seed source collected in Los Angeles County or Ventura County.	EIR/EA CM OAK-8 (Biology)	Construction		

52	Prior to the start of construction, thorough surveys for Unarmored Threespine Stickleback (UTS) will be conducted by a qualified biologist highly knowledgeable and experienced with identifying UTS. The qualified biologist and survey methodology will be approved by USFWS prior to survey commencement. 1.Immediately prior to the start of construction, the qualified biologist (in close coordination with USFWS) will conduct no-take visual-only surveys for UTS throughout the northern drainage (e.g., from the existing The Old Road culvert down to the stream's confluence with the mainstem of the Santa Clara River) to confirm absence. a.If UTS are detected during either survey, the northern drainage will be considered occupied by UTS. If this is the case, the project culvert extension option will not be considered, and an alternative design will be necessary. b.If UTS are not detected, the project could potentially begin. 2.Immediately following the UTS survey, a fish-excluding device will be installed and maintained. This device will be designed, installed, monitored, and maintained to (a) completely exclude UTS and other aquatic life from the project area in the northern drainage during the entire term of work in or near surface waters, and (b) avoid stranding, entrapment, or entanglement of wildlife. The fish-exclusion device will be regularly monitored by a qualified biologist to ensure it is functional. 3.A surface water diversion will also be designed, installed, monitored, and maintained in a manner that ensures that sufficient water flow continues to maintain aquatic life downstream from the project area in the northern drainage. 4.Additional BMPs will be implemented to avoid and minimize project impacts to water quality, aquatic life, nesting birds, and other natural resources. BMPs will be placed around the periphery of work areas to ensure no inadvertent spills, erosion, sedimentation, or construction-related effects occur. 5.If UTS are detected within the project area or northern drainage, work will be halted and USFWS and CDFW will be contacted immediately.	EIR/EA AMM UTS-1 (Biology)	Pre-Construction & Construction		
53	For the mainstem of the Santa Clara River where UTS are assumed present, work activities will be conducted in a way to ensure no surface water contact and a biological monitor will be present during all ground disturbing activities when near the Santa Clara River. Vegetation trimming and removal will be conducted in a way to prevent contact with surface water, and BMPs will be placed along the length of the Santa Clara River to ensure no inadvertent spills, erosion, or sedimentation occurs. A biological monitor will ensure that materials from concrete decking installation and concrete pouring do not fall into the Santa Clara River and all construction personnel and equipment remain outside of the active channel. Construction of the piles within the Santa Clara River will occur during summer months to coincide with periods of low flow for the Santa Clara River to minimize the potential for impacts to surface water in the Santa Clara River. The cast-in-drilled-hole pile with slurry displacement installation method was specifically selected to avoid the need for dewatering and potential impacts to UTS. A biological monitor will be present during cast-in-drilled-hole pile installation when in proximity to the Santa Clara River to ensure that vibration impacts are not negatively affecting aquatic species. If unforeseen circumstances arise during construction of the bridge piles that may result in impacts to UTS, the USFWS will be contacted to discuss additional potential measures to avoid impacts. Any additional measures developed in consultation with USFWS will be incorporated.	EIR/EA AMM UTS-2 (Biology)	Construction		
54	Prior to clearing, grubbing, and construction activities, arroyo toad exclusionary fencing will be installed around the perimeter of all work areas adjacent to potential arroyo toad breeding habitat as determined by a qualified arroyo toad biologist . In areas without water flows, the fence will consist of woven nylon fabric or similar material at least 2 feet high, staked firmly to the ground. No fencing will be placed in areas of flowing water (due to the potential for UTS). In areas where soils are suitable for burrowing, the lower 1 foot of material will stretch outward along the ground and be secured with a continuous line of sandbags to prevent burrowing beneath the fence. Doubling this line (i.e., stacking sand or gravel bags two-deep) may reduce maintenance and should be considered to improve the integrity of the fencing. In areas where soils are not suitable for burrowing, (i.e., hardpack soils), fencing may be buried to reduce maintenance concerns and improve the integrity of the fencing over time. Decisions on the appropriate fencing installation method for a given reach will be made by the qualified arroyo toad biologist. All fencing will be removed following completion of project activities. Ingress and egress of equipment and personnel will use two identified access points to the site, which will be as narrow as possible and closed off by exclusionary fence when personnel are not present.	EIR/EA, AMM ARTO-1 (Biology)	Construction		
55	Prior to vegetation grubbing or construction, but after exclusionary fence has been installed around the impact footprint, at least three surveys for arroyo toads of any life stages or clutches will be conducted within the fenced area by a qualified biologist knowledgeable of arroyo toad biology and ecology. Surveys will be conducted during the appropriate climatic conditions during the appropriate time of day or night to maximize the likelihood of encountering arroyo toads. If arroyo toads of any life stages or clutches are found within the project area, they will be captured and translocated, by the biologist, to the closest area of suitable habitat within the Santa Clara River. Before each workday begins, the qualified biologist will also check to see if arroyo toads have entered the impact footprint. If arroyo toads are found within the impact footprint, the individuals will be moved outside of the impact footprint, if suitable habitat exists, or out of harm's way.	EIR/EA, AMM ARTO-2 (Biology)	Construction		
56	The qualified biologist will be present each morning before construction activities begin to inspect all arroyo toad exclusionary fencing for damage or holes, conduct a sweep of the work area for arroyo toad of any life stages, inspect any covered stockpiles for gaps or sign that arroyo toads have accessed the soils underneath and will be present when these covers are removed. If burrows characteristic of arroyo toads are found, the burrows will be hand excavated. The qualified biologist will relocate any arroyo toads found to suitable habitat adjacent to the construction site but at least 200 feet away.	EIR/EA, AMM ARTO-3 (Biology)	Pre-Construction & Construction		
57	Excavations or trenches created by construction activities that have the potential to trap arroyo toads will be covered with cover plates or other materials at the end of each workday. Holes or trenches that are covered will have the edges sealed with sandbags, bricks, or boards to prevent arroyo toads from becoming trapped in holes or trenches. The qualified biologist will inspect all holes and trenches (covered and uncovered) for the presence of arroyo toads prior to disturbance of soils or removal of cover plates. The qualified biologist will be present when the cover plates are removed and will inspect and relocate any arroyo toads that may have entered the trench during the night to suitable habitat adjacent to the construction site but at least 200 feet away.	EIR/EA, AMM ARTO-4 (Biology)	Pre-Construction & Construction		
58	A qualified biologist shall survey the work site no more than 48 hours before the onset of activities for signs of southwestern pond turtles and/or southwestern pond turtle nesting activity (i.e., recently excavated nests, nest plugs) or nest depredation (partially to fully excavated nest chambers, nest plugs, scattered eggshell remains, eggshell fragments). Preconstruction surveys to detect western pond turtle nesting activity should be concentrated within suitable upland habitat in the BSA and should focus on areas along south- or west-facing slopes with bare hard-packed clay or silt soils or a sparse vegetation of short grasses or forbs. Survey efforts should focus on suitable aerial and aquatic basking habitat such as logs, branches, rootwads, and riprap, as well as the shoreline and adjacent warm, shallow waters where pond turtles may be present below the water surface beneath algal mats or other surface vegetation.	EIR/EA, AMM WPT-1 (Biology)	Pre-Construction		
59	If southwestern pond turtle is observed during the preconstruction survey, it will be avoided to the greatest extent practicable. If avoidance is not feasible, LACPW will confer with USFWS to determine the best approach to ensure no take of the species, including additional measures such as the implementation of exclusion buffers, nest exclosures, silt fencing, screening, and additional BMP installation, as appropriate.	EIR/EA, AMM WPT-2 (Biology)	Construction		
60	To the greatest extent possible, construction activities (such as vegetation removal) will be timed to avoid the nesting season for riparian avian species (March 15 through September 15).	EIR/EA, AMM RIP-1 (Biology)	Construction		
61	If work is scheduled during the riparian avian breeding season (March 15 through September 15), and within Least Bell's Vireo (LBVI) or Southwestern Willow Flycatcher (SWFL) suitable habitat, a qualified biologist will conduct a preconstruction nesting survey to ensure that no active bird nests are present within 300 feet of construction activities. If no nests are detected, then vegetation removal will be permitted during the nesting season.	EIR/EA, AMM RIP-2 (Biology)	Pre-Construction		
62	If an active nest is detected, no construction activities will be permitted within 300 feet of the nest. Work within nest buffers may not resume until the young fledge and disperse, or the nest has been determined to fail by the qualified biologist. Limits of construction to avoid a nest site will be established in the field with flagging and stakes or construction fencing.	EIR/EA, AMM RIP-3 (Biology)	Construction		

63	During construction of The Old Road Bridge, any nighttime lighting necessary for work or placed around temporary work areas/laydown yards will be shielded away from the Santa Clara River. Security lights around temporarily fenced areas under or adjacent to the Santa Clara River will have motion-activated sensors to ensure they are not continually on throughout the night, but only trigger if someone enters the fenced work area.	EIR/EA, AMM LION-1 (Biology)	Construction		
64	Any permanent streetlights installed on The Old Road Bridge or along the west side of The Old Road where it is adjacent to the Santa Clara River will be shielded so that light does not directly glare into native habitat within the Santa Clara River.	EIR/EA, AMM LION-2 (Biology)	Construction		
65	No earlier than 20 days prior to the commencement of construction activities around the two bridge locations, a field survey shall be conducted by a qualified biologist to determine if active roosts of bats are present on or within 300 feet of the project boundaries. Should an active roost be identified, a determination shall be made regarding whether the roost is used as a night-roost, day-roost, or maternity-roost. If an active roost would be removed, mitigation measure BAT-2 (below) shall be implemented. Alternatively, if an active roost is identified within 300 feet of the disturbance boundary, but would not be removed, mitigation measure BAT-3 (below) shall be implemented. Because the ambient noise levels already exceed acceptable noise levels due to surrounding construction activities and traffic noise, additional noise mitigation will not be implemented. Consequently, no interference will take place with bat echolocation and insect foraging.	EIR/EA, AMM BAT-1 (Biology)	Pre-Construction		
66	Should a night-roost be identified within the LOD, the roost structure will be removed during daylight hours while the roost is not in use. Should an active day-roost be identified, roosting bats will be evicted through the use of humane exclusionary devices. Prior to implementation, the proposed methods for bat exclusion will be approved by CDFW. The roost will not be removed until it has been confirmed by a qualified biologist that all bats have been successfully excluded. Should an active maternity-roost be identified (the breeding season of native bat species in California generally occurs from April 1 through August 31), the roost will not be disturbed and construction within 300 feet will be postponed or halted, at the discretion of the biological monitor, until the roost is vacated and juveniles have fledged, as determined by the biologist. CDFW will be consulted regarding the necessity to construct replacement roosting habitat or to modify the proposed project (as appropriate) to include features conducive to roosting. This determination will be based on the bat species to be displaced, the abundance of other roost sites in the area, and the size of the roost removed. All CDFW recommendations for roost replacement will be implemented.	EIR/EA, AMM BAT-2 (Biology)	Construction		
67	Should a night-roost be identified within the 300-foot buffer of the LOD, construction-related activities will be conducted during daylight hours while the roost is not in use. Should an active day-roost be identified, a determination (in consultation with CDFW or a qualified bat expert) will be made regarding if construction-related activities (i.e., noise and vibrations) could substantially disturb roosting bats. This determination will be based on baseline noise/vibrations levels, anticipated noise-levels associated with the construction of the proposed project, and the sensitivity to noise-disturbances of the bat species present. If it is determined that noise could result in the temporary abandonment of a day-roost, construction-related activities will be scheduled to minimize the period the roost would be subject to noise-related disturbances. Should an active maternity-roost be identified (the breeding season of native bat species in California generally occurs from April 1 through August 31), construction within 300 feet of the roost will be postponed or halted, at the discretion of the biological monitor, until the roost is vacated and juveniles have fledged, as determined by the biologist.	EIR/EA, AMM BAT-3 (Biology)	Construction		
68	While the project is anticipated to avoid direct take of UTS, there is still potentially occupied and assumed occupied habitat that may require mitigation. Impacts to occupied habitat may be mitigated through obtaining credits at an applicable mitigation bank, the creation or enhancement of similar riparian habitat at an approved mitigation site, or by the removal of exotic species from an area of existing similar habitat as determined by USFWS. The requirement for replacing suitable habitat by obtaining credits at an applicable mitigation bank, creating/restoring new habitat, and/or removing exotic species from existing habitat will be determined in consultation with USFWS.	EIR/EA, Compensatory Mitigation UTS-3 (Biology)	Post-Construction		
69	To compensate for the direct loss of arroyo toad critical habitat, in consultation with USFWS, it may be necessary to acquire mitigation lands and/or conduct restoration (such as nonnative species removal) within Santa Clara River or other similar location. The specific mitigation ratio will be determined in consultation with USFWS. Critical habitat to be mitigated will be in-kind and contain the same physical and biological features that were present in the critical habitat removed by the proposed project.	EIR/EA, Compensatory Mitigation ARTO-5 (Biology)	Pre-Construction		
70	Pending the federal listing determination for this species, further consultation may be required with USFWS to determine the appropriate mitigation approach. Under its current status, compensatory mitigation for permanent and temporary loss of habitat for southwestern pond turtle will be provided in compensatory mitigation required for federally listed species impacts to arroyo toad, LBVI, and SWFL, similar to the approach proposed for non-listed special-status wildlife species.	EIR/EA, Compensatory Mitigation WPT-3(Biology)	Pre-Construction		
71	The removal of LBVI and SWFL critical habitat will be mitigated through obtaining credits at an applicable mitigation bank, the creation or enhancement of similar riparian habitat at an approved mitigation site, or by the removal of exotic species from an area of existing similar habitat. The requirement for replacing suitable habitat by obtaining credits at an applicable mitigation bank, creating/restoring new habitat, and/or removing exotic species from existing habitat will be determined in consultation with USFWS.	EIR/EA, Compensatory Mitigation RIP-4 (Biology)	Pre-Construction		
72	Pending the state listing status of mountain lion, impacts will be assessed by CDFW during the Incidental Take Permitting process and any necessary mitigation will be acquired/implemented.	EIR/EA, Compensatory Mitigation LION-3 (Biology)	Pre-Construction		

73	The contractor(s) will be informed, prior to the bidding process, regarding the biological constraints of the project (will be included in Section EC of the special provisions). The project limits will be clearly marked on project plans provided to the contractor(s), and areas outside of the project limits shall be designated as "no construction" zones. A construction manager will be present during all construction activities to ensure that work is limited to designated project limits.	EIR/EA, AMM GEN-1	Construction		
74	ESA fencing and silt fencing with appropriate signs will be installed by the contractor prior to work to prevent habitat impacts and prevent the spread of silt from the construction zone into adjacent habitats. The fencing will be installed in a manner that does not impact habitats to be avoided and will be installed along the outer edge of work limits.	EIR/EA, AMM GEN-2	Pre-Construction		
75	Employees will strictly limit their activities, vehicles, equipment, and construction materials to the fenced construction limits, staging areas, and routes between the construction limits and staging areas. Temporary construction fencing will be removed upon project completion.	EIR/EA, AMM GEN-3	Construction		
76	All workers must participate in a contractor education program for sensitive biological resources; Worker Environmental Awareness Program training will be included in Section EC of the Special Provisions. Sign-in sheets will be maintained to document completion of the program by each worker. This program can be administered in person by a qualified biologist or through screening of a video/slide presentation prepared by a qualified biologist and overseen by an on-site manager. Contractor education will include a review of special-status species and protected habitats occurring/potentially occurring on-site. Identification of these resources and all biological avoidance and minimization measures relevant to the contractors' work will be reviewed. Stop work and notification procedures will be outlined. The education program will include a section specific to UTS, arroyo toad, LBVI, and SWFL. Education handouts will be provided and posted at the work site.	EIR/EA, AMM GEN-4	Pre-Construction		
77	A qualified biologist, defined as an individual with the appropriate federal and state permits to conduct the specified activities, will be available to relocate any listed species out of harm's way, if detected within the project limits of construction. They have verified previous experience with the species for which they are conducting surveys and have been approved by USFWS to ensure that they are truly "qualified" to conduct species surveys, monitoring, and relocation activities. In addition to a qualified biologist being available for species surveys, monitoring, and relocation activities, biological monitors will be present on a daily basis throughout the construction period when construction activities are adjacent to federally listed species habitat or have the potential to impact listed species. Biological monitors will be qualified for the monitoring activities and species in the area. A biological monitor will monitor the status of BMPs to ensure they continue to work after installation and prevent species that are in proximity to construction activities from being affected by the BMPs. In particular, construction monitoring will occur daily while ground-disturbing activities occur in/near the Santa Clara River. Biological monitors will ensure BMPs are operating effectively, conduct daily sweeps of the active construction areas to ensure no listed species are impacted, and conduct pre-activity clearance surveys ahead of vegetation/ground disturbance when in listed species habitat or critical habitat (that contains the necessary physical and biological features). Repeat pre-activity clearance surveys will be conducted when there is a lapse in activities in suitable listed species habitat longer than three days after vegetation removal or a previous survey.	EIR/EA, AMM GEN-5	Pre-Construction		
78	All equipment maintenance; staging; and dispensing of fuel, oil, coolant, or any other such activities will occur in designated areas outside of jurisdictional wetlands or waters and within the fenced proposed project limits. These designated areas will be located in previously compacted and disturbed areas to the maximum extent practicable in such a manner as to prevent any runoff from entering jurisdictional wetlands or waters. Fueling of equipment will take place within existing paved areas, if feasible, greater than 100 feet from jurisdictional wetlands or waters. Contractor equipment will be checked for leaks prior to operation and repaired as necessary. "Fueling zones" will be designated on construction plans.	EIR/EA, AMM GEN-6	Construction		
79	In areas that do not require excavation or grading, vegetation will be trampled instead of completely removed.	EIR/EA, AMM GEN-7	Construction		
80	To reduce impacts to listed species critical and occupied habitat, prior to entering the project site, all personnel will remove invasive species materials, propagules, seeds, individuals, etc. from project equipment, project materials, equipment, and clothes to reduce the proliferation of invasive species.	EIR/EA, AMM GEN-8	Construction		
81	The project site will be kept as clean of debris as possible to avoid attracting predators of sensitive wildlife. All food-related trash items will be enclosed in sealed containers and regularly removed from the site.	EIR/EA, AMM GEN-9	Construction		
82	Pets of project personnel will not be allowed on the proposed project site.	EIR/EA, AMM GEN-10	Construction		
83	Disposal or temporary placement of excess fill, brush, or other debris will not be allowed in WOTUS or their banks.	EIR/EA, AMM GEN-11	Construction		
84	The majority of construction is expected to be undertaken during daylight; however, when nighttime construction is necessary, lighting will be of the lowest illumination necessary for human safety, will be diverted away from any native vegetation communities, and will consist of low-sodium or similar lighting equipped with shields to focus light downward onto the appropriate subject area.	EIR/EA, AMM GEN-12	Construction		
85	Exclusionary devices will be installed underneath the bridge to prevent birds and bats from nesting during construction. Installation of these devices will be completed prior to February 15 (beginning of bird breeding season) and remain until construction is completed. A qualified biologist will inspect the area prior to installation for nests and evidence of breeding activity. If breeding activity is not detected, inactive nests will be destroyed to prevent birds from establishing breeding. If breeding activity is confirmed, exclusionary devices will be installed in all other areas lacking active nests. Active nests will be monitored by the biologist until breeding is complete. Once breeding is complete, exclusionary devices will be installed in these areas.	EIR/EA, AMM GEN-13	Construction		
86	Best efforts will be implemented (within the control of Los Angeles County, taking into consideration land ownership) to restrict public access into Santa Clara River that could adversely affect listed fish and wildlife resources. These actions will include, among other things, posting signs (along the multi-use trail and other areas where the sidewalk abuts the Santa Clara SEA), identifying an ecologically sensitive area, promoting public education and awareness of such ecological sensitivities, and the maintenance of fences and barricades to prevent unauthorized or unrestricted access to the river bottom, as applicable.	EIR/EA, AMM GEN-14	Construction		

Appendix D. Form AD-1006

U.S. Department of Agriculture

FARMLAND CONVERSION IMPACT RATING

PART I *(To be completed by Federal Agency)*		Date Of Land Evaluation Request 02/20/2023	
Name of Project The Old Road over Santa Clara River ar		Federal Agency Involved California Department of Transport	
Proposed Land Use Transportation		County and State Los Angeles County, CA	
PART II *(To be completed by NRCS)*		Date Request Received By NRCS 3/16/2023	Person Completing Form: P. Fahnestock
Does the site contain Prime, Unique, Statewide or Local Important Farmland? *(If no, the FPPA does not apply - do not complete additional parts of this form)*	YES ☑ NO ☐	Acres Irrigated 13,800	Average Farm Size 56 acres
Major Crop(s) hay, vegetables, fruit and nut trees	Farmable Land In Govt. Jurisdiction Acres: 588,88[illegible]% 23.2	Amount of Farmland As Defined in FPPA Acres: 61,73[illegible]% 2.4	
Name of Land Evaluation System Used	Name of State or Local Site Assessment System Storie	Date Land Evaluation Returned by NRCS 3/17/2023	

PART III *(To be completed by Federal Agency)*	Alternative Site Rating			
	Site A	Site B	Site C	Site D
A. Total Acres To Be Converted Directly	1.08 acr			
B. Total Acres To Be Converted Indirectly				
C. Total Acres In Site	44.03 ac			
PART IV *(To be completed by NRCS)* Land Evaluation Information				
A. Total Acres Prime And Unique Farmland	1.2			
B. Total Acres Statewide Important or Local Important Farmland	0			
C. Percentage Of Farmland in County Or Local Govt. Unit To Be Converted	0.001			
D. Percentage Of Farmland in Govt. Jurisdiction With Same Or Higher Relative Value	55			
PART V (To be completed by NRCS) Land Evaluation Criterion Relative Value of Farmland To Be Converted (Scale of 0 to 100 Points)	86			

PART VI *(To be completed by Federal Agency)* Site Assessment Criteria *(Criteria are explained in 7 CFR 658.5 b. For Corridor project use form NRCS-CPA-106)*	**Maximum Points**	Site A	Site B	Site C	Site D
1. Area In Non-urban Use	(15)	4			
2. Perimeter In Non-urban Use	(10)	3			
3. Percent Of Site Being Farmed	(20)	0			
4. Protection Provided By State and Local Government	(20)	20			
5. Distance From Urban Built-up Area	(15)	0			
6. Distance To Urban Support Services	(15)	0			
7. Size Of Present Farm Unit Compared To Average	(10)	0			
8. Creation Of Non-farmable Farmland	(10)	10			
9. Availability Of Farm Support Services	(5)	0			
10. On-Farm Investments	(20)	0			
11. Effects Of Conversion On Farm Support Services	(10)	0			
12. Compatibility With Existing Agricultural Use	(10)	2			
TOTAL SITE ASSESSMENT POINTS	160	39			
PART VII ***(To be completed by Federal Agency)***					
Relative Value Of Farmland *(From Part V)*	100	86			
Total Site Assessment *(From Part VI above or local site assessment)*	160	39			
TOTAL POINTS ***(Total of above 2 lines)***	260	125			

Site Selected: Site A	Date Of Selection 4/10/2023	Was A Local Site Assessment Used? YES ☐ NO ☑

Reason For Selection:

Name of Federal agency representative completing this form: California Department of Transportation | Date: 02/20/2023

(See Instructions on reverse side) **Form AD-1006 (03-02)**

STEPS IN THE PROCESSING THE FARMLAND AND CONVERSION IMPACT RATING FORM

Step 1 - Federal agencies (or Federally funded projects) involved in proposed projects that may convert farmland, as defined in the Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA) to nonagricultural uses, will initially complete Parts I and III of the form. For Corridor type projects, the Federal agency shall use form NRCS-CPA-106 in place of form AD-1006. The Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA) process may also be accessed by visiting the FPPA website, http://fppa.nrcs.usda.gov/lesa/.

Step 2 - Originator (Federal Agency) will send one original copy of the form together with appropriate scaled maps indicating location(s)of project site(s), to the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) local Field Office or USDA Service Center and retain a copy for their files. (NRCS has offices in most counties in the U.S. The USDA Office Information Locator may be found at http://offices.usda.gov/scripts/ndISAPI.dll/oip_public/USA_map**,** or the offices can usually be found in the Phone Book under U.S. Government, Department of Agriculture. A list of field offices is available from the NRCS State Conservationist and State Office in each State.)

Step 3 - NRCS will, within 10 working days after receipt of the completed form, make a determination as to whether the site(s) of the proposed project contains prime, unique, statewide or local important farmland. (When a site visit or land evaluation system design is needed, NRCS will respond within 30 working days.

Step 4 - For sites where farmland covered by the FPPA will be converted by the proposed project, NRCS will complete Parts II, IV and V of the form.

Step 5 - NRCS will return the original copy of the form to the Federal agency involved in the project, and retain a file copy for NRCS records.

Step 6 - The Federal agency involved in the proposed project will complete Parts VI and VII of the form and return the form with the final selected site to the servicing NRCS office.

Step 7 - The Federal agency providing financial or technical assistance to the proposed project will make a determination as to whether the proposed conversion is consistent with the FPPA.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE FARMLAND CONVERSION IMPACT RATING FORM

(For Federal Agency)

Part I: When completing the "County and State" questions, list all the local governments that are responsible for local land use controls where site(s) are to be evaluated.

Part III: When completing item B (Total Acres To Be Converted Indirectly), include the following:

1. Acres not being directly converted but that would no longer be capable of being farmed after the conversion, because the conversion would restrict access to them or other major change in the ability to use the land for agriculture.
2. Acres planned to receive services from an infrastructure project as indicated in the project justification (e.g. highways, utilities planned build out capacity) that will cause a direct conversion.

Part VI: Do not complete Part VI using the standard format if a State or Local site assessment is used. With local and NRCS assistance, use the local Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA).

1. Assign the maximum points for each site assessment criterion as shown in § 658.5(b) of CFR. In cases of corridor-type project such as transportation, power line and flood control, criteria #5 and #6 will not apply and will, be weighted zero, however, criterion #8 will be weighed a maximum of 25 points and criterion #11 a maximum of 25 points.

2. Federal agencies may assign relative weights among the 12 site assessment criteria other than those shown on the FPPA rule after submitting individual agency FPPA policy for review and comment to NRCS. In all cases where other weights are assigned, relative adjustments must be made to maintain the maximum total points at 160. For project sites where the total points equal or exceed 160, consider alternative actions, as appropriate, that could reduce adverse impacts (e.g. Alternative Sites, Modifications or Mitigation).

Part VII: In computing the "Total Site Assessment Points" where a State or local site assessment is used and the total maximum number of points is other than 160, convert the site assessment points to a base of 160.
Example: if the Site Assessment maximum is 200 points, and the alternative Site "A" is rated 180 points:

$$\frac{\text{Total points assigned Site A}}{\text{Maximum points possible}} = \frac{180}{200} \text{ X } 160 = 144 \text{ points for Site A}$$

For assistance in completing this form or FPPA process, contact the local NRCS Field Office or USDA Service Center.

NRCS employees, consult the FPPA Manual and/or policy for additional instructions to complete the AD-1006 form.

Appendix E. Notice of Preparation

NOTICE OF PREPARATION AND PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING FOR A DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT/ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Date:	March 3, 2023
To:	State Clearinghouse, Responsible and Trustee Agencies, Organizations and Interested Parties
Subject:	Notice of Preparation and Public Scoping Meeting for a Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment
Project:	The Old Road over Santa Clara River and the Southern Pacific Transportation Company (SPT Co.) Bridge, Et Al.
Lead Agency:	County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works (CEQA), California Department of Transportation (NEPA)
Review Period:	30 days

Public Works will prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR)/Environmental Assessment (EA) for The Old Road over Santa Clara River and SPT Co. Bridge, Et Al., project. The County will be the lead agency for the proposed project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and Caltrans will be the lead agency under the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) as assigned by the Federal Highway Administration. The County has prepared this Notice of Preparation (NOP) to provide agencies, organizations, and other interested parties with information describing the proposed project to identify potential environmental effects pursuant to State requirements.

Public Works is soliciting input from agencies and interested parties on the scope and content of the environmental information to be evaluated in the proposed project EIR/EA. In accordance with CEQA, agencies are requested to review the project description in this NOP and provide their comments on environmental issues related to the statutory responsibilities of the agency. The EIR/EA will be used by the Board when considering approval of the proposed project as well as any related discretionary actions. The proposed project location, description, and potential environmental effects are discussed below.

PROJECT LOCATION

The project site includes the approximately two-mile stretch of existing The Old Road right-of-way between Henry Mayo Drive and Magic Mountain Parkway in western the County, as shown in Figure 1, Project Location Map. Additionally, the proposed project would include an approximately 0.58-mile extension of the County Multi-Purpose Regional River Trail on the southbound side of The Old Road from where the trail travels under The Old Road and Interstate 5 (I-5) just southeast of Rye Canyon Road to just northwest of the I-5 On- and off-ramps. The project site is contiguous to Henry Mayo Road, which forms the northern boundary of the project site; Rye Canyon Road, which intersects with The Old Road in the middle of the project site; Sky View Lane, which intersects with The Old Road in the southern portion of the project site; and Magic Mountain Parkway, which forms the southern boundary of the project site.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project is being proposed to improve existing traffic operations and accommodate future traffic projections along the roadway. The improvements primarily consist of reconstruction and widening of The Old Road, replacement of two bridges, reconstruction and widening of Rye Canyon Road, and

reconstruction and widening of Sky View Lane, including reconfiguration of its intersection with The Old Road. The project would also extend the existing County Multi-Purpose Regional River Trail from its existing terminus just south of Rye Canyon Road to just northwest of the I-5 on- and off-ramps. Current traffic demand in the project area meets or exceeds roadway capacity for many arterial roadways. Increases in traffic demand are anticipated over the next few years concurrent with projected population growth in the area. As such, the widening of The Old Road to six lanes is critical to the passage of traffic and emergency vehicles in the area.

The Old Road over the Santa Clara River bridge is currently not high enough to allow the volume of water of Public Works' Capital Flood event (defined as a 50-year burned and bulked storm) to pass under it. Replacing the bridge at a higher elevation would provide a minimum freeboard of 2.5 feet to allow a Capital Flood event to pass under it. The bridge is currently classified as structurally deficient in accordance to the Federal Highway Administration standards. Replacing the bridge as part of this project would eliminate that classification. The Old Road over the abandoned Southern Pacific Transportation Company Railroad bridge would be reconstructed at a lower grade to improve roadway safety and to match the road elevation at Rye Canyon Road. Both of The Old Road bridge replacements would include additional roadway improvements, such as the addition of bicycle lanes, raised medians, sidewalks, and concrete barriers to separate pedestrians from traffic lanes.

POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

Based on a preliminary review of the proposed project consistent with Section 15060 of CEQA Guidelines, the County has determined that an EIR/EA should be prepared for this proposed project. In addition, consistent with Section 15082 of CEQA Guidelines, the County has identified the following potential environmental effects of the project, which will be addressed in the EIR/EA for this project:

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

SUBMITTAL OF WRITTEN COMMENTS

In accordance with CEQA Guidelines, Section 15082, this NOP is being circulated for a 30-day comment period, starting March 6, 2023, and ending April 4, 2023. Interested parties must submit their comments in writing by 5 p.m. on April 4, 2023. Any comments provided should identify specific topics of environmental concern and your reason for suggesting the study of these topics in the EIR/EA. Comments must be submitted via postal or electronic mail to the following address:

Department of Public Works
Attention Ms. Ebigalle Voigt
P.O. Box 1460
Alhambra, CA 91802-1460
e-mail: evoigt@dpw.lacounty.gov

SCOPING MEETING

Public Works will hold a virtual scoping meeting for the The Old Road over Santa Clara River and SPT Co. Bridge,Et Al., project to receive comments on the scope and content of the EIR/EA. The scoping meeting will include a brief presentation providing an overview of the Proposed Project and CEQA process. The virtual scoping meeting will be held as follows:

Date:	March 16, 2023
Time:	6 p.m. PST
Location:	Online, via Zoom meeting link: https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81799188445 Or via Zoom telephone number: (669) 900-6833 Webinar ID: 817 9918 8445

DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY

This NOP can be viewed online at https://pw.lacounty.gov/pmd/TheOldRoad-over-SantaClaraRiver/. Future project documents, including the Draft and Final EIR/EA, will also be made available online.

The NOP will also be available at the following locations for viewing:

> Public Works Transportation Planning and Programs Division, 11th Floor, 900 South Fremont Avenue, Alhambra, CA 91803

Questions regarding this notice should be directed to Ebigalle Voigt at (626) 458-3967 or evoigt@pw.lacounty.gov, Monday through Thursday, between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m.

Si necesita asistencia con la traducción a Español, por favor comuniquese con el representante del departamento de Obras Públicas del Condado de Los Angeles, Sr. Art Correa (626) 458-3948, 72 horas antes de la reunión.

ADA and Title VI Accommodations: Individuals requiring reasonable accommodations, interpretation services, and materials in other languages or in an alternate format may contact the department coordinator at (626) 458-7901. Individuals with hearing or speech impairment may use California Relay Service 711.

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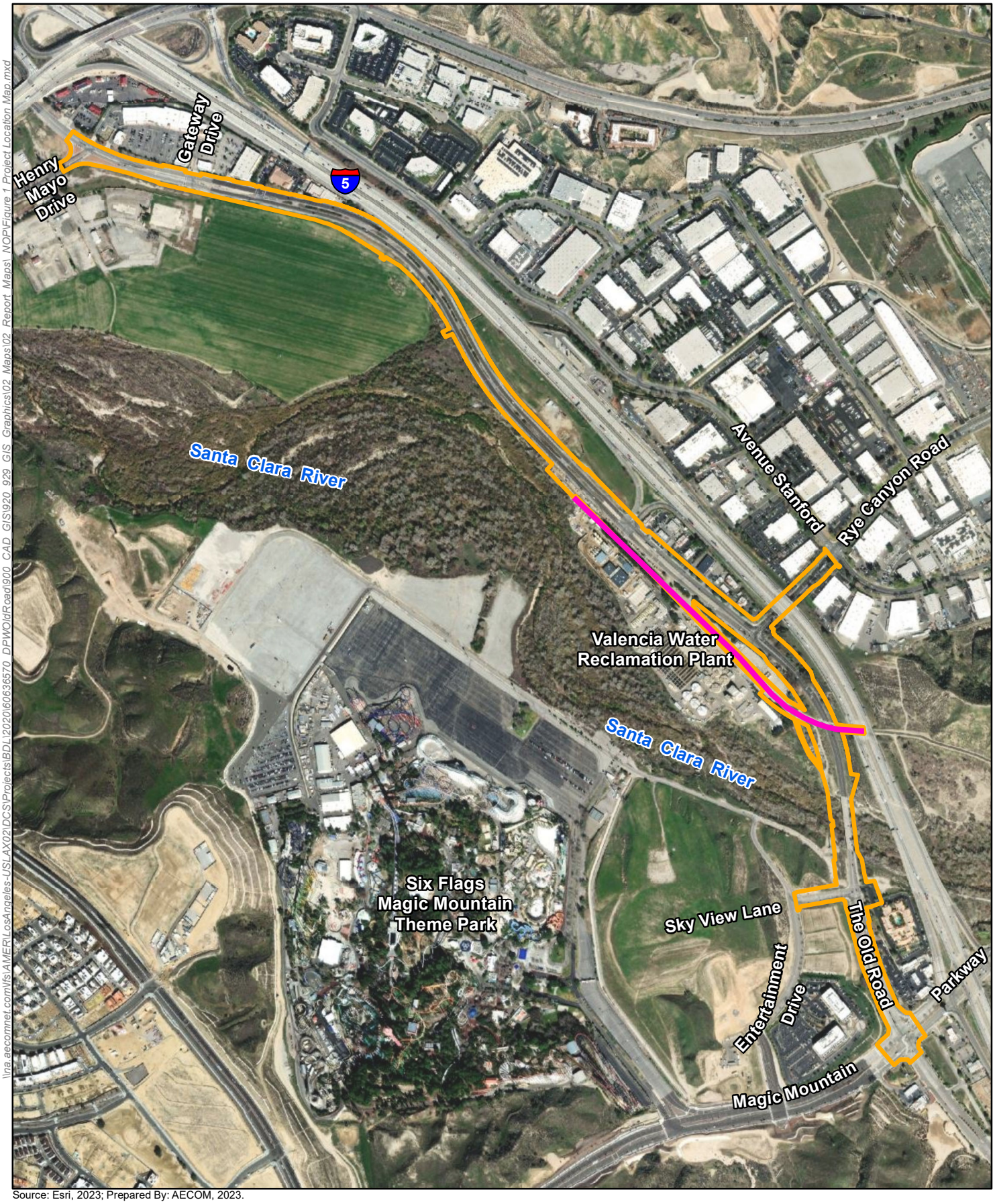

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Source: Esri, 2023; Prepared By: AECOM, 2023.

0 500 1,000 Feet

Project Limit

Multi-Use Trail

Figure 1

Project Location Map

Appendix F. USFWS Species List

United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Ventura Fish And Wildlife Office
2493 Portola Road, Suite B
Ventura, CA 93003-7726
Phone: (805) 644-1766 Fax: (805) 644-3958
Email Address: FW8VenturaSection7@FWS.Gov
https://www.fws.gov/Ventura

In Reply Refer To: January 02, 2024
Project Code: 2024-0031581
Project Name: The Old Road Over Santa Clara River and Southern Pacific Transportation Company Bridge Et Al Project

Subject: List of threatened and endangered species that may occur in your proposed project location or may be affected by your proposed project

To Whom It May Concern:

The enclosed species list identifies threatened, endangered, proposed, and candidate species, as well as proposed and final designated critical habitat, that may occur within the boundary of your proposed project and/or may be affected by your proposed project. The species list fulfills the requirements of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) under section 7(c) of the Endangered Species Act (Act) of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*).

New information based on updated surveys, changes in the abundance and distribution of species, changed habitat conditions, or other factors could change this list. Please feel free to contact us if you need more current information or assistance regarding the potential impacts to federally proposed, listed, and candidate species and federally designated and proposed critical habitat. Please note that under 50 CFR 402.12(e) of the regulations implementing section 7 of the Act, the accuracy of this species list should be verified after 90 days. This verification can be completed formally or informally as desired. The Service recommends that verification be completed by visiting the IPaC website at regular intervals during project planning and implementation for updates to species lists and information. An updated list may be requested through IPaC by completing the same process used to receive the enclosed list.

The purpose of the Act is to provide a means whereby threatened and endangered species and the ecosystems upon which they depend may be conserved. Under sections 7(a)(1) and 7(a)(2) of the Act and its implementing regulations (50 CFR 402 *et seq.*), Federal agencies are required to utilize their authorities to carry out programs for the conservation of threatened and endangered species and to determine whether projects may affect threatened and endangered species and/or designated critical habitat.

A Biological Assessment is required for construction projects (or other undertakings having similar physical impacts) that are major Federal actions significantly affecting the quality of the human environment as defined in the National Environmental Policy Act (42 U.S.C. 4332(2)(c)). For projects other than major construction activities, the Service suggests that a biological evaluation similar to a Biological Assessment be prepared to determine whether the project may affect listed or proposed species and/or designated or proposed critical habitat. Recommended contents of a Biological Assessment are described at 50 CFR 402.12.

If a Federal agency determines, based on the Biological Assessment or biological evaluation, that listed species and/or designated critical habitat may be affected by the proposed project, the agency is required to consult with the Service pursuant to 50 CFR 402. In addition, the Service recommends that candidate species, proposed species and proposed critical habitat be addressed within the consultation. More information on the regulations and procedures for section 7 consultation, including the role of permit or license applicants, can be found in the "Endangered Species Consultation Handbook" at: https://www.fws.gov/sites/default/files/documents/endangered-species-consultation-handbook.pdf

Migratory Birds: In addition to responsibilities to protect threatened and endangered species under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), there are additional responsibilities under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (BGEPA) to protect native birds from project-related impacts. Any activity, intentional or unintentional, resulting in take of migratory birds, including eagles, is prohibited unless otherwise permitted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (50 C.F.R. Sec. 10.12 and 16 U.S.C. Sec. 668(a)). For more information regarding these Acts, see Migratory Bird Permit | What We Do | U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (fws.gov).

The MBTA has no provision for allowing take of migratory birds that may be unintentionally killed or injured by otherwise lawful activities. It is the responsibility of the project proponent to comply with these Acts by identifying potential impacts to migratory birds and eagles within applicable NEPA documents (when there is a federal nexus) or a Bird/Eagle Conservation Plan (when there is no federal nexus). Proponents should implement conservation measures to avoid or minimize the production of project-related stressors or minimize the exposure of birds and their resources to the project-related stressors. For more information on avian stressors and recommended conservation measures, see https://www.fws.gov/library/collections/threats-birds.

In addition to MBTA and BGEPA, Executive Order 13186: *Responsibilities of Federal Agencies to Protect Migratory Birds*, obligates all Federal agencies that engage in or authorize activities that might affect migratory birds, to minimize those effects and encourage conservation measures that will improve bird populations. Executive Order 13186 provides for the protection of both migratory birds and migratory bird habitat. For information regarding the implementation of Executive Order 13186, please visit https://www.fws.gov/partner/council-conservation-migratory-birds.

We appreciate your concern for threatened and endangered species. The Service encourages Federal agencies to include conservation of threatened and endangered species into their project planning to further the purposes of the Act. Please include the Consultation Code in the header of

this letter with any request for consultation or correspondence about your project that you submit to our office.

Attachment(s):

- Official Species List

OFFICIAL SPECIES LIST

This list is provided pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, and fulfills the requirement for Federal agencies to "request of the Secretary of the Interior information whether any species which is listed or proposed to be listed may be present in the area of a proposed action".

This species list is provided by:

Ventura Fish And Wildlife Office
2493 Portola Road, Suite B
Ventura, CA 93003-7726
(805) 644-1766

PROJECT SUMMARY

Project Code: 2024-0031581

Project Name: The Old Road Over Santa Clara River and Southern Pacific Transportation Company Bridge Et Al Project

Project Type: Bridge - Replacement

Project Description: Los Angeles County Public Works (LACPW) proposes to implement the proposed action (improve The Old Road over the Santa Clara River bridge), which would increase regional roadway capacity, reduce congestion, and enhance safety in the project area through implementation of various roadway improvements along The Old Road between Henry Mayo Drive and Magic Mountain Parkway. Additionally, the proposed action would include an extension of the County of Los Angeles Multi-purpose Regional River Trail.

The proposed action is being proposed to improve existing traffic operations and accommodate future traffic projections along the roadway. The improvements primarily consist of reconstruction and widening of The Old Road, replacement of two bridges, reconstruction and widening of Rye Canyon Road, and reconstruction and widening of Sky View Lane, including reconfiguration of its intersection with The Old Road. Current traffic demand in the project area meets or exceeds roadway capacity for many arterial roadways. Substantial increases in traffic demand are anticipated over the next few years based on projected growth in the area. As such, the widening of The Old Road to six lanes is critical to the passage of traffic and emergency vehicles in the area.

The Old Road over the Santa Clara River bridge is currently not high enough to allow the volume of water of a LACPW Capital Flood event (defined as a 50-year burned and bulked storm) to pass under it. Replacing the bridge at a higher elevation would provide a minimum freeboard of 2.5 feet to allow a Capital Flood event to pass under it. Additionally, emergency repairs were performed on the superstructure, piers, and abutment seats of the bridge immediately following the 1994 Northridge earthquake. Nonetheless, the bridge is currently classified as structurally deficient per Federal FHWA standards. Replacing the bridge as part of this proposed action would eliminate that classification.

Project Location:

The approximate location of the project can be viewed in Google Maps: https://www.google.com/maps/@34.43139325,-118.59040825435582,14z

Counties: Los Angeles County, California

ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT SPECIES

There is a total of 16 threatened, endangered, or candidate species on this species list.

Species on this list should be considered in an effects analysis for your project and could include species that exist in another geographic area. For example, certain fish may appear on the species list because a project could affect downstream species.

IPaC does not display listed species or critical habitats under the sole jurisdiction of NOAA Fisheries[1], as USFWS does not have the authority to speak on behalf of NOAA and the Department of Commerce.

See the "Critical habitats" section below for those critical habitats that lie wholly or partially within your project area under this office's jurisdiction. Please contact the designated FWS office if you have questions.

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1. NOAA Fisheries, also known as the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), is an office of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration within the Department of Commerce.

BIRDS

NAME	STATUS
California Condor *Gymnogyps californianus* Population: U.S.A. only, except where listed as an experimental population There is **final** critical habitat for this species. Your location does not overlap the critical habitat. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/8193	Endangered
Coastal California Gnatcatcher *Polioptila californica californica* There is **final** critical habitat for this species. Your location does not overlap the critical habitat. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/8178	Threatened
Least Bell's Vireo *Vireo bellii pusillus* There is **final** critical habitat for this species. Your location overlaps the critical habitat. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/5945	Endangered
Southwestern Willow Flycatcher *Empidonax traillii extimus* There is **final** critical habitat for this species. Your location overlaps the critical habitat. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/6749	Endangered
Yellow-billed Cuckoo *Coccyzus americanus* Population: Western U.S. DPS There is **final** critical habitat for this species. Your location does not overlap the critical habitat. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/3911	Threatened

AMPHIBIANS

NAME	STATUS
Arroyo (=arroyo Southwestern) Toad *Anaxyrus californicus* There is **final** critical habitat for this species. Your location overlaps the critical habitat. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/3762	Endangered

FISHES

NAME	STATUS
Unarmored Threespine Stickleback *Gasterosteus aculeatus williamsoni* No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/7002	Endangered

INSECTS

NAME	STATUS
Monarch Butterfly *Danaus plexippus* No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9743	Candidate

CRUSTACEANS

NAME	STATUS
Riverside Fairy Shrimp *Streptocephalus woottoni* There is **final** critical habitat for this species. Your location does not overlap the critical habitat. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/8148	Endangered
Vernal Pool Fairy Shrimp *Branchinecta lynchi* There is **final** critical habitat for this species. Your location does not overlap the critical habitat. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/498	Threatened

FLOWERING PLANTS

NAME	STATUS
California Orcutt Grass *Orcuttia californica* No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/4923	Endangered
Gambel's Watercress *Rorippa gambellii* No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/4201	Endangered
Marsh Sandwort *Arenaria paludicola* No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/2229	Endangered
Nevin's Barberry *Berberis nevinii* There is **final** critical habitat for this species. Your location does not overlap the critical habitat. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/8025	Endangered
Slender-horned Spineflower *Dodecahema leptoceras* No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/4007	Endangered
Spreading Navarretia *Navarretia fossalis* There is **final** critical habitat for this species. Your location does not overlap the critical habitat. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/1334	Threatened

CRITICAL HABITATS

There are 3 critical habitats wholly or partially within your project area under this office's jurisdiction.

NAME	STATUS
Arroyo (=arroyo Southwestern) Toad *Anaxyrus californicus* https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/3762#crithab	Final
Least Bell's Vireo *Vireo bellii pusillus* https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/5945#crithab	Final
Southwestern Willow Flycatcher *Empidonax traillii extimus* https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/6749#crithab	Final

IPAC USER CONTACT INFORMATION

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