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Governor's Office of Planning & Research

October 7, 2019

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STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

To: All Interested Parties

The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) has prepared the Final Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) for consideration of TDS Telecommunications Corporation application for a Permit to Construct the Olinda Last Mile Underserved Broadband Project (Resolutions T-17411 and T-17517). The Final IS/MND has been prepared in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and incorporates changes resulting from comments submitted during the public review period (April 30, 2019 through May 31, 2019).

Description of the Proposed Project. The proposed project involves the construction of a second-generation, very-high-bit-rate digital subscriber line (VDSL2) fiber-optic network capable of 25 Mbps/5 Mbps (megabit-per-second download/upload) speed. Approximately 15.3 miles of new fiber-optic cable would be buried within protective conduit along existing roads in southwestern Shasta County. The proposed project is partly funded by the California Advance Services Fund (CASF). On October 2, 2013, the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) adopted Resolution T-17411 approving CASF funding of the Grant Application for construction of the proposed project. On May 12, 2016, the CPUC adopted Resolution T-17517 to provide additional CASF funding for the environmental review and completion of the proposed project.

Contents of the Final IS/MND. The Final IS/MND consists of one volume with the Mitigated Negative Declaration statement to be adopted by the CPUC, and the Initial Study, which evaluates the potential significance of project impacts. The Initial Study also contains the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan, to be approved by the CPUC. One new chapter (Chapter 7) has been added to the Initial Study that presents the written comments received during the public review period, and written responses to those comments. Additionally, a new appendix (Appendix F) has been added to the Initial Study to disclose additional information resulting from the public review period and other staff-initiated revisions to the IS/MND that were identified after publication of the Draft IS/MND.

Changes Made to the IS/MND. In response to comments on the Draft IS/MND that was circulated for public review, various changes or additions have been made to the document. Other than insertion of the new Chapter 7 and Appendix F, any text inserted into the Final IS/MND is underlined, and any deleted text is shown in ~~strikeout~~.

Information has been added or revised in the Final IS/MND as follows:

- Minor revisions were made to the Initial Study Checklist Form, Project Description, Biological Resources, Hydrology and Water Quality, and Mandatory Findings Sections.
- A minor revision was made to a mitigation measure in the Biological Resources Section. This revision is also reflected in the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan (MMRP, Chapter 6). Where applicable, revisions were made to the implementation columns in Table 6-1 in the