



Draft
Initial Study and
Mitigated Negative Declaration
Semitropic Water Storage District
Cox Canal Pumping Plant and Intertie
Project

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COMMITMENT & INTEGRITY DRIVE RESULTS

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Proposed Project

In conformance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, Public Resources Code, Division 13, Environmental Protection; the CEQA Guidelines), the Semitropic Water Storage District (Semitropic) is providing this environmental document to disclose the potential environmental effects associated with constructing, operating and maintaining the Cox Canal Pumping Plant Intertie Project (the Project) . The Project would facilitate continued conveyance of surplus water between existing canals owned and operated by Semitropic and the Buena Vista Water Storage District (BVWSD) in lieu of using diesel pumps. Semitropic is the lead agency for CEQA compliance.

Semitropic is in the southern end of California's San Joaquin Valley, in Kern County, approximately 20 miles northwest of Bakersfield. The District lies between Interstate 5 on the west, Highway 99 on the east, the city of Delano to the north, and Bakersfield on the south. The District service area comprises approximately 222,000 gross acres of which 137,800 acres are intensely farmed, highly productive agricultural land.

Semitropic has determined that an Initial Study leading to a Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) is the appropriate CEQA compliance document because all potentially significant impacts described in this environmental document would be reduced to a less-than-significant level with the implementation of the Proposed Project's mitigation measures/environmental commitments.

The purpose of the document is to allow the Semitropic Board of Directors to determine whether or not to approve the Proposed Project, based on the understanding of the associated environmental impacts.

1.2 Need for Project

Semitropic currently lacks permanent and adequate infrastructure to move water into the District from the Cox Canal . Semitropic uses multiple ineffective horizontal diesel pumps to convey excess water during wet years from the BVWSD Cox Canal to the Semitropic Water Storage District Intake Canal. The Project would provide long-term resiliency to drought that would improve/increase reliability of available water supplies, improve water management, and expand conjunctive use management practices. The Proposed Project is expected to increase operation efficiency, reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, and facilitate continued surplus water deliveries to Semitropic and its users for groundwater recharge during wet years to assist with sustainable groundwater management pursuant to the Sustainable Groundwater Management Code, Water Code section 10720 et seq. (SGMA).

CHAPTER 2 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

2.3 Project Overview

This Proposed Project includes construction of a permanent pump station and intertie system, including construction of a pumping plant, 200-cfs in capacity, equipped with two 100-cfs, 200-horsepower (HP) pumps to convey excess wet year surface water supplies from BVWSD to Semitropic WSD, two 48-inch diameter pipelines, and an emergency spillway for spillway protection. The pump station would lift water from BVWSD's Cox Canal into Semitropic's Primary Intake Canal via two 48-inch diameter pipes, connecting the 33 feet between the canals. The location of the proposed permanent pump station is shown in **Figure 2-1**. Project facilities would replace use of diesel-powered pumps and associated facilities.

To secure wet year flows in 2017, Semitropic installed mobile pumps in the Cox Canal to allow delivery of surplus water from BVWSD. Three 45-cfs pumps were rented from a local company, Rain for Rent, and were operated with diesel-driven engines. The proposed permanent facility is anticipated to more efficiently convey wet period BVWSD water to Semitropic through the Cox Canal at an increased rate. The capacities of both the mobile facility and proposed permanent facility are shown in the table below.

Table 2-1: Existing and Proposed Pump Configuration

Type of Facility	Number of Pumps	Pump Capacity (cfs)	Total Capacity (cfs)
Existing Facility (rented)	3	45	135
Proposed Permanent Facility	2	100	200

The Project is estimated to supply Semitropic with up to an annual average of 9,462 acre-feet when normalized over the 30-year life of the project in lieu of using diesel-powered pumps. From an efficiency perspective, the proposed permanent facility improves water supply management by increasing the rate at which water west to east by 48 percent (65 cfs / 135 cfs). The energy efficiency gained from using electric-powered pumps in comparison to the diesel-powered rentals also contributes to the overall better management of water supplies.

2.4 Existing Facilities

The Proposed Project would use two already existing canals to convey flows from the BVWSD to Semitropic. The Project is proposing to utilize BVWSD's Cox Canal to convey the water to the Semitropic's Primary Intake Canal, and Semitropic would in turn deliver water through existing facilities for groundwater recharge and maintenance of beneficial uses by its landowners. Historically, in 2017 and more recently in 2019, the District relied upon pump rentals (three 40-cfs units) to convey wet year water to Semitropic for delivery to its landowners. These pumps are powered by on-site diesel generators, as shown in **Figure 2-2**.

Figure 2-1: Location and Vicinity Map

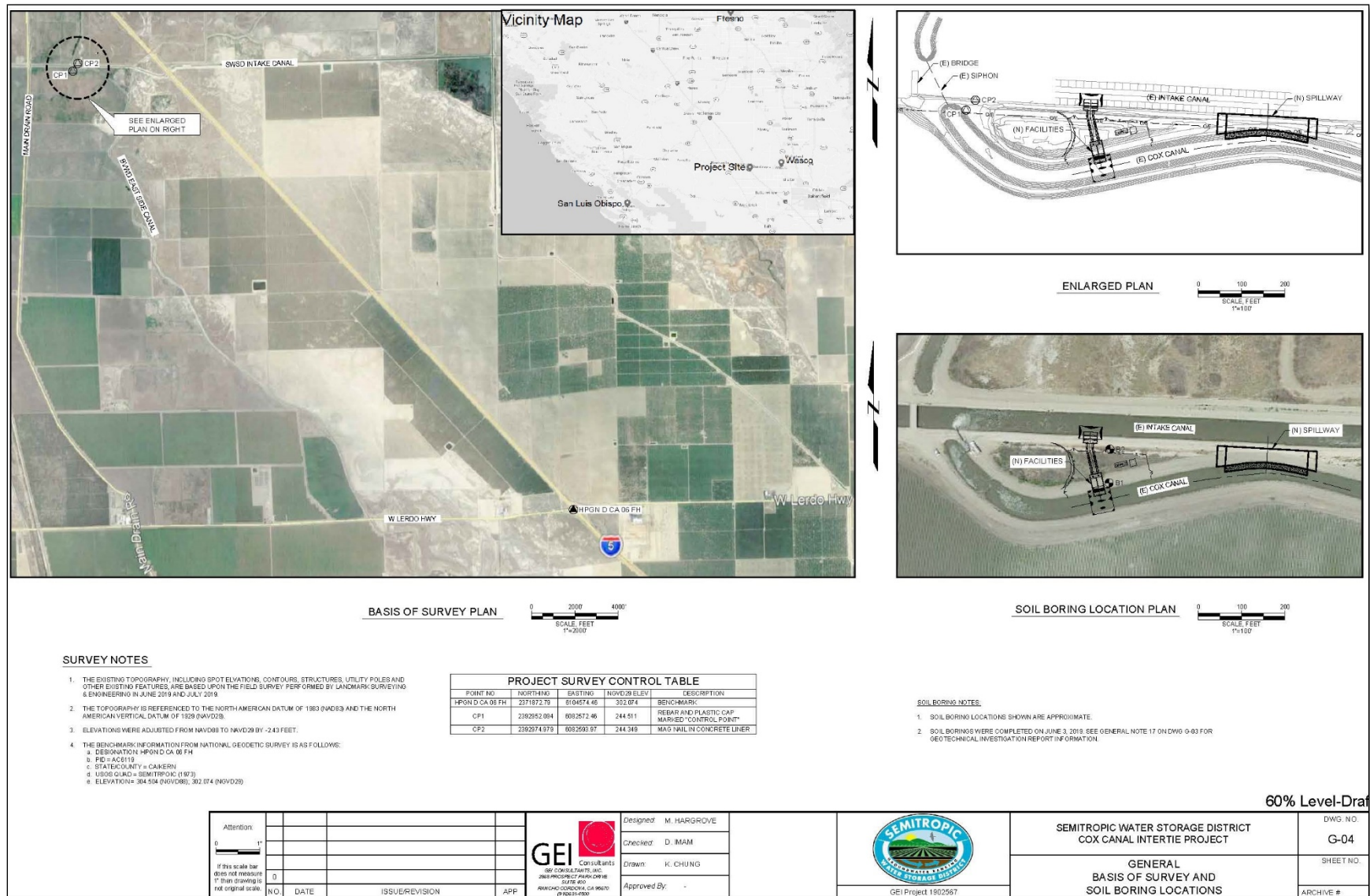


Figure 2-2: Existing Mobile Diesel-Powered Pumps at the Project Site



2.5 Proposed Project

2.5.1 Proposed Project Facility

The Proposed Project includes the construction of an interconnection between Semitropic and BVWSD, including a pump station (Cox Canal Pump Station), off of the BV Cox Canal, an outlet structure at the Semitropic Intake Canal, and a spillway to convey water from the Cox Canal to the Intake Canal to provide spill protection in the event that a power outage prevents pumping. Water would be delivered via the existing BVWSD Cox Canal, then lifted via the Cox Canal Pump Station, for delivery to the Semitropic Intake Canal, which is the primary conveyance artery for ultimately delivery and beneficial use via existing Semitropic facilities.

The Cox Canal Pump Station is a canal lift station to be located on the eastern side, within the Cox Canal channel, and would consist of a reinforced concrete structure with an operating platform, miscellaneous metalwork, and two low-head, high volume pumping units (each 100 cfs), discharge manifold piping (connecting the Cox Canal to the Intake Canal), metering and appurtenances and electrical equipment, all within a chain-link fenced enclosure. The yard area within the enclosure would be topped with crushed rock and would be accessed via the crushed rock road atop the canal levees. Energy-efficient pumps and motors would be selected as appropriate.

The outlet structure is a concrete structure that is proposed to be located on the southern levee of the Semitropic Intake Canal, just downstream of the discharge pipelines from the Cox Canal Pump Station. The outlet structure would provide the energy dissipation needed when discharging max flows into the Semitropic Intake Canal.

The spillway would be a reinforced concrete broad crested weir type that is about 190 ft wide at the bottom and about 35 ft long at its centerline. The spillway would be designed for heavy traffic loading so it that maintenance equipment can drive on it. The side slopes would be 10:1 (10 percent) for ease of vehicle access. The spillway would provide spill protection/mitigation in the event of a power failure. If water has been conveyed into the Cox Canal to be pumped into the Intake Canal and the pumps are out of service, the spillway would allow high water levels in the Cox Canal to spill into the Intake Canal for beneficial use.

A plot plan and layout of the Cox Canal Pump Station is shown in **Figure 2-3**. The location of the proposed spillway is shown in **Figure 2-4**.

Figure 2-3: Cox Canal Pump Station Site Plan

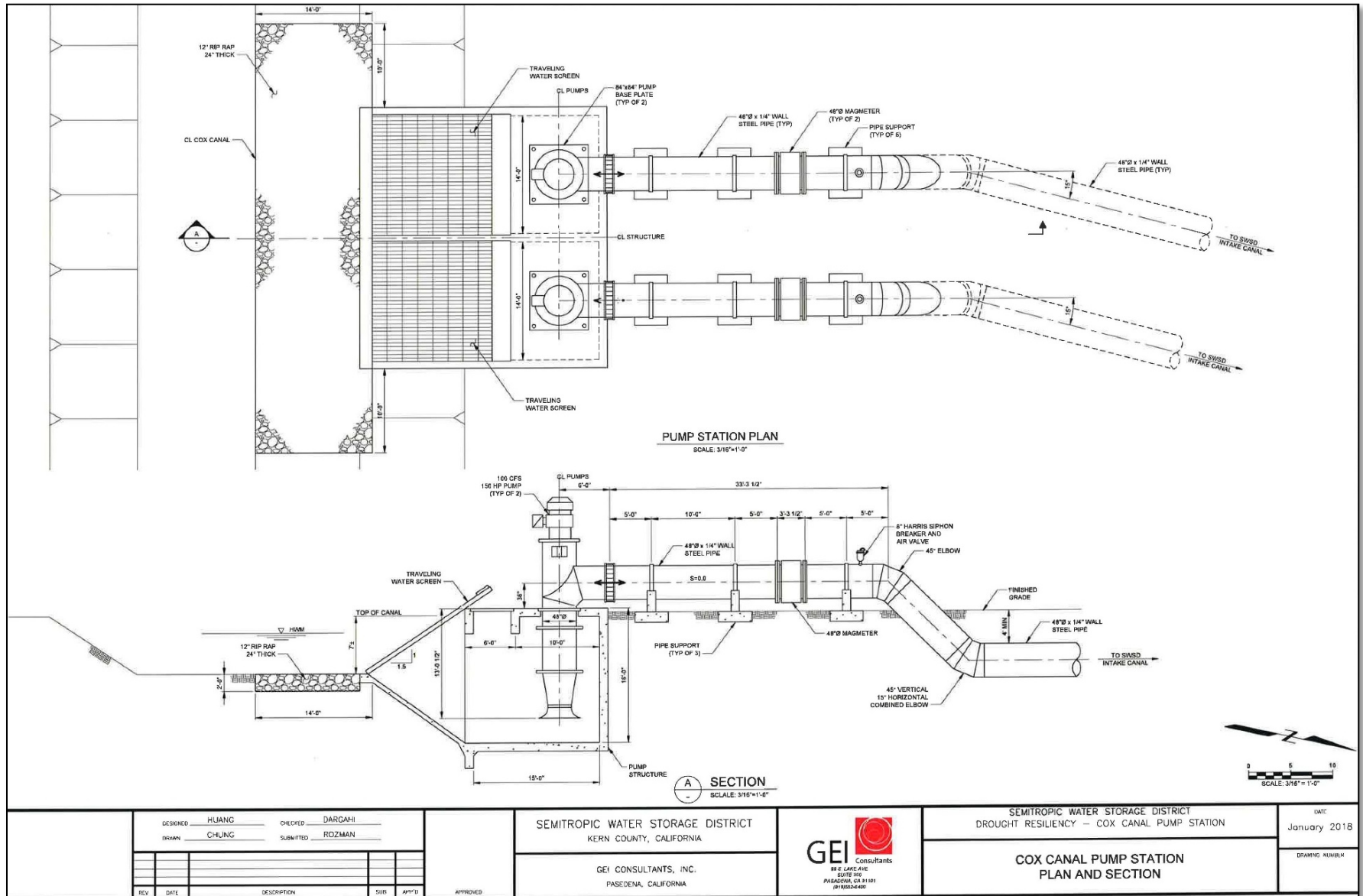
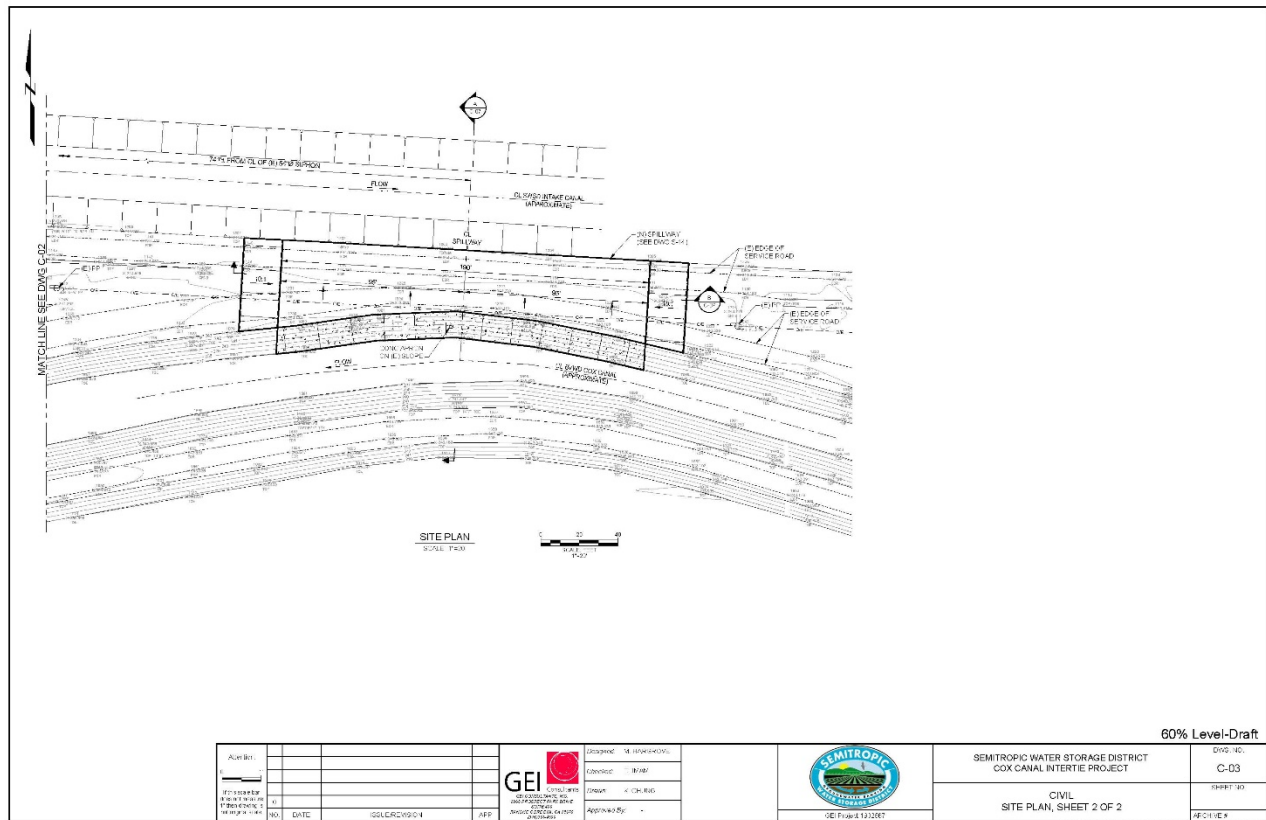


Figure 2-4: Spillway Location



2.6 Construction Methods

The Proposed Project would be constructed using a variety of traditional construction methods and equipment and would occur in the following phases:

- Mobilization to the site;
- BMP implementation and setup;
- Clearing and grubbing of vegetation (as needed);
- Surface scarification (loosen top six inches of topsoil);
- Backfill of project site as needed; borrow material would be imported as needed from the existing borrow site, for construction of the earthen pad;
- Construction yard setup including using temporary chain-link fencing for security and storage of materials and equipment. Equipment stored on site may include small generator, portable lighting, portable toilet facility, and other construction equipment as needed;
- Lowering of water levels of existing Intake Canal, and placement of earthen berms on either side of the construction of the outlet structure, for containment of any nuisance water;
- Removal of existing canal lining panels for outlet structure;
- Excavation for intake structure, outlet structure, and discharge pipelines (all work in the canals is to take place during dry conditions while the canals are empty);
- Construction of reinforced concrete spillway;

-
- Construction/installation of foundation structures and reinforced concrete inlet and outlet structures, including trashrack or waterscreens;
 - Installation of pumps, motors, miscellaneous metalwork, piping, pipe supports, valves, flow meters, electrical equipment shade structure, reinforced concrete equipment pad, electrical components, control components, and SCADA equipment;
 - Painting and coating;
 - Erection of perimeter fencing and gates;
 - Final grading and placement of gravel surfacing;
 - Performance of startup, testing and commissioning; and
 - Demobilization of the site.

During construction, access to the Project would be provided by existing public roads and unpaved canal access roads including Main Drain Road and the canal access roads that parallel the Cox Canal and Semitropic Intake Canal.

2.6.1 Equipment / Staging / Workers

Construction of the proposed Project would require heavy equipment. The final equipment requirements would be determined by the construction contractor, but may include the following:

- Tractor Scarifier
- Excavator
- Loader
- Crane
- Dump Trucks
- Dozer
- Grader
- Concrete Trucks
- Concrete Pump
- Vibratory Rollers
- Vibratory Compactors
- Small Generators
- Pick-up Trucks

2.6.2 Schedule

The design/engineering work is expected to be completed in March 2020, followed by solicitation of sealed bids and award of the Project in July 2020. Construction is expected to begin immediately after the environmental compliance work has been completed, which is expected to occur in August 2020, with completion of construction expected by December 2021.

2.7 Operation and Maintenance

2.7.1 Operation

In general, the Proposed Project is expected to operate when surplus water is available from the neighboring water district, BVWSD, during relatively wet years. Based on historical records, this occurs, on average, three out of every

10 years. In years when surplus water is available, water would be delivered, as part of ongoing BVWSD operations, via their East Side Canal to the Cox Canal (the East side Canal bifurcates into the Cox Canal near the proposed Project site), then lifted, via the Cox Canal Pump Station, to the District's Intake Canal. Once the water is lifted to the District's Intake Canal, the primary conveyance artery, the water would be conveyed via existing canals for delivery, recharge and beneficial use by the District landowners (see **Figure 2-5**). The Project is expected to operate 24 hours per day, 7 days per week for about 3 months in each year when surplus water is available.

2.7.2 Maintenance

Maintenance of the Project would primarily involve regular inspections by field staff of the pump station, discharge pipeline, intake structure, and existing canals, predominantly at times when the Project is in operation. It is expected that one existing field staff would be required to operate and maintain the facilities. Operation and maintenance activities for the existing conveyance canals would not be change and would follow the ongoing practices. Below is a description of maintenance activities for each facility type.

Cox Canal Pump Station

The pump station would be subject to periodic visual inspections and patrols when in operation, with access generally provided by driving the adjacent operating roads. When not in use, the pumps would be exercised for short periods (as necessary) each year to ensure operational readiness. Maintenance activities would include the following:

- Lubrication of pumps, motors, and control valves, with cleaning, testing, and replacement of electrical components as required;
- Removal of accumulated debris from trash rack(s), stacking debris for drying, and disposal of debris after drying;
- Weed abatement around pump station sites, including mowing, grading, and spot treatment with herbicides;
- Washing pump head and base plate, manifold piping, and all other aboveground facilities as necessary;
- Painting of all metal surfaces including pumps, motors, and exposed piping and appurtenances from time to time to avoid corrosion and for aesthetic purposes;
- Removal of accumulated sediment from the pump sump;
- Replenishment of gravel surfacing around plant sites; and
- Repair or replacement of pumps, motors, valves, and electrical equipment.
- External or internal repairs of discharge pipe.

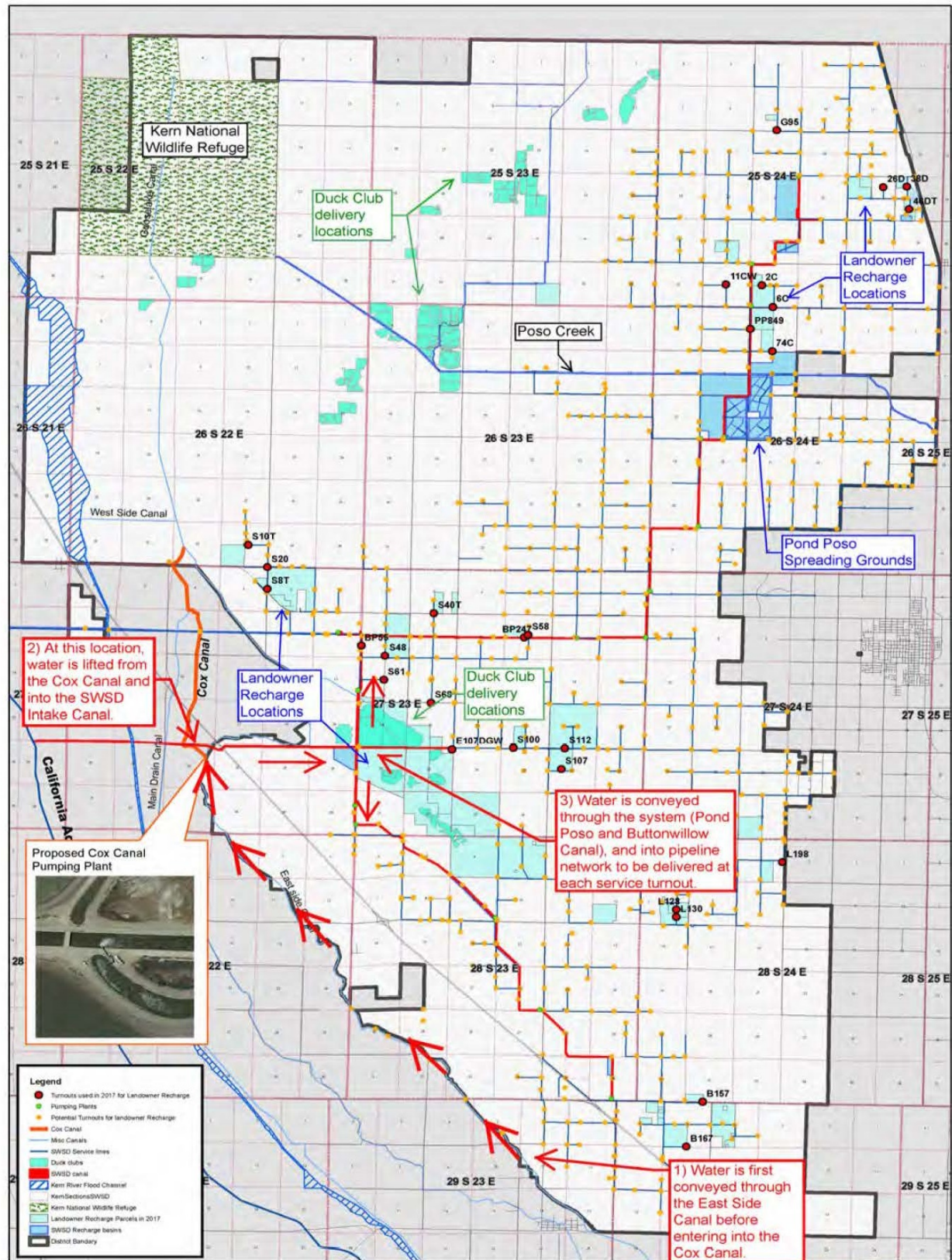
Outlet Structure

The outlet structure would require periodic visual inspection, when in operation. Access to the site would include driving on County Roads and along the existing canal operating roads. General maintenance activities would include the following:

- Regular inspection of intake structure
- Periodic inspection and repair of the concrete liner around the outlet structure, if needed.

When the Project is in operation, it is expected that site visits, to be conducted twice per day, would be required for operation and maintenance. The annual energy use is expected to be 864,000 kWh per year, based upon pumping 24 hours per day, 7 days a week for 3 months.

Figure 2-5: Conveyance of Water



CHAPTER 3 ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

1. **Project Title:** Cox Canal Pumping Plant and Intertie Project
2. **Lead Agency Name:** Semitropic Water Storage District
3. **Contact Person and Phone Number:** Jason Gianquinto; Phone: 661-758-5113
4. **Project Location:** The Project is approximately 0.75 miles west of Interstate-5 and 0.5 miles east of Main Drain Road. It is 6.25 miles south-south east of Lost Hills, and approximately 15 miles west of Wasco, CA.
5. **5. Project Sponsor's Name and Address:** Semitropic Water Storage District
1101 Central Ave.
PO Box 8032
Wasco
6. **General Plan Designation:** Intensive Agriculture
7. **Zoning:** Special District
8. **Description of Project:** The Proposed Project would replace three diesel-powered pumps with 45 cfs capacity each with two 100-cfs capacity grid powered pumps to move water from the BVWSD Cox Canal to the Semitropic Intake Canal during wet years.
9. **Surrounding Land Uses and Setting:** The Proposed Project site is located in a predominantly agricultural area. Properties bordering the project site are agricultural fields.
10. **Other public agencies whose approval is required (e.g., permits, financing approval, or participation agreement.)**

No permits are expected to be required. Semitropic is not subject to Kern County's jurisdiction with regard to building and grading permits relative to water resource projects such as the proposed Project. Accordingly, no County issued permits would be required.

Environmental Factors Potentially Affected

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

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

DETERMINATION: (To be completed by Lead Agency)

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

	I find that the proposed Project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared
X	I find that although the proposed Project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the Project have been made by or agreed to by the Project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
	I find that the proposed Project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.
	I find that the proposed Project MAY have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.
	I find that although the proposed Project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed Project, nothing further is required.


 Signature
 Jason Gianquinto
 Printed Name

January 24, 2020
 Date

Semitropic Water Storage District
 For

3.1 Introduction

Using a modified CEQA Environmental Checklist Form as presented in Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines (14 CCR §15000 et seq.) as a framework, with the addition of Environmental Justice, this section identifies the potential environmental impacts of the Proposed Project. Each environmental issue analyzed in this document provides brief background information and discussion of the environmental setting or “affected environment” to help the reader understand the conditions present prior to the implementation of the Proposed Project.

3.2 Environmental Impact Designations

The draft environmental document is intended to inform the public of the potential impacts or benefits that would result from implementation of the Proposed Project. Therefore, this document applies a set of significance criteria for each issue area to determine potential effects and appropriate mitigation measures/environmental commitments. For this checklist, the following designations are used to distinguish between levels of significance of potential impacts to each resource area in accordance with CEQA Guidelines:

- **Potentially Significant.** Adverse environmental consequences with the potential to be significant according to the threshold criteria identified for the resource, even after mitigation strategies are applied and/or an adverse effect that could be significant and for which no mitigation has been identified. If potentially significant impacts are identified, an EIR must be prepared to meet the requirements of CEQA.
- **Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation is Incorporated.** Adverse environmental consequences with the potential to be significant but can be reduced to less than significant levels through the application of identified mitigation strategies that have not already been incorporated into the Proposed Project.
- **Less than Significant.** Potential adverse environmental consequences have been identified. However, they are not so adverse as to meet the significance threshold criteria for a resource. Therefore, no mitigation measures are required.
- **No Impact.** No adverse environmental consequences have been identified for the resource or the consequences are negligible or undetectable. Therefore, no mitigation measures are required.

3.3 Mitigation Measures

CEQA requires that a distinction be made between mitigation measures that are included in the Proposed Project and other measures proposed by the lead, responsible, or trustee agencies, or other persons that are not included but that the lead agency determines could reasonably be expected to reduce adverse impacts if required as conditions of project approval. Mitigation measures presented in this environmental document, proposed by the lead agency, would be implemented to reduce potential impacts to less-than-significant levels. Compliance would occur through implementation of a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program.

The following sections provide analyses of potential impacts for each resource area, determine the levels of potential environmental impact for each area, and present mitigation measures/environmental commitments, where needed, to reduce potential environmental impacts to less than significant.

3.4 Aesthetics

Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?				X
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?				X
c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point). If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?				X
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?			X	

Discussion

Setting

The Proposed Project is located in an unincorporated area of the Kern County. The nearest incorporated city is Wasco, approximately 15 miles east. Lost Hills, a census designated place with a population of 2,412 people, is approximately six miles north-northwest (American Fact Finder, 2010). No other populated or residential areas are nearby the project site. The visual quality of the Proposed Project area is defined by agricultural setting consisting of agricultural fields and canals. There are no designated scenic vistas or scenic highways located within the Proposed Project area or vicinity. **Figure 3-1** and **Figure 3-2** show the existing visual character of the Proposed Project site and existing pumps. The visual quality is defined by agricultural uses in the vicinity of the site and includes the two canals.

Figure 3-1: Proposed Project Site – Looking South



View looking south at an existing mobile pumps, generator, and fuel tank.

Figure 3-2: Proposed Project Site – Looking East



View looking east next to Cox Canal.

Water in this picture is being pumped from Cox Canal into the Semitropic Intake Canal

Impacts

a, b, c, d) Construction

During construction, large equipment such as backhoes, and crane, and work trucks would be on site. However, the project site is not in or near a scenic vista and is located in an agricultural area with no scenic resources such as trees, rock outcroppings, or historical buildings. Additionally, the Project site is not visible from a public viewpoint, so there would be no impact..

The Proposed Projects construction would not create a new source of substantial light or glare that could affect day or nighttime views in the areas. Construction activities are planned to be conducted during normal construction hours (7am-5pm), and the Proposed Project site is not located near any light sensitive communities, areas, or residences.

Operation and Maintenance

Once constructed, the intake screen, top of the pumps and approximately 33 feet of two pipelines would be visible. Above-ground facilities would not be more visible or obtrusive than current facilities. The Proposed Project would not degrade existing visual characteristics or quality of public views and would not alter the visual character of the area, so there would be no operational impact. The Proposed Project does include light fixtures mounted on light poles around the facility. These lights would include photocells to turn lights on at night and off during the day. Other lighting may be included under the electrical equipment shade structure and would be operated with manual switches. This additional light source would have a less than significant impact because the site is surrounded by agricultural fields and there are no residential, commercial, or scenic vistas near the project location.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is necessary.

3.5 Agriculture and Forestry Resources

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?				X
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?				X
c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?				X
d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?				X
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?				X

Discussion

Setting

The Proposed Project is located in an unincorporated area in Kern County. Land around the Proposed Project site is agricultural. While the Kern County General Plan contains a land use designation map that specifies the Project site as Intensive Agriculture (Map Code 8.1), parcel data for the Project site (APN 069-240-37) specifies the parcel as a Special District (code 6050) because it is owned by Semitropic. Important Farmland mapping for Kern County shows the site as "Nonagricultural and Natural Vegetation" (Department of Conservation 2016). Specifically, the Proposed Project site is a small piece of land that lies between the Semitropic Water Storage District Intake Canal and Cox Canal. Canals and canal service roads bound the small project site, which is not in agricultural use. There is no forest land in the area.

Impacts

a-e) Construction, Operation and Maintenance

As the Proposed Project does not occur within agricultural or forest lands, it would not convert Important Farmland, conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use/forest land, result in the loss/conversion of forest land, or involve other changes in the existing environment which could result in the conversion of farmland or forest land. The project would provide water for agricultural use and support existing agricultural land uses and reduce the risk of the fallowing of Farmland due to SGMA in the Semitropic service area. No impacts would occur.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is necessary.

3.6 Air Quality

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?				X
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?			X	
c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?				X
d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?				X

Discussion

Setting

The Proposed Project area lies within the San Joaquin Valley Air Basin (SJAB). The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD) is the local agency responsible for developing and implementing the clean air plan (CAP) for attainment and maintenance of the ambient air quality standards for SJAB. The SJVAPCD regulates most air pollutant sources, except for motor vehicles, marine vessels, aircraft, and construction equipment, which are regulated by the California Air Resources Board (CARB) or the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). State and local government projects are subject to SJVAPCD requirements if the sources are regulated by the SJVAPCD.

SJVAPCD's *Small Project Analysis Level (SPAL)* guidance document assesses CEQA applicability, significance of impacts, and potential mitigation of significant impacts for small projects. The guidance document establishes thresholds of significance for criteria pollutant emissions, and pre-quantified emissions and specifies a size below which it is reasonable to conclude that a project would not exceed applicable thresholds of significance for criteria pollutants. For the purposes of determining applicability for SPAL analysis the Proposed Project is considered "General Light Industry". Projects in this category with less than 1,506 vehicle trips per day are considered as Small Projects.

a, b) Construction, Operation and Maintenance

Project construction would generate emissions associated with grading activities and use of diesel equipment. The contractor would be required to comply with all mandatory Air District rules including fugitive dust regulations and with CARB off-road diesel vehicle regulations. With these requirements and given the small size of the project, construction emissions can be assumed to be less than significant. The pumps would be operated by electrical power and would not generate emissions. The only source of operational emissions would be trips for vehicle maintenance. Operation and maintenance of the facility would require two vehicle trips per day during operation, which would occur approximately three months a year. The Proposed Project is therefore considered a Small Project and would not exceed applicable thresholds of significance for criteria pollutants.

c) Construction, Operation and Maintenance

The Proposed Project is not near any habitable structures, residential, commercial structures, or near any sensitive receptors. Therefore, there would be no impact.

d) Construction, Operation and Maintenance

The Proposed Project would convey surface water and would not generate odors.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is necessary.

3.7 Biological Resources

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?		X		
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?				X
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?				X
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?			X	
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?			X	
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?				X

Discussion

Setting

The Proposed Project is located within an unincorporated area of Kern County on a small piece of land between the Cox Canal and Semitropic Primary Intake Canal. A biological assessment and survey of the project site was conducted by ICF. Land cover types in the survey area include irrigation canals, gravel/bare ground, and a degraded alkali weed-salt grass sink. Prior to the reconnaissance field survey, ICF biologists conducted a database and literature review of sensitive biological resources known to occur within the Project region (approximately a 10-mile buffer around the survey area). Databases included the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's California Natural Diversity Database and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) database of Information for Planning and Conservation. The database and literature review reported that 16 special-status plants and 35 special-status wildlife species are known to occur or have a low, and in few cases moderate, potential to occur within Project region.

A botanist/wetland ecologist and a wildlife biologist conducted a reconnaissance biological field survey on August 9, 2019. The biologists documented the survey area's existing conditions and the plant and wildlife species observed. No special-status plant or wildlife species were observed. The field survey coincided with the blooming period of six of the special-status plant species that are known to occur in the Project region; two special-status plant species known to occur within the Project region lacked suitable habitat in the survey area.

An isolated seasonal wetland of approximately 0.7 acres, characterized as a degraded alkali weed-salt sink, was mapped in the survey area. The sink is surrounded by access roads and the Cox Canal and Semitropic Primary Intake Canal. Both canals are manmade structures, and neither is regarded as a water of the United States or water of the state, and neither is under the jurisdiction of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. The wetland is thus an isolated feature and not under U.S. Army Corps of Engineers jurisdiction. The isolated wetland is not considered a water of the state because it is an artificial feature subject to ongoing maintenance and is less than an acre in size (California State Water Resources Control Board 2019).

During surveys of the Project site no special status wildlife species were observed, however, vegetation in and around the survey area provides suitable nesting and foraging habitat for bird species that are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and the California Fish and Game Code.

a) Construction, Operation and Maintenance

The Proposed Project includes facilities that would be constructed in the vicinity of habitat that could support listed species. Table 3-1 lists the species with potential habitat in the vicinity, their type, and status.

Table 3-1: Species with Potential Habitat in the Vicinity of Proposed Project Facilities

Species	Type	Status	Potential for Presence
Horn's Milk-Vetch	Vegetation	California Rare Plan Rank 1B.1	Not present
Heartscale	Vegetation	California Rare Plan Rank 1B.2	Not present
Earlimart Orache	Vegetation	California Rare Plan Rank 1B.2	Not present
Lost Hills Crownscale	Vegetation	California Rare Plan Rank 1B.2	Not present
Lesser Saltscale	Vegetation	California Rare Plan Rank 1B.1	Not present
Subtle Orache	Vegetation	California Rare Plan Rank 1B.2	Not present
California Jewelflower	Vegetation	California Rare Plan Rank 1B.1	Low Potential
Recurved Larkspur	Vegetation	California Rare Plan Rank 1B.2	Low Potential
Kern Mallow	Vegetation	California Rare Plan Rank 1B.2	Low Potential
Coulter's Goldfields	Vegetation	California Rare Plan Rank 1B.1	Low Potential
Munz's Tidy-Tips	Vegetation	California Rare Plan Rank 1B.2	Low Potential
San Joaquin Woollythreads	Vegetation	California Rare Plan Rank 1B.2	Low Potential
California Alkali Grass	Vegetation	California Rare Plan Rank 1B.2	Low Potential
Kings Gold	Vegetation	California Rare Plan Rank 1B.1	Low Potential
Crotch Bumble Bee	Insect	State Candidate for Listing	Low Potential
Western Spadefoot Toad	Amphibian	State Species of Special Concern	Low Potential

Species	Type	Status	Potential for Presence
California Glossy Snake	Reptile	State Species of Special Concern	Low Potential
Western Pond Turtle	Reptile	State Species of Special Concern	Low Potential
Blunt-Nosed Leopard Lizard	Reptile	State and Federally Endangered Species	Moderate Potential
Blainville's Horned Lizard	Reptile	State and Federally Endangered Species	Low Potential
San Joaquin Coachwhip	Reptile	State Species of Special Concern	Low Potential
Burrowing Owl	Bird	State Species of Special Concern	Low Potential
Mountain Plover	Bird	State Species of Special Concern	Low Potential
Loggerhead Shrike	Bird	State Species of Special Concern	Low Potential
Le Conte's Thrasher	Bird	State Species of Special Concern	Low Potential
Nelson's Antelope Squirrel	Mammal	State Listed as Threatened	Moderate Potential
Giant Kangaroo Rat	Mammal	State and Federally Endangered Species	Low Potential
Short-Nosed Kangaroo Rat	Mammal	State Species of Special Concern	Low Potential
Tipton Kangaroo Rat	Mammal	State and Federally Endangered Species	Low Potential
Western Mastiff Bat	Mammal	State Species of Special Concern	Low Potential
American Badger	Mammal	State Species of Special Concern	Low Potential
Tulare Grasshopper Mouse	Mammal	State Species of Special Concern	Low Potential
San Joaquin Kit Fox	Mammal	Federally Endangered Species	Moderate Potential

No federally proposed or designated critical habitat for any listed species occurs in the survey area.

Although habitat on site is limited, no sensitive species were observed during surveys, and the project site is isolated by roads and canals, it is possible that mobile species could travel through the site during construction and could be harmed by construction activities. While construction of the Proposed Project could cause adverse effects to individuals of species identified as a candidate, sensitive or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, implementation of Mitigation Measures BIO-1 through BIO-6 would ensure that plants and wildlife are protected during construction resulting in less than significant impacts.

b, c) Construction, Operation and Maintenance

The Proposed Project would partially be constructed within the Cox Canal and Semitropic Primary Intake Canal. As described above, the Project site and adjacent canals are not riparian habitat, sensitive natural communities or state or federally protected wetlands. Therefore, there would be no impact on riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community or any adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands.

d) Construction, Operation and Maintenance

Because the Project site is on a small isolated parcel surrounded by access roads and canals the Proposed Project would not interfere substantially with the movement of migratory fish or wildlife. Non-special-status migratory birds could nest in or adjacent to the survey area based on the presence of suitable nesting habitat such as the grasslands, scrub, and telephone poles. However, implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-5 would ensure protection of nesting birds, resulting in less than significant impacts.

e) Construction, Operation and Maintenance

The Proposed Project does not conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance. Kern County does not have policies or ordinances for tree protection, and no trees would be removed for the Project. With implementation of Mitigation Measures BIO-1 through BIO-6, biological resources at the site would be protected.

f) Construction, Operation and Maintenance

There are no adopted Habitat Conservation Plans, Natural Community Conservation Plans or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plans in the Project area. No conflict is anticipated with any conservation plans, and thus no impacts would occur.

Mitigation Measures

Mitigation Measure-BIO 1: Provide Environmental Awareness Training

Semitropic shall conduct environmental awareness training for all construction personnel. Training shall be done by a biological monitor or other qualified trainer. The trainer will be responsible for conducting an environmental awareness training for all Project personnel and for new personnel as they are added to the Project, to familiarize workers with surrounding common and special-status species and their habitats, applicable regulatory requirements, and mitigation measures that must be implemented to avoid or minimize potential impacts on biological resources. The training will include a printed handout that will be handed to all personnel. All employees and contractors will be required to sign a sign-in sheet indicating that they attended the training and understand the material presented. The handout will contain the following information.

- Descriptions of special-status species (including photographs) and their habitat needs.
- An explanation of the protected status of each special-status species and legal obligations.
- Mitigation measures that will be followed to avoid and/or reduce impacts on the special-status species during all project activities and the penalties for not following the avoidance and mitigation measures.
- Instructions on the procedures that will be implemented if a special-status species is found onsite.

The environmental training will also cover general restrictions and guidelines that must be followed by all construction personnel to reduce or avoid effects on sensitive biological resources during project construction. General restrictions and guidelines that must be followed by construction personnel are listed below.

- Ground disturbance will be minimized to the maximum extent practicable and confined to the designated work area.

-
- Construction activities will cease 0.5 hour before sunset and will not begin prior to 0.5 hour before sunrise.
 - To prevent inadvertent entrapment of special-status wildlife during construction, all excavated, steep-walled holes or trenches more than 6 inches deep will be provided with one or more escape ramps constructed of earth fill or wooden planks and will be inspected by a qualified biologist prior to being filled.
 - Inspect open trenches, pits, and under construction equipment and material left onsite in the morning and evening to look for special-status wildlife that may have become trapped or are seeking refuge.
 - No canine or feline pets or firearms (except those accompanying federal, state, or local law enforcement officers and security personnel) will be permitted at the project site.
 - No monofilament plastic mesh or line will be used for erosion control. Approved erosion control material includes burlap-wrapped fiber rolls and sediment fencing.
 - All vehicle parking will be restricted to roads within the designated work area on or adjacent to existing roads.
 - All workers will ensure their food scraps, paper wrappers, food containers, cans, bottles, and other trash from the project area are deposited in covered or closed trash containers to avoid attracting predators. The trash containers will be removed from the project area at the end of each working day.

Mitigation Measure-BIO-2: Conduct an Early Season Floristic Survey for Special- Status Plant Species

Semitropic shall retain a qualified biologist to conduct a floristic survey timed to coincide with the blooming period of the eight special-status plant species that may not have been blooming or evident during the August 9, 2019 reconnaissance survey. The floristic survey will follow methods described in *Protocols for Surveying and Evaluating Impacts to Special Status Native Plant Populations and Sensitive Natural Communities* (CDFW 2018d).

Mitigation Measure-BIO 3: Compensate for Permanent Impacts on Special-Status Plants

If special-status plants cannot be avoided, Semitropic will consult with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and/or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to determine the appropriate compensatory measures for impacts that could result from project construction or operation.

Mitigation Measure-BIO 4: Conduct Preconstruction Surveys for Special-status Amphibians and Reptiles.

To avoid potential injury or mortality of western spadefoot toad, western pond turtle, California glossy snake, coast horned lizard, San Joaquin coachwhip, and blunt-nosed leopard lizard, Semitropic will retain a qualified biologist to conduct a preconstruction survey of the entire survey area, including open trenches, for special-status amphibians and reptiles no more than 24 hours prior to ground disturbance.

Information about the location of special-status amphibian and reptiles observed during the preconstruction survey will be included in the environmental awareness training and provided directly to the construction crew working in that area to ensure that areas where special-status animals were observed are inspected each day prior to the start of construction activities to ensure that no special-status animals are present.

Mitigation Measure-BIO 5: Implement Avoidance Measures and Conduct Pre-Construction Nesting Bird Surveys

No more than 1 week prior to the start of Project construction, a qualified biologist will conduct a survey of and around the survey area to determine the presence of nesting activity (the typical nesting season is from February 1 to September 1). If an active nest is found in the survey area, a no-disturbance buffer will be established around the nest site to avoid disturbance or destruction of the nest until the end of the breeding season (August 31) or until after a qualified wildlife biologist determines that the young have fledged and moved out of the nesting substrate (this date varies by species). The extent of these buffers will be determined by the biologist in coordination with USFWS and/or

CDFW, and will depend on the level of construction disturbance, line-of-sight between the nest and the disturbance, ambient levels of noise and other disturbances, and other topographical or artificial barriers. Suitable buffer distances may vary between species.

Mitigation Measure-BIO 6: Conduct Preconstruction Surveys for Special-Status Burrowing Mammals

No less than 14 days but no more than 30 days prior to ground disturbance, a qualified biologist will conduct a preconstruction survey for San Joaquin antelope squirrel, San Joaquin kit fox dens, American badger dens, and potential kangaroo rat burrows within the work area. The surveys for San Joaquin kit fox dens will be conducted within 500 feet of the work area, in accordance with the revised U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Standardized Recommendations for Protection of the Endangered San Joaquin Kit Fox Prior to or During Ground Disturbance (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 2011). Known or potential dens will not be disturbed.

If San Joaquin antelope squirrel, badger dens, potential or known San Joaquin kit fox dens, or kangaroo rat burrows are observed during the survey, CDFW and USFWS, as applicable, will be contacted prior to construction to determine what additional actions are warranted.

3.8 Cultural Resources

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to §15064.5?				X
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?		X		
c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?		X		

Discussion

Setting

A cultural resource inventory of the Proposed Project Area was conducted in August 2019 (ICF 2019) in compliance with both Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The cultural resources inventory included:

- A records search and review of the archaeological, ethnographic, and historical literature;
- Consultation with the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) and Native American representatives from federally recognized tribes;
- Correspondence with other interested parties;
- Examination of historic maps and aerial imagery;
- Archival research; and
- Field surveys.

No archaeological resources were identified within the Project Area as a result of the cultural resources inventory effort. Two built-environment structures are in the Project Area, a segment of the Semitropic Intake Canal and a

segment of the Cox Canal. The Semitropic Intake Canal was built in 1973 by the District, is not 50 years old, and does not meet any NRHP criteria considerations; therefore, it is not a historic property/historical resource. The Cox Canal was determined to be not eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) or the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR).

The construction activities are limited to the horizontal and vertical extent of original construction of the Cox Canal and Semitropic Intake Canal, and the fill material in between these two facilities. While the general area has a moderately high sensitivity for the presence of subsurface cultural resources, the project area has a low probability of subsurface cultural resources being present due to previous construction.

Impacts

a) Construction, Operation and Maintenance

As described in the Cultural Resources Inventory and Evaluation Report, there are no historic properties/historical resources in the Project Area. Therefore, no impact would occur.

b) Construction, Operation and Maintenance

Although no archaeological resources were identified in the survey of the Project Area, it is possible that a previously undiscovered unique archaeological resource could be encountered during construction. Implementation of **Mitigation Measure CR-1** would ensure that any resources discovered during construction are dealt with appropriately. With implementation of mitigation, impacts on archaeological resources would be less than significant.

c) Construction, Operation and Maintenance

Although highly unlikely, there is a potential that human remains could be encountered during construction. Implementation of **Mitigation Measure CR-2** would ensure that any human remains discovered during construction are dealt with appropriately. With implementation of mitigation, impacts on human remains would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

Mitigation Measure CR-1: Halt Construction if Archaeological Resources Uncovered

If cultural resources are discovered during construction, all construction shall immediately stop within 100 feet (of the discovery, the location of the discovery will be marked for avoidance, and efforts will be made to prevent inadvertent destruction of the find. The contractor shall notify Semitropic and consult with a qualified archaeologist for an on-site evaluation. If the site is or appears to be eligible for listing on the NRHP or CRHR, additional mitigation (e.g., further testing for evaluation or data recovery) may be necessary. In the event that resources are discovered, the District shall retain a qualified archaeologist to assess the find and determine whether the resource requires further study. Any previously undiscovered resources found during construction will be recorded on appropriate DPR 523 forms and evaluated for significance under all applicable regulatory criteria.

Mitigation Measure CR-2: Halt construction if human remains uncovered

Section 7050.5(b) of the California Health and Safety code shall be implemented in the event that human remains, or possible human remains, are located project-related construction excavation. It states:

In the event of discovery or recognition of any human remains in any location other than a dedicated cemetery, there shall be no further excavation or disturbance of the site or any nearby area reasonably suspected to overlie adjacent remains until the coroner of the county in which the human remains are discovered has determined, in accordance with Chapter 10 (commencing with Section 27460) of Part 3 of Division 2 of Title 3 of the Government Code, that the remains are not subject to the provisions of Section 27492 of the Government Code or any other related provisions of law concerning investigation of the circumstances, manner and cause of death, and the recommendations concerning treatment and disposition of the human remains have been made to the person responsible for the

excavation, or to his or her authorized representative, in the manner provided in Section 5097.98 of the Public Resources Code.

The County Coroner, upon recognizing the remains as being of Native American origin, is responsible to contact the Native American Heritage Commission within 24 hours. The Commission has various powers and duties to provide for the ultimate disposition of any Native American remains, as does the assigned Most Likely Descendant. Sections 5097.98 and 5097.99 of the Public Resources Code also call for "...protection of inadvertent destruction." To achieve this goal, it is recommended that the construction personnel on the Proposed Project be instructed as to the potential for discovery of cultural or human remains, and both the need for proper and timely reporting of such finds, and the consequences of failure thereof.

3.9 Energy

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?			X	
b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?				X

Discussion

Setting

Mobile pumps that are currently used to convey water are powered by a diesel generator. Electrical power to the site is provided by PG&E.

Impacts

a) Construction, Operation and Maintenance

Construction, operation and maintenance would require energy, but would not entail wasteful, inefficient or unnecessary consumption of energy resources. The Proposed Project would install more energy efficient grid-powered pumps at the facility, which would replace diesel-powered pumps. With the new facility, operations would be more energy efficient than the current use of existing pumps to convey water.

Construction is estimated to require the use of about 10,000 gallons of fuel for equipment, trucks and worker vehicles (GEI 2019). Because of the high cost of fuel, contractors have a built-in incentive to conduct work in an energy-efficient manner, and environmental impacts from wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources are not expected to occur.

The majority of power consumed at the facility would be used by the two 100-cfs pumps, which would operate 24 hours per day for approximately three months out of the year, when water is available for delivery. Estimated annual energy usage is 864,000 kWh/year. Maintenance vehicles trips are expected to use about 700 gallons of fuel each year, but this is expected to be the same or less than the energy use for vehicle trips needed for operation and maintenance of the existing pumps that are currently used. While pumping occurs, Semitropic field staff would perform visual inspections of the facility twice a day to ensure efficient and proper function. Because operational

energy use is expected to be more efficient than the existing pumps, and construction would be conducted as efficiently as possible, no impacts associated with wasteful, inefficient or unnecessary consumption of energy would occur.

b) Construction, Operation and Maintenance

The Proposed Project does not obstruct any state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency. The Kern County General Plan, Chapter 5 Energy Element does not outline any energy efficiency plans or guidelines. No impact associated with obstructing plans for renewable energy or energy efficiency is thus expected to occur.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is necessary.

3.10 Geology and Soils

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant 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.				X
ii. Strong seismic ground shaking?			X	
iii. Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?			X	
iv. Landslides?				X
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?			X	
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?				X
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?				X
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?				X
f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?			X	

Discussion

Setting

The Proposed Project is located in a portion of Kern County that is approximately 3.5 miles from the nearest fault, a pre-Quaternary concealed fault (California Geologic Survey, 2018). Other faults lie approximately 17 miles to the east including the San Andreas fault zone. While the project does not directly overly an active fault, it is within proximity to active faults and seismic activities.

The intensity of ground shaking the Proposed Project area could experience is affected by a number of factors including vicinity to the fault rupture and depth of earthquake, along with the response of the geologic materials. The slope of the project site is approximately 0 to 2 percent, and while the Proposed Project site is small and level.

The Proposed Project site consists of Lokern Clay, saline-alkali, drained soil. This is part of the larger Lokern-Buttonwillow soil (California Geological Survey, 2018). Lokern soils consists of deep, somewhat poorly drained clayey soils formed from mixed but predominantly granitic alluvium (National Cooperative Soil Survey, 1997). Clay is generally associated with higher expansive potential. Soils in the area have the potential for liquefaction due to their alluvial composition, but liquefaction is only a risk when the water table is shallow (Kern County General Plan Safety Element). Existing groundwater levels at the Project site are approximately 246 feet below the ground surface based on data from CASGEM Well 47965 taken on June 6, 2019, which is approximately 1.9 miles from the project site (CASGEM, 2019).

Impacts

a) i) Construction, Operation and Maintenance

The Proposed Project area is not designated as an Alquist-Priolo "Earthquake Fault Zone" (CGS, 2018), and thus there is no impact associated with rupture of a known earthquake fault.

a) ii) Construction, Operation and Maintenance

The Proposed Project area could experience very strong to violent shaking in the event of a major earthquake along historically active including the San Andreas fault zone (Kern County, 2009). However, because the Proposed Project facilities do not include habitable structures no people would be exposed to risk, and impacts from ground shaking would be less than significant.

a) iii) Construction, Operation and Maintenance

Because of the substantial depth to groundwater, soils at the project site are not expected to be susceptible to liquefaction, and thus liquefaction impacts would be less than significant.

a) iv) Construction, Operation and Maintenance

According to the California Geological Survey (CGS), none of the Proposed Project area is located within an earthquake-induced landslide zone (CGS, 2019). The pump station site is flat, and no rainfall-induced landslides or existing landslides are mapped. Therefore, there would be no impact associated with landslide hazards.

b) Construction, Operation and Maintenance

Construction activities involving soil disturbance, such as excavation, stockpiling, and grading could result in increased erosion and sedimentation to surface waters. However, substantial erosion is not expected because of the relatively small scale of earthmoving activities necessary for Project implementation, and the contractor would be required to prepare and implement a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan that includes BMPs to minimize erosion and sedimentation of surface waters. Thus, impacts would be reduced to a less-than-significant level.

c, d) Construction, Operation and Maintenance

The pumps and pipelines constructed as part of the Proposed Project would not affect the stability of the geologic unit or soil or result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse. There are no habitable structures proposed for the Project; therefore, there is no risk to human life or property. With proper engineering, the construction, operation and maintenance of the Proposed Project is not expected to result in any significant adverse short- or long-term impacts related to geology, soils or seismicity. Portions of the pipeline alignment and structures are located within clayey soils (National Cooperative Soil Survey, 1997) with the potential for expansion as defined by the UBC Table 18-I-B – Classification of Expansive Soil (UBC, 1997). Facilities would be designed to include measures to ensure the pumps and pipelines are not damaged by expansive soils. Because no

habitable structures would be built as a part of the Project, and the facility would be designed to address the potential for expansive soils, there is no substantial risk to life or property as a result of expansive soils.

e) Construction, Operation and Maintenance

No septic tanks are proposed for the Proposed Project; therefore, no impacts would occur.

f) Construction, Operation and Maintenance

The Proposed Project site is small and surrounded by canals. The site was previously disturbed by canal construction and the existing pumping facility it is not expected that paleontological resources would be encountered during construction. Due to the site's location and previous disturbance, impacts on paleontological resources would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is necessary.

3.11 Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?				X
b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?				X

Discussion

Setting

Semitropic currently uses diesel-powered pumps to facilitate conveyance of surplus water from the Cox Canal to the Semitropic Primary Intake Canal. Neither Kern County nor SJVAPCD have developed quantified threshold of significance for GHG emissions.

Impacts

a, b) Construction, Operation and Maintenance

Assuming that construction would require about 10,000 gallons of diesel fuel, the project would generate about 102 metric tons of CO₂e during construction (<https://www.epa.gov/energy/greenhouse-gas-equivalencies-calculator>). Amortized over a 50-year project life, this results in annualized emission of 2 metric tons of CO₂e. The Proposed Project would use more efficient grid power (supplied by PG&E) without the combustion of diesel fuel on site. While power generated by and for PG&E does produce GHGs, the energy production is much more efficient than the current on-site diesel generators. It is thus anticipated that operational greenhouse gas emissions would be reduced by replacing the existing pumps and the net impact of construction, operation and maintenance is expected to be a reduction in GHG emissions.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is necessary.

3.12 Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?			X	
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?			X	
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?				X
d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?				X
e) For a Project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the Project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the Project area?				X
f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?				X
g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?				X

Discussion

Setting

Hazardous materials are defined in the California Health and Safety Code as a material that because of its "quantity, concentration, or physical or chemical characteristics, poses a significant present or potential hazard to human health and safety or the environment". These materials, which include fuels, solvents, paints, lubricants and other chemicals, are subject to federal, state and local requirements for transportation, storage, and use.

The California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) identifies sites contaminated due to release of hazardous materials or wastes. An online search of DTSC's EnviroStor database (DTSC 2019) and SWRCB's GeoTracker database (SWRCB 2019) was conducted. The EnviroStor database identifies sites that have known or suspected contamination. The GeoTracker database provides regulatory data regarding sites with leaking

underground storage tanks, fuel pipelines, and public drinking water supplies; these sites also meet the Cortese List¹ requirements. No properties on which historic or ongoing activities have resulted in a reported release of hazardous materials into soil or groundwater have been identified near the Proposed Project site.

Impacts

a, b) Construction, Operation and Maintenance

Construction of the Proposed Project would not result in the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials. However, the Proposed Project would temporarily increase the transport of materials used in construction activities that are generally regarded as hazardous. Limited quantities of hazardous substances, such as gasoline, diesel fuel, hydraulic fluids, paint, and other similar materials would be brought onto work sites, used, and stored during construction. All hazardous materials used during construction would be properly transported, stored, managed and disposed of in accordance with federal, state and local regulations. The construction contractor would be required to prepare a Hazardous Management Spill Prevention and Control Plan for hazardous materials management, which would address spill control measures and notification and documentation requirements in the event of a spill. With compliance with regulations and implementation of spill control measures the risks associated with the transport, use, and storage of these materials during construction would be less than significant.

Project Operation would not involve the routine transportation, use, storage, and/or disposal of hazardous materials other than small quantities of lubricants that may be needed for pump maintenance. No chemicals or fuels would be stored on site. Impacts associated with hazards to the public would thus be less than significant.

c) Construction, Operation and Maintenance

No schools are located within one-quarter mile of the Proposed Project. The nearest schools are located in Lost Hills, California, approximately 6 miles north west of the Project site. Therefore, no impacts would occur.

d) Construction, Operation and Maintenance

Based on a review of the EnviroStor database, DTSC's Hazardous Waste and Substances Site List (2019), the proposed pumps and pipelines would not be located on a site that is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 (Cortese). Thus, no impacts would occur.

e) Construction, Operation and Maintenance

There are no airports or private airstrips near the Proposed Project site. The nearest airport is located approximately 6 miles northwest of the site near Lost Hills, California. As such, the Proposed Project would not expose people residing or working in the area to safety hazards. Therefore, no impact would occur.

f) Construction, Operation and Maintenance

The Proposed Project site is not located adjacent to a public roadway, and construction activities would not affect any nearby roadways or access. The Proposed Project does not interfere with an existing or proposed emergency response or emergency evacuation plan. Therefore, no impact would occur.

g) Construction, Operation and Maintenance

The Proposed Project site is not an area where there is risk of wildland fire. The Proposed Project Facility is surrounded by canals, service roads, and agricultural fields with low fire risk. Therefore, there is no potential to expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires. No impacts would occur.

¹ The Cortese (Hazardous Waste and Substances Sites) List is a planning resource used by the State, local agencies and developers to comply with the CEQA requirements in providing information about the location of hazardous materials release sites. Government Code section 65962.5 requires the California Environmental Protection Agency to develop, at least annually, an updated Cortese List. DTSC is responsible for a portion of the information contained in the Cortese List. Other State and local government agencies are required to provide additional hazardous material release information for the Cortese List.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is necessary.

3.13 Hydrology and Water Quality

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant 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?			X	
b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the Project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?				X
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:				X
i. result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site;				X
ii. substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site;				X
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				X
iv. impede or redirect flood flows?				X
d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to Project inundation?				X
e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?				X

Discussion

Setting

Kern County is the southern end of the San Joaquin Valley and is primarily drained by the Kern River. Canals, such as the Cox Canal, Semitropic Water Storage District Intake Canal, and California Aqueduct, crisscross the county. The Proposed Project does not lie within or near any natural watercourse but would directly connect the Cox Canal and Semitropic Water Storage District Intake Canal. The Kern County Subbasin, part of the larger San Joaquin Valley Groundwater Basin, underlies the Proposed Project. Historically intense groundwater pumping has occurred

within the subbasin to supply domestic and agricultural needs. The Proposed Project site is not within a 100-year floodplain (Kern County 2015).

Impacts

a) Construction, Operation and Maintenance

Construction activities of one acre or more need to obtain coverage under the NPDES General Permit for Stormwater Discharges associated with Construction and Land Disturbance Activities (Construction General Permit) Order No. 2009-0009-DWQ). The total disturbance area of the Proposed Project of the pump station and stockpile area are 9.31 acres in total, however, there are no discharges to waters of the state. The Construction General Permit requires that the contractor prepare and implement a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan that includes BMPs to minimize erosion and sedimentation of surface waters. The contractor would be required to implement BMPs and necessary measures to clean any hazardous spills and reduce the risk of degrading surface or groundwater quality. Operation would entail continuance of water conveyance between Semitropic and BVWSD canals and is not expected to have any adverse on water quality in the Cox Canal or Semitropic Intake Canal. Impacts to water quality during construction would be avoided through implementation of BMPs and impacts would thus be less than significant.

b) Construction, Operation and Maintenance

The Proposed Project would not include groundwater withdrawals. Project pumps would continue conveyance of water between existing canals and would recharge the groundwater system, which would benefit the Kern County Subbasin and assist with sustainable groundwater management pursuant to SGMA, and thus would not deplete groundwater. Because the site would not be paved, the reduction in impervious surface would be limited to the actual footprint of the pumps, which is minimal, and interference with groundwater recharge would not be expected to occur. Therefore, no adverse impacts to groundwater would occur.

c) i, ii, iii, iv) Construction, Operation and Maintenance

The Proposed Project would be on a small piece of disturbed land between the Cox Canal and Semitropic Water Storage District Intake Canal. The land between the two canals is approximately 5.2 acres, but the proposed facilities would not use the entire site and would replace equipment already in place. As noted above, the site would not be paved. Permanent facilities are small and would not alter the course of a stream or river or result in substantial erosion of siltation or flooding on- or off-site. Additionally, the Proposed Project facility is not served by existing or planned stormwater drainage systems and would not contribute to polluted runoff or impede or redirect flood flows. No impact to drainage patterns would occur.

d) Construction, Operation and Maintenance

The Proposed Project is not within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map (Kern County 2015). Additionally, the Proposed Project facility is not located within a tsunami, or seiche zone, and thus there is no risk of a release of pollutants due to project inundation. No impact associated with inundation would occur.

e) Construction, Operation and Maintenance

The Proposed Project would not have any effect on water quality and thus does not conflict with any water quality control plan. Therefore, no impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is necessary.

3.14 Land Use and Planning

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Physically divide an established community?				X
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?				X

Discussion

Setting

The Proposed Project is located in unincorporated Kern County. Land around the Proposed Project site is agricultural. While the Kern County General Plan contains a land use designation map that specifies the Project site as Intensive Agriculture (Map Code 8.1), parcel data for the Project site (APN 069-240-37) specifies the parcel as a Special District (code 6050) because it is owned by Semitropic.

The Proposed Project replaces currently utilized diesel-powered pumps with electric grid-powered pump facilities to deliver water from the Cox Canal to the Semitropic Water Storage District Intake Canal. The Project facilities would replace the current equipment, and not encroach on other land.

Impacts

a) Construction, Operation and Maintenance

The Proposed Project lies within an agricultural area and is not near a community. Therefore, no impact associated with dividing a community would occur.

b) Construction, Operation and Maintenance

The Proposed Project site is on property owned by Semitropic and is not currently used for agriculture. The Proposed Project replaces existing diesel-powered pumps with electric grid-powered pumps and, would not entail a change in land use. The pump station is consistent with agricultural use because it provides water for agricultural users, improves water supply and would provide drought resilience.

The Proposed Project would not conflict with the policies of the Kern County General Plan, and several goals and policies within the plan are directly supported by the implementation of the Proposed Project. Therefore, this project would not conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect and no impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is necessary.

3.15 Mineral Resources

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?				X
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?				X

Discussion

Setting

The Kern County General Plan's Chapter 5, Energy Element describes the county's important role in oil, natural gas, and energy production. Oil production is a major industry within Kern County, and oil production predominantly takes place on the western and eastern edges of the county along the edges of the San Joaquin valley.

The Proposed Project site is not located in a mineral resource zone identified by the Department of Conservation, California Geological Survey - Mines and Minerals Resources Program (Department of Conservation 2019), and no mineral mining or oil production takes place on or near the pump station site.

Impacts

a, b) Construction, Operation and Maintenance

Because there are no mineral resource present, no impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is necessary.

3.16 Noise

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant 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?				X
b) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?				X
c) For a Project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the Project expose people residing or working in the Project area to excessive noise levels?				X

Discussion

Setting

The major noise sources within the Proposed Project area are transportation noises associated with traffic along Interstate-5 and Main Drain Road.

Local Noise Standards

Kern County

Kern County Health and Safety Ordinance (Title 8 of the Ordinance Code) Chapter 8.36, Noise Control (Section 8.36.020, Prohibited Sounds) of the Ordinance Code of Kern County prohibits construction noise between the hours of 9:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. on weekdays and 9:00 p.m. and 8:00 a.m. on weekends, which is audible to a person with average hearing faculties or capacity at a distance of 150 feet from the construction site, if the construction site is within 1,000 feet of an occupied residential dwelling except for emergency work or when the resource management director or his designated representative provides an exemption for a limited time.

There are no residences or other sensitive receptors within 1,000 feet of the construction area, so this ordinance is not applicable.

Impacts

a) Construction, Operation and Maintenance

Construction would generate noise from equipment and during operation pumps would run for approximately three months of the year (when certain wet year conditions have been met). The pumps would be noisy but would not be expected to be noticeably louder than the existing pumps that are used to convey water. However, the Proposed Project is not within the vicinity of any residences or other occupied structures, and therefore no impact would occur during construction or operation of the facility.

b) Construction, Operation and Maintenance

Construction activities such as excavation, spoil transport, and shoring of trenches would generate vibration. However, there are no residential or habitable structures within the vicinity of the Proposed Project site. Therefore, no impacts would occur.

c) Construction, Operation and Maintenance

There are no airports or private airstrips near the Proposed Project site. The nearest airport is located approximately 6 miles north west near Lost Hills, California. As such, the Proposed Project would have no impact.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is necessary.

3.17 Population and Housing

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?				X
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?				X

Discussion

Setting

The Proposed Project is located on vacant land within unincorporated Kern County. Lands around the Proposed Project site are agricultural, and there are no residential areas in the vicinity.

Impacts

a) Construction, Operation and Maintenance

The Proposed Project consists of replacing existing less efficient pumps with grid-powered pumps to facilitate efficient water conveyance from the Cox Canal to the Semitropic Primary Intake Canal. There are no new homes or businesses associated with the pump station. The operation of the project would continue water conveyance between Semitropic and BVWSD that is already occurring to support existing agriculture and reduce the risk of fallowing as a result of implementation of SGMA, and would not generate additional water supply that would remove a constraint to growth. As such it would not induce directly or indirectly any population growth in the area. Thus, no impact would occur.

b) Construction, Operation and Maintenance

The Proposed Project does not involve removal of residences and would not displace people. Therefore, no impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is necessary.

3.18 Public Services

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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:				X
i. Fire protection?				X
ii. Police protection?				X
iii. Schools?				X
iv. Parks?				X
v. Other public facilities?				X

Discussion

Setting

The Kern County Fire Department (KCFD) provides fire protection services for over 500,000 citizens living in the unincorporated areas of Kern County and the cities of Arvin, Delano, Maricopa, McFarland, Ridgecrest, Shafter, Taft, Tehachapi and Wasco (KCFD 2019). The Kern County Sheriff's Office and California Highway Patrol provide law enforcement services within the unincorporated areas of the county.

Impacts

a) Construction, Operation and Maintenance

The Proposed Project is intended to provide a more efficient and permanent facility to convey water from the Cox Canal to the Semitropic Primary Intake Canal. The Proposed Project would not require new or physically altered government facilities. Operation and maintenance of the Proposed Project would does not require additional staff from any public protection service entities (e.g., police and fire). As implementation of the Proposed Project would not change the demand for any public services, it would not require additional equipment or resources for those public service providers. As such, no impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is necessary.

3.19 Recreation

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant 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?				X
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?				X

Discussion

Setting

There are no recreational facilities or areas in the vicinity of the Proposed Project.

Impacts

a, b) Construction, Operation and Maintenance

The Proposed Project replaces existing diesel-powered pumps with grid-powered permanent pumps to convey water from the Cox Canal to the Semitropic Primary Intake Canal. The pump station does not include recreational facilities and would not result in population growth that would increase use of parks or require construction of new facilities. Because the Proposed Project does not directly result in an increased use or need for expansion/construction of additional recreational facilities, there would be no impacts on recreation.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is necessary.

3.20 Transportation/Traffic

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Conflict with a program plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?			X	
b) Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?			X	
c) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?				X
d) Result in inadequate emergency access?				X

Discussion

Setting

Kern County's General Plan's Chapter 2: Circulation Element identifies Interstate-5 as a route of regional significance. Interstate-5, which runs north to south, lies approximately 0.75 miles to the east of the Proposed Project site and Main Drain Road is approximately 0.4 miles to the west.

To access the construction site, vehicles would use Main Drain Road to the maintenance road that parallels the Semitropic Primary Intake Canal. Main Drain Road is most easily accessed by either Highway 46 or West Lerdo Highway.

Impacts

a) Construction, Operation and Maintenance

Construction period impacts would be associated with traffic generated by workers and haul trucks, which would average five workers and one haul truck per day. Main Drain Road would serve the Proposed Project and is not considered a route of regional significance as specified in the Kern County General Plan. Additionally, the Proposed Project site does not bisect or encroach on any public circulation systems including transit, roadway, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities. Addition of six construction trips per day would not conflict with any plans, ordinances or policy addressing the circulation system.

Operation of the Proposed Project would only require two vehicle trips per day to the facility three months out of the year; trips would be similar to existing conditions which require regular trips to operate and maintain the existing pumps that are currently used. Due to the Proposed Projects facility location and the low number of required vehicle trips during construction, operation and maintenance, the impacts would be less than significant.

b) Construction, Operation and Maintenance

Section 15064.3 (b) provides the criteria for analyzing transportation impacts. The Proposed Project is not a transportation project or a land use project. During construction, vehicle miles traveled would increase, however, this is temporary and would only occur during construction. Operation of the Proposed Project would only require an estimated two trips per day to the facility while it is operating three months during the year, which is essentially the same as occurs under existing conditions. Operational VMT would not be expected to increase. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

c) Construction, Operation and Maintenance

The Proposed Project would not geometrically alter any design feature during construction or operations, and therefore there would be no impact.

d) Construction, Operation and Maintenance

The Proposed Project facility is not located on or near a public roadway and would not affect emergency access. Therefore, no impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is necessary.

3.21 Tribal Cultural Resources

Would the Project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant 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 Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k), or				X
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 Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.				X

Discussion

Setting

The analysis of tribal cultural resources provided in this section is based on cultural resources records search through the California Historical Resources Information System, and a Sacred Lands File search through the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC). On July 19, 2018, ICF sent a letter to the NAHC requesting a search of its Sacred Lands File and a list of individuals and organizations that may have knowledge of properties of cultural or religious importance to Native Americans in the vicinity of the Project Area. On August 8, 2019, ICF received a response letter from the NAHC, stating that a search of its Sacred Lands File failed to identify any sacred lands within the Project Area. The NAHC provided a list of 15 Native American contacts who may have information regarding Native American cultural resources within the area. The results of the Sacred Lands File search and the list of Native American contacts were emailed to Reclamation archaeologists on August 12, 2019, for use in Section 106 consultation efforts. All tribal consultation under CEQA (Assembly Bill 52) is being prepared by the District (CEQA lead agency).

Through these searches and contacts, no archaeological/tribal cultural resources were identified within the Project Area. No listed or eligible resources as defined by Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k), or other resources

pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1 were found within the Project Area, and thus results of the study conclude that the Proposed Project would have no adverse effect on cultural resources. In November 2019, Semitropic prepared and mailed a notification letter under AB 52 to Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians Tribe. Semitropic will consult with the tribe about any concerns they have about the Proposed Project.

Impacts

a, b) Construction, Operation and Maintenance

No listed or eligible resources as defined by Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k), or other resources pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1, were found within the Project Area. Because no consultation has been requested under AB 52 no tribal cultural resources have been identified. Therefore, no impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is necessary.

3.22 Utilities and Service Systems

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?				X
b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the Project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?				X
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?				X
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?			X	
e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?				X

Discussion

Setting

The pump station site is not served by potable water or wastewater treatment facilities. The nearest solid waste disposal facility is the Kern County Shafter-Wasco Recycling and Sanitary Landfill in Shafter, California. This landfill has an estimated closure year of 2059.

Impacts

a) Construction, Operation and Maintenance

The Proposed Project is a water conveyance project and would not require or result in the construction of new or expanded water or wastewater treatment facilities, storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas or telecommunications facilities. There would be no impact.

b) Construction, Operation and Maintenance

The Proposed Project is not a development project and does not generate demand for water supplies. The project would improve efficiency of existing conveyances between Semitropic and BVWSD facilities that serve demand from existing agricultural uses. Therefore, no impact would occur.

c) Construction, Operation and Maintenance

The Proposed Project would not generate wastewater. Therefore, no impact would occur.

d) Construction, Operation and Maintenance

Construction and implementation of the Proposed Project is not anticipated to generate a significant amount of solid waste. The construction contractor(s) would be required to dispose of excavated soil and solid waste generated during project-related construction in accordance with local solid waste disposal requirements. Waste material would likely be hauled to the Kern County Landfill Shafter/Wasco facility, as it is the nearest to the Proposed Project site. Given the anticipated lifespan of the landfill (through 2059), this landfill is expected to have sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the Proposed Project's solid waste disposal needs. Once constructed, operation and maintenance activities would generate minimal solid waste. For the reasons described above, implementation of the Proposed Project would not exceed permitted capacity at the local landfill. Therefore, impacts regarding solid waste would be less than significant.

e) Construction, Operation and Maintenance

Solid waste generation would be limited to construction-related activities and would not affect available solid waste disposal capacity in the region. Minimal long-term solid waste generation would be associated with the Proposed Project. The Proposed Project would comply with all federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste. Therefore, no impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is necessary.

3.23 Wildfire

If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?				X
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?				X
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?				X
d) Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslopes or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?				X

Setting

The Proposed Project facility is located in the San Joaquin Valley and is surrounded by two canals and agricultural fields. The slope at the facility and surrounding areas is minimal, approximately 0-2 percent. Vegetation is sparse, which no nearby trees and low shrubs/bushes and grass. The site is not in or near a state responsibility area and is not classified as a high fire hazard severity zone (CalFire 2007).

The Proposed Project facility does have power lines that run nearby, and connection to the powerlines is not expected to require installation of extensive new infrastructure.

Impacts

a-d) Construction, Operation and Maintenance

Because the pump station would not be located in or near a state responsibility area or lands classified as a very high fire hazard severity zone, the criteria regarding impacts associated with emergency plans, wildfires, increased wildlife risk, or post-fire hazards are not applicable.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is necessary.

3.24 Mandatory Findings of Significance

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Does the Project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?		X		
b) Does the Project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a Project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?				X
c) Does the Project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?				X

Discussion

Impacts

a) Construction, Operation and Maintenance

As discussed in the checklist items above, the project would not have any significant effects on biological or cultural resources. Although there is the potential for some sensitive species to occur with the project area, mitigation would be required to ensure that significant effects on plants and wildlife in the project are avoided. Thus, the Proposed Project would not degrade the quality of the environment, or substantially reduce habitat, wildlife populations or plant communities. No historic or archaeological resources are present at the project site and measures are in place to ensure protection of any previously undiscovered resources. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

b) Construction, Operation and Maintenance

The CEQA Guidelines define cumulative impacts as "two or more individual effects which, when considered together, are considerable or which compound or increase other environmental impacts. The individual effects may be changes resulting from a single project or increase in environmental impacts. The cumulative impact from several projects is the change in the environment which results from the incremental impact of the Proposed Project when added to other closely related past, present, and reasonably foreseeable probable future projects. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor but collectively significant projects taking place over a period of time" (Guidelines, Section 15355(a)(b)).

A number of projects are currently under environmental review in the Kern County (Kern County – Planning and Natural Resources Department 2019). While many of these cumulative projects are in the same region as the Proposed Project, all are outside the Project vicinity.

Therefore, the Proposed Project would not have the potential to combine with other projects so as to contribute to cumulatively considerable impacts.

Operation of the Proposed Project would not result in any long-term land use effects, and as such it would not contribute to any cumulative impacts that are common for development projects. As such, no cumulative impacts would occur.

c) Construction, Operation and Maintenance

Construction, operation and maintenance activities associated with the Proposed Project do not have the potential to result in impacts, either directly or indirectly, on human beings, and thus no impacts would occur.

CHAPTER 4 REPORT PREPARATION

4.1 Report Authors

This report was prepared by Semitropic Water Storage District and their consultants, including Woodard & Curran.

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APPENDIX A: NOTICE OF INTENT TO ADOPT A NEGATIVE DECLARATION

Notice of Intent to Adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration

Date: January 30, 2020
Project Title: **Cox Canal Pumping Plant and Intertie Project (the Project)**
Staff Contact: Jason Gianquinto
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(661) 758-5113

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Semitropic Water Storage District intends to adopt a Negative Declaration under the California Environmental Quality Act regarding the following matter.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The Semitropic Water Storage District proposes, in lieu of continued use of diesel-powered pumps and associated facilities, proposes to construct the Cox Canal Pumping Plant and Intertie Project which includes construction of a pump station and intertie system, including construction of a pumping plant, 200cfs in capacity, equipped with two 100-cfs, 200-horsepower (HP) pumps to convey surface water supplies from the Cox Canal to Semitropic's Primary Intake Canal, two 48-inch diameter pipelines, and an emergency spillway for spillway protection. The pump station would lift water from Cox Canal into Semitropic's Intake Canal via two 48-inch diameter pipes. The Project would be located in Kern County about 14 miles west of Wasco, on land owned by Semitropic between Main Drain Road and Interstate 5. Project facilities would replace use of diesel-powered pumps and associated facilities.

PROPOSED NEGATIVE DECLARATION: Semitropic Water Storage District is the Lead Agency for the Cox Canal Pumping Plant and Intertie Project and has prepared an Initial Study as required under the California Environmental Quality Act. As the Lead Agency, Semitropic has evaluated the environmental effects of the Project and concludes that the project would not have a significant impact on the environment. Therefore, an Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) has been prepared and is available for inspection at the District office at 1101 Central Ave., Wasco, CA 93280-0877.

COMMENTS: Comments or questions concerning the Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration should be mailed to Jason Gianquinto, General Manager, Semitropic Water Storage District, at the above address or emailed to mail@semitropic.com. If you would like a copy of the IS/MND, contact the District for a copy.

The review period of the proposed MND begins on the date of this notice and will expire on March 2, 2020.

DATED:

January 24, 2020

Semitropic Water Storage District

By: 
Jason Gianquinto, General Manager

APPENDIX B: PROOF OF PUBLICATION AND DISTRIBUTION LIST

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Kern County Planning Department
Lorelei Oviatt
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APPENDIX C: NOTICE OF DETERMINATION

Note – Notice of Preparation will not be filed until the Final IS/MND is adopted and will be attached to the Final IS/MND