



County of Fresno

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND PLANNING
STEVEN E. WHITE, DIRECTOR

EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

APPLICANT: County of Fresno, Department of Public Works and Planning,
Design Division

APPLICATION NOS.: Initial Study Application No. 7594

DESCRIPTION: Replace the existing bridge on Frankwood Avenue where it crosses the Alta Main Canal. The proposed two-lane bridge would be an approximately 145-foot-long, three-span, cast-in-place, concrete slab bridge located downstream of the existing bridge. The proposed bridge will have curb-to-curb width of approximately 32 feet, while the existing bridge only has a clear width of 16.4 feet. This would increase lane widths from 8.2 feet to 12 feet. Construction of the proposed bridge would also add 4-foot wide shoulder in each direction, where the existing bridge has none. No new lanes will be added as part of this project. The total width of the proposed bridge deck would be 34.96 feet.

LOCATION: The existing bridge (Bridge No. 42C0289) is located on North Frankwood Avenue at its intersection with the Alta Canal; approximately 1.15 miles south of Piedra Road and 1.7 miles north of State Route 180. The replacement bridge will be constructed just south of the existing structure.

The bridge foundation is proposed to be driven H-piles with concrete pile caps for both the abutments and piers. Concrete abutment pile caps would be placed outside the invert of the canal and would be excavated to a depth of about 5.5 feet. Two piers with concrete pile caps will be constructed in the canal invert and would be excavated to a depth of about 5.5 feet.

The proposed project would widen the bridge approaches from 19 feet to 32 feet to accommodate the new structure and realign North Frankwood Road to the new bridge location. The alignment change would improve sight distance to the bridge compared to existing conditions. The west bridge approach extends about 460 feet from the bridge and the east extends about 345 feet from the bridge. The new roadway alignment will require the driveways that serve the properties north of Frankwood Avenue and the canal access roads to be modified to conform to the new roadway alignment and profile. The access road to the Alta Irrigation District field office (northwest of bridge) will also need to be realigned to conform to the new roadway alignment. The Alta Irrigation District owns and operates the Alta Main

Canal and associated right of way. The County will work with the Alta Irrigation District to schedule construction of the proposed project and obtain right-of-way for the new alignment. The roadway and bridge alignment may require additional right-of-way acquisition from two adjacent private properties, and project construction would require temporary construction easements from Alta Irrigation District and nearby property owners.

The existing bridge and roadway alignment would function as an onsite detour for vehicular traffic during construction of the project. Once the project is completed, the existing bridge would remain intact and continue to serve as an irrigation control structure; with access to the bridge limited to the Alta Irrigation District. No general traffic would be allowed on the bridge after this replacement bridge is operational.

The purpose of the proposed Project is to construct a wider bridge with approaches that meet current design standards, improve sight distance, and improve the curve radius to eliminate the 15 mile per hour curve at the west end of the existing bridge. The existing bridge has been listed by Caltrans as functionally obsolete with a sufficiency rating of 50.5. Deficiencies in the Alta Main Canal Bridge include transverse deck cracking over the bents, longitudinal and pattern cracking, insufficient curb-to-curb clear width, narrow traffic lanes and shoulders, narrow and winding approach roads with poor sight distance, and guardrails and railings that do not meet American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) standards.

Note: The “entire project limits” referenced in this report and by the Mitigation Measures includes the following: eastern and western approaches to the bridge with sufficient width to include both the current and proposed roadway alignments; potential staging areas; modifications and improvements to the canal banks and maintenance roads to provide access from North Frankwood Ave; current right-of-way for North Frankwood Avenue; proposed North Frankwood Ave right-of-way on two parcels; a third parcel where revised access to the right-of-way will be necessary; the current bridge structure; and the portions of the canal above, below, and between the current and proposed bridges; and downstream of the proposed bridge to the limit of canal grading.

I. AESTHETICS

Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the project:

- A. Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista; or
- B. Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway; or
- C. In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point). If the project is in an urbanized

area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

North Frankwood Avenue is not designated by Caltrans or the County of Fresno as a scenic highway or scenic roadway. The nearest roadway with such a designation is State Route 180, a designated scenic highway located approximately 1.5 miles south of the project site.

The project is located in a rural community in an area that is visually characterized by scattered agricultural fields with corridors of natural vegetation that border the Kings River and its tributaries. Developed features within the project area include the existing bridge; a mobile home park west of the bridge where Frankwood turns south; and single-family residential developments to the east.

Given the current road and bridge, the introduction of additional roadway pavement and the new bridge would not be inconsistent with the setting of the Project area or the existing visual elements within the viewsheds of local residents and motorists. Removal of valley oak riparian habitat along the canal would constitute a loss of scenic resources; however, the new road and bridge are in general alignment with an existing overhead powerline, the maintenance of which has required substantial pruning and disfigurement of the trees along its route. Approximately half of the trees to be removed are along this corridor. Placing the roadway in this location reduces the number of mature, picturesque oaks to be removed and, if the powerline is relocated in a more appropriate location beyond the reach of growing trees, may reduce future tree-trimming maintenance on the powerline easement.

For residents on the east side of the canal, removal of vegetation and construction of the new bridge and roadway alignment would not result in significant degradation to their viewsheds, given that their homes are substantially offset from the existing road and generally obscured by other vegetation. Additionally, areas disturbed by construction of the Project, but not permanently paved over, will be re-seeded; which would reduce the overall effect of removed vegetation.

Motorists traveling on North Frankwood Avenue are less likely to be affected by changes to viewsheds within the Project area than residents, as their focus is primarily on the road and there are no stop signs or signals that would cause them to pause in this area. Furthermore, while the realignment of North Frankwood Avenue will be noticeable to local motorists familiar with this particular stretch of road, the softening of the turn onto the proposed bridge and lowering of the canal banks will create a more open viewshed, particularly for travelers heading north, enhancing the site's overall scenic value by providing views of visual elements beyond the Project area, such as the distant hillsides to the east.

Therefore, due to the minimal impacts on residents and motorists and limited impacts on mature, scenic trees, impacts to scenic vistas and scenic resources will be less than significant.

- D. Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

No lighting is proposed as part of this application. The replacement bridge will be made of concrete, which does not reflect light in such a manner as to cause glare.

II. AGRICULTURAL AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment project; and forest carbon measurement methodology in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. Would the project:

- A. Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance, as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use; or
- B. Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act Contract?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project site is primarily located within the existing roadway, where the ground is paved, and across the Alta Canal, which does not support active farmland. Zoning on the surrounding parcels is Limited Agricultural (AL-20) to the east and north with Trailer Park Residential (TP) to the southwest where the proposed replacement bridge will connect to South Frankwood Avenue. The Department of Conservation's 2014 Important Farmlands map designates lands in this area as Urban and Built-up land, Rural Residential land, and Farmland of Local Importance. The land designated as farmland is located directly north of the project site, outside the area of direct impacts from this project. None of the surrounding parcels are restricted by Williamson Act Contracts.

As a result of the zoning designations on the surrounding parcels and the designation of surrounding land uses as primarily urban/disturbed and residential, no impacts to agricultural resources are anticipated. Replacement of this bridge will not generate pressure for the conversion of offsite farmland because following construction, there will be minimal change to the baseline operation.

- C. Conflict with existing zoning for forest land, timberland or timberland zoned Timberland Production; or
- D. Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project site and surrounding parcels are not zoned as forest land or timberland and therefore the proposed project will not have any impact on conflicts with or conversion of such lands.

- 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?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

Based on the lack of important farmlands and timberland in the vicinity of the project site, there will be no adverse impacts on such lands or the pressure to convert away from such uses on off-site parcels.

III. AIR QUALITY

Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management district or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:

- A. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable Air Quality Plan; or
- 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; or

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (Air District) reviewed this project and did not identify any concerns with potential air quality standards violations or nonconformity with existing Air Quality Plans. The project is anticipated to return to baseline traffic and use conditions following construction of the replacement bridge and because the original structure will continue to function as flood control for the canal, no new impacts are anticipated. Therefore, the project's contribution to air quality impacts and release of greenhouse gases is limited to the construction period. The Greenhouse Gas Memo prepared by LSA (dated December 17, 2019) used the Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District's Road Construction Emissions Model (ROADMod) to estimate the project's emissions during construction: 647.12 metric tons of Carbon Dioxide equivalent (MTCO_{2e}).

The Air District has not adopted significant thresholds for construction impacts; however, the anticipated release of 647.12 MTCO_{2e} is less than the 900 MTCO_{2e} threshold recommended by the California Air Pollution Control Officer's Association (CAPCOA) for construction impacts.

The limitation of the project's scope to the same intensity of use as the existing structure ensures compliance with Plans and Regulations, such as Assembly Bill (AB) 32 and AB 197. In further compliance with these plans, the construction fleet will be required to use vehicles which meet increasingly strict emission standards, in order to minimize the release of pollutants made by motor vehicles during the construction period.

- C. Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations; or
- D. Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

After construction, the bridge will function as an integral part of the circulation system, completely replacing the function existing bridge, although the existing bridge will remain in use to control the flow of the canal. The use of the project site as a bridge will not expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentration or result in other emissions because there will be no emissions during operation above the existing (baseline) usage of the bridge. Construction of the bridge will be temporary and will not produce substantial pollutant concentrations or odors.

IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

- A. Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED:

The woodland in the area of the canal is considered to be Valley Oak Riparian vegetation, which is regulated by the CDFW under Section 1602 of the California Fish and Game Code. Further from the canal, the community is considered Valley Oak Woodland. Up to 0.241 acre of permanent impacts and 0.607 acre of temporary impacts could occur to Valley Oak Woodland as a result of this project. In addition, up to 31 valley oak trees may be removed and the driplines of seven additional oak trees may be impacted. This is considered a significant impact to a sensitive habitat. Compensation for the impacted oak trees must be provided within other habitat in the Kings River watershed at a 3:1 ratio, consistent with the Valley Oak Management Plan.

Surveys were completed to determine if other special status species could be present:

- San Joaquin kit fox (mammal): a federally-endangered and California-threatened species which has been observed twice within ten miles of the project site. No suitable denning habitat was observed in the project area.
- Western pond turtle (reptile): a California species of special concern, which was not observed on the project site; however, suitable habitat is present.
- Migratory birds and raptors: suitable nesting habitat for migratory birds and raptors is present on the project site.

Due to the lack of suitable habitat and the presence of domestic canines in the area (three were observed during the field survey), the San Joaquin kit fox is not likely to be present on the subject parcel; however the western pond turtle, migratory birds, and the special status plants California satin-tail and forked hare-leaf have the potential to be present prior to the start of construction, despite not being observed during the field survey. Therefore, pre-construction surveys for special status plants and animals must be completed before the start of construction. If there is no presence of special-status species indicated by the surveys, then construction may proceed; otherwise appropriate avoidance measures, as defined by the mitigation measures below, must be followed.

* **Mitigation Measures**

1. *Environmental Awareness Training shall be conducted for every employee before starting work on the project site. The training shall discuss special-status species and sensitive habitat in the area, how to recognize special-status species which might be present on the site, and actions to take in case such species are identified. The training will provide an environmental awareness handout that describes and illustrates sensitive resources to be avoided during project construction.*
2. *Before any ground-disturbing activity occurs within the entire project limits, temporary construction barrier fencing, silt fencing, and/or flagging shall be installed between the work area and environmentally sensitive habitat areas (i.e. waters, riparian habitat, special-status species habitat, and buffers around active bird/raptor nests), as appropriate. Construction personnel and construction activity shall avoid areas outside the fencing. The exact location of the fencing and/or flagging shall be determined by the resident engineer in coordination with a qualified biologist, with the goal of protecting sensitive biological habitat and water quality. The fencing/flagging shall be checked regularly and maintained until all construction is complete. Any required barrier or sediment fencing and a note reflecting this condition shall be shown on the final construction documents.*
3. *The following measures shall be implemented within the entire project limits to reduce the spread of invasive species:*
 - a. *Only certified noxious weed-free erosion control materials shall be used. All stray and seed material shall be certified as weed-free prior to being used at the project site.*

6. *A qualified biologist shall conduct a preconstruction clearance survey for western pond turtles within 48 hours prior to any ground disturbance in the project area. Any western pond turtles found within the construction work area shall be allowed to voluntarily move out of the area. If the individual does not move, a qualified biologist will, in coordination with Caltrans and California Department of Fish and Wildlife, assist in removing the turtle. If a western pond turtle nest containing eggs or young is identified within the construction work area, a qualified biologist will determine an appropriate no-disturbance buffer to ensure avoidance of the nest.*
7. *Botanical surveys for California satintail and forked hare-leaf shall be performed during the appropriate bloom period for these species (April-May) within two years of the start of construction. If special-status plants are found within the project site, individual plants shall be fenced off or flagged for avoidance. If the plants cannot be avoided, the topsoil (roughly 3-4 inches of soil where dormant seeds would be present), shall be removed and stockpiled on site. After finished grades generally have been achieved, the stockpiled topsoil will be redistributed within disturbed areas in the entire project limits.*
8. *If construction (including equipment staging and tree removal) will occur during the breeding season for migratory birds and raptors (generally between February 15 and September 1), the County shall retain a qualified biologist to conduct a preconstruction nesting bird and raptor survey before the onset of construction activities. The preconstruction nesting bird and raptor survey shall be conducted between February 15 and September 1 within suitable habitat within the entire project limits. Surveys for nesting migratory birds shall be completed within 100 feet of the entire project limits. Surveys for raptor nests should also extend 0.25 mile from the entire project limits to ensure that nesting raptors are not indirectly affected by construction noise. The survey shall be conducted not more than 14 days before the initiation of construction activities. If no active nests are detected during the survey, no additional mitigation is required to address concerns relating to migratory birds and raptors.*

If migratory birds or raptors are found to be nesting in or adjacent to the Project area, a no-disturbance buffer of 100 feet around an active bird nest or 300 feet around an active raptor nest shall be established to avoid disturbance of the nest area and to avoid take. The buffer shall be maintained around the nest area until the end of the breeding season, or until a qualified biologist determines that the young have fledged and are foraging on their own. The extent of these buffers may be modified, as determined by the biologist (in coordination with Caltrans and CDFW), depending on the species identified, level of noise or construction disturbances, and other topographical or artificial barriers.

- B. Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED:

No waters of the U.S. are present within the Project area; however, there is one aquatic community (the canal), which may qualify as a water of the State, which would be regulated by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) and the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB). Up to 0.186 acres of permanent impacts and 0.204 acres of temporary impacts could occur to this water feature. In the area of the project, the canal has artificially maintained hydrology in a man-made canal excavated in uplands; however, the project will not result in long-term changes to the function and value of the canal. The project will be required to prepare and implement a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) because the area of impacts (from the entire project) will be greater than one acre. The SWPPP will identify potential sources of pollution from the project and adopt measures to reduce releases to the Alta Main Canal. Best Management Practices (BMPs) will be identified to further reduce or minimize impacts as a result of spills or erosion. In addition to the BMPs identified in the SWPPP, the developer shall also implement the following Mitigation Measure identifying key BMPs to prevent adverse impacts from this project:

* **Mitigation Measures**

9. *The following Best Management Practices shall be implemented as part of the Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan to address potential impacts to the Alta Main Canal:*

- a. *Sediment fencing, fiber rolls, or other equivalent erosion and sediment control measures shall be installed between the designated work area and the Alta Main Canal, as necessary, to ensure that construction debris and sediment does not inadvertently enter the waterway. Tightly woven fiber netting (no monofilament netting) or similar material shall be used for erosion control or other purposes within the Project work limits to ensure that wildlife is not trapped.*
- b. *All exposed soil shall be covered or otherwise stabilized within 48 hours prior to potential precipitation events of greater than 0.5 inch.*
- c. *All exposed soil shall be stabilized immediately after bridge construction is complete. Soil stabilization may include, but is not limited to, seeding with a native grass seed mix, planting native plants, and placement of rocks.*
- d. *Refueling, storage, servicing, or maintenance of equipment shall be prohibited within 100 feet of the aquatic habitat.*
- e. *All machinery used during construction of the proposed Project shall be properly maintained and cleaned to prevent spills and leaks that could contaminate soil or water.*
- f. *Any spills or leaks from construction equipment (e.g. fuel, oil, hydraulic fluid, grease, etc.) shall be cleaned up in accordance with applicable local, state, and/or federal regulations.*

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; or

- 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?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

During construction, flow from the Alta Canal will need to be diverted around the work area, which may result in temporary impacts to the canal, which is served with water from the Kings River. Because the canal typically discharges most of its water to irrigation turn-outs for agricultural purposes, it does not serve as a migratory corridor for fish and therefore no impacts to such migratory fish would occur.

Compliance to the SWPPP and the specifications of the Streambed Alteration Agreement (SAA) will ensure that permanent impacts to resources present within Alta Canal at this location do not occur. The bridge foundation is proposed to be driven H piles with concrete pile caps for both the abutments and piers. Concrete abutment pile caps would be placed outside the invert of the canal and would be excavated to a depth of about 5.5 feet. Two piers with concrete pile caps will be constructed in the canal invert and would be excavated to a depth of about 5.5 feet. This will result in limited interference in the flow of the canal. Such flow is managed by the existing weir beneath the bridge, which allows Alta Irrigation District to control how much water is released.

- E. Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance; or
- 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?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED:

The Fresno County General Plan Policy OS-F.11 directs the County to encourage developers to follow the Fresno County Oak Woodlands Management Guidelines, which describe a voluntary process for Developers to reduce their impacts on existing Oak Woodlands. This process will be required as mitigation to ensure that impacts to remaining oaks are reduced to less than significant and that trees which are removed will be replaced at a higher ratio.

* **Mitigation Measures**

10. The Applicant shall develop an Oak Woodland Management Plan pursuant to County General Plan Policy OS-F.11 Part 1:

- a. Construction shall adhere to the Oak Woodland Management Plan.*
- b. Compensation for impacted Oak Trees shall be at a ratio of 3:1 and replacement trees shall be planted within the Kings River watershed.*

11. *Where possible, development shall avoid grade changes, trenching, compacting soils, and paving with non-porous materials within the drip-line of protected trees. In addition, grade changes that would cause water to pond within the drip-line of native oaks shall be prohibited.*

Where encroachment of development into the dripline of a protected tree cannot be avoided, a qualified individual will provide recommendations to minimize adverse effects on those trees. For example, trenching within the protected zone of a protected tree may be permitted using hand tools to avoid root injury, all severed roots shall be cut cleanly, and no roots over 1-inch in diameter shall be cut without approval and oversight.

V. CULTURAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

- A. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to Section 15064.5; or
- B. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5; or
- C. Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED:

JRP Historical Consulting, LLC performed an archeological review of the project site and prepared a report titled *Historic Property Survey Report for the Alta Main Canal Bridge Replacement Project on North Frankwood Avenue, Fresno, California*, dated April 2018. As the first step of that review, JRP Historical Consulting, LLC consulted with John Whitehouse, Caltrans PQS Principal Investigator, Prehistoric Archeology and James Perrault, Caltrans District 6 Local Assistance Engineer, to determine the area of potential effects (APE) on archeological resources. The APE for this project included the following: eastern and western approaches to the bridge with a sufficient buffer to include both the current and proposed alignments; potential staging areas; current right-of-way for North Frankwood Avenue; proposed right-of-way on two parcels; a third parcel where revised access to the right-of-way will be necessary; the current bridge structure; and the portion of the canal above and below the current and proposed bridges. The vertical APE was assumed to be no greater than five feet six inches below the current ground surface in all areas except the footprint of the bridge, where piles and footing may be installed at depths of 10 to 70 feet.

An archaeological pedestrian survey was conducted on June 10, 2016, by Far Western Anthropological Research Group, Inc., archaeologist John Berg who examined all unpaved portions of the APE. No archaeological resources were identified.

JRP conducted a records search, which determined that there were two previously recorded built environmental resources within one-quarter mile of the project site: the

Alta Main Canal and the Friant-Kern Canal, which passes through the southern edge of the records search area but was not determined to be within the APE. Further research into the historic integrity of the Alta Main Canal determined that it does not qualify as a historical resource. In addition, an Archaeological Extended Phase I coring effort included the excavation of four geoprobe cores. No archaeological deposits or stable soils likely to contain archaeological deposits were identified in the project area. The subject bridge was determined not to be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

JRP reached out to the Native American Heritage Commission for a review of sacred land files and list of tribes who might have had ancestors in the vicinity of the project site. No known resources were recorded at the project site and none of the ten tribes contacted identified any unlisted resources at the site; however, one tribe identified this area as sensitive to archeological discoveries and recommended full-time tribal monitoring during construction. These concerns are addressed in greater detail in Section XVIII Tribal Cultural Resources. The following mitigation measures will reduce impacts on Cultural Resources to less than significant and are also necessary to address impacts to previously unknown Tribal Resources (Section XVIII):

- 12. A qualified archaeologist/paleontologist, defined as one meeting the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards for Archeology (the "Qualified Archaeologist"), shall be on call during any ground-disturbing activity at the Proposed Project to evaluate any possible resources uncovered.*
- 13. The Qualified Archaeologist shall conduct a preconstruction meeting to orient the construction crew to the potential for encountering prehistoric archaeological deposits during construction. This instructional meeting shall include a discussion of the types of artifacts that could be encountered and the steps to take upon discovery to avoid inadvertent impacts to such finds. The tribal monitors may be present at the preconstruction meeting.*
- 14. In the event that unanticipated archaeological resources are encountered during Project activities, compliance with federal and state regulations and guidelines regarding the treatment of cultural resources and/or human remains shall be required, along with implementation of the following mitigation:*
 - a. All construction activities within 100 feet shall halt and the County shall be notified.*
 - b. The Qualified Archaeologist shall inspect the findings and report the results of the inspection to the developer and the County.*
 - c. In the event that the identified archaeological resource is determined to be prehistoric, the County and Qualified Archaeologist will coordinate with and solicit input from the appropriate Native American Tribal Representatives, as determined by consultation with the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC), regarding significance and treatment of the resource as a tribal cultural resource. Any tribal cultural resources discovered during project work shall be treated in consultation with the tribe, with the goal of preserving in place with proper treatment.*

d. *If the County determines that the resource qualifies as a historical resource or a unique archaeological resource (as defined pursuant to CEQA Guidelines) and that the project has potential to damage or destroy the resource, mitigation shall be implemented in accordance with Public Resources Code Section 21083.2 and CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.4. Consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.4(b)(3), mitigation shall be accomplished through either preservation in place or, if preservation in place is not feasible, data recovery through excavation conducted by a qualified archaeologist implementing a detailed archaeological treatment plan.*

15. *If human remains are uncovered during Project activities, the Project owner shall immediately halt work, contact the Fresno County Sheriff-Coroner to evaluate the remains, and follow the procedures and protocols set forth in CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.4 (e)(1). If the County Sheriff-Coroner determines that the remains are Native American in origin, the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) will be notified, in accordance with Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5(c) and Public Resources Code Section 5097.98 (as amended by AB 2641). The NAHC shall designate a Most Likely Descendent (MLD) for the remains per Public Resources Code Section 5097.98, and the landowner shall ensure that the immediate vicinity, according to generally accepted cultural or archaeological standards or practices, where the Native American human remains are located, is not damaged or disturbed by further development activity until the landowner has discussed and conferred, as prescribed in Public Resources Code Section 5097.98, with the MLD regarding their recommendations for the disposition of the remains, taking into account the possibility of multiple human remains.*

VI. ENERGY

Would the project:

- A. Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation;
or
- B. Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The project will expend the highest amount of energy from non-renewable resources during construction of the new bridge. After construction, it will have no operational emissions or use of energy. Project construction will occur in compliance with regulations which are intended to reduce emissions of criteria pollutants and increase efficiency. Doing so has the impact of also reducing wasteful and inefficient use of energy, specifically gasoline used to power commuter vehicles and construction equipment. Therefore, compliance with these regulations will reduce potential impacts

to wasteful use of energy, and conflict with plans for energy efficiency will be less than significant.

VII. GEOLOGY AND SOILS

Would the project:

- A. Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:
 - 1. 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?
 - 2. Strong seismic ground shaking?
 - 3. Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?
 - 4. Landslides?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

Five soil map units occur within the BSA: Hanford fine sandy loam, gravelly substratum; Hesperia fine sandy loam, moderately deep, saline-alkali; Hesperia fine sandy loam, moderately deep; Tujunga soils, channeled, 0 to 9 percent slopes; and water (Natural Resource Conservation Service [NRCS] 2016). The Hanford fine sandy loam, gravelly substratum and Tujunga soils, channeled, 0 to 9 percent slopes soil map units are listed in the National Hydric Soil List (NHSL) (NRCS 2015). No other soil map units within the Project area are listed in the NHSL. The Initial Site Assessment performed by Haro Environmental and dated November 6, 2015, shows no earthquake fault lines within one mile of the project site. There are also no significant slopes in the vicinity of the project, with the exception of the bank of the Alta Main Canal. However, the existing bridge is currently subject to these conditions and therefore, the replacement will result in no changes to the baseline level of risk to motorists driving over the Canal in this location.

- B. Result in substantial soil erosion or loss of topsoil; or
- 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; or
- 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; or

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

Five soil map units occur within the BSA: Hanford fine sandy loam, gravelly substratum; Hesperia fine sandy loam, moderately deep, saline-alkali; Hesperia fine sandy loam, moderately deep; Tujunga soils, channeled, 0 to 9 percent slopes; and water (Natural Resource Conservation Service [NRCS] 2016). The Hanford fine sandy loam, gravelly substratum and Tujunga soils, channeled, 0 to 9 percent slopes soil map units are listed in the National Hydric Soil List (NHSL) (NRCS 2015). No other soil map units within the Project area are listed in the NHSL. These soils are not considered to have a high shrink-swell potential (expansive).

Best Management Practices will be required by the project's adherence to regulations set forth by the Regional Water Quality Control Board, specifically the preparation of the SWPPP and application for SAA. These practices include the use of erosion control measures to avoid the possibility of landslide and lateral spreading thereby reducing the possibility of such impacts to less than significant.

- 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?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The proposed project consists of a bridge for motorized transportation. While shoulders are proposed which could accommodate pedestrians and other non-motorized travelers, the purpose is to provide a connection from one side of the canal to the other and no permanent septic systems or other waste water services systems are required. Portable facilities will be provided during construction.

- F. Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

No unique paleontological or geologic resources, sites, or features were identified within the APE of the project. See additional discussion under Section V Cultural Resources and Section XVIII Tribal Cultural Resources. Mitigation measures were adopted to reduce potential impacts to previously-unknown historic, cultural, and/or paleontological resources.

VIII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Would the project:

- A. Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment; or

- B. Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The project's primary source of greenhouse gas emissions comes from the use of gas-powered machinery during construction and for transportation of construction workers in passenger vehicles. Following construction, the bridge will be part of the existing circulation system and will not result in further emissions. In general, Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plans, such as AB 32 and SB 32 focus on the reduction of operational emissions and increases in efficiency standards for commercial cars and trucks. Construction would comply with all existing regulations and would generate approximately 3.06 tons of CO and after consideration of all other GHGs released during construction, such as NOx, SOx, and PM_{10/2.5}, would generate approximately 647.12 Metric Tons of CO₂ equivalent (MTCO_{2e}). There are no thresholds of significance for construction impacts; therefore, due to the limited amount of overall emissions and the lack of operational emissions, there will be a less than significant impact on the generation of greenhouse gases and the project is in compliance with applicable plans, policies, and regulations.

VIII. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Would the project:

- A. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials; or
- 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?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED:

A site visit was performed in order to determine if any hazardous materials or signs of hazardous materials were present at the project site or on surrounding properties. No such products or their indicators were present, which suggests that no storage of hazardous materials occurred on site. Since the project relates to an existing bridge, the use of such materials would not have been anticipated.

Following construction, there will be no movement of hazardous materials because the bridge will function as part of the complete circulation system. However, the following environmental hazards may be present: the concrete used to construct Alta Main Canal may contain asbestos; the paint used on the railing may contain lead; and the pole-mounted transformer may contain polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs). In addition to the concrete, rails, and transformer, the potential exists for other, currently unknown, hazardous contamination to be encountered during construction. In these cases, existing Caltrans regulations require adherence to Caltrans Unknown Hazards Procedures, which are intended to reduce impacts from discovered hazards.

The following mitigation measures are required to reduce this impact to less than significant:

* **Mitigation Measures**

16. The developer shall perform an asbestos survey to determine whether or not the concrete contains asbestos. If asbestos-containing concrete is identified, it shall be treated in accordance with Caltrans' standards for handling of asbestos-containing materials.

17. The developer shall perform a lead-based paint survey to determine whether or not the railing paint contains elevated concentrations of lead. If the paint is determined to contain lead, it shall be treated in accordance with Caltrans's standards for handling of lead-based paint.

18. The developer shall contact the electric company responsible for the transformer and determine if the transformer contains polychlorinated biphenyls. If it does, then it shall be properly disposed of in accordance with rules and regulations.

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

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project site is not located within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school.

- G. 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?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project site and nearby properties are not located on the Environmental Data Resources (EDR) list which was reviewed as part of the Phase I Environmental Site Assessment. One nearby site shown near the project site was mislabeled and in actuality, is located more than one mile from the project site. In addition, the National Pipeline Mapping System was reviewed for the presence of gas and hazardous liquid transmission pipelines with negative results. Therefore, due to the lack of reported hazardous materials handlers in the vicinity of the project, there are no impacts relating to public exposure as a result of recognized environmental hazards.

- H. 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?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project site is located near Harris Ranch Airport; however because there is no increase in the baseline usage at the site, there will be no increase in risk associated with employment or residency near an airport.

- I. Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan; or
- J. Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The proposed bridge will serve as an in-kind replacement for the existing deficient bridge which currently serves as part of the roadway network in the vicinity of Alta Main Canal. Because some of the bridge will be redesigned for improved safety, persons using the bridge as part of an evacuation will not be adversely impacted. Similarly, because this is a bridge replacement project and because the existing bridge will function as a detour during construction, there are no changes from the baseline risk of loss, injury, or death associated with wildland fires as the road will remain open continuously in this area.

X. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Would the project:

- A. Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality; or
- B. Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

Two groundwater wells are located within a one-quarter mile radius of the site with the closest well 276 feet to the west-north-west of the project site and used as an irrigation well. The nearest surface water body is the Alta Main Canal which is in the project area. No groundwater wells are located within the project area. Compliance with existing regulations relating to the discharge of pollutants to Alta Main Canal will reduce impacts to groundwater quality. The site will use a water truck for dust suppression purposes and will use portable sanitary facilities during construction, and therefore will not have an adverse impact on local groundwater supply.

- 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 result in substantial erosion or siltation on or off site?

1. Result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site;
2. Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or offsite?
3. 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
4. Impede or redirect flood flows?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The roadway and bridge profile are designed to slope from the east to the west, with the maximum slip of 1.15% occurring across the bridge. This will allow the canal freeboard desired by Alta Irrigation District while maintaining a similar elevation to the existing bridge. The grade at the north and south banks of the canal may be lowered to accommodate the proposed height of the bridge.

Construction shall occur during the dry season, when the flow of Alta Canal is at its lowest. However, because water does not cease flowing even during the driest parts of the year, a temporary diverter will be installed to protect the work area. Temporary diversion of the water will not have significant environmental impacts as the canal is expected to return to typical flow following completion of the project.

- D. In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project site is not located in an area at risk of seiche or tsunami based on its distance from large, still bodies of water or the ocean, respectively. The area of Alta Canal north of the existing bridge is designated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) as Flood Zone A, which is a special flood hazard area. The end of such designation occurs with the weir beneath the existing bridge and FEMA has not conducted further evaluation of the canal. Because this weir will continue to function controlling water flow during construction and operation of the replacement bridge, there will be no change in the flood zones and therefore no impact to the risk of flooding at the project site.

The project site is not located near the ocean, preventing impacts from tsunami; and is not located near a standing body of water which could be subject to seiche.

- E. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

California regulates activities and discharges in waters of the state through the State Water Resources Control board (SWRCB), which acts through the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB). The RWQCB requires that any entity proposing to discharge into State Waters first notify the RWQCB, who may then place waste discharge requirements on the project to ensure the protection of such waters. This project is obligated to provide such notification to the RWQCB and to implement any waste water discharge requirements. Such compliance will ensure that the project does not create a new source of pollution within the Alta Main Canal.

Because the project will disturb more than one acre of land, it is also required to prepare a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), which will minimize construction and storm water impacts.

Work is proposed within the bed of the Alta Canal and the flow will be temporarily diverted around the work area. As a result, the developer is required to obtain a Streambed Alteration Agreement, which will outline additional measures that must be taken in order to prevent adverse impacts to water quality and special-status species. These actions are not considered mitigation because the project is required by law to apply for, obtain, and observe this agreement, although some required actions may be identified separately as mitigation measures within this document if such actions are determined to be necessary to reduce a potential impact to less than significant. In the case of impacts to the implementation of a water quality control plan, the impacts would be less than significant with compliance to existing regulations administered by the Water Resources Control Boards.

The project does not propose the use of groundwater during construction and will not require the use of water during operation, resulting in no impacts to groundwater sustainability.

XI. LAND USE AND PLANNING

Would the project:

- A. Physically divide an established community?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

This bridge replacement project will not physically divide an established community; it will create a new connection between the east and west sides of the Alta Canal, which will completely replace the existing bridge in that function. The existing bridge will continue to function as a weir for the canal but will not create a divide within an established community.

- B. Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED:

The replacement of a deficient bridge with one which has been designed for improved safety and meets current standards is not in conflict with any part of the General Plan. Improvements to the road system, including bridges, are encouraged by Goal TR-A: “to plan and provide a unified, coordinated, and cost-efficient countywide street and highway system that ensures the safe, orderly, and efficient movement of people and goods.” Other policies which support the noted goal also support the replacement of deficient roadway structures with new ones that meet current safety standards.

In compliance with the Fresno County Oak Woodland Management Guidelines, the applicant will be required to prepare an Oak Woodland Management Plan to retain existing oaks, avoid tree root compaction, and replace trees whose removal was unavoidable. The need to replace removed oak trees at a 3:1 ratio is noted as mitigation in Section IV. Biological Resources. The project is therefore in conformance with the general plan and there will be less than significant impacts on the environment resulting from violation of a plan, policy, or regulation with compliance to the Mitigation Measure identified in Section IV, requiring the preparation and adherence to a Valley Oak Management Plan.

* **Mitigation Measures**

See Section IV. Biological Resources

XII. MINERAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

- A. Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state; or
- 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?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

Figure 7-7 of the Fresno County General Plan Background Report maps areas where valuable material resources are located. The project site is not in the vicinity of such resources and therefore will have no impact on their availability.

XIII. NOISE

Would the project result in:

- 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; or

B. Generation of excessive ground-borne vibration or ground-borne noise levels?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

After construction, the project will be a seamless part of the existing circulation system and will not result in additional noise in the vicinity. Because the replacement bridge will be built downstream of the existing, it will be closer to the residential development on the west side of South Frankwood Avenue; however, the road is approximately 300 feet away with an average of 1,080 vehicles per day, therefore, the increase in noise levels due to the reduction in the distance of the bridge will be not be significant.

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; or

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project site is not located in the vicinity of a private airstrip or airport land use plan. Following construction, the project site will be unmanned. Therefore, no impacts will occur as a result of location proximate to an airstrip.

XIV. POPULATION AND HOUSING

Would the project:

- 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); or
- B. Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

This project proposes to build a replacement bridge with improved geometric design slightly downstream from the existing bridge, which will continue to function as a weir after the bridge has been decommissioned. There are no residents in the project area although some driveways may need to be relocated as a result of the new bridge location. This impacts residents' approaches to their homes, but will not result in displacement, even temporarily, from their homes.

With the exception of the construction period, no employees will be present on the site. Construction is anticipated to take less than six months, making it unlikely that a large number of residents would move to the area as a result of the increased employment opportunity. The improved safety of the bridge is an asset to users of the road, but

similarly not likely to attract a large number of new residents. Therefore, this project will have no impact on population growth in this area and will have no impact on the displacement of persons from existing housing.

XV. PUBLIC SERVICES

Would the project:

- A. Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically-altered governmental facilities, or the 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?
 - 1. Fire protection;
 - 2. Police protection;
 - 3. Schools;
 - 4. Parks; or
 - 5. Other public facilities?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

While there may be a minor increase in the need for fire protection, police protection, and emergency services as a result of the increased activity on the project site associated with construction, these impacts will be temporary. Following construction, the replacement bridge will serve in identical capacity as the existing bridge and will not require the improvement or creation of public services in this area.

XVI. RECREATION

Would the project:

- A. Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated; or
- B. Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities, which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project will not increase the population size in the area (see discussion in Section XIV) and there are no parks in the vicinity of the bridge. Therefore, no impacts to existing neighborhood and regional parks will occur as a result of this project.

XVI. TRANSPORTATION

Would the project:

- A. Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities; or
- B. Would the project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b); or
- C. Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment); or
- D. Result in inadequate emergency access?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

During construction of the replacement bridge, motorists will continue to have access to the existing bridge, which will result in no variation in the baseline circulation system in this area. Emergency access will be maintained. The improvement of old bridges is consistent with the General Plan (see Section XI Land Use and Planning).

Similarly, during operation, the replacement bridge will serve in the exact capacity as the existing bridge, albeit with a design that has been modified for improved safety. This will result in fewer geometric design hazards, as the bridge's curve will be softened, which may be considered a minor benefit regarding design hazards. Therefore, the project will have no impact on increased hazard due to geometric designs or inadequate emergency access.

XVIII. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

- A. 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:
 - 1. 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
 - 2. 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 Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED:

Review of the study prepared by JRP Historical Consulting, LLC (JRP) indicated that there were no known resources at the project site. JRP also reached out to ten different Tribal Governments and several resource lists (such as the Sacred Lands files) and no resources were identified from any of these sources.

The County provided notice of this project to three Native American Tribal Governments who requested such notice pursuant to Assembly Bill 52 (AB 52). The project was determined to be outside of the area where the Santa Rosa Rancheria Tachi Yokut Tribal Government formally requested notice from the County. No comments were received during the 30-day response period prescribed by AB 52; however, when JRP reached out to the Tribal Governments provided by the NAHC, the Santa Rosa Rancheria Tachi Yokut Tribal Government indicated that the project area was sensitive to Tribal Resources and recommended that the County require on-site tribal monitoring during all ground disturbing activities.

In response to these concerns, JRP performed a buried archaeological site assessment to determine the site's likely sensitivity to buried archeological resources. The buried site potential was determined using three main assumptions: that archaeological sites tend to be located near perennial or reliable water sources; that archaeological deposits from later time periods are more common because the density of human populations increased over time; and the longer a landform remained at the surface, the greater the probability that any one spot on that landform was occupied (JRP 2018).

As discussed under Section VII Geology and Soils, the soils at the project site are primarily Hesperia fine sandy loam with some Hanford fine sandy loam. On a geologic scale, these soils were recently deposited (late to recent Holocene) and due to their location near the Kings River are considered to have "high to highest" sensitivity for buried archaeological sites.

Since it cannot be shown with certainty that previously-unknown resources are not present below the ground surface and because this project site exhibits high potential for the presence of resources, mitigation measures are necessary to ensure that impacts to possible Tribal Cultural Resources are not significant. Mitigation Measures listed in Section V Cultural Resources also serve to reduce impacts on Tribal Cultural Resources; however, the following measure is necessary to address potential impacts specifically to previously undiscovered tribal resources:

* **Mitigation Measures**

See Section V. Cultural Resources

19. Forty-eight (48) hours prior to any ground-disturbing activities within the entire project limits, such as digging, trenching, or grading, the Applicant shall notify all

Tribes that participated in consultation of the opportunity to have a certified Native American Monitor present during those construction activities. Notification shall be by email to Shana Brum, Cultural Specialist II with the Santa Rosa Rancheria Tachi Yokut Tribe at spowers@tachi-yokut-nsn.gov. The tribal monitors shall be independently insured with policies conforming to County of Fresno requirements in order to enter the construction zone. Notification shall also be provided in the same manner at least 48 hours prior to any preconstruction meetings.

XIX. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

Would the project:

- 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; or
- B. Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years; or
- 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; or
- 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; or
- E. Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project will have sufficient water supplies available to accommodate construction needs and no water would be necessary during operation of the project. Workers will be onsite for the construction period and portable sanitary facilities would be provided, as the project site will not be occupied following the end of construction. During operation, the bridge will be part of the transportation system in this area of the County and will function as part of the road.

No new facilities are required to address impacts from this project as all impacts will be temporary in nature and no permanent water supply, wastewater facilities, or other utilities are proposed as part of this application.

XX. WILDFIRE

If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:

- A. Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects; or
- 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; or
- 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; or
- D. Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

This project proposes to construct a new bridge over Alta Main Canal, to be built adjacent to the existing bridge, but with a softer curve to improve safety. Because the existing bridge serves as a weir for the canal, it will not be demolished; however, future access across the bridge would be limited to employees of the Alta Irrigation District.

The original bridge will remain open to the public during construction. Therefore, no detours would be required and there would be no impact on increased emergency response times. Further, the project site is not located in an area determined to be a very high fire hazard severity zone.

XXI. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Would the project:

- A. Have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED:

Biological and archeological surveys were conducted to determine if any existing resources were present within and around the project site. Neither study identified

existing sensitive resources; however, the biological study determined that habitat was present which could support special-status species and the archeological investigation determined that the soils around the project site had high sensitivity to previously-undiscovered resources. Therefore, additional studies and minimization efforts are required to ensure that impacts to biological and cultural resources remain less than significant.

* **Mitigation Measures**

See Section IV. Biological Resources

See Section V. Cultural Resources

See Section XVIII. Tribal Cultural Resources

- B. Have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (“Cumulatively considerable” means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects); or
- C. Have environmental effects, which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

Because the replacement bridge will perform the same function as the existing bridge, in the same capacity, impacts from the project would only result from the construction period. No significant cumulative impacts were identified as a result of construction of the proposed project.

CONCLUSION/SUMMARY

Based upon the Initial Study prepared for the Alta Main Canal Bridge Replacement, staff has concluded that the project will not have a significant effect on the environment.

It has been determined that there would be no impacts to Agricultural and Forestry Resources, Energy, Mineral Resources, Population and Housing, Public Services, Recreation, Transportation, Utilities and Service Systems, and Wildfire. Potential impacts related to Aesthetics, Air Quality, Geology and Soils, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Hydrology and Water Quality, and Noise have been determined to be less than significant. Potential impacts relating to Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Land Use and Planning, and Tribal Cultural Resources have determined to be less than significant with compliance with the noted Mitigation Measures.

A Mitigated Negative Declaration is recommended and is subject to approval by the decision-making body. The Initial Study is available for review at 2220 Tulare Street, Suite A, street level, located on the southwest corner of Tulare and “M” Street, Fresno, California.

CMM

G:\4360Devs&Pln\PROJSEC\PROJDOCS\Environmental\Initial Studies - Environmental Assessments\7000-7999\IS 7594 Alta Main Canal\IS-CEQA\IS 7594 wu.docx