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Initial Study  
for the  
2020 Alpine County  
Regional Transportation Plan

December 2020



**Alpine County Local Transportation Commission**

# Initial Study for the

## *2020 Alpine County Regional Transportation Plan*

Prepared For:

### **Alpine County Local Transportation Commission**

50 Diamond Valley Road  
Markleeville, CA 96120

Report Prepared By:



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# Introduction

## Project Title

*Alpine County 2020 Regional Transportation Plan*

## Lead Agency Name and Address

*Alpine County Transportation Commission  
50 Diamond Valley Rd  
Markleeville, California 96120-9512*

## Contact Person and Phone Number

*Jeff Schwein  
530-895-1109*

## Project Sponsor's Name and Address

*Alpine County Transportation Commission  
50 Diamond Valley Rd  
Markleeville, California 96120-9512*

## Project Location and Setting

*The project area consists of the entire County of Alpine. Alpine County is located in the Sierra Nevada Mountains in eastern California, approximately 30 miles south of South Lake Tahoe, 85 miles south of Reno, Nevada and 120 miles east of Sacramento, California. Alpine County is one of the smaller counties in California, with a land area equaling approximately 740 square miles. The terrain is mountainous, with elevation ranging from 4,800 feet to over 11,400 feet. The Central Sierra Nevada is the dominant land feature, with Carson and Antelope Valleys bordering on the east. The County is bounded by El Dorado County to the north, Amador, Calaveras, and Tuolumne Counties to the west, Mono County to the south, and Douglas County, Nevada to the east. There are no incorporated cities in Alpine County. Markleeville, Kirkwood, Bear Valley, Woodfords and Alpine Village are the primary communities in the county; the Tribal community of Hung A Lele Ti is located near Woodfords.*

*The roadway network serving the County is comprised of approximately 252 miles of streets, roads, and highways. Approximately 89 miles of the system are State highways, 147 miles are County roads, and approximately 16 miles are maintained by the US Forest Service. The state highways transecting Alpine County are State Route (SR) 4, SR 88, and SR 89. SR 4 provides a link to Calaveras County to the southwest over Ebbett's Pass. SR 88 provides links to the Central Valley to the west, and Minden and Gardnerville to the east in Nevada's Carson Valley. SR 89 provides links to South Lake Tahoe (El Dorado County) to the north and Mono County to the southeast over Monitor Pass. Ebbett's Pass and Monitor Pass are closed during the winter months due to snow accumulation. Additionally, SR 207, Mt. Reba Road, connects the Bear Valley Ski Resort to SR 4. State highways play an important role in Alpine County's transportation system serving as main streets for most of the communities in the county.*

*Alpine County is the least populous county in California with only 1,142 people as of the 2020 Department of Finance estimates. The rural and mountainous nature of the County is ideal for recreational opportunities, including fishing, skiing, hiking, hunting, and bicycling. Almost 95% of the County's land is publicly owned and includes portions of the Mokelumne and Carson-Iceberg Wilderness*

*Areas and Humboldt-Toiyabe, Stanislaus and Eldorado National Forests. Grover Hot Springs State Park is also located in Alpine County, near Markleeville.*

*The County is served by the Alpine County Health Clinic in Woodfords and one general aviation airport, located three miles east of SR 89 on Airport Road between Markleeville and Woodfords. The airport has no facilities such as hangars and fuel services. Travel in Alpine County is primarily automobile-oriented due to the rural and mountainous nature of the County as well as the sparsely populated local communities, low development densities, and limited options for using non-auto modes of travel.*

## GENERAL PLAN AND ZONING

There are a variety of General Plan Land Use designations applicable throughout the entire County, which includes the entire project area. The proposed project was designed to be consistent with the General Plans of Alpine County. The Circulation Element from the County's general plan was used as a reference during the development of the Alpine County 2015 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). The proposed project is consistent with the General Plan and does not include any proposed changes to the County's general plan. There are a variety of zoning designations applicable throughout the entire County, which includes the entire project area. The proposed project was designed to be consistent with the zoning code of Alpine County.

## Project Description

The Alpine County Local Transportation Commission (ACLTC) is the Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA) for Alpine County. The ACLTC is comprised of an executive secretary and the five-member board of supervisors representing the various districts in the County. The RTPA is required by California law to adopt and submit an updated Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) to the California Transportation Commission (CTC) and to the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) every five years. The last update to the Alpine County RTP was adopted in 2015. The horizon year for the 2020 Alpine County RTP is 2040, with transportation improvements in the RTP identified as short-term (0-10 years) or long-term (11-20 years).

The 2020 Regional Transportation Plan is considered a "project" under CEQA and this Initial Study is focused on the Plan as a long-term planning effort. Projects identified within the Plan will be individually evaluated under CEQA at the project level when the project is being delivered. The RTP update must be consistent with the 2017 Regional Transportation Plan Guidelines, which requires inclusion of program-level outcome-based performance measures and close ties to the Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) and the Interregional Transportation Improvement Program (ITIP).

The overall focus of the 2020 RTP is directed at developing a coordinated and balanced multimodal regional transportation system that is financially constrained to the revenues anticipated over the life of the plan. The coordination focus brings the County, Caltrans, local communities, governmental resource agencies, commercial interests, Hung a Le Ti or Woodfords Community, and citizens into the planning process. The balance is achieved by considering investment and improvements for moving people and goods across all modes including roads, transit, bicycle, pedestrian, trucking, and aviation.

The State and the County are at a pivotal moment in creating a new transportation pattern integrated with land use planning. Regions across California have been asked to develop plans for more efficient land use and development to reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT). As per Senate Bill 743, VMT data is annually reported as part of the Federal Highway Performance Monitoring System (HPMS) program. The HPMS program uses a sample-based method that combines traffic counts stratified by functional classification of roadways by volume groups to produce sample based geographic estimates of VMT. HPMS VMT estimates are considered "ground truth" by the 1990 Federal Clean Air Act Amendments

(November 15, 1990). HPMS VMT estimates are used to validate baseline travel demand models and to track modeled VMT forecasts over time. HPMS VMT estimates are reported for each county by local jurisdiction, state highway use, and other state/federal land roadways, e.g. State Parks, US Bureau of Land Management, US Forest Service, US Fish and Wildlife Service. HPMS VMT estimates are sample based. Due to smaller sampling requirements at the sub-county level of geography and in federal air quality attainment areas, desired 90/10 confidence level estimates of VMT are typically not attained in more rural areas of the state. Planners generally agree that reducing congestion, commute times, and VMT will lead to reduced carbon emissions while improving the quality of life for communities throughout California.

According to the California Department of Finance (DOF), the total population in Alpine County in 2015 was 1,162. By 2020, the DOF estimated the population to be 1,142, which calculates to an approximate -0.35 percent annual change on average. Countywide population density in 2020 was estimated to equal 1.5 persons per square mile. The forecasted population of Alpine County is expected to decrease approximately 2.8 percent every 5 years from 2020 to 2040.

### **Purpose of the Plan**

As defined by the 2017 RTP Guidelines, the purpose of the regional transportation plan is to accomplish the following objectives:

- Providing an assessment of the current modes of transportation and the potential of new travel options within the region;
- Projecting/estimating the future needs for travel and goods movement;
- Identification and documentation of specific actions necessary to address regional mobility and accessibility needs;
- Identification of guidance and documentation of public policy decisions by local, regional, state and federal officials regarding transportation expenditures and financing;
- Identification of needed transportation improvements, in sufficient detail, to serve as a foundation for the: (a) Development of the Federal State Transportation Improvement Program (FSTIP, which includes the STIP), (b) Facilitation of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)/404 integration process and (c) Identification of project purpose and need;
- Employing performance measures that demonstrate the effectiveness of the system of transportation improvement projects in meeting the intended goals;
- Promotion of consistency between the CTP, the RTP and other plans developed by cities, counties, districts, California Tribal Governments, and state and federal agencies in responding to statewide and interregional transportation issues and needs;
- Providing a forum for: (1) participation and cooperation and (2) facilitation of partnerships that reconcile transportation issues which transcend regional boundaries; and,
- Involving community-based organizations as part of the public, Federal, State and local agencies, California Tribal Governments, as well as local elected officials, early in the transportation planning process so as to include them in discussions and decisions on the social, economic, air quality and environmental issues related to transportation. The ACLTC prepared this 2020 RTP

based on these objectives consistent with the 2017 RTP Guidelines (adopted January 18, 2017).

### **Project Purpose and Need**

The RTP guidelines require that an RTP “provide a clearly defined justification for its transportation projects and programs.” This requirement is often referred to as The Project Purpose and Need Statement. Caltrans’ Deputy Directive No. DD 83 describes a project’s “Need” as an identified transportation deficiency or problem, and its “Purpose” is the set of objectives that will be met to address the transportation deficiency. For Alpine County, each project by mode in Attachment E of the 2020 RTP includes a qualitative assessment of purpose and need indicating a project’s contribution to system preservation, safety, multimodal improvements, regional and local mobility. These broader categories capture the intended outcome for projects during the life of the RTP and serve to enhance and protect the “livability” for residents in the County.

All projects listed in the Action Element of the RTP fall into one of the following designations. It should be noted that projects within each grouping are for the most part in random order. Consequently, the ACLTC, County, and/or Caltrans may change the priority ranking or project scope during the RTP approval process.

- Short Range: RTP improvements represent short-range projects that are fully fundable from anticipated revenue sources, referred to as “constrained”, and will normally be programmed during the first 10 years (0-10 years) of the RTP.
- Long Range: RTP improvements represent long-range projects that are included on the unconstrained or “unfunded” list of projects in Appendix G of the RTP and are planned for programming in the 11-20 year time frame (by the RTP horizon year, 2040).

There are no new roadways proposed as part of the proposed project. The RTP does not directly provide for the implementation of transportation projects and/or facilities. Rather, it identifies necessary improvements in order to provide the best possible transportation/circulation system to meet the mobility and access needs of the entire County.

Due to the regional nature of the RTP, the analysis in this Initial Study focuses on those impacts that are anticipated to be potentially significant on a regional system-wide level. As individual projects near implementation, it will be necessary to undertake project-specific environmental assessments before each project is approved and implemented. Such future environmental review will be required in accordance with CEQA and, if federally funded, NEPA. Adoption of this Initial Study/Negative Declaration and approval of the RTP does not authorize Alpine County or Caltrans to undertake construction of specific improvement projects identified in the RTP without further environmental review and consideration.

The following definitions are used in the RTP document.

**System Preservation** – This category of improvement indicates a project that serves to maintain the integrity of the existing system so that access and mobility are not hindered for travelers. Improvements may include bridge repairs, upgrading of existing rail lines, airport runway repairs, and upgrades to signs and traffic control devices and striping. In addition, because Alpine County is very rural and contains several small communities, the lack of maintenance funding has resulted in a large amount of “deferred maintenance” that has actually lapsed into a serious need to “rehabilitate” roadways to maintain system preservation. Rehabilitation entails primarily overlay and/or chip seal work that can also be considered a safety improvement. The majority of road projects listed indicate either “rehabilitation” or “reconstruction” to maintain system preservation.



**Safety Projects** – Safety improvements are intended to reduce the chance of conflicts between modes, prevent injury to motorists using the transportation system, and to ensure that motorists can travel to their destination in a timely manner. Safety improvements may include roadway and intersection realignments to improve sight-distance, pavement or runway resurfacing to provide for a smooth travel surface, signage to clarify traffic and aviation operations, congestion relief, obstacle removal so that traffic flows are not hindered, and improvements to pedestrian and bicycle facilities to promote safe travel to desired destinations. In addition, bridge repairs and reinforcement serve to improve safety. The desired outcome is to reduce the incident of collisions on County facilities and the societal costs in terms of injury, death or property damage.

**Multi-modal Enhancement** – These type of improvements focus on non-auto modes of travel such as bicycling, walking and transit. Projects that are designated as multimodal are designed to enhance travel by one or more of these modes, provide for better connectivity between modes, and to improve non-auto access to major destinations and activity centers. Typical projects include separated bike lanes, shared bike routes, sidewalks, transit amenities, street furniture, and signage.

### **Regional Goals**

The comprehensive goals, objectives, and policies that have been developed for this RTP meet the needs of the region and are consistent with the County’s regional vision and priorities for action, which set the framework for carrying out the roles and responsibilities of the ACLTC and assists them in their decision-making process for transportation investment. These objectives are intended to guide the development of a transportation system that is balanced, multi-modal, and will maintain and improve the quality of life in Alpine County.

#### **Alpine County Regional Goals:**

- Provide a well-balanced regional transportation system that meets the needs of all users.
- Provide and maintain a safe, efficient, and convenient countywide roadway system that meets the travel needs of people and goods through and within the region.
- Support recreational travel by making it safe, easy and inviting.
- Upgrade and maintain roadways in order to preserve the County roadway system.
- Provide for the mobility needs of county residents, visitors, and employees within the financial constraints of state and federal transit funding.
- Promote a safe, convenient, and efficient non-motorized transportation system that is part of a balanced overall transportation system.
- Promote alternative transportation.
- Fulfill the parking needs of local citizens, travelers, and tourists.
- Maintain the Alpine County Airport as a safe and operable general aviation facility. Expand airport services only if additional funding is available beyond CAAP annual grant program.
- Provide for the safe and efficient movement of goods within Alpine County and connecting to points beyond.
- Promote the use of alternative transportation to reduce the negative impacts of single-occupant vehicle travel and to increase mobility for Alpine County residents.
- Enhance sensitivity to the environment in all transportation decisions.
- Reduce Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions.

### **Other Public Agencies Whose Approval Is Required (e.g., Permits, etc.)**

Alpine County will be the Lead Agency for the proposed project pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), Section 15050. No specific permits are required to approve the

proposed project. Future permit approvals vary among projects and may include, but are not necessarily limited to: Caltrans, CA Department of Fish and Wildlife, Regional Water Quality Control Board, Bureau of Reclamation, Bureau of Land Management, US Army Corps of Engineers, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Federal Highway Administration, Federal Aviation Administration, and the California Transportation Commission.



Figure 1: Location Map

## Environmental Factors Potentially Affected

None of the environmental factors listed below would be potentially affected by this project, as described on the following pages.

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

## Determination

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

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

Debbie Burkett, Executive Director

Date

## Evaluation of Environmental Impacts

In each area of potential impact listed in this section, there are one or more questions which assess the degree of potential environmental effect. A response is provided to each question using one of the four impact evaluation criteria described below. A discussion of the response is also included.

- **Potentially Significant Impact.** This response is appropriate when there is substantial evidence that an effect is significant. If there are one or more "Potentially Significant Impact" entries, upon completion of the Initial Study, an EIR is required.
- **Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated.** This response applies when the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from "Potentially Significant Impact" to a "Less Than Significant Impact". The Lead Agency must describe the mitigation measures and briefly explain how they reduce the effect to a less than significant level.
- **Less than Significant Impact.** A less than significant impact is one which is deemed to have little or no adverse effect on the environment. Mitigation measures are, therefore, not necessary, although they may be recommended to further reduce a minor impact.
- **No Impact.** These issues were either identified as having no impact on the environment, or they are not relevant to the Project.

## Environmental Checklist

This section of the Initial Study incorporates the most current Appendix "G" Environmental Checklist Form, contained in the CEQA Guidelines. Impact questions and responses are included in both tabular and narrative formats for each of the 17 environmental topic areas.

### I. AESTHETICS – WOULD THE PROJECT:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	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 the site and its surroundings?			X	
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?			X	

### SETTING

Alpine County is characterized by large mountain ranges, deep valleys and alpine forests. Spectacular views of the Sierra Nevada Mountains, waterways, vast forests, granite peaks, and other scenic resources are available from highways and roadways throughout the County. The region's economy is largely dependent on the visitors who come to recreate in these diverse natural settings, and they are a significant reason why many residents choose to live in Alpine County. The Alpine County General Plan envisions conservation rather than development of open lands, and the RTP aligns with this vision by programming transportation system improvements rather than expansion.

### RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS

**Response a-d): Less than Significant.** State Highways 88, 89 and 4 are designated State Scenic Highways, and State Route 4 is designated as a National Scenic Byway. The proposed project includes a variety of roadway improvement projects, which consist primarily of roadway rehabilitation efforts and roadway safety improvements. Improvements occur on State Highways and on local roadways. There are no new roadways proposed as part of the 2020 RTP update, and as such, the proposed project would not lead to indirect population growth as a result of access improvements into areas that are currently undeveloped. The proposed project identifies roadway and multimodal transportation improvement funding priorities that will be implemented over the next 20 years. Implementation of the proposed project would not result in significant or adverse changes to the visual quality of the County, and would not result in the introduction of increased nighttime lighting or daytime glare. This is a less than significant impact and no mitigation is required.

## AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES --WOULD THE PROJECT:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	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) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non- agricultural use?				X

## SETTING

According to the 2009 Alpine County General Plan, 95 percent of the land in the County is publicly owned and designated as wilderness or open space. The remaining 5 percent is in agriculture, residential and commercial type land uses. There are 6 farms in the County according to the 2017 Census of Agriculture. Primary commodities include hay and cattle. According to the 2018 Alpine County Annual Crop and Livestock Report, the 2018 gross production of agricultural commodities was estimated to be \$5 million.

## RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS

**Response a): No Impact.** Implementation of the proposed project would allow for roadway and multimodal transportation improvements throughout the County over the next 20 years. The proposed project would not result in the conversion of any agricultural lands to non- agricultural uses, and as such, would have no impact on any Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland or Farmland of Statewide importance. There is no impact, and no mitigation is required.

**Response b): No Impact.** The proposed project does not propose any changes to General Plan land use designations or zoning districts, and would have no impact on zoning for agricultural use. The proposed project would not result in conflicts with any Williamson Act contracts, nor would it result in the cancellation of any Williamson Act contracts. Implementation of the proposed project will have no impact on a Williamson Act contract, and no mitigation is required.

**Response c): No Impact.** See responses a) and b) above. The proposed project will have no impact on agricultural lands or operations.

## II. AIR QUALITY -- WOULD THE PROJECT:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?			X	
b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?			X	
c) 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 (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?			X	
d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?			X	
e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?			X	

### SETTING

Alpine County is located within the Great Basin Valleys - Air Basin (GBVAB), named so because its geologic formation is that of a basin, with the surrounding mountains trapping the air and its pollutants in the valleys and basins.

As of the 2019 State Area Designations, Alpine County is currently unclassified for state PM10 standards, but not federal PM10 standards. Primary sources of PM10 pollution include wood stoves, wildfires, open and prescribed burning, and wind-blown dust generated from unpaved roads and agriculture. Alpine County is also unclassified for state ozone standards, and federal 8-hour ozone standards.

#### *Alpine County Air Pollution Control District*

The Great Basin Unified Air Pollution Control District (GBUAPCD) is the regional government agency that works to protect the people and the environment of Alpine, Mono and Inyo Counties from the harmful effects of air pollution. The GBUAPCD is responsible for the preparation of plans for the attainment and maintenance of Ambient Air Quality Standards (AAQS), adoption and enforcement of rules and regulations for sources of air pollution, and issuance of permits for stationary sources of air pollution.

The GBUAPCD also inspects stationary sources of air pollution, regulates agricultural burning, responds to citizen complaints, monitors ambient air quality and meteorological conditions, and implements programs and regulations required by federal and state air quality regulations.

The GBUAPCD works to ensure a coordinated approach in the development and implementation of transportation plans throughout the County. This coordination ensures compliance with pertinent provisions of the federal and state Clean Air Acts, as well as related transportation legislation.



## RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS

**Responses a-e): Less Than Significant.** It is the intention of the RTP to maintain the current transportation network and improve existing and future circulation within the County wherever possible. With this focus, improvements in the RTP may benefit regional air quality by reducing congestion on major roads within the County. Some of the route improvements identified in the RTP could have direct impacts on air quality, sensitive receptors, or create objectionable odors on a project-specific basis during construction. The Clean Air Act sets national ambient air quality standards for various air pollutants, including carbon monoxide, ozone, oxides of nitrogen, sulfur dioxide and particulate matter.

Individual projects identified in the RTP will be subject to project-level environmental review prior to approval and construction. Measures, such as construction best management practices (BMPS), may be required for individual projects to reduce temporary short-term construction related impacts to air quality. The project would not result in any indirect or cumulatively adverse impacts on air quality, as the project would not result in increased vehicle trips within the County or an overall increase in vehicle miles travelled as a result of implementation of the RTP. The proposed project would not conflict with or obstruct the implementation of the air quality plan, or violate any air quality standard.

In 2006, the California State Legislature adopted Assembly Bill (AB) 32 known as the California Global Warming Solutions Act (Section 38560.5 of the Health and Safety Code). The bill, and subsequent legislation (SB 375) establishes a cap on statewide greenhouse gas emissions and sets forth the regulatory framework to achieve the corresponding reduction in statewide emissions levels.

In January 2007, the Legislature asked the CTC to review the RTP guidelines to incorporate climate change emission reduction measures. The request emphasized that RTPs should utilize models that accurately measure the benefits of land use strategies aimed at reducing vehicle trips and/or trip length. The CTC staff established an RTP guidelines work group to assist in the development of “best practices” for inclusion in the RTP Guidelines. The newest 2017 RTP Guidelines provides several recommendations for consideration by rural RTPAs to address GHG reductions. The following strategies from the 2017 RTP guidelines have specific application to Alpine County.

- For purposes of allocating transportation investments, recognize the rural contribution towards GHG reduction for counties that have policies that support development within their cities, and protect agriculture and resource lands. Consideration should be given to jurisdictions that contribute towards these goals for projects that reduce GHG or are GHG neutral, such as safety, rehabilitation, connectivity and for alternative modes.
- In setting priorities, consider transportation projects that increase efficiency, connectivity and/or accessibility or provide other means to reduce GHG.
- In setting priorities, consider transportation projects that provide public health co-benefits.
- Emphasize transportation investments in areas where desired land uses as indicated in the County General Plan may result in vehicle miles traveled (VMT) reduction or other lower impact use.
- Employ “Fix It First” policies to ensure that preventive maintenance and repair of existing transit and roads are the highest priority for spending, to reduce overall maintenance costs, and to support development in existing centers and corridors.

The transportation planning literature recognizes three interrelated components that contribute to transportation emissions reductions. Those components include changes in vehicle technology (cleaner burning engines), alternative fuel sources, and vehicle use. The first two components are typically the responsibility of industry and national governmental interests. RTPAs and local governments have the

ability to affect vehicle use by promoting transportation alternatives to the automobile, and by managing the demand for transportation. These efforts typically involve goals and policies and/or projects and programs focused on getting people out of their cars and into non-auto modes of travel (mode shifting).

The following RTP goals are established for Alpine County to increase safety while reducing dependence on the automobile and to promote mode shifting to other forms of transportation.

- Provide a well-balanced regional transportation system that meets the needs of all users.
- Support recreational travel by making it safe, easy and inviting.
- Provide for the mobility needs of county residents, visitors, and employees within the financial constraints of state and federal transit funding.
- Promote a safe, convenient, and efficient non-motorized transportation system that is part of a balanced overall transportation system.
- Promote alternative transportation.
- Provide for the safe and efficient movement of goods within Alpine County and connecting to points beyond.
- Promote the use of alternative transportation to reduce the negative impacts of single-occupant vehicle travel and to increase mobility for Alpine County residents.
- Enhance sensitivity to the environment in all transportation decisions.
- Reduce Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions.

The effectiveness of efforts by the RTPA to provide transportation alternatives and to implement TDM and TSM policies and strategies can be measured in terms of reductions in vehicle miles traveled (VMT) or the expected growth in VMT. VMT reductions correlates directly with reductions in GHG emissions.

Caltrans reports VMT by County on an annual basis (see Figure 2). The daily vehicle miles traveled on County roads increased by 18.6% between 2014 and 2018, or an average of a 4.6% increase every year. Federally maintained US Forest Service roads almost doubled, increasing from 1.35 daily VMT in 2014 to 2.32 daily VMT in 2018. Additionally, State highways increased an average of 1.3% daily VMT each year with a total increase of 5.2%.

Table 2.18 Historic Vehicle Miles Traveled							
Jurisdiction	2014 Daily VMT	2015 Daily VMT	2016 Daily VMT	2017 Daily VMT	2018 Daily VMT	Change, 2014- 2018	Average Annual Change, 2014-2018
Bureau of Indian Affairs	0.11	x	x	x	x	-	-
County	35.7	34.91	42.23	42.24	42.34	18.6%	4.6%
State Highways	120.52	128.94	129.94	129.94	126.78	5.2%	1.3%
State Park Service	0.36	0.17	x	x	x	-	-
US Forest Service	1.35	1.71	2.54	2.54	2.32	71.9%	18.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>158.04</b>	<b>165.73</b>	<b>174.72</b>	<b>174.73</b>	<b>171.45</b>	<b>8.5%</b>	<b>2.1%</b>
<i>Source: 2010 - 2018 California Public Road Data</i>							

*Figure 2: Daily Vehicle Miles Travelled*

Table 2.19 Forecasted Vehicle Miles Traveled					
Jurisdiction	2020 Daily VMT	2025 Daily VMT	2030 Daily VMT	2035 Daily VMT	2040 Daily VMT
County	42.9	43.9	44.9	46.0	47.1
State Highways	127.3	128.1	128.9	129.8	130.6
US Forest Service	2.4	2.7	2.9	3.2	3.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>172.5</b>	<b>174.4</b>	<b>176.2</b>	<b>178.0</b>	<b>179.9</b>

*Source: 2010 - 2018 California Public Road Data*

*Figure 3: Projected Vehicle Miles Traveled*

In recent years, Alpine County has experienced decreasing growth (approximately 0.92 percent change per year) in population and employment. Due to the minimal decrease, however, future trends of population decrease could easily change. Additionally, the population changes throughout the year due to seasonal residents with vacation homes. A variable formula was used to forecast average daily VMT based on the average annual change from 2014-2018. Roadway segments with minor increases or decreases in this time period were projected at a matching constant rate of increase or decrease. Roadways with significant average VMT increases were projected at a higher rate of increase in proportion to VMT increases experienced between 2014 and 2018. Road segments that experienced no change between 2014 and 2018 have been projected to remain constant. Based on this trend and the guidelines established in the 2017 RTP guidelines, the County is not required to run a network travel demand model to estimate VMT. The guidelines cite the lack of road congestion and the fact that emission changes from higher-MPG vehicles will continue to help the County comply with future emission caps established by the California Air Resources Board as part of AB 32.

The Alpine County 2020 RTP recognizes that TDM and other non-auto mobility options, including walking, biking and transit, require coordinated land use decisions and improved infrastructure. To this degree, the goals and policies in the RTP are consistent with the County's proposed general plan revisions to provide a balanced multi-modal transportation system that includes non-auto choices for access and mobility. Goals proposed in the 2009 General Plan revision and update emphasize the following:

- Goal No. 38 provide for the transit needs of the county in a timely and economic fashion
- Goal No. 40 develop bicycle circulation and support facilities where safe and reasonable
- Goal No. 41 develop pedestrian circulation for the betterment of local commerce as well as the safety and convenience of local citizens
- Goal No. 43 establish winter trails for cross-country ski and snowmobile use

The County is committed to implementing these types of policies and strategies that reduce reliance on the automobile and contribute to the reduction of GHG emissions. Although the RTP mentions projects that will enhance the countywide transportation system, the proposed improvements would not influence VMT or population levels, nor would it significantly

alter current air quality levels. As such, the proposed project would result in less than significant impacts to air quality, and no mitigation is required.

### III. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES -- WOULD THE PROJECT:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?			X	
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or US Fish and Wildlife Service?			X	
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (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	

### SETTING

The Central Sierra Nevada is the dominant land feature, with the Carson and Antelope Valleys bordering on the east. The County's topography is characterized by high rugged peaks and ridges, deep canyons, mountain meadows, and numerous streams and lakes. Alpine County extends from high elevations (+11,000 feet) at Sonora Peak to the low elevations (+4,700 feet) in the mountain valleys. As a result of such major changes in elevation, Alpine County includes a great variety of climatic, soil and geographic conditions which, in turn, influence the distribution, variety, and abundance of the plant and animal species within the County. It is estimated that ninety five percent of Alpine County's land area is government owned and administered by the U.S. Forest Service or Bureau of Land Management.

#### *State Wildlife Action Plan*

The goals identified in the Policy Element (Chapter 3) of this Plan consider stressors identified in the State Wildlife Action Plan. The State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP) identifies separate conservational

provinces broken into subzones called ecoregions. During the process of this RTP, The ACLTC coordinated with the California State Wildlife Action Plan to ensure that the RTP action items aligned with the conservation strategies for the Central Valley and Sierra Nevada regions.

According to the California State Wildlife Action Plan, the major stressors in the Central Valley and Sierra Nevada Region are as follows:

**Stressors affecting upland habitats:**

- Growth and land development
- Forest management conflicts
- Altered fire regimes
- Excessive livestock grazing
- Invasive Plants
- Recreational Pressures
- Climate change

**Stressors affecting aquatic and riparian habitats:**

- Water diversions and dams
- Watershed fragmentation and fish barriers
- Hydropower project operations
- Excessive livestock grazing
- Water diversions from the Owens Valley
- Introduced non-native fish

Although Alpine County is located within the Sierra Nevada and Cascades region, the California state Wildlife Action Plan was not developed on a county-basis. The larger region that applies to Alpine County contains species, stressors and recommended actions that are not relevant to Alpine County. For a complete list of actions suggested for wildlife management in Alpine County and the Sierra Nevada and Cascades Region, see Attachment C of the Regional Transportation Plan.

*California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB)*

A review was performed of county-wide species using the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB). The information in the species list includes known occurrences and historical occurrences of species listed as threatened, endangered or otherwise protected under policies or ordinances at the local or regional level as required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA, §15380).

The CNDDDB County Species List for Alpine County contains 84 total animal and plant species and communities within the County. Of these, 23 species are classified by the CDFW as Fully Protected, Species of Special Concern, or Watch List. The CNDDDB list also contains 1 species federally listed as proposed endangered, 1 proposed threatened, 2 species federally endangered, and 3 federally threatened. 1 species is listed by the State as Candidate Endangered, 4 as endangered, and 3 as threatened. 1 species has been delisted. Many of the above-listed species are recognized in two or more classifications.

## RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS

**Response a-f): Less than Significant.** The proposed project does not propose the construction of new roadways in areas of the County that have previously been undisturbed. Nearly all of the roadway projects identified in the RTP consist of rehabilitation efforts, which would occur within the roadbeds of the existing roadways, and would not have the potential to impact any special status species or habitat. Individual projects identified in the RTP that may include the widening of a particular roadway would be subject to project-level environmental review prior to approval and construction of the improvements. This future project-level environmental review of individual projects would identify the potential for impacts to any special status species, habitat, or wetlands. As such, implementation of the proposed project would not directly or indirectly impact any biological resources, wetland resources, or conflict with any habitat conservation plan or local ordinance protecting natural and biological resources. This is a less than significant impact and no mitigation is required.

#### IV. CULTURAL RESOURCES -- WOULD THE PROJECT:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in §15064.5?			X	
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?			X	
c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?			X	
d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?			X	

#### SETTING

Alpine County, California, has a uniquely rich historic and prehistoric heritage. The County lies within the traditional Washoe aboriginal lands: the mountains and valleys of Alpine County have provided subsistence and spiritual sustenance to the Washoe for millennia. Euro-American travel through the County and its later settlement are also of interest and importance to the people of Alpine County, for the County's identity is closely related to these historic events. The current Native American population in Alpine County is centered in Hung a Lel Ti at Woodfords Community.

Prehistoric and historic resources are valuable to the people of Alpine County in many ways: spiritual importance, community identity, aesthetic beauty, historic interest, and recreation opportunities. Prehistoric, historic, and contemporary cultural resources could be located anywhere within the County. No comprehensive inventory of cultural resource sites within Alpine County exists.

#### RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS

**Response a-d): Less than Significant.** The proposed project does not entitle, propose, or otherwise require the construction of new roadways. The proposed project includes a variety of roadway improvement projects, which consist primarily of roadway rehabilitation efforts and roadway safety improvements. The proposed project identifies roadway and multimodal transportation improvement funding priorities that will be implemented over the next 20 years. Nearly all of the roadway projects identified in the RTP consist of rehabilitation efforts, which would occur within the roadbeds of the existing roadways, and would not have the potential to impact any known or previously undiscovered cultural resources. Individual projects identified in the RTP that may include the widening or a particular roadway would be subject to project-level environmental review prior to approval and construction of the improvements. This future project-level environmental review of individual projects would identify the potential for impacts to any cultural, historical, paleontological or archaeological resources. A project level environmental review is required under CEQA for each project identified in the Regional Transportation Plan and will be evaluated at that time for cultural resources. This Plan as a Project has a less than significant impact on the environment and no mitigation is required.



**V. GEOLOGY AND SOILS -- Would the project:**

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:			X	
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 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	

**SETTING**

Alpine County is underlain predominately by volcanic and granitic rocks. The volcanic rocks are predominant in the eastern part of the County, while granitic rocks are most abundant in the west. Small masses of metamorphic rocks occur in the northern part of the County. The valleys are underlain by alluvium. There are a few glacial moraines. Although much of Alpine County was shaped by glaciation during the Pleistocene Epoch, only a few glacial moraines exist and none are very extensive. Moraines are located near Lake Alpine and Union Reservoir in the southwest part of the County, near Grover Hot Springs, near Silver Mountain City, at the head of upper Carson Valley and northeast of the Carson Pass. The moraines are composed of rough angular boulders of all sizes mixed with sand, gravel, and finer detritus. Alluvial deposits occupy the valleys, the most extensive deposits being in the upper Carson Valley and Hope Valley. The alluvium consists of silt, sand, and gravel in and adjacent to the present stream channels.

## RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS

**Responses a-e): Less than Significant.** Seismicity is directly related to the distribution of fault systems within a region. Depending on activity patterns, faults and fault-related geologic features may be classified as active, potentially active, or inactive. The entire State of California is considered seismically active and is susceptible to seismic ground shaking, however, the most highly active fault zones are along the coastal areas.

*Fault Rupture.* A fault rupture occurs when the surface of the earth breaks as a result of an earthquake, although this does not happen with all earthquakes. These ruptures generally occur in a weak area of an existing fault. Ruptures can be sudden (i.e. earthquake) or slow (i.e. fault creep). The Alquist-Priolo Fault Zoning Act requires active earthquake fault zones to be mapped and it provides special development considerations within these zones. While it is possible for a fault rupture throughout seismically active areas of California, there are no Alquist-Priolo Fault zones within Alpine County.

*Seismic Ground Shaking.* The potential for seismic ground shaking in California is expected. As a result of the foreseeable seismicity in California, the State requires special design considerations for all structural improvements in accordance with the seismic design provisions in the California Building Code. These seismic design provisions require enhanced structural integrity based on several risk parameters. Any future roadway improvements implemented as a result of adoption of the RTP would be subject to detailed engineering requirements to ensure structural integrity consistent with the requirements of state law. As such, implementation of the proposed project would result in a less than significant impact from seismic ground shaking.

*Liquefaction.* Liquefaction typically requires a significant sudden decrease of shearing resistance in cohesionless soils and a sudden increase in water pressure, which is typically associated with an earthquake of high magnitude. The potential for liquefaction is highest when groundwater levels are high, and loose, fine, sandy soils occur at depths of less than 50 feet. Most areas of Alpine County are considered to be at a low risk of hazards from liquefaction. Any future roadway improvements implemented as a result of adoption of the RTP would be subject to detailed engineering requirements to ensure structural integrity consistent with the requirements of state law. As such, implementation of the proposed project would result in a less than significant impact from liquefaction.

*Landslides.* Landslides include rockfalls, deep slope failure, and shallow slope failure. Factors such as the geological conditions, drainage, slope, vegetation, and others directly affect the potential for landslides. One of the most common causes of landslides is construction activity that is associated with road building (i.e. cut and fill). The projects identified in the RTP consist primarily of roadway maintenance and improvement projects, and would occur within the existing right of way of the County's roadway system. As such, the potential for impacts related to landslides is considered less than significant.

*Lateral Spreading.* Lateral spreading typically results when ground shaking moves soil toward an area where the soil integrity is weak or unsupported, and it typically occurs on the surface of a slope, although it does not occur strictly on steep slopes. Oftentimes, lateral spreading is directly associated with areas of liquefaction. Any future roadway improvements implemented as a result of adoption of the RTP would be subject to detailed engineering requirements to ensure structural integrity consistent with the requirements of state law. As such, implementation of the proposed project would result in a less than significant impact from lateral spreading.

*Erosion.* Erosion naturally occurs on the surface of the earth as surface materials (i.e. rock, soil, debris, etc.) is loosened, dissolved, or worn away, and transported from one place to another by gravity. Two common types of soil erosion include wind erosion and water erosion. The steepness of a slope is an important factor that affects soil erosion. Erosion potential in soils is influenced primarily by loose soil texture and steep slopes. Loose soils can be eroded by water or wind forces, whereas soils with high clay content are generally susceptible only to water erosion. The potential for erosion generally increases as a result of human activity, primarily through the development of facilities and impervious surfaces and the removal of vegetative cover. Future roadway improvement projects would be required to implement measures during construction, including various BMPs, that would reduce potential impacts related to erosion. This is considered a less than significant impact.

*Expansive Soils.* Expansive soils are those that shrink or swell with the change in moisture content. The volume of change is influenced by the quantity of moisture, by the kind and amount of clay in the soil, and by the original porosity of the soil. Shrinking and swelling can damage roads and structures unless special engineering design is incorporated into the project plans.

*Septic Tanks.* Implementation of the RTP would not result in the use or expansion of any septic systems. Implementation of the proposed project would have a less than significant impact on this environmental topic, and no mitigation is required.

## VI. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS -- WOULD THE PROJECT:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	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	

### SETTING

The RTP includes goals, policies, and strategies aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions in Alpine County. RTP projects such as roadway and bridge repairs are necessary to maintain a safe regional transportation system and to prevent deterioration of roadways and bridges which may require costlier repairs in the future. These projects will not result in greater traffic volumes along state highways or County roads. To the degree that keeping an existing travel route open avoids travel via longer alternative routes that would accompany a closure, maintaining existing roadways and bridges can help to avoid increases in Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT).

The RTP should be consistent with any County General Plan updates or County land use guidelines and will encourage new developments to be placed adjacent to existing development in order to assist in VMT reduction and shorter travel distances. The RTP also includes long-term bicycle and pedestrian improvement projects which will create more bicycle and pedestrian friendly communities and potentially further reduce VMT. The RTP also includes public transit elements. By expanding alternative forms of transportation, Alpine County is in-line with statewide climate change goals. The RTP is a programmatic document and the proposed projects will be reviewed on a project-by-project basis, therefore there is no potential for significant impact.

### RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS

**Response a) and b): Less than Significant.** The population has decreased slightly in Alpine County over the past decade, and this trend is anticipated to continue through 2040. As a result of the County's historic and projected population decrease, increases in VMT are anticipated to remain low as well. The RTP includes numerous goals related to the increase in multi-modal transportation options, which reduce dependence on the automobile, and may subsequently result in decreases in total VMT throughout the County.

## VII. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS -- WOULD THE PROJECT:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	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 for people residing or working in the project area?			X	
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?			X	
g) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?				X
h) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?			X	

### SETTING

The State of California has adopted U.S. DOT regulations for the intrastate movement of hazardous materials; State regulations are contained in 26 CCR. In addition, the State of California regulates the transportation of hazardous waste originating in the state and passing through the state (26 CCR). Both regulatory programs apply in California. The two State agencies with primary responsibility for enforcing federal and State regulations and responding to hazardous materials transportation emergencies are the

CHP and Caltrans. The CHP enforces hazardous material and hazardous waste labeling and packing regulations to prevent leakage and spills of material in transit. Caltrans has emergency chemical spill identification teams at as many as 72 locations throughout the State that can respond quickly in the event of a spill. Additionally, the Alpine County Public Health Department serves the public to protect the health and welfare of the general public and environment through prevention and control of disease and pollutants.

## RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS

**Responses a-c): No Impact.** A “hazardous material” is a substance or combination of substances that, because of its quantity, concentration, or physical, chemical, or infectious characteristics, may pose a potential hazard to human health or the environment when handled improperly. The proposed project does not propose new development or any use that would result in the transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials. Furthermore, the proposed project would not result in a foreseeable upset, accident, or emission of hazardous materials. Implementation of the proposed project would have a less than significant impact on this environmental topic and no mitigation is required.

**Responses d): Less than Significant.** There are no locations in Alpine County that are registered with the Department of Toxic Substances Control and included on the Cortese List. Implementation of the proposed project would have no impact on this environmental topic and no mitigation is required.

**Response e-f): Less than Significant.** The Action Element of the RTP includes a list of proposed improvement projects related to aviation facilities in the County. The proposed aviation facility improvements consist primarily of rehabilitation efforts, and the implementation of other ancillary improvements such as fencing, lighting, etc. All improvements to aviation facilities within the County identified in the RTP are consistent with the applicable airport land use plans (ALUPs) and would not result in changes to the aviation and flight patterns surrounding County aviation facilities. Implementation of the proposed project would have a less than significant impact on this environmental topic and no mitigation is required.

**Response g): Less than Significant.** The proposed project would not impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. The improvements identified in the RTP would improve the transportation network in Alpine County, which would serve to improve emergency response times countywide. Construction activities associated with projects identified within the RTP may result in temporary lane closures that may temporarily impede emergency access to certain areas within the County during construction. However, each improvement project, when undertaken, will include measures to ensure that emergency access is not adversely impeded. Implementation of the proposed project would have a less than significant impact on this environmental topic and no mitigation is required.

**Response h): Less than Significant.** Wildfires are a major hazard in the State of California. Wildfires burn natural vegetation on developed and undeveloped lands and include timber, brush, woodland, and grass fires. While low intensity wildfires have an important role in the ecosystem, modern wildfires are exacerbated due to fire suppression, extreme drought and climate change. These higher intensity fires put human health and safety, structures (e.g., homes, schools, businesses, etc.), air quality, recreation areas, water quality, wildlife habitat and ecosystem health, and forest resources at risk.

The proposed project consists primarily of projects that will improve and rehabilitate roadways throughout the County. Roadway rehabilitation is necessary for improving emergency response and evacuation efficiency. There are no new homes, businesses or habitable structures proposed as part of the RTP. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project would not result in increased risks

associated with wildfires. This is a less than significant impact and no mitigation is required.

# **VIII. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY -- WOULD THE PROJECT:**

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?			X	
b) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?			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, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?			X	
d) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site?			X	
e) 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?			X	
f) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?			X	
g) Place housing 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?			X	
h) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures which would impede or redirect flood flows?			X	
i) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?			X	
j) Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?			X	

## **SETTING**

Alpine County's climate is classified as Mediterranean in the Koppen climate classification system. Hot, dry summers and temperate winters generally characterize most of the County. Alpine County received approximately 18.5 inches of rainfall in the 2018 water year and 21.8 inches of rainfall in 2019 (California Data Exchange Center 2018-2019).



Alpine County's hydrologic sources are dominated by surface water flow from the Carson River, according to the US Geological Survey. The major sources of groundwater in Alpine County include rainfall, infiltration from nearby rivers and streams, Carson River flow, and subsurface inflow.

Alpine County's population and economy is dependent upon adequate water supplies. Water is a necessity for agricultural production and economic development and is vitally important to maintaining many of the county's wildlife resources and recreation attractions. Alpine County contains many lakes and streams that not only are a vital water source, but also serve as recreational attractions. Additionally, many reservoirs are located within the County such as Kinney Reservoir, part of Spicer Meadow Reservoir, Salt Springs Reservoir, Lake Alpine, and Lower Bear River Reservoir.

Alpine County experiences periodic winter snow and thunderstorms that lead to heavy snowpack levels within the County. Under winter storm conditions, some sections of Alpine County roadways are regularly closed off during severe winter storms such as State Route 4 from Lake Alpine to Monitor Junction. Heavy rain from storms occasionally leads to flash flooding. Flooding has had severe impacts on homes, business and schools in Carson Valley and along the West Fork of the Carson River, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

## RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS

**Response a-j): Less than Significant.** Implementation of the proposed project would result in the improvement and rehabilitation of roadways and transportation infrastructure throughout Alpine County. The project would not result in the development or construction of housing or other habitable structures that would be at risk from flooding events. There are a small number of projects identified within the RTP that may increase the area of impervious surfaces within the County. Such improvements consist primarily of roadway widening to address safety and operational concerns. The amount of impervious surfaces that may be added to the County as a result of project implementation is negligible, and would not result in impacts to groundwater recharge rates. The improvements identified in the RTP would not result in increased uses of ground or surface water and would not directly or indirectly lead to population growth. As such, the project would not result in an increased demand for ground or surface water resources, and would have no impact on these environmental topics.

There is the potential for water quality impacts to occur during construction activities associated with the various projects identified in the RTP. Each project is subject to further project-level environmental review prior to approval and construction. During subsequent environmental review, potential project-specific construction impacts to water quality would be identified, and mitigation measures, in the form of BMPs would be identified and implemented to ensure that impacts to water quality are reduced or avoided. Impacts to these environmental topics are considered less than significant and no mitigation is required.

## IX. LAND USE AND PLANNING - *Would the project:*

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Physically divide an established community?				X
b) Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?				X
c) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?				X

### SETTING

Almost 95% of Alpine County land is publicly owned. Most of the residential development in the county is low-density single-family housing. Alpine County has a General Plan containing policies to guide growth and land use changes.

### RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS

**Responses a-c): No Impact.** Implementation of the proposed project would result in improvements to the County's transportation network. There are no changes to land uses or land use designations proposed as part of the RTP. The County General Plan was reviewed during preparation of the RTP, and the RTP is consistent with these documents. No housing would be removed as part of the proposed project, and there are no new roadways proposed that would divide an established community. Implementation of the RTP would not conflict with a habitat conservation plan. There are no impacts to land use associated with the proposed project and no mitigation is required.

**X. MINERAL RESOURCES -- WOULD THE PROJECT:**

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	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

**SETTING**

The Office of Mine Reclamation periodically publishes a list of mines regulated under SMARA that is generally referred to as the AB 3098 List. The Public Contract Code precludes mining operations that are not on the AB 3098 List from selling sand, gravel, aggregates, or other mined materials to state or local agencies. The current AB 3098 list (November 6, 2020) indicates that there are 3 mines regulated under SMARA in Alpine County; Merrill Barrow Pit, Gansberg Sand, and the Fredericksburg Gravel pit.

**RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS**

**Response a-b): No Impact.** There are no active mines located within the areas proposed for improvement in the RTP. The proposed project would not result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource or mineral resource recovery site. Implementation of the proposed project would have a less than significant impact on this environmental topic.

## XI. NOISE -- WOULD THE PROJECT RESULT IN:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?			X	
b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?			X	
c) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?			X	
d) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?			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 expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?			X	
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?			X	

### SETTING

Due to the lack of sizeable industrial operations, the Alpine County General Plan identifies existing noise sources in Alpine County related to vehicular traffic on State Routes 88, 89, and 4, and 207. Recreation and tourism can cause higher levels of noise on these routes than would otherwise exist. The County airport presently receives very limited use and is located three miles from the nearest developed area. It is therefore not included as a significant noise producing transportation facility.

### RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS

**Responses a-f): Less than Significant.** Implementation of the proposed project consists primarily of improvements to the existing transportation network in Alpine County. There are no new roadways proposed that would introduce new vehicle trips into areas not currently exposed to mobile noise sources from the existing transportation network. The improvements identified in the RTP would not directly result in increased vehicle trips on the County roadway network, and would therefore, not result in increased noise levels from vehicles travelling on existing roadways and transportation facilities in the County. The improvements to aviation facilities identified in the RTP would not result in increased or expanded flight operations and would not result in increased noise from aviation sources.

Construction activities associated with the various improvements identified in the RTP could result in short-term temporary noise impacts in the immediate vicinity of the improvements. These noise increases would be temporary in nature, and construction activities in the vicinity of residences and

other sensitive noise receptors would usually be limited to the daytime hours. However, as described throughout this initial study, subsequent environmental review of project-specific impacts would be required prior to approval and implementation of future improvements. This future environmental review would identify the potential for short-term construction noise impacts to sensitive receptors and assign mitigation measures as needed to reduce noise impacts. This is a less than significant impact and no mitigation is required.

## **XII. POPULATION AND HOUSING – WOULD THE PROJECT:**

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Induce substantial 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 housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?			X	
c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?			X	

### **SETTING**

According to the American Community Survey, the total number of housing units in Alpine County was estimated at 1,733 in 2017, of which an estimated 1,110 were occupied. An estimated 83% of the housing units were owner-occupied and 17% were renter-occupied. The vacancy rate in Alpine County (36%) is much higher than the state rate (7.9%). The median home value in the County is \$349,000. The median home value in Alpine County is approximately 79% of the statewide median value of \$443,400.

According to the US Census, the population of Alpine County started to slowly decline around the year 2000. Growth has decreased, but the margin is so small that in the future, it could remain steady. Alpine County has seasonal population increases that are directly related to the large recreational tourism industry. Transportation planning efforts must accommodate the seasonal population boosts.

### **RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS**

**Responses a-c): Less than Significant.** The proposed project consists primarily of the rehabilitation of the existing transportation network in Alpine County. There are no new roadways proposed that would extend vehicular access into areas of the County that are not currently accessible by area roadways. The project would not result in the direct or indirect inducement of population growth. The proposed project includes projects that would occur primarily within the right-of-way of the existing transportation network, and would not displace any persons or housing units. This is a less than significant impact and no mitigation is required.

### XIII. PUBLIC SERVICES

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	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:				
Fire protection?			X	
Police protection?			X	
Schools?			X	
Parks?			X	
Other public facilities?			X	

#### SETTING

Alpine County is served by 4 fire departments including volunteer fire departments and the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (Cal Fire). Law enforcement for the County is provided by the Alpine County Sheriff's Office, located in Markleeville. The California Highway Patrol enforces traffic laws throughout the county.

Alpine County is served by one school district, the Alpine County Unified School District, which contains Diamond Valley School and Bear Valley School. Due to the low population within the County, there are no high schools or higher education institutions in Alpine County. The closest high school is located in Tahoe Valley in El Dorado County.

The Alpine County Community Development Department operates and maintains parks and community facilities in Markleeville and Bear Valley. There are seven facilities that include community meeting rooms, playgrounds, disc golf courses, campgrounds, and open space. Additionally, there is an abundance of National Forest land, State Park land, and privately owned recreation facilities within the County that are widely utilized for recreational purposes.

#### RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS

**Response a): Less than Significant.** As described throughout this initial study, the proposed project (adoption of the RTP) consists primarily of the rehabilitation and improvement of the existing transportation network in Alpine County. The projects included in the RTP would not extend roadway infrastructure into areas not currently served, and would not result in the direct or indirect growth of the County's population. As such, the demand for increased public services, including police protection, fire protection, schools, parks and other public facilities would not increase as a result of implementation of the proposed project. This is a less than significant impact and no mitigation is required.

#### XIV. RECREATION

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	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	

#### SETTING

As discussed previously, Alpine County parks are operated and maintained by the County Department. The Parks system consists of seven facilities that include a variation of parks and community centers. However, most recreation takes place within the abundance of Federal lands and State Parks within the county.

#### RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS

**Responses a-b): Less than Significant.** As described throughout this initial study, the proposed project (adoption of the RTP) consists primarily of the rehabilitation and improvement of the existing transportation network in Alpine County. The projects included in the RTP would not extend roadway infrastructure into areas not currently served, and would not result in the direct or indirect growth of the County's population. As such, the demand for increased recreational facilities would not increase as a result of implementation of the proposed project. This is a less than significant impact and no mitigation is required.



## **XV. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC -- WOULD THE PROJECT:**

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation including mass transit and non-motorized travel and relevant components of the circulation system, including but not limited to intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit?			X	
b) Conflict with an applicable congestion management program, including, but not limited to level of service standards and travel demand measures, or other standards established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?			X	
c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?			X	
d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?			X	
e) Result in inadequate emergency access?			X	
f) Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such facilities?			X	

### **SETTING**

Alpine County is served by four state highways and numerous local roadways. The roadway network provides the regional transportation routes for automobiles and trucks. The roadway network includes State Routes 4, 88, 89 and 207.

According to the California Public Road Data, approximately 147 centerline road miles are maintained by the County. Approximately 89 miles are maintained by State Highways, and 16 miles are maintained by the U.S. Forest Service.

State Route (SR) 4 is an east-west 2-lane conventional highway (classified as a minor arterial) beginning in Contra Costa County at the City of Hercules and ending in Alpine County at SR 89 near Markleeville, and has a length of approximately 197 miles. The 58-mile stretch of SR 4 from Arnold in Calaveras County to its endpoint at SR 89, known as Ebbetts Pass Scenic Byway, is designated as a National Scenic Byway and a California State Scenic Highway. Portions of SR 4, including the section from Monitor Jct. to Lake Alpine, are closed regularly during winter due to severe winter weather.

SR 88 is an east-west 2-lane conventional highway (classified as principle arterial) beginning in Stockton at SR 99 and ending at in Minden, Nevada, and has a length of approximately 122 miles. SR 88 is a State Scenic Highway. SR 88 closes over Carson Pass during severe winter weather events.

SR 89 is a 243 mile north-south 2-lane conventional highway (classified as a minor arterial) beginning at I-5 near Mount Shasta and ending at US 395 near Coleville, California in Mono County. SR 89 is a major thoroughfare for many mountain communities, as it runs through Siskiyou, Shasta, Tehama, Plumas, Sierra, Nevada, Placer, El Dorado, Alpine, and Mono counties. SR 89 is a State Scenic Highway. SR 89 closes from Monitor Pass to US 395 during severe winter weather events, and rarely closes over Luther Pass.

SR 207 is a north-south 2-lane conventional highway beginning at SR 4 near Bear Valley and ending at Mount Reba at the Bear Valley Ski Resort parking lot, and is only 1.36 miles in length. SR 207 is open year-round as it is the only way to access the Bear Valley Ski Resort.

In 2017, the California Transportation Commission adopted guidelines for Regional Transportation Planning Agencies for RTP analysis and modeling. This was the first time separate guidelines have been developed for RTPAs and Metropolitan Planning Organizations, recognizing the inherent differences. The 2017 RTP Guidelines for RTPAs formally recognizes that RTPAs are not required to develop Sustainable Communities Strategies as MPOs are. As such, air quality conformity analysis and travel demand models are not required either. Air quality conformity analysis on regionally significant, federally funded projects is performed by the California Department of Transportation in isolated rural nonattainment and maintenance areas.

The 2017 RTP guidelines incorporate California's Senate Bill 743 (SB 743), which requires a change in transportation impact metrics used in the CEQA process from Level of Service (LOS) to Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT). Environmental review consistent with the new CEQA guidelines will be conducted for individual projects as they advance to the implementation stage of development.

Estimates of countywide VMT for the five most recent years available, 2014 through 2018 are provided in Table 2.18 of the RTP. The daily vehicle miles traveled on County roads increased by 18.6% between 2014 and 2018, or an average of 4.6% per year. During the same time period, State highways increased by 1.3%, of an average annual change of 1.3%. Although the County's population is expected to decline, the daily VMT in the County is estimated to increase slightly between 2020 and 2040 from 172.5 to 179.9. This equates to a total an increase of 4.3% throughout the lifespan of the RTP. This slight increase can be credited to the increase in recreational travel within the County.

## RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS

**Responses a-b): Less than Significant.** Implementation of the proposed RTP would result in improvements and rehabilitation to the existing transportation and roadway network in Alpine County.

Although a slight increase in VMT is likely to occur throughout the lifetime of this RTP, few changes are expected in the ratings of state routes in Alpine County. In 2040, most highway segments are expected to be operating at an acceptable congestion rating.

Implementation of the proposed project would not result in population growth within Alpine County and would not directly result in increases of VMT. The proposed project would improve traffic flows and operations throughout the County and would not result in VMT that exceeds applicable standards or thresholds. This is a less than significant impact and no mitigation is required.

**Responses c-f): Less than Significant.** As described throughout this initial study, implementation of the proposed project would assist in the improvement of the County's transportation network across all modes of transit and transportation. The improvements proposed to aviation facilities in the County would not result in an increase in flights or a change in flight patterns. There are policies and programs included in the RTP that would improve public access to transit systems and alternative modes of transit, such as bicycle use. The various roadways improvements identified in the RTP would assist in the delivery of emergency services by improving the local and regional roadway network and eliminating existing design and safety hazards. The RTP and the projects included within were developed after careful review of the General Plan of the County. The RTP is consistent with the circulation element of the General Plan and would not result in conflicts or inconsistencies with the above referenced plan. This is considered a less than significant impact and no mitigation is required.

## XVI. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES – WOULD THE PROJECT

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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:				
a) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of the Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined 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	

### SETTING

There is currently one federally recognized Tribal entity in Alpine County. The Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California includes the Hung a Le Ti community in Woodfords in Alpine County. Cooperative planning between Tribal governments, regional and local agencies and Caltrans was achieved during the planning process of this document. Tribal cultural resources could be located anywhere within the County. No comprehensive inventory of tribal cultural resource sites within Alpine County exists.

CEQA requires lead agencies to determine if a proposed project would have a significant effect on tribal cultural resources. The CEQA Guidelines define tribal cultural resources as: (1) a site, feature, place, cultural landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American Tribe that is listed or eligible for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources, or on 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 according to the historical register criteria in Public Resources Code Section 5024.1(c), and considering the significance of the resource to a California Native American Tribe. The County provides notices of projects under AB52 to the designated contact of, or a tribal representative of, traditionally and culturally affiliated California Native American tribes that have requested notice.

### RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS

**Responses a-b): Less than Significant.** The proposed project does not entitle, propose, or otherwise require the construction of new roadways. The proposed project includes a variety of roadway improvement projects, which consist primarily of roadway rehabilitation efforts and roadway safety improvements. The proposed project identifies roadway and multimodal transportation improvement funding priorities that will be implemented over the next 20 years. Nearly all of the roadway projects identified in the RTP consist of rehabilitation efforts, which would occur within the roadbeds of the

existing roadways, and would not have the potential to impact any known or previously undiscovered cultural resources. Individual projects identified in the RTP that may include the widening of a roadway would be subject to project-level environmental review prior to approval and construction of the improvements. This future project-level environmental review of individual projects would identify the potential for impacts to any cultural resources. This is a less than significant impact and no mitigation is required.

**XVII. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS -- WOULD THE PROJECT:**

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?			X	
b) Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?			X	
c) Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?			X	
d) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?			X	
e) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the projects projected demand in addition to the providers existing commitments?			X	
f) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the projects solid waste disposal needs?			X	
g) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?			X	

**SETTING**

Alpine County's population and economy is dependent upon adequate water supplies. Water is a necessity for economic development and is vitally important to maintaining many of the county's wildlife resources and recreation attractions. Alpine County contains several reservoirs that make up the county's surface water resources, including Kinney, Indian Creek, Bear River, Spicer, and Lake Alpine Reservoirs. The major sources of groundwater in Alpine County include rainfall, infiltration from nearby rivers and streams, Carson River flow, and subsurface inflow.

The Alpine County Health Department partakes in the Small Water System Program, which is responsible for permitting, inspecting, and monitoring 39 small public water systems in the county. The program's purpose is to ensure that small water systems deliver safe, adequate, and dependable potable water, according to the Alpine County website.

Alpine County uses three waste management services for solid waste collection and treatment. Cal-Waste serves the Bear Valley region, Kirkland Meadows Public Utility District serves the Kirkwood area, and Douglas Disposal serves the Markleeville and Woodfords areas.

**RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS**

**Responses a-g): Less than Significant.** The project consists of various roadway and transportation network improvement projects throughout the County. The project would not result in direct or indirect population growth, and as such, would not increase the demand for water supplies or the treatment and/or conveyance of wastewater. The various roadway and infrastructure improvements may require modifications or expansions to existing and future stormwater conveyance infrastructure adjacent to roadways proposed for rehabilitation or modification. As described throughout this initial study, projects identified in the RTP would be subject to project-level environmental review to determine if potential impacts to the County's stormwater detention and conveyance infrastructure may occur. This future project-specific environmental review may include mitigation measures, as appropriate, to avoid or lessen potential impacts to the stormwater infrastructure adjacent to roadway and other improvement projects. Implementation of the projects identified in the RTP would not generate significant amounts of solid waste, and would not result in an exceedance of any landfill's capacity or violate any state, federal or local statutes related to the disposal of solid waste. This is considered a less than significant impact and no mitigation is required.

## XVIII. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Does the project have the potential to 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, 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	

### RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS

**Responses a) - c): Less than Significant.** As described throughout the analysis above, the proposed project will not result in any changes to General Plan land use designations or zoning districts, would not result in annexation of land, and would not allow development in areas that are not already planned for development in the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance. The proposed project would not result in new adverse environmental impacts. The project would not threaten a significant biological resource, nor would it eliminate important examples California history or prehistory. The proposed project does not have impacts that are cumulatively considerable, nor would it have substantial adverse effects on human beings. Implementation of the proposed project would have a less than significant impact on these environmental topics.



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