Appendices

Appendix A NOP and NOP Responses

Appendices

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NOTICE OF PREPARATION AND SCOPING MEETING for the WINE COUNTRY SPECIFIC PLAN SUPPLEMENTAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

Date: July 13, 2022

TO: State Clearinghouse, Responsible Agencies, Trustee

Agencies, Organizations, and Interested Parties

PROJECT: Yucaipa Valley Wine Country Specific Plan

LEAD AGENCY: City of Yucaipa

PROJECT SPONSOR: City of Yucaipa

The City of Yucaipa ("City") is the lead agency pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") and intends to prepare a Supplemental Environmental Impact Report ("SEIR") to the Yucaipa General Plan EIR for the proposed project identified below. The City has prepared this Notice of Preparation ("NOP") to provide Responsible Agencies and other interested parties with information describing the project and to identify its potential environmental effects pursuant to State requirements.

AGENCIES: The City requests your agency's views on the scope and content of the environmental information relevant to your agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project, in accordance with Title 14, Section 15082(b) of the California Code of Regulations. Your agency will need to use the SEIR prepared by the City when considering any permits that your agency must issue or other approval for the project.

ORGANIZATIONS AND INTERESTED PARTIES: The City requests your comments and concerns regarding the environmental issues associated with construction and operation of the proposed project.

PROJECT: Yucaipa Valley Wine Country Specific Plan

PROJECT SPONSOR: City of Yucaipa, 34272 Yucaipa Blvd, Yucaipa, CA 92399

PROJECT LOCATION: The 1,093.6-acre Wine Country Specific Plan (WCSP) area is in the northeastern portion of the City of Yucaipa, specifically the North Bench Area of the city as shown in Figure 1, *Local and Regional Vicinity*. The project site is at the foot of the San Bernardino Mountains. The major north-south thoroughfares include Fremont Street, Jefferson Street, and Martell Avenue; major east-west thoroughfares include Ivy Street, Carter Street, and Oak Glen Road. The plan area is bounded by Martell Avenue on the east, Oak Glen Road on the south, Fremont Street on the west and the San Bernardino mountains on the north (see Figure 2, *Site Aerial*).

APNs: 032025-106, -108, -119, -120, -121, -123, -124, -125, -130, -131, -132, -133, -134, -135, -136, -137, -138, -156, -157, -158; 032104-105, -107, -108, -109, -110, -111, -112, -113, -114, -115; 032023-101, -102, -103, -109, -110; 032108-113, -114, -115, -214; 032109-101, -103, -104, -105, -106; 032110-101, -102, -112, -125, -126; 032024-103, -104, -112, -113; 032103-102, -107, -108, -111, -112, -114, -115, -116, -118, -120, -121, -124, -126, -128, -130, -139, -144, -149, -150, -151, -152, -153

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The City of Yucaipa (Applicant) proposes the Yucaipa Valley Wine Country Specific Plan (WCSP). WCSP is a proposed phased development that would subdivide the land into lots (i.e., homes/estates) and nonresidential areas for vineyards, trails, and open space.

The proposed project site consists of 1,093.6 acres of primarily undeveloped land. Under the proposed Specific Plan, land uses would be split approximately 50/50, with residential uses on 547.4 acres and nonresidential uses on 546.2 acres. The proposed nonresidential land use designations include Agriculture, Riparian Area, and Water District at approximately 465, 73, and 7 acres, respectively. The Water District designation would apply to land owned by the Yucaipa Valley Water District and used for existing infrastructure. The residential use acreage would be divided into two groups; residential lots of 10,000 to 14,000 square feet ("Villas") encompassing 315 acres and residential lots of 0.5 acre ("Estates") encompassing 232.4 acres (see Figure 3, Conceptual Land Use Plan). The Riparian Area would create a buffer between the proposed residential uses surrounding Wilson Creek and the creek habitat.

The 2016 Yucaipa General Plan designates the plan area as Rural Living (RL) with the Custom Home Overlay, which allows low-density rural residential development that is enhanced by special design standards. Single-family residential is the primary use, coexisting with open space and agriculture/agrarian uses. The maximum development gross density is one unit per acre. The WCSP maintains the land use requirement and buildout capacity of the General Plan, with the same total number of units on the entire site. However, the WCSP would allow residential units at a higher net density, up to four units per acre, while maintaining the effective gross one-acre density over the entire plan area and then balancing the remainder to create areas that specifically support viticultural uses and preserve open space features.

The WCSP would allow a maximum of 1,091 residential units, which is the same total units permitted in the General Plan for the plan area. The Villas would cover 629 lots with a buildout density of 2 to 3 dwelling units per acre (DU/ac); the Estates would be on 462 half-acre lots with a buildout density of 2 DU/ac. The breakdown of the residential units is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Residential Units Breakdown

Land Use Designation	Lot Size	Density (DU/ac)	Lots	Percentage	
Villas	10,000–14,000 SF	2.0–3.0	629	57%	
Estates	Half Acre	2.0	462	43%	
		Total	1,091	100%	

SAN BERNARDING MOUNTAINS Seven Oaks Reservoir Mountain Home Village Lake Arrowhead Big Bear Lake **North Bench Area** Mill Creek Ra **Project Site North Bench Area** City of San Bernardino Fontana **Project Site** Oak Glen Mentone 10 County of San Bernardino City of County of Yucaipa Yucaipa caipa Blvd (S60 Wildwood Park Wildwood Canyon Rd S91 Moreno Valley County of San Bernardino County of Riverside BERNASCONI HILLS Calimesa 7.5 Scale (Miles) Scale (Miles) **Local Vicinity Regional Vicinity** City of Yucaipa Boundary **County Boundary** City Boundary Source: City of Yucaipa, 2022

Figure 1 - Local and Regional Vicinity

IVY ST **Project Site** MY ST HOLLY AVE HOLLY AVE HOLLY AVE SPRIG AVE GRAPE AVE JEFFERSON ST CARTER ST SINSET BALSA ST FIR AVE SUNNYSIDE DR OAK GLEN RD DR

Figure 2 - Site Aerial Photograph

City of Yucaipa Boundary

0 2,000 Scale (Feet)



Source: City of Yucaipa, 2022

Figure 3 - Conceptual Land Use Plan IVY-ST Color Land Use Acres Agriculture 465.5 73.6 Riparian Area PA 19 24.7 AC Water District 7.1 Estates 232.4 Villas 315.0 Total 1093.6 PA 16 El Dorado Park Land Use Acres Residential Total 547.4 Non-Residential Total 546.2 **Grand Total** 1093.6 OAK GLEN RD

----- Project Site

2,000 Scale (Feet)



Source: City of Yucaipa, 2022; PlaceWorks, 2021

The approximately 465.5 acres of land designated for Agriculture would be used for vineyards and wineries — it is anticipated that 346 acres would be for vineyards that have no on-site wine production and 120 acres would be for wineries that include ancillary production/commercial uses that support the vineyards. The WCSP anticipates a total of 26 wineries varying in sizes and onsite accessory buildings. Three different categories of wineries are envisioned: 12 micro-wineries, 10 artisan wineries, and 4 boutique wineries.

- Micro-wineries are small wineries, greater than 2.5 acres in size, that could include tasting rooms, limited food service, and art/merchandise sales in addition to the wine making facility and vineyards.
- Artisan wineries are 5 acres in size or greater; in addition to the micro-winery uses they can also include bed and breakfast inns, picnic and dining areas, commercial kitchens, marketing events, and small event venues that can accommodate up to 75 guests.

Boutique wineries are greater 10 acres in size, and includes all the uses associated with micro- and artisan wineries, but can also include distilleries, small bungalow resorts, and special event venues that can accommodate up to 150 guests. For each category of winery, the accessory buildings and accessory uses would not occupy more than 25 percent of the gross lot area, with a minimum of 75 percent of the lot used specially for vineyards. Once the grapes have reached maturity for wine production, it is expected that no more than 50 percent of the fruit processed would be imported from outside the Yucaipa Valley American Viticultural Area.

The "primary" unrestricted public access wine corridor would be Jefferson Street. Jefferson Street traverses north-south through the western portion of the plan area, which would allow the proposed surrounding agricultural uses and the residential uses vehicular access. The "secondary" public access wine corridor would be Carter Street. Carter Street provides west-east vehicular access to the plan area. Oak Glen Road is a notable city scenic view corridor that borders the southern portion of the site.

A 12-year development schedule is proposed for the 1,091 homes to proceed in five phases: (1) 313 dwelling units, (2) 37 dwelling units, (3) 316 dwelling units, (4) 197 dwelling units, and (5) 228 dwelling units. The project would strive for a 50/50 split of vineyards and riparian areas (nonresidential) to residential land per phase.

POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS OF THE PROJECT

Based on a preliminary review of the proposed project's consistency with CEQA Guidelines, Section 15060, the City has determined that an SEIR be prepared for the proposed project. Consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15082, the City has identified the following probable environmental effects of the project:

- Aesthetics
- Agricultural and Forestry Resources
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Energy
- Geology and Soils
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality

- Land Use and Planning
- Mineral Resources
- Noise
- Population and Housing
- Public Services
- Recreation
- Transportation
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Utilities and Service Systems
- Wildfire

These environmental effects will be addressed in the SEIR and include all of the environmental topics identified in Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines:

NOTICE OF SCOPING MEETING: The City will hold a scoping meeting in conjunction with this NOP in order to present the project and the EIR process and to provide an opportunity for agency representatives and the public to assist the lead agency in determining the scope and content of the environmental analysis for the EIR. The meeting will be held:

Wednesday, July 27, 2022

5:00 pm

Yucaipa City Hall 34272 Yucaipa Boulevard Yucaipa, CA 92399

PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD: The City has determined to make this NOP available for a 30-day public review and comment pursuant to Title 14, section 15082(b) of the California Code of Regulations. The comment period for the NOP begins on July 14, 2022 and ends on August 15, 2022.

Comments provided should identify specific topics of environmental concern and must be submitted in writing by **5:00 pm**, **August 15**, **2022 to**:

Benjamin Matlock, Planning Manager/City Planner City of Yucaipa Development Services 34272 Yucaipa Boulevard, Yucaipa, CA 92399

bmatlock@yucaipa.org

All written responses will be included in the appendix of the Draft SEIR, and their contents considered in accordance with State and County environmental guidelines.

www.SBCounty.gov



Department of Public Works

- Flood Control
- Operations
- Solid Waste Management
- Special Districts
- Surveyor
- Transportation

Brendon Biggs, M.S., P.E. Director Noel Castillo, P.E. **Assistant Director**

> **Trevor Leja Assistant Director**

August 11, 2022

Transmitted Via Email File: 10(ENV)-4.01

Benjamin Matlock, Planning Manager/City Planner City of Yucaipa Development Services 34272 Yucaipa Boulevard, Yucaipa, CA 92399 bmatlock@vucaipa.org

RE: CEQA - CITY OF YUCAIPA- NOTICE OF PREPARATION AND SCOPING MEETING FOR

THE WINE COUNTRY SPECIFIC PLAN SUPPLEMENTAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

REPORT

Dear Mr. Matlock:

Thank you for allowing the San Bernardino County Department of Public Works the opportunity to comment on the above-referenced project. We received this request on July 25, 2022 and pursuant to our review, we have the following comments for your consideration and inclusion into public record:

Flood Control Planning & Water Resources Division (Michael Fam, Chief, 909-387-8120):

The Project is within:

- Comprehensive Storm Drain Plan (CSDP) No. 5
- Yucaipa Master Plan of Drainage (MPD) RBF Consulting January 2012
- San Bernardino County Flood Control District's (District) recommendation is most often made for site specific conditions. Therefore, the recommendations made here are general in nature until such time as more detailed plans become available.
- 2. According to the most recent FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Map, Panels 06071C8735H, 8745H and 8765H, dated August 28, 2008, the majority of the Project lies within Zone X (unshaded) at the south, a smaller portion of Zone D to the north, and slivers of Zone A traversing through the Project from the eastern mountains as Wilson Creek. Impacts associated with the project's occurrence in the described zones/areas, and their mitigation, should be discussed within the SEIR prior to adoption or certification.
- 3. Those portions of the Project lying in and abutting the natural drainage course and its overflow area may be subject to infrequent flood hazard until adequate channel and debris retention facilities are provided to intercept and conduct flows through and away from the site. Impacts associated with the project's occurrence within or adjacency to the natural drainage course and any potential flood hazards, and proposed mitigation for these impacts, should be discussed within the SEIR prior to adoption or certification.

- 4. One of the benefits of the CSDP/MPD is to identify the alignment of future drainage and flood control facilities. It is hoped that the developer and City will continue to use these documents to protect the alignment of future facilities.
- 5. We recommend that the City enforces its most recent FEMA regulations for construction within a Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA).
- 6. We are aware there may be storm drains in and around the site that may be affected by the proposed Project. When planning for or altering existing or future storm drains, be advised that the Project is subject to the Yucaipa's Master Plan of Drainage (MPD), dated January 2012. It is to be used as a available quideline for drainage in the area and is at the following https://yucaipa.maps.arcgis.com/home/index.html or from the City of Yucaipa's offices. Any revision to the drainage should be reviewed and approved by the City of Yucaipa. Should construction of new, or alterations to existing storm drains be necessary as part of the Proposed Project, their impacts and any required mitigation should be discussed within the SEIR before the document is adopted by the Lead Agency.

Permits/Operations Support Division (Fong Tse, Chief, 909-387-7995):

1. The site is located outside of the District's ROW. Based on the top view plans provided no permit is anticipated to be required at this time. However, any encroachment on the District's right-of-way or facilities, including but not limited to access, fencing and grading, utility crossings, landscaping, new and/or alteration to drainage connections will require a permit from the District prior to start of construction. The necessity for permits, and any impacts associated with them, should be addressed in the SEIR prior to adoption and certification. If you have any questions regarding this process, please contact the District's Permit Section at (909) 387-1863

<u>Environmental Management Division (Jonathan Dillon, PWE III, Stormwater Program, 909-387-8119):</u>

1. The Specific Plan should follow all current MS4 requirements issued by the Santa Ana Regional Waterboard and address impacts and proposed mitigation for these impacts prior to adoption by the Lead Agency.

We respectfully request to be included on the circulation list for all project notices, public reviews, or public hearings. In closing, I would like to thank you again for allowing the San Bernardino County Department of Public Works the opportunity to comment on the above-referenced project. Should you have any questions or need additional clarification, please contact the individuals who provided the specific comment, as listed above.

Sincerely,

Anthony Pham P.E,

Chiet,

Environmental Management

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE Inland Deserts Region

3602 Inland Empire Boulevard, Suite C-220 Ontario, CA 91764

www.wildlife.ca.gov

August 12, 2022 Sent via email

Benjamin Matlock Planning Manager/City Planner City of Yucaipa 34272 Yucaipa Boulevard Yucaipa, CA 92399 bmatlock@yucaipa.org

Subject: Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report

Yucaipa Valley Wine Country Specific Plan Project

State Clearinghouse No. 2022070240

Dear Mr. Matlock:

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) received a Notice of Preparation (NOP) of a Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) from the City of Yucaipa (City) for the Yucaipa Valley Wine Country Specific Plan Project (Project) pursuant the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and CEQA Guidelines.¹

GAVIN NEWSOM, Governor

CHARLTON H. BONHAM, Director

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments and recommendations regarding those activities involved in the Project that may affect California fish and wildlife. Likewise, we appreciate the opportunity to provide comments regarding those aspects of the Project that CDFW, by law, may be required to carry out or approve through the exercise of its own regulatory authority under the Fish and Game Code.

CDFW ROLE

CDFW is California's Trustee Agency for fish and wildlife resources, and holds those resources in trust by statute for all the people of the State. (Fish & G. Code. §§ 711.7. subd. (a) & 1802; Pub. Resources Code, § 21070; CEQA Guidelines § 15386, subd. (a).) CDFW, in its trustee capacity, has jurisdiction over the conservation, protection, and management of fish, wildlife, native plants, and habitat necessary for biologically sustainable populations of those species. (Id., § 1802.) Similarly, for purposes of CEQA, CDFW is charged by law to provide, as available, biological expertise during public agency environmental review efforts, focusing specifically on projects and related activities that have the potential to adversely affect fish and wildlife resources.

CDFW is also submitting comments as a Responsible Agency under CEQA. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21069; CEQA Guidelines, § 15381.) CDFW expects that it may need to exercise regulatory authority as provided by the Fish and Game Code. As proposed, for example, the Project may be subject to CDFW's lake and streambed alteration regulatory authority. (Fish & G. Code, § 1600 et seq.) Likewise, to the extent implementation of the Project as proposed may result in "take" as defined by State law of any species protected under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA) (Fish & G. Code, § 2050 et seq.), the Project proponent may seek related take authorization as provided by the Fish and Game Code.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION SUMMARY

The proposed Project outlines a Specific Plan to create a land use framework to create opportunities for open space, agricultural, and residential land uses in lieu of the existing large-lot residential designation to support the establishment of a wine growing region. The Specific Plan will provide provisions for the proposed agricultural district, including types and sizes of wineries to be permitted, as well as the two single-family land use districts, with the "Wine Country Villas" within the interior of the Specific Plan area, and the larger-lot size "Wine Country Estates" along the periphery of the site. Additional elements include the protection of Wilson Creek, and the creation of public trails for the community.

COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CDFW offers the comments and recommendations below to assist the City in adequately identifying and/or mitigating the Project's significant, or potentially significant, direct and indirect impacts on fish and wildlife (biological) resources.

CDFW recommends that the forthcoming DEIR address the following:

Assessment of Biological Resources

Section 15125(c) of the CEQA Guidelines states that knowledge of the regional setting of a project is critical to the assessment of environmental impacts and that special emphasis should be placed on environmental resources that are rare or unique to the region. To enable CDFW staff to adequately review and comment on the project, the DEIR should include a complete assessment of the flora and fauna within and adjacent to the Project footprint, with particular emphasis on identifying rare, threatened, endangered, and other sensitive species and their associated habitats.

The CDFW recommends that the DEIR specifically include:

1. An assessment of the various habitat types located within the project footprint, and a map that identifies the location of each habitat type. CDFW recommends that

floristic, alliance- and/or association based mapping and assessment be completed following *The Manual of California Vegetation*, second edition (Sawyer et al. 2009). Adjoining habitat areas should also be included in this assessment where site activities could lead to direct or indirect impacts offsite. Habitat mapping at the alliance level will help establish baseline vegetation conditions.

2. A general biological inventory of the fish, amphibian, reptile, bird, and mammal species that are present or have the potential to be present within each habitat type onsite and within adjacent areas that could be affected by the project. CDFW's California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB) in Sacramento should be contacted at (916) 322-2493 or CNDDB@wildlife.ca.gov to obtain current information on any previously reported sensitive species and habitat, including Significant Natural Areas identified under Chapter 12 of the Fish and Game Code, in the vicinity of the proposed Project.

Please note that CDFW's CNDDB is not exhaustive in terms of the data it houses, nor is it an absence database. CDFW recommends that it be used as a starting point in gathering information about the *potential presence* of species within the general area of the project site.

3. A complete, recent inventory of rare, threatened, endangered, and other sensitive species located within the Project footprint and within offsite areas with the potential to be affected, including California Species of Special Concern (CSSC) and California Fully Protected Species (Fish and Game Code § 3511). Species to be addressed should include all those which meet the CEQA definition (CEQA Guidelines § 15380). The inventory should address seasonal variations in use of the Project area and should not be limited to resident species. Focused species-specific surveys, completed by a qualified biologist and conducted at the appropriate time of year and time of day when the sensitive species are active or otherwise identifiable, are required. Acceptable species-specific survey procedures should be developed in consultation with CDFW and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, where necessary. Note that CDFW generally considers biological field assessments for wildlife to be valid for a one-year period, and assessments for rare plants may be considered valid for a period of up to three years. Some aspects of the proposed Project may warrant periodic updated surveys for certain sensitive taxa, particularly if the Project is proposed to occur over a protracted time frame, or in phases, or if surveys are completed during periods of drought.

Burrowing Owl (Athene cunicularia)

The Project site has the potential to provide suitable foraging and/or nesting habitat for burrowing owl. Take of individual burrowing owls and their nests is defined by Fish and Game Code section 86, and prohibited by sections 3503, 3503.5 and 3513.

Take is defined in Fish and Game Code section 86 as "hunt, pursue, catch, capture or kill, or attempt to hunt, pursue, catch, capture or kill."

CDFW recommends that the City follow the recommendations and guidelines provided in the *Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation* (Department of Fish and Game, March 2012); available for download from CDFW's website: https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/conservation/survey-protocols. The Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation, specifies three steps for project impact evaluations:

- a. A habitat assessment;
- b. Surveys; and
- c. An impact assessment

As stated in the Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation, the three progressive steps are effective in evaluating whether a project will result in impacts to burrowing owls, and the information gained from the steps will inform any subsequent avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures. Habitat assessments are conducted to evaluate the likelihood that a site supports burrowing owl. Burrowing owl surveys provide information needed to determine the potential effects of proposed projects and activities on burrowing owls, and to avoid take in accordance with Fish and Game Code sections 86, 3503, and 3503.5. Impact assessments evaluate the extent to which burrowing owls and their habitat may be impacted, directly or indirectly, on and within a reasonable distance of a proposed CEQA project activity or non-CEQA project.

Within the 2012 Staff Report, the minimum habitat replacement recommendation was purposely excluded as it was shown to serve as a default, replacing any sitespecific analysis and discounting the wide variation in natal area, home range, foraging area, and other factors influencing burrowing owls and burrowing owl population persistence in a particular area. It hypothesized that mitigation for permanent impacts to nesting, occupied, and satellite burrows and burrowing owl habitat should be on, adjacent or proximate to the impact site where possible and where habitat is sufficient to support burrowing owls present. If mitigation occurs offsite, it should include (a) permanent conservation of similar vegetation communities (grassland, scrublands, desert, urban, and agriculture) to provide for burrowing owl nesting, foraging, wintering, and dispersal (i.e., during breeding and non-breeding seasons) comparable to or better than that of the impact area, and (b) be sufficiently large acreage with the presence of fossorial mammals. Futhermore, the report noted that suitable mitigation lands should be based on a comparison of the habitat attributes of the impacted and conserved lands, including but not limited to: type and structure of habitat being impacted or conserved; density of burrowing owls in impacted and conserved habitat; and significance of impacted or conserved habitat to the species range-wide.

Analysis of Direct, Indirect, and Cumulative Impacts to Biological Resources

The DEIR should provide a thorough discussion of the direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts expected to adversely affect biological resources as a result of the Project. To ensure that Project impacts to biological resources are fully analyzed, the following information should be included in the DEIR:

- 1. A discussion of potential impacts from lighting, noise, human activity (e.g., recreation), defensible space, and wildlife-human interactions created by zoning of development projects or other project activities adjacent to natural areas, exotic and/or invasive species, and drainage. The latter subject should address Project-related changes on drainage patterns and water quality within, upstream, and downstream of the Project site, including: volume, velocity, and frequency of existing and post-Project surface flows; polluted runoff; soil erosion and/or sedimentation in streams and water bodies; and post-Project fate of runoff from the Project site.
- 2. A discussion of potential indirect Project impacts on biological resources, including resources in areas adjacent to the project footprint, such as nearby public lands (e.g. National Forests, State Parks, etc.), open space, adjacent natural habitats, riparian ecosystems, wildlife corridors, and any designated and/or proposed reserve or mitigation lands (e.g., preserved lands associated with a Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other conserved lands).
- 3. An evaluation of impacts to adjacent open space lands from both the construction of the Project and any long-term operational and maintenance needs.
- 4. A cumulative effects analysis developed as described under CEQA Guidelines section 15130. The DEIR should analyze the cumulative effects of the plan's land use designations, policies and programs on the environment. Please include all potential direct and indirect Project related impacts to riparian areas, wetlands, vernal pools, alluvial fan habitats, wildlife corridors or wildlife movement areas, aquatic habitats, sensitive species and other sensitive habitats, open lands, open space, and adjacent natural habitats in the cumulative effects analysis. General and specific plans, as well as past, present, and anticipated future projects, should be analyzed relative to their impacts on similar plant communities and wildlife habitats.

Alternatives Analysis

CDFW recommends the DEIR describe and analyze a range of reasonable alternatives to the Project that are potentially feasible, would "feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the Project," and would avoid or substantially lessen any of the Project's significant effects (CEQA Guidelines § 15126.6[a]). The alternatives analysis should also evaluate a "no project" alternative (CEQA Guidelines § 15126.6[e]).

Mitigation Measures for Project Impacts to Biological Resources

The DEIR should identify mitigation measures and alternatives that are appropriate and adequate to avoid or minimize potential impacts, to the extent feasible. The City should assess all direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts that are expected to occur as a result of the implementation of the Project and its long-term operation and maintenance. When proposing measures to avoid, minimize, or mitigate impacts, CDFW recommends consideration of the following:

- 1. Fully Protected Species: Fully protected species may not be taken or possessed at any time. Project activities described in the DEIR should be designed to completely avoid any fully protected species that have the potential to be present within or adjacent to the Project area. CDFW also recommends that the DEIR fully analyze potential adverse impacts to fully protected species due to habitat modification, loss of foraging habitat, and/or interruption of migratory and breeding behaviors. CDFW recommends that the City include in the analysis how appropriate avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures will reduce indirect impacts to fully protected species.
- 2. Sensitive Plant Communities: CDFW considers sensitive plant communities to be imperiled habitats having both local and regional significance. Plant communities, alliances, and associations with a statewide ranking of S-1, S-2, S-3, and S-4 should be considered sensitive and declining at the local and regional level. These ranks can be obtained by querying the CNDDB and are included in *The Manual of California Vegetation* (Sawyer et al. 2009). The DEIR should include measures to fully avoid and otherwise protect sensitive plant communities from project-related direct and indirect impacts.
- 3. California Species of Special Concern (CSSC): CSSC status applies to animals generally not listed under the federal Endangered Species Act or the CESA, but which nonetheless are declining at a rate that could result in listing, or historically occurred in low numbers and known threats to their persistence currently exist. CSSCs should be considered during the environmental review process.
- 4. Mitigation: CDFW considers adverse project-related impacts to sensitive species and habitats to be significant to both local and regional ecosystems, and the DEIR should include mitigation measures for adverse project-related impacts to these resources. Mitigation measures should emphasize avoidance and reduction of project impacts. For unavoidable impacts, onsite habitat restoration and/or enhancement, and preservation should be evaluated and discussed in detail. Where habitat preservation is not available onsite, offsite land acquisition, management, and preservation should be evaluated and discussed in detail.

The DEIR should include measures to perpetually protect the targeted habitat values within mitigation areas from direct and indirect adverse impacts in order to meet mitigation objectives to offset project-induced qualitative and quantitative losses of biological values. Specific issues that should be addressed include restrictions on access, proposed land dedications, long-term monitoring and management programs, control of illegal dumping, water pollution, increased human intrusion, etc.

If sensitive species and/or their habitat may be impacted from the Project, CDFW recommends the inclusion of specific mitigation in the DEIR. CEQA Guidelines section 15126.4, subdivision (a)(1)(8) states that formulation of feasible mitigation measures should not be deferred until some future date. The Court of Appeal in San Joaquin Raptor Rescue Center v. County of Merced (2007) 149 Cal.App.4th 645 struck down mitigation measures which required formulating management plans developed in consultation with State and Federal wildlife agencies after Project approval. Courts have also repeatedly not supported conclusions that impacts are mitigable when essential studies, and therefore impact assessments, are incomplete (Sundstrom v. County of Mendocino (1988) 202 Cal. App. 3d. 296; Gentry v. City of Murrieta (1995) 36 Cal. App. 4th 1359; Endangered Habitat League, Inc. v. County of Orange (2005) 131 Cal. App. 4th 777).

CDFW recommends that the DEIR specify mitigation that is roughly proportional to the level of impacts, in accordance with the provisions of CEQA (CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4(a)(4)(B), 15064, 15065, and 16355). The mitigation should provide long-term conservation value for the suite of species and habitat being impacted by the Project. Furthermore, in order for mitigation measures to be effective, they need to be specific, enforceable, and feasible actions that will improve environmental conditions.

5. Habitat Revegetation/Restoration Plans: Plans for restoration and revegetation should be prepared by persons with expertise in southern California ecosystems and native plant restoration techniques. Plans should identify the assumptions used to develop the proposed restoration strategy. Each plan should include, at a minimum:

(a) the location of restoration sites and assessment of appropriate reference sites;
(b) the plant species to be used, sources of local propagules, container sizes, and seeding rates; (c) a schematic depicting the mitigation area; (d) a local seed and cuttings and planting schedule; (e) a description of the irrigation methodology; (f) measures to control exotic vegetation on site; (g) specific success criteria; (h) a detailed monitoring program; (i) contingency measures should the success criteria not be met; and (j) identification of the party responsible for meeting the success criteria and providing for conservation of the mitigation site in perpetuity. Monitoring of restoration areas should extend across a sufficient time frame to ensure that the new habitat is established, self-sustaining, and capable of surviving drought.

CDFW recommends that local onsite propagules from the Project area and nearby vicinity be collected and used for restoration purposes. Onsite seed collection should be initiated in the near future in order to accumulate sufficient propagule material for subsequent use in future years. Onsite vegetation mapping at the alliance and/or association level should be used to develop appropriate restoration goals and local plant palettes. Reference areas should be identified to help guide restoration efforts. Specific restoration plans should be developed for various project components as appropriate.

Restoration objectives should include protecting special habitat elements or recreating them in areas affected by the Project; examples could include retention of woody material, logs, snags, rocks, and brush piles.

6. Nesting Birds and Migratory Bird Treaty Act: Please note that it is the Project proponent's responsibility to comply with all applicable laws related to nesting birds and birds of prey. Fish and Game Code sections 3503, 3503.5, and 3513 afford protective measures as follows: Fish and Game Code section 3503 makes it unlawful to take, possess, or needlessly destroy the nest or eggs of any bird, except as otherwise provided by Fish and Game Code or any regulation made pursuant thereto. Fish and Game Code section 3503.5 makes it unlawful to take, possess, or destroy any birds in the orders Falconiformes or Strigiformes (birds-of-prey) to take, possess, or destroy the nest or eggs of any such bird except as otherwise provided by Fish and Game Code or any regulation adopted pursuant thereto. Fish and Game Code section 3513 makes it unlawful to take or possess any migratory nongame bird except as provided by the rules and regulations adopted by the Secretary of the Interior under provisions of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918, as amended (16 U.S.C. § 703 et seq.).

CDFW recommends that the DEIR include the results of avian surveys, as well as specific avoidance and minimization measures to ensure that impacts to nesting birds do not occur. Project-specific avoidance and minimization measures may include, but not be limited to: project phasing and timing, monitoring of project-related noise (where applicable), sound walls, and buffers, where appropriate. The DEIR should also include specific avoidance and minimization measures that will be implemented should a nest be located within the project site. If pre-construction surveys are proposed in the DEIR, the CDFW recommends that they be required no more than three (3) days prior to vegetation clearing or ground disturbance activities, as instances of nesting could be missed if surveys are conducted sooner.

7. Moving out of Harm's Way: To avoid direct mortality, CDFW recommends that the City condition the DEIR to require that a CDFW-approved qualified biologist be retained to be onsite prior to and during all ground- and habitat-disturbing activities to move out of harm's way special status species or other wildlife of low or limited

mobility that would otherwise be injured or killed from project-related activities. Movement of wildlife out of harm's way should be limited to only those individuals that would otherwise by injured or killed, and individuals should be moved only as far a necessary to ensure their safety (i.e., CDFW does not recommend relocation to other areas). Furthermore, it should be noted that the temporary relocation of onsite wildlife does not constitute effective mitigation for the purposes of offsetting project impacts associated with habitat loss.

8. *Translocation of Species*: CDFW generally does not support the use of relocation, salvage, and/or transplantation as mitigation for impacts to rare, threatened, or endangered species as studies have shown that these efforts are experimental in nature and largely unsuccessful.

California Endangered Species Act

CDFW is responsible for ensuring appropriate conservation of fish and wildlife resources including threatened, endangered, and/or candidate plant and animal species, pursuant to CESA. CDFW recommends that a CESA Incidental Take Permit (ITP) be obtained if the Project has the potential to result in "take" (California Fish and Game Code Section 86 defines "take" as "hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill, or attempt to hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill") of State-listed CESA species, either through construction or over the life of the project. It is the policy of CESA to conserve, protect, enhance, and restore State-listed CESA species and their habitats.

CDFW encourages early consultation, as significant modification to the proposed Project and avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures may be necessary to obtain a CESA ITP. CDFW must comply with CEQA for issuance of a CESA ITP. CDFW therefore recommends that the DEIR addresses all Project impacts to listed species and specify a mitigation monitoring and reporting program that will meet the requirements of CESA.

Based on review of CNDDB, and/or knowledge of the project site/vicinity/general area, CDFW is aware that the following CESA-listed species have the potential to occur onsite/have previously been reported onsite: San Bernardino kangaroo rat, southern mountain yellow-legged frog, slender-horned spineflower, Santa Ana River woollystar.

Lake and Streambed Alteration Program

Based on review of material submitted with the NOP and review of aerial photography multiple drainage features traverse the site. Depending on how the Project is designed and constructed, it is likely that the Project applicant will need to notify CDFW per Fish and Game Code section 1602. Fish and Game Code section 1602 requires an entity to notify CDFW prior to commencing any activity that may do one or more of the following: Substantially divert or obstruct the natural flow of any river, stream or lake; Substantially

change or use any material from the bed, channel or bank of any river, stream, or lake; or Deposit debris, waste or other materials that could pass into any river, stream or lake. Please note that "any river, stream or lake" includes those that are episodic (i.e., those that are dry for periods of time) as well as those that are perennial (i.e., those that flow year-round). This includes ephemeral streams, desert washes, and watercourses with a subsurface flow.

Upon receipt of a complete notification, CDFW determines if the proposed Project activities may substantially adversely affect existing fish and wildlife resources and whether a Lake and Streambed Alteration (LSA) Agreement is required. An LSA Agreement includes measures necessary to protect existing fish and wildlife resources. CDFW may suggest ways to modify your Project that would eliminate or reduce harmful impacts to fish and wildlife resources.

CDFW's issuance of an LSA Agreement is a "project" subject to CEQA (see Pub. Resources Code 21065). To facilitate issuance of an LSA Agreement, if necessary, the DEIR should fully identify the potential impacts to the lake, stream, or riparian resources, and provide adequate avoidance, mitigation, and monitoring and reporting commitments. Early consultation with CDFW is recommended, since modification of the proposed Project may be required to avoid or reduce impacts to fish and wildlife resources. To submit a Lake or Streambed Alteration notification package, please go to https://wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Environmental-Review/EPIMS.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

To ameliorate the water demands of this Project, CDFW recommends incorporation of water-wise concepts in project landscape design plans. In particular, CDFW recommends xeriscaping with locally native California species, and installing water-efficient and targeted irrigation systems (such as drip irrigation). Local water agencies/districts, and resource conservation districts in your area may be able to provide information on plant nurseries that carry locally native species, and some facilities display drought-tolerant locally native species demonstration gardens (for example the Riverside-Corona Resource Conservation District in Riverside). Information on drought-tolerant landscaping and water-efficient irrigation systems is available on California's Save our Water website: http://saveourwater.com/what-you-can-do/tips/landscaping/

ENVIRONMENTAL DATA

CEQA requires that information developed in environmental impact reports and negative declarations be incorporated into a database which may be used to make subsequent or supplemental environmental determinations. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21003, subd. (e).) Accordingly, please report any special status species and natural communities detected during Project surveys to the California Natural Diversity

Database (CNDDB). Information can be submitted online or via completion of the CNDDB field survey form at the following link:

https://wildlife.ca.gov/Data/CNDDB/Submitting-Data. The completed form can be mailed electronically to CNDDB at the following email address: CNDDB@wildlife.ca.gov. The types of information reported to CNDDB can be found at the following link: https://wildlife.ca.gov/Data/CNDDB/Plants-and-Animals.

FILING FEES

The Project, as proposed, would have an impact on fish and/or wildlife, and assessment of filing fees is necessary. Fees are payable upon filing of the Notice of Determination by the Lead Agency and serve to help defray the cost of environmental review by CDFW. Payment of the fee is required in order for the underlying project approval to be operative, vested, and final. (Cal. Code Regs, tit. 14, § 753.5; Fish & G. Code, § 711.4; Pub. Resources Code, § 21089.).

CONCLUSION

CDFW appreciates the opportunity to comment on the NOP of a DEIR for the Yucaipa Valley Wine Country Specific Plan Project (SCH No. 2022070240) and recommends that the City of Yucaipa address the CDFW's comments and concerns in the forthcoming DEIR. If you should have any questions pertaining to the comments provided in this letter, please contact Marina Barton, Environmental Scientist, at marina.barton@wildlife.ca.gov.

Sincerely.



Kim Freeburn Acting Environmental Program Manager

ec: Marina Barton, Environmental Scientist Inland Deserts Region marina.barton@wildlife.ca.gov

Office of Planning and Research, State Clearinghouse, Sacramento state.clearinghouse@opr.ca.gov

REFERENCES

Sawyer, J. O., T. Keeler-Wolf, and J. M. Evens. 2009. A manual of California Vegetation, 2nd ed. California Native Plant Society Press, Sacramento, California. http://vegetation.cnps.org/

JoAnn Hadfield

Sent:Monday, August 15, 2022 10:02 AMTo:JoAnn Hadfield; Nicole VermilionSubject:FW: City of Yucaipa Specific Plan

Benjamin Matlock

Planning Manager / City Planner

City of Yucaipa

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Office: 909-797-2489 Ext. 261

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From: Quechan Historic Preservation historicpreservation@quechantribe.com

Sent: Monday, August 15, 2022 8:53 AM

To: Benjamin Matlock

 / bmatlock@yucaipa.org>

Subject: City of Yucaipa Specific Plan

This email is to inform you that we do not wish to comment on this project. We defer to the more local Tribes and support their determinations on this matter.

H. Jill McCormick, M.A. Historic Preservation Officer Ft. Yuma Quechan Tribe P.O. Box 1899 Yuma, AZ 85366

Office: 760-572-2423 Cell: 928-261-0254



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August 15, 2022

Benjamin Matlock, Planning Manager/City Planner City of Yucaipa Development Services 34272 Yucaipa Boulevard Yucaipa, California 92399 Phone: (909) 797-2489

E-mail: bmatlock@yucaipa.org

RE: SCAG Comments on the Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Yucaipa Valley Wine Country Specific Plan [SCAG NO. IGR10677]

Dear Benjamin Matlock,

Thank you for submitting the Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Yucaipa Valley Wine Country Specific Plan ("proposed project") to the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) for review and comment. SCAG is responsible for providing informational resources to regionally significant plans, projects, and programs per the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) to facilitate the consistency of these projects with SCAG's adopted regional plans, to be determined by the lead agencies.¹

Pursuant to Senate Bill (SB) 375, SCAG is the designated Regional Transportation Planning Agency under state law and is responsible for preparation of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) including the Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS). SCAG's feedback is intended to assist local jurisdictions and project proponents to implement projects that have the potential to contribute to attainment of Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS) goals and align with RTP/SCS policies. Finally, SCAG is the authorized regional agency for Intergovernmental Review (IGR) of programs proposed for Federal financial assistance and direct Federal development activities, pursuant to Presidential Executive Order 12372.

SCAG staff has reviewed the Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Yucaipa Valley Wine Country Specific Plan in San Bernardino County. The proposed project includes the development of a specific plan to subdivide the land into up to 1,091 residential villas and estates, and 546.2 acres of non-residential areas for vineyards, trails, and open space on 1,093.6 acres.

When available, please email environmental documentation to IGR@scag.ca.gov providing, at a minimum, the full public comment period for review.

If you have any questions regarding the attached comments, please contact the Intergovernmental Review (IGR) Program, attn.: Annaleigh Ekman, Associate Regional Planner, at (213) 630-1427 or IGR@scag.ca.gov. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Frank Wen, Ph.D.

Manager, Planning Strategy Department

¹ Lead agencies such as local jurisdictions have the sole discretion in determining a local project's consistency with the 2020 RTP/SCS (Connect SoCal) for the purpose of determining consistency for CEQA.

COMMENTS ON THE NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF A DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR THE YUCAIPA VALLEY WINE COUNTRY SPECIFIC PLAN [SCAG NO. IGR10677]

CONSISTENCY WITH CONNECT SOCAL

SCAG provides informational resources to facilitate the consistency of the proposed project with the adopted 2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS or Connect SoCal). For the purpose of determining consistency with CEQA, lead agencies such as local jurisdictions have the sole discretion in determining a local project's consistency with Connect SoCal.

CONNECT SOCAL GOALS

The SCAG Regional Council fully adopted <u>Connect SoCal</u> in September 2020. Connect SoCal, also known as the 2020 – 2045 RTP/SCS, builds upon and expands land use and transportation strategies established over several planning cycles to increase mobility options and achieve a more sustainable growth pattern. The long-range visioning plan balances future mobility and housing needs with goals for the environment, the regional economy, social equity and environmental justice, and public health. The goals included in Connect SoCal may be pertinent to the proposed project. These goals are meant to provide guidance for considering the proposed project. Among the relevant goals of Connect SoCal are the following:

SCAG CONNECT SOCAL GOALS					
Goal #1:	Encourage regional economic prosperity and global competitiveness				
Goal #2:	Improve mobility, accessibility, reliability and travel safety for people and goods				
Goal #3:	Enhance the preservation, security, and resilience of the regional transportation system				
Goal #4:	Increase person and goods movement and travel choices within the transportation system				
Goal #5:	Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve air quality				
Goal #6:	Support healthy and equitable communities				
Goal #7:	Adapt to a changing climate and support an integrated regional development pattern and transportation network				
Goal #8:	Leverage new transportation technologies and data-driven solutions that result in more efficient travel				
Goal #9:	Encourage development of diverse housing types in areas that are supported by multiple transportation options				
Goal #10:	Promote conservation of natural and agricultural lands and restoration of habitats				

For ease of review, we encourage the use of a side-by-side comparison of SCAG goals with discussions of the consistency, non-consistency or non-applicability of the goals and supportive analysis in a table format. Suggested format is as follows:

SCAG CONNECT SOCAL GOALS							
	Goal	Analysis					
Goal #1:	Encourage regional economic prosperity and global competitiveness	Consistent: Statement as to why; Not-Consistent: Statement as to why; Or Not Applicable: Statement as to why; DEIR page number reference					
Goal #2:	Improve mobility, accessibility, reliability and travel safety for people and goods	Consistent: Statement as to why; Not-Consistent: Statement as to why; Or Not Applicable: Statement as to why; DEIR page number reference					
etc.		etc.					

Connect SoCal Strategies

To achieve the goals of Connect SoCal, a wide range of land use and transportation strategies are included in the accompanying twenty (20) technical reports. Of particular note are multiple strategies included in Chapter 3 of Connect SoCal intended to support implementation of the regional Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) framed within the context of focusing growth near destinations and mobility options; promoting diverse housing choices; leveraging technology innovations; supporting implementation of sustainability policies; and promoting a Green Region. To view Connect SoCal and the accompanying technical reports, please visit the Connect SoCal webpage. Connect SoCal builds upon the progress from previous RTP/SCS cycles and continues to focus on integrated, coordinated, and balanced planning for land use and transportation that helps the SCAG region strive towards a more sustainable region, while meeting statutory requirements pertinent to RTP/SCSs. These strategies within the regional context are provided as guidance for lead agencies such as local jurisdictions when the proposed project is under consideration.

DEMOGRAPHICS AND GROWTH FORECASTS

A key, formative step in projecting future population, households, and employment through 2045 for Connect SoCal was the generation of a forecast of regional and county level growth in collaboration with expert demographers and economists on Southern California. From there, jurisdictional level forecasts were ground-truthed by subregions and local agencies, which helped SCAG identify opportunities and barriers to future development. This forecast helps the region understand, in a very general sense, where we are expected to grow, and allows SCAG to focus attention on areas that are experiencing change and may have increased transportation needs. After a year-long engagement effort with all 197 jurisdictions one-on-one, 82 percent of SCAG's 197 jurisdictions provided feedback on the forecast of future growth for Connect SoCal. SCAG also sought feedback on potential sustainable growth strategies from a broad range of stakeholder groups - including local jurisdictions, county transportation commissions, other partner agencies, industry groups, community-based organizations, and the general public. Connect SoCal utilizes a bottomup approach in that total projected growth for each jurisdiction reflects feedback received from jurisdiction staff, including city managers, community development/planning directors, and local staff. Growth at the neighborhood level (i.e., transportation analysis zone (TAZ) reflects entitled projects and adheres to current general and specific plan maximum densities as conveyed by jurisdictions (except in cases where entitled projects and development agreements exceed these capacities as calculated by SCAG). Neighborhood level growth projections also feature strategies that help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) from automobiles and light trucks to achieve Southern California's GHG reduction target, approved by the California Air Resources Board (CARB) in accordance with state planning law. Connect SoCal's Forecasted Development Pattern is utilized for long range modeling purposes and does not supersede actions taken by elected bodies on future development, including entitlements and development agreements. SCAG does not have the authority to implement the plan -- neither through decisions about what type of development is built where, nor what transportation projects are ultimately built, as Connect

SoCal is adopted at the jurisdictional level. Achieving a sustained regional outcome depends upon informed and intentional local action. To access jurisdictional level growth estimates and forecasts for years 2016 and 2045, please refer to the Connect SoCal Demographics and Growth Forecast Technical Report. The growth forecasts for the region and applicable jurisdictions are below.

	Adopted SCAG Region Wide Forecasts				Adopted City of Yucaipa Forecasts			
	Year 2020	Year 2030	Year 2035	Year 2045	Year 2020	Year 2030	Year 2035	Year 2045
Population	19,517,731	20,821,171	21,443,006	22,503,899	58,906	66,706	71,491	75,209
Households	6,333,458	6,902,821	7,170,110	7,633,451	19,638	22,439	24,250	26,068
Employment	8,695,427	9,303,627	9,566,384	10,048,822	11,763	13,500	15,562	17,624

MITIGATION MEASURES

SCAG staff recommends that you review the Final Program Environmental Impact Report (Final PEIR) for Connect SoCal for guidance, as appropriate. SCAG's Regional Council certified the PEIR and adopted the associated Findings of Fact and a Statement of Overriding Considerations (FOF/SOC) and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) on May 7, 2020 and also adopted a PEIR Addendum and amended the MMRP on September 3, 2020 (please see the PEIR webpage and scroll to the bottom of the page for the PEIR Addendum). The PEIR includes a list of project-level performance standards-based mitigation measures that may be considered for adoption and implementation by lead, responsible, or trustee agencies in the region, as applicable and feasible. Project-level mitigation measures are within responsibility, authority, and/or jurisdiction of project-implementing agency or other public agency serving as lead agency under CEQA in subsequent project- and site- specific design, CEQA review, and decision-making processes, to meet the performance standards for each of the CEQA resource categories.