County of Madera

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

Initial Study

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| **1. Project title:** | Tentative Parcel Map No. 4286 |
| **2. Lead agency name and address:** | County of Madera Community and Economic Development Department200 West 4th Street, Suite 3100 Madera, California 93637  |
| **3. Contact person and phone** **number:** | Matthew Treber, Director559-675-7821matthew.treber@maderacounty.com  |
| **4. Project Location & APN:** | Both sides of Rawhide Riata Rd south of Cimarron RdAPN 053-260-044 |
| **5. Project sponsor’s name** **and address:** | Andrew Bradley, 818 Second St, Pacific Grove, CA 93950  |
| **6. General Plan Designation:** | RER (Rural Estate Residential) |
| **7. Zoning:** | ARF (Agricultural, Rural, Foothills) |
| **8. Description of project:** Subdivide a 37.3 acre agricultural zoned parcel into 4 agricultural parcel of 6.58 acres, 11.08 acres, 12.60 acres and 10.05 acres.**9. Surrounding Land Uses and Setting:** Agricultural uses, Rural Residential uses and zoning to the north, south, east and west.  |
| **10. Other Public Agencies Whose Approval is Required:**   None |
| **11. Have California Native American tribes traditionally and culturally affiliated with the project area requested consultation pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21080.3.1? If so, is there a plan for consultation that includes, for example, the determination of significance of impacts to tribal cultural resources, procedures regarding confidentiality, etc.?**No tribal consultations have been requested. (See Section XVIII for additional discussion.) |

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| **ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED** |
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| The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a “Potentially Significant Impact” as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

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

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| **DETERMINATION** |
| On the basis of this initial evaluation: |
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| [ ]  | I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared. |
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| **[x]**  | I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.(2021-025) |
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| [ ]  | I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required. |
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| [ ]  | 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. |
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| [ ]  | 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.  |
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|  | PotentiallySignificant Impact | Less Than SignificantWith MitigationIncorporation | Less Than Significant Impact | NoImpact |
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| **I. AESTHETICS** Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section21099, would the project: |
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| a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?  |  | [ ]  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |  | [ ]  |  |
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| b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway? |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |
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| c) In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point). If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |  | [ ]  |  |
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| d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area? |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |  | [ ]  |  |
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**Responses:**

1. **Less than Significant Impacts.** The project is consistent with surrounding land uses in the area.

Large lot residential is suitable for this area and maintains the character of the surrounding area.

1. **No Impact**. There are no scenic vistas in the vicinity of this project site. The closest areas that are being considered as scenic highways by the California Department of Transportation (CALTRANS) are Highways 41 and 49 north of Oakhurst.
2. **Less than Significant Impacts.** The project would allow for construction of homes where open range land previously existed. However, this is consistent with surrounding properties in the area and consistent with the Raymond Area Plan. Raymond Area Plan Design Guidelines also apply to the project should also provide enough of a buffer to limit lighting or glare to neighboring areas or parcels.

**(d) Less than Significant Impacts.** Any lighting for the projects will be directed away from adjacent properties as to not create any sort of impact. There are no scenic resources on this property that will be damaged as a result of this project.

A nighttime sky in which stars are readily visible is often considered a valuable scenic/visual resource. In urban areas, views of the nighttime sky are being diminished by “light pollution.” Light pollution, as defined by the International dark-Sky Association, is any adverse effect of artificial light, including sky glow, glare, light trespass, light clutter, decreased visibility at night, and energy waste. Two elements of light pollution may affect city residents: sky glow and light trespass. Sky glow is a result of light fixtures that emit a portion of their light directly upward into the sky where light scatters, creating an orange-yellow glow above a city or town. This light can interfere with views of the nighttime sky and can diminish the number of stars that are visible. Light trespass occurs when poorly shielded or poorly aimed fixtures cast light into unwanted areas, such as neighboring property and homes.

Light pollution is a problem most typically associated with urban areas. Lighting is necessary for nighttime viewing and for security purposes. However, excessive lighting or inappropriately designed lighting fixtures can disturb nearby sensitive land uses through indirect illumination. Land uses which are considered “sensitive” to this unwanted light include residences, hospitals, and care homes.

Daytime sources of glare include reflections off of light-colored surfaces, windows, and metal details on cars traveling on nearby roadways. The amount of glare depends on the intensity and direction of sunlight, which is more acute at sunrise and subset because the angle of the sun is lower during these times.

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|  | PotentiallySignificant Impact | Less Than SignificantWith MitigationIncorporation | Less Than Significant Impact | NoImpact |
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| **II. AGRICULTURAL and Forestry RESOURCES**In determining whether agricultural impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state’s inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment Project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board.Would the project: |  |
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| 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]**  |  |
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| b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract? |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |
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| c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))? |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |
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| d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use? |

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| e) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use? |

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**Responses:**

**(a - e)****No Impact**. The project parcels and its’ surroundings are zoned for farmland use and will remain as farm land under the ARF (Agricultural, Rural, Foothills) zoning.

**General Information**

The California Land Conservation Act of 1965 -- commonly referred to as the Williamson Act -- enables local governments to enter into contracts with private landowners for the purpose of restricting specific parcels of land to agricultural or related open space use. In return, landowners receive property tax assessments which are much lower than normal because they are based upon farming and open space uses as opposed to full market value.

The Department of Conservation oversees the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program. The Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) produces maps and statistical data used for analyzing impacts on California’s agricultural resources. Agricultural land is rated according to soil quality and irrigation status; the best quality land is called Prime Farmland. The maps are updated every two years with the use of a computer mapping system, aerial imagery, public review, and field reconnaissance. The program’s definition of land is below:

PRIME FARMLAND (P): Farmland with the best combination of physical and chemical features able to sustain long term agricultural production. This land has the soil quality, growing season, and moisture supply needed to produce sustained high yields. Land must have been used for irrigated agricultural production at some time during the four years prior to the mapping date.

FARMLAND OF STATEWIDE IMPORTANCE (S): Farmland similar to Prime Farmland but with minor shortcomings, such as greater slopes or less ability to store soil moisture. Land must have been used for irrigated agricultural production at some time during the four years prior to the mapping date.

UNIQUE FARMLAND (U): Farmland of lesser quality soils used for the production of the state’s leading agricultural crops. This land is usually irrigated, but may include non-irrigated orchards or vineyards as found in some climatic zones in California. Land must have been cropped at some time during the four years prior to the mapping date.

FARMLAND OF LOCAL IMPORTANCE (L): Land of importance to the local agricultural economy as determined by each county's board of supervisors and a local advisory committee.

GRAZING LAND (G): Land on which the existing vegetation is suited to the grazing of livestock. This category was developed in cooperation with the California Cattlemen's Association, University of California Cooperative Extension, and other groups interested in the extent of grazing activities. The minimum mapping unit for Grazing Land is 40 acres.

URBAN AND BUILT-UP LAND (D): Land occupied by structures with a building density of at least 1 unit to 1.5 acres, or approximately 6 structures to a 10-acre parcel. This land is used for residential, industrial, commercial, institutional, public administrative purposes, railroad and other transportation yards, cemeteries, airports, golf courses, sanitary landfills, sewage treatment, water control structures, and other developed purposes.

OTHER LAND (X): Land not included in any other mapping category. Common examples include low density rural developments; brush, timber, wetland, and riparian areas not suitable for livestock grazing; confined livestock, poultry or aquaculture facilities; strip mines, borrow pits; and water bodies smaller than 40 acres. Vacant and nonagricultural land surrounded on all sides by urban development and greater than 40 acres is mapped as Other Land.

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|  | PotentiallySignificant Impact | Less Than SignificantWith MitigationIncorporation | Less Than Significant Impact | NoImpact |
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| **III. AIR QUALITY**Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management district or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project: |  |  |  |  |
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| a) Conflict with, or obstruct implementation of, the applicable air quality plan? |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |
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| b) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |
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| c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations? |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |
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| d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people? |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |
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**Responses:**

**(a-d) No Impact.** No impacts have been identified as a result of this project. The project will not impact implementation of any air quality plans.

Global Climate Change

Climate change is a shift in the “average weather” that a given region experiences. This is measured by changes in temperature, wind patterns, precipitation, and storms. Global climate is the change in the climate of the earth as a whole. It can occur naturally, as in the case of an ice age, or occur as a result of anthropogenic activities. The extent to which anthropogenic activities influence climate change has been the subject of extensive scientific inquiry in the past several decades. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), recognized as the leading research body on the subject, issued its Fourth Assessment Report in February 2007, which asserted that there is “very high confidence” (by IPCC definition a 9 in 10 chance of being correct) that human activities have resulted in a net warming of the planet since 1750.

CEQA requires an agency to engage in forecasting “to the extent that an activity could reasonably be expected under the circumstances. An agency cannot be expected to predict the future course of governmental regulation or exactly what information scientific advances may ultimately reveal” (CEQA Guidelines Section 15144, Office of Planning and Research commentary, citing the California Supreme Court decision in Laurel Heights Improvement Association v. Regents of the University of California [1988] 47 Cal. 3d 376).

Recent concerns over global warming have created a greater interest in greenhouse gases (GHG) and their contribution to global climate change (GCC). However at this time there are no generally accepted thresholds of significance for determining the impact of GHG emissions from an individual project on GCC. Thus, permitting agencies are in the position of developing policy and guidance to ascertain and mitigate to the extent feasible the effects of GHG, for CEQA purposes, without the normal degree of accepted guidance by case law.

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| **IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES**Would the project: |  |  |  |  |
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| a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service? |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |
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| b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service? |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |
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| c) Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means? |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |
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| 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 a native wildlife nursery site? |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |
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| e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance? |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |
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| 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]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |
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| **Discussion:**1. **Less than Significant Impact.**

A Biological Assessment was conducted on the property to the north and east in 2006 and found that the likelihood for impact to existing habitat for specially listed species is minimal. Review of the California Natural Diversity Database found that several special were listed (see table below). The only endangered species which may occur on the property would be the bald eagle, which was delisted federally but remains endangered according to the State of California. However, the report notes that there is low potential for Bald eagle to nest the area due to lack of suitable nesting habitat (i.e., typically conifers greater in size than surrounding trees, with branches or broken tops large enough to support a large stick nest or large Blue oaks greater than 100 years old. The report also notes that there is no evidence that Bald eagles have nested at the project site in the past, and there is low potential that Bald eagles may nest, or attempt to nest, at the project site in the future. The project would not conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, and the project would not conflict with the provision of any conservation plans. Special Status Species include:* Plants and animals that are legally protected or proposed for protection under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA) or Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA);
* Plants and animals defined as endangered or rare under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) §15380;
* Animals designated as species of special concern by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) or California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG);
* Animals listed as “fully protected” in the Fish and Game Code of California (§3511, §4700, §5050 and §5515); and
* Plants listed in the California Native Plant Society’s (CNPS) Inventory of Rare and Endangered Vascular Plants of California.

A review of both the County’s and Department of Fish and Game’s databases for special status species have identified the following species:

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| **Species** | **Federal Listing** | **State Listing** | **Dept. of Fish and Game Listing** | **CNPS Listing** |
| Golden Eagle | None | None | FP,WL | None |
| Bald Eagle | Delisted | Endangered | FP | None |
| Double-Crested Cormorant | None | None | WL | None |
| California tiger salamander-central California DPS | Threatened | Threatened | WL | None |
| Foothill yellow-legged from | None | Endangered | SSC | None |
| Western spadefoot | None | Endangered | SSC | None |
| California Linderiella | None | None | None | None |
| Pallid bat | None | None | SSC | None |
| Hoary bat | None | None | SSC | None |
| Western Pond Turtle | None | None | SSC | None |
| Fragile pentachaeta | None | None | SSC | None |
| Beaked clarkia | None | None | None | 4.3 |
| Succulent owl’s-clover | Threatened | Endangered | None | 1B.2 |
| Madera Leptosiphon | None | None | None | 1B.2 |
| Shining Navarretia | None | None | None | 1B.2 |

**Raymond Quadrangle**List 1A: Plants presumed extinctList 1B: Plants Rare, Threatened, or Endangered in California and elsewhere.List 2: Plants Rare, Threatened, or Endangered in California, but more numerous elsewhereList 3 Plants which more information is needed – a review listList 4: Plants of Limited Distributed - a watch list**Ranking**0.1 – Seriously threatened in California (high degree/immediacy of threat)0.2 – Fairly threatened in California (moderate degree/immediacy of threat)0.3 – Not very threatened in California (low degree/immediacy of threats or no current threats known)SSC Species of Special ConcernWL Watch ListThe Valley elderberry longhorn beetle was listed as a threatened species in 1980. Use of the elderberry bush by the beetle, a wood borer, is rarely apparent. Frequently, the only exterior evidence of the elderberry's use by the beetle is an exit hole created by the larva just prior to the pupal stage. According to the USFWWS, the Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle habitat is primarily in communities of clustered Elderberry plants located within riparian habitat. The USFWS stated that VELB habitat does not include every Elderberry plant in the Central Valley, such as isolated, individual plants, plants with stems that are less than one inch in basal diameter or plants located in upland habitat.**(b - d, f) No Impact.**The project does not contain any natural riparian habitat or designated wetlands. In addition, **it** is not redirecting, obstructing or change a wildlife corridor for native resident species. The project may impact any onsite oak trees however. Existing oak trees should be noted and accommodated through construction activities and location of structures. Replacement of oak trees is not required through local ordinance or policies, but is encouraged in order to preserve the natural landscape of the project site.The project does not reside within an existing habitat conservation plan.**(e) Less than Significant with Mitigation.**The Biological Assessment as well as the Raymond Area Plan both call out for preservation of oak woodlands with development. Any future development should incorporate or preserve oak woodlands as part of the project. If an oak tree is to be removed, it shall be replaced at a rate of 2 to 1.**Responses:**Effective January 1, 2007, Senate Bill 1535 took effect that has changed de minimis findings procedures. The Senate Bill takes the de minimis findings capabilities out of the Lead Agency hands and puts the process into the hands of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (formally the California Department of Fish and Game). A Notice of Determination filing fee is due each time a NOD is filed at the jurisdictions Clerk’s Office. The authority comes under Senate Bill 1535 (SB 1535) and Department of Fish and Wildlife Code 711.4. Each year the fee is evaluated and has the potential of increasing. For the most up-to-date fees, please refer to: <http://www.dfg.ca.gov/habcon/ceqa/ceqa_changes.html>.  |

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|  | PotentiallySignificant Impact | Less Than SignificantWith MitigationIncorporation | Less Than Significant Impact | NoImpact |
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| **V. CULTURAL RESOURCES**Would the project: |  |  |  |  |
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| a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to §15064.5? |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |
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| b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5? |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |
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| c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries? |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |
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**Responses:**

**(a -d) Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation.**A prior project to the north and east submitted a Phase 1 archeological survey for that proposed project site. The survey was conducted using aerial photography as well as field surveys. The report identified multiple sites which would need some mitigation incorporation in order limit potential impacts.

A historic "Olive Grove Site" consists of a 9-foot by 12-foot rock and mortar spring box located on the southwestern edge of a man-made pond and an olive grove. The spring box and olive grove may date to the early 1900s. There are no other associated cultural materials dating to the historic period. Research failed to identify the family associated with this historic site. The man-made pond appears to post-date 1962 as it does not show up on USGS topographic maps pre-dating that year. Suggested mitigation includes further evaluation of the site by a licensed professional in order to determine if the site is eligible for listing on the California Register of Historic Resources OR placing an easement over the site for preservation purposes.

The "Big Milling Site" contains two bedrock outcrops with mortar cups. There are no known associated cultural features or artifacts associated with the milling stations. The area between the two bedrock features has been highly disturbed to the extent that two to three feet of top soil has been removed or pushed around in the creation of a dirt bike track, as well as the cutting of a dirt road through the adjacent area. The boundaries of the site have been confined to the immediate area around each outcrop with mortar cups. Midden deposits do occur immediately adjacent to milling features (bedrock outcrops with mortar cups), thus it is recommended that all future development occur outside of a 5-meter buffer surrounding the extant features. This 5-meter buffer is suggested to be incorporated as a part of the final parcel map.

The "Isolated Milling Site" is comprised of a single bedrock outcrop with three small mortar cups. There does not appear to be any associated cultural features or artifacts. Midden deposits do occur immediately adjacent to milling features (bedrock outcrops with mortar cups), thus it is recommended that all future development occur outside of a 5-meter buffer surrounding the extant features. This 5-meter buffer is suggested to be incorporated as a part of the final parcel map.

Finally, the study suggest if future development of the property find any aboriginal or historic materials that have not been identified in this report, that the Madera County Planning Department and a professional archeologist be notified immediately.

Most of the archaeological survey work in the County has taken place in the foothills and mountains. This does not mean, however, that no sites exist in the western part of the County, but rather that this area has not been as thoroughly studied. There are slightly more than 2,000 recorded archaeological sites in the County, most of which are located in the foothills and mountains. Recorded prehistoric artifacts include village sites, camp sites, bedrock milling stations, pictographs, petroglyphs, rock rings, sacred sites, and resource gathering areas. Madera County also contains a significant number of potentially historic sites, including homesteads and ranches, mining and logging sites and associated features (such as small camps, railroad beds, logging chutes, and trash dumps.

Archaeological importance is generally, although not exclusively, a measure of the archaeological research value of a site which meets one or more of the following criteria:

* Is associated with an event or person of recognized significance in California or American history or of recognized scientific importance in prehistory.
* Can provide information which is both of demonstrable public interest and useful in addressing scientifically consequential and reasonable archaeological research questions.
* Has a special or particular quality such as oldest, best example, largest, or last surviving example of its kind.
* Is at least 100 years old and possesses substantial stratigraphic integrity (i.e. it is essentially undisturbed and intact).
* Involves important research questions that historic research has shown can be answered only with archaeological methods.

Reference CEQA Guidelines §15064.5 for definitions.

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| TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES Would the project |  |  |  |  |
| a) | Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource as defined in Public Resources Code §21074**SUBSTANTIATION:** Check if the project is located in the traditional and cultural affiliated geographic area of a California Native American Tribe: The project does not abut areas known to have be inhabited by native tribes. Consultation has been made with the Chowchilla Yokuts Tribe, the North Fork Mono Tribe and the Table Mountain Rancheria Tribe.  | **[ ]**  | **[ ]**  | **[x]**  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |
| **Discussion:** The parcel map site will remain rural residential, however, after the division each parcel is permitted to establish two dwellings. The division may also require roads to be constructed for access to each parcel. The parcel map will be conditioned that prior to the issuance of any permits for excavation or building construction, the tribal member will be notified and permitted access to the site prior to and during construction.**a) Less Then Significant Impact.** Less Than Significant with standard notification to tribal members before grading:Any impacts will be mitigated by the conditions of approval for the parcel map. |  |  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |  |

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|  | PotentiallySignificant Impact | Less Than SignificantWith MitigationIncorporation | Less Than Significant Impact | NoImpact |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **VI. Energy**Would the project: |  |  |  |  |
|  |
| a) Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation? |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |
|  |  |
| b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency? |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |

**Responses:**

**(a-b) Less Than Significant Impact.** This is a land division for sale of a future parcel, however, a residential solar facility required by the current building code can be considered a renewable energy facility. While obviously this will not impact fuel efficiency for vehicles, it will support efficiency efforts for the power grid, and thus make the area less dependent on non-renewable energy sources.

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|  | PotentiallySignificant Impact | Less Than SignificantWith MitigationIncorporation | Less Than Significant Impact | NoImpact |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **VII. GEOLOGY AND SOILS**Would the project: |  |  |  |  |
|  |
| a) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving: |  |
|  |
| i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone 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 geological unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse? |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |
|  |
|  |
| d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property? |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |
|  |
|  |
| e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater? |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |
|  |
| f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature? |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |

 |
|  |

**Responses:**

**(a i - iii ) Less than Significant Impact.** Madera County is divided into two major physiographic and geologic provinces: The Sierra Nevada Range and the Central Valley. The Sierra Nevada physiographic province in the northeastern portion of the county is underlain by metamorphic and igneous rock. It consists mainly of homogenous types of granitic rocks, with several islands of older metamorphic rock. The central and western parts of the county are part of the Central Valley province, underlain by marine and non-marine sedimentary rocks.

The foothill area of the county is essentially a transition zone, containing old alluvial soils that have been dissected by the west-flowing rivers and streams which carry runoff from the Sierra Nevada’s.

Seismicity varies greatly between the two major geologic provinces represented in Madera County. The Central valley is an area of relatively low tectonic activity bordered by mountain ranges on either side. The Sierra Nevada’s, partly within Madera County, are the result of movement of tectonic plates which resulted in the creation of the mountain range. The Coast Ranges on the west side of the Central Valley are also a result of these forces, and continued movement of the Pacific and North American tectonic plates continues to elevate the ranges. Most of the seismic hazards in Madera County result from movement along faults associated with the creation of these ranges.

There are no active or potentially active faults of major historic significance within Madera County. The County does not lie within any Alquist Priolo Special Studies Zone for surface faulting or fault creep.

However, there are two significant faults within the larger region that have been and will continue to be, the principle sources of potential seismic activity within Madera County.

San Andreas Fault: The San Andreas Fault lies approximately 45 miles west of the county line. The fault has a long history of activity and is thus a concern in determining activity in the area.

Owens Valley Fault Group: The Owens Valley Fault Group is a complex system containing both active and potentially active faults on the eastern base of the Sierra Nevada Range. This group is located approximately 80 miles east of the County line in Inyo County. This system has historically been the source of seismic activity within the County.

The *Draft Environmental Impact Report* for the state prison project near Fairmead identified faults within a 100 mile radius of the project site. Since Fairmead is centrally located along Highway 99 within the county, this information provides a good indicator of the potential seismic activity which might be felt within the County. Fifteen active faults (including the San Andreas and Owens Valley Fault Group) were identified in the *Preliminary Geotechnical Investigation*. Four of the faults lie along the eastern portion of the Sierra Nevada Range, approximately 75 miles to the northeast of Fairmead. These are the Parker Lake, Hartley Springs, Hilton Creek and Mono Valley Faults. The remaining faults are in the western portion of the San Joaquin Valley, as well as within the Coast Range, approximately 47 miles west of Fairmead. Most of the remaining 11 faults are associated with the San Andreas, Calaveras, Hayward and Rinconada Fault Systems which collectively form the tectonic plate boundary of the Central Valley.

In addition, the Clovis Fault, although not having any historic evidence of activity, is considered to be active within quaternary time (within the past two million years), is considered potentially active. This fault line lies approximately six miles south of the Madera County line in Fresno County. Activity along this fault could potentially generate more seismic activity in Madera County than the San Andreas or Owens Valley fault systems. However, because of the lack of historic activity along the Clovis Fault, there is inadequate evidence for assessing maximum earthquake impacts.

Seismic ground shaking, however, is the primary seismic hazard in Madera County because of the County's seismic setting and its record of historical activity (General Plan Background Element and Program EIR). The project represents no specific threat or hazard from seismic ground shaking, and all new construction will comply with current local and state building codes. Other geologic hazards, such as landslides, lateral spreading, subsidence, and liquefaction have not been known to occur within Madera County.

According to the Madera County General Plan Background Report, ground shaking is the primary seismic hazard in Madera County. The valley portion of Madera County is located on alluvium deposits, which tend to experience greater ground shaking intensities than areas located on hard rock. Therefore, structures located in the valley will tend to suffer greater damage from ground shaking than those located in the foothill and mountain areas.

Liquefaction is a process whereby soil is temporarily transformed to a fluid form during intense and prolonged ground shaking. According to the Madera County General Plan Background Report, although there are areas of Madera County where the water table is at 30 feet or less below the surface, soil types in the area are not conducive to liquefaction because they are either too coarse in texture or too high in clay content; the soil types mitigate against the potential for liquefaction.

**(a – iv) Less than Significant Impact.** The parcel is in an area where it is topographically not conducive to landslides, so therefore there will be no impacts.

**(b) Less than Significant Impact.** The parcel itself is currently agricultural district and vacant. The future projects incorporates structures and parking. This will directly and indirectly either induce or contribute to existing erosion patterns. The amount of said erosion will be dependent on the amount of rain and the amount of impervious surfaces resulting from the project.

**(c - d) Less than Significant Impact.** The impacts that will occur as a direct or indirect result of this project will not be significant.

**(e - f) No Impact.** There are no known impacts that will occur as a direct or indirect result of this project.

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|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | PotentiallySignificant Impact | Less Than SignificantWith MitigationIncorporation | Less Than Significant Impact | NoImpact |
| **VIII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS**Would the project: |  |  |  |  |
|  |
| a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment? |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |
|  |
|  |
| b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases? |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |
|  |

**Responses:**

The primary factors that determine air quality are the locations of air pollutant sources and the amounts of pollutants emitted. Meteorological and topographical conditions, however, also are important. Factors such as wind speed and direction, and air temperature gradients interact with physical landscape features to determine the movement and dispersal of criteria air pollutants.

The area within Madera County lies within the San Joaquin Valley Air Basin (SJVAB), basically a flat area bordered on the east by the Sierra Nevada Mountains; on the west by the Coast Ranges; and to the south by the Tehachapi Mountains. Airflow in the SJVAB is primarily influenced by marine air that enters through the Carquinez Straits where the San Joaquin-Sacramento Delta empties into the San Francisco Bay. The region’s topographic features restrict air movement through and out of the basin. As a result, the SJVAB is highly susceptible to pollutant accumulation over time. Frequent transport of pollutants into the SJVAB from upwind sources also contributes to poor air quality.

Wind speed and direction play an important role in dispersion and transport of air pollutants. During summer periods, winds usually originate from the north end of the San Joaquin Valley and flows in a south-southeasterly direction through the valley, through the Tehachapi pass and into the neighboring Southeast Desert Air Basin. During winter months, winds occasionally originate from the south end of the valley and flow in a north-northwesterly direction. Also, during winter months, the valley experiences light, variable winds, less than 10 miles per hour (mph). Low wind speeds, combined with low inversion layers in the winter, create a climate conducive to high concentrations of certain air pollutants.

The SJVAB has an inland Mediterranean climate that is characterized by warm, dry summers and cooler winters. Summer high temperatures often exceed 100 degrees Fahrenheit, averaging from the low 90s in the northern part of the valley to the high 90s in the south. The daily summer temperature variation can be as high as 30 degrees Fahrenheit. Winters are for the most part mild and humid. Average high temperatures during the winter are in the 50s, while the average daily low temperature is in the 40s.

The vertical dispersion of air pollutants in the valley is limited by the presence of persistent temperature inversions. Air temperatures usually decrease with an increase in altitude. A reversal of this atmospheric state, where the air temperature increases with height, is termed an inversion. Air above and below an inversion does not mix because differences in air density restrict air pollutant dispersal.

**(a - b)** **No Impact.**  No new greenhouse gases are anticipated to be generated as a result of this land division.

Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions: The potential effect of greenhouse gas emission on global climate change is an emerging issue that warrants discussion under CEQA. Unlike the pollutants discussed previously that may have regional and local effects, greenhouse gases have the potential to cause global changes in the environment. In addition, greenhouse gas emissions do not directly produce a localized impact, but may cause an indirect impact if the local climate is adversely changed by its cumulative contribution to a change in global climate. Individual development projects contribute relatively small amounts of greenhouse gases that when added to other greenhouse gas producing activities around the world would result in an increase in these emissions that have led many to conclude is changing the global climate. However, no threshold has been established for what would constitute a cumulatively considerable increase in greenhouse gases for individual development projects. The State of California has taken several actions that help to address potential global climate change impacts.

Assembly Bill 32 (AB 32), the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006, outlines goals for local agencies to follow in order to bring Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions to 1990 levels (a 25% overall reduction) by the year 2020. The California Air Resources Board (CARB) holds the responsibility of monitoring and reducing GHG emissions through regulations, market mechanisms and other actions. A Draft Scoping Plan was adopted by CARB in order to provide guidelines and policy for the State to follow in its steps to reduce GHG. According to CARB, the scoping plan’s GHG reduction actions include: direct regulations, alternative compliance mechanisms, monetary and non-monetary incentives, voluntary actions, and market-based mechanisms such as a cap-and-trade system.

Following the adoption of AB 32, the California State Legislature adopted Senate Bill 375, which became the first major bill in the United States that would aim to limit climate change by linking directly to “smart growth” land use principles and transportation. It adds incentives for projects which intend to be in-fill, mixed use, affordable and self-contained developments. SB 375 includes the creation of a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) through the local Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) in order to create land use patterns of which reduce overall emissions and vehicle miles traveled. Incentives include California Environmental Quality Act streamlining and possible exemptions for projects which fulfill specific criteria.

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|  | PotentiallySignificant Impact | Less Than SignificantWith MitigationIncorporation | Less Than Significant Impact | NoImpact |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **IX. HAZARDS and HAZARDOUS MATERIALS**Would the project: |  |  |  |  |
|  |
| a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use or disposal of hazardous materials? |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |
|  |  |
|  |
| b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment? |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |
|  |  |
| c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school? |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |
|  |  |
|  |
| d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment? |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |
|  |  |
|  |
| e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area? |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |
|  |  |
|  |
| f) Impair implementation of, or physically interfere with, an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan? |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |
|  |  |
|  |
| g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires? |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |
|  |  |

**Responses:**

**(a - c) Less than Significant Impact.** The impacts that will occur as a direct or indirect result of this project will not be significant. The existing agricultural use may have less then significant impacts.

**(d–g) No Impact.** No impacts identified as a result of this project. Future development will require compliance with Environment Health Division and Fire Marshal standards.

\_\_\_\_\_

|   | PotentiallySignificant Impact | Less Than SignificantWith MitigationIncorporation | Less Than Significant Impact | NoImpact |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **X. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY**Would the project: |  |  |  |  |
|  |
| a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality? |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |
|  |  |
|  |
| b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin? |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |
|  |  |
|  |
| c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would: |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |
| (i) result in substantial erosion or siltation on or off site;  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |
|  |  |
|  |
| (ii) substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on or off site;  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |
|  |
| (iii) create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |
|  |  |
|  |
| (iv) impede or redirect flood flows? |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |
|  |  |
|  |
| d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation? |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |
|  |  |
|  |
| e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan? |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |
|  |  |

**Responses:**

**(a – c-i) Less than Significant Impact.** The impacts that will occur as a direct or indirect result of this project will not be significant. The existing agricultural use may have less then significant impacts.

\_**(c-ii - e) No Impact.** No impacts identified as a result of this land division.

A seiche is an occasional and sudden oscillation of the water of a lake, bay or estuary producing fluctuations in the water level and caused by wind, earthquakes or changes in barometric pressure. A tsunami (from the Japanese language, roughly translated as “harbor wave”) is an unusually large sea wave produced by seaquake or undersea volcanic eruption. According to the California Division of Mines and Geology, there are no active or potentially active faults of major historic significance within Madera County. Additionally, there are no bodies of water (lakes, etc.) within proximity of the site. Madera County is geographically located in the center of the state, therefore not affected by tsunamis.

**General Information**

Groundwater quality contaminants of concern in the Valley Floor include high salinity (total dissolved solids), nitrate, uranium, arsenic, methane gas, iron, manganese, slime production, and dibromochloropropane with the maximum contaminant level exceeded in some areas. Despite the water quality issues noted above, most of the groundwater in the Valley Floor is of suitable quality for irrigation. Groundwater of suitable quality for public consumption has been demonstrated to be present in most of the area at specific depths.

Groundwater quality contaminants of concern in the Foothills and Mountains include manganese, iron, high salinity, hydrogen sulfide gas, uranium, nitrate, arsenic, and methylbutylethylene (MTBE) with the maximum concentration level being exceeded in some areas. Despite these problems, there are substantial amounts of good-quality groundwater in each of the areas evaluated in the Foothills and Mountains. Iron and manganese are commonly removed by treatment. Uranium treatment is being conducted on a well by the Bass Lake Water Company.

A seiche is an occasional and sudden oscillation of the water of a lake, bay or estuary producing fluctuations in the water level and caused by wind, earthquakes or changes in barometric pressure. A tsunami (from the Japanese language, roughly translated as “harbor wave”) is an unusually large sea wave produced by seaquake or undersea volcanic eruption. According to the California Division of Mines and Geology, there are no active or potentially active faults of major historic significance within Madera County. As this property is not located near any bodies of water, no impacts are identified.

The flood hazard areas of the County of Madera are subject to periodic inundation which results in loss of life and property, health and safety hazards, disruption of commerce and governmental services, extraordinary public expenditures for flood protection and relief, and impairment of the tax base, all of which adversely affect the public health, safety and general welfare. These flood losses are caused by uses that are inadequately elevated, flood proofed, or protected from flood damage. The cumulative effect of obstruction in areas of special flood hazards which increase flood height and velocities also contribute to flood loss.

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|  | PotentiallySignificant Impact | Less Than SignificantWith MitigationIncorporation | Less Than Significant Impact | NoImpact |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **XI. LAND USE AND PLANNING**Would the project: |  |  |  |  |
|  |
| a) Physically divide an established community? |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |
|  |
| b) Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect? |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |
|  |
|  |

**Responses:**

**(a - b)** **No Impact.** No impacts identified as a result of this proposed land division. The proposed parcels are consistent with the General Plan, the Raymond Plan and Zoning.

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|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | PotentiallySignificant Impact | Less Than SignificantWith MitigationIncorporation | Less Than Significant Impact | NoImpact |
| **XII. MINERAL RESOURCES**Would the project: |  |  |  |  |
|  |
| a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state? |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[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]**  |  |
|  |

**Responses:**

**(a - b)** **No Impact.**  There are no known minerals in the vicinity of the project site.

\_\_\_\_\_

|  | PotentiallySignificant Impact | Less Than SignificantWith MitigationIncorporation | Less Than Significant Impact | NoImpact |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **XIII. NOISE**Would the project result in: |  |  |  |  |
|  |
| a) Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinances, or applicable standards of other agencies? |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |
|  |  |
|  |
| b) Generation of excessive ground-borne vibration or ground-borne noise levels? |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |
|  |  |
|  |
| c) For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels? |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |
|  |  |
|  |

**Responses:**

The proposed project is located in an area of western Madera County, or more specifically, the area of the County considered most likely to accommodate future growth in agricultural facilities. The noise sources associated with these type of facilities are mainly indoor light industrial equipment, and vehicles operating on local roadways. Noise levels away from these noise sources can be quite low depending on the amount of nearby human activity.

**(a-c).** **Less Then Significant Impact.** There is only residential construction anticipated as a result of this land division. No airports or private airstrips are in the vicinity of the project. The closest airport is the Madera airport, at approximately 26 miles southwest of the project area.

Regarding ground-borne vibration levels, none are significantly expected. There might be some minor vibrations as trucks enter and leave, but they are not expected to be significant.

**General Discussion**

The Noise Element of the Madera County General Plan (Policy 7.A.5) provides that noise which will be created by new non-transportation noise sources shall be mitigated so as not to exceed the Noise Element noise level standards on lands designated for noise-sensitive uses. However, this policy does not apply to noise levels associated with agricultural operations. All the surrounding properties, while include some residential units, are designated and zoned for agricultural uses. This impact is therefore considered less than significant.

Construction noise typically occurs intermittently and varies depending upon the nature or phase of construction (e.g. demolition/land clearing, grading and excavation, erection). The United States Environmental Protection Agency has found that the average noise levels associated with construction activities typically range from approximately 76 dBA to 84 dBA Leq, with intermittent individual equipment noise levels ranging from approximately 75 dBA to more than 88 dBA for brief periods.

Short Term Noise

Noise from localized point sources (such as construction sites) typically decreases by approximately 6 dBA with each doubling of distance from source to receptor. Given the noise attenuation rate and assuming no noise shielding from either natural or human-made features (e.g. trees, buildings, and fences), outdoor receptors within approximately 400 feet of construction site could experience maximum noise levels of greater than 70 dBA when onsite construction-related noise levels exceed approximately 89 dBA at the project site boundary. Construction activities that occur during the more noise-sensitive eighteen hours could result in increased levels of annoyance and sleep disruption for occupants of nearby existing residential dwellings. As a result, noise-generating construction activities would be considered to have a potentially significant short-term impact. However with implementation of mitigation measures, this impact would be considered less than significant.

Long Term Noise

Mechanical building equipment (e.g. heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems, and boilers), associated with the proposed structures, could generate noise levels of approximately 90 dBA at 3 feet from the source. However, such mechanical equipment systems are typically shielded from direct public exposure and usually housed on rooftops, within equipment rooms, or within exterior enclosures.

Landscape maintenance equipment, such as leaf blowers and gasoline powered mowers, could result in intermittent noise levels that range from approximately 80 to 100 dBA at 3 feet, respectively. Based on an equipment noise level of 100 dBA, landscape maintenance equipment (assuming a noise attenuation rate of 6 dBA per doubling of distance from the source) may result in exterior noise levels of approximately 75 dBA at 50 feet.

MAXIMUM ALLOWABLE NOISE EXPOSURE FOR

NON-TRANSPORTATION NOISE SOURCES\*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | Residential | Commercial | Industrial (L) | Industrial (H) | Agricultural |
| Residential | AM | 50 | 60 | 55 | 60 | 60 |
| PM | 45 | 55 | 50 | 55 | 55 |
| Commercial | AM | 60 | 60 | 60 | 65 | 60 |
| PM | 55 | 55 | 55 | 60 | 55 |
| Industrial (L) | AM | 55 | 60 | 60 | 65 | 60 |
| PM | 50 | 55 | 55 | 60 | 55 |
| Industrial (H) | AM | 60 | 65 | 65 | 70 | 65 |
| PM | 55 | 60 | 60 | 65 | 60 |
| Agricultural | AM | 60 | 60 | 60 | 65 | 60 |
| PM | 55 | 55 | 55 | 60 | 55 |
| \*As determined at the property line of the receiving land use. When determining the effectiveness of noise mitigation measures, the standards may be applied on the receptor side of noise barriers at the property line.AM = 7:00 AM to 10:00 PMPM = 10:00 PM to 7:00 AML = LightH = HeavyNote: Each of the noise levels specified above shall be lowered by 5 dB for pure tone noises, noises consisting primarily of speech or music, or for recurring impulsive noises. These noise level standards do not apply to residential units established in conjunction with industrial or commercial uses (e.g. caretaker dwellings). |

Vibration perception threshold: The minimum ground or structure-borne vibrational motion necessary to cause a normal person to be aware of the vibration by such direct means as, but not limited to, sensation by touch or visual observation of moving objects. The perception threshold shall be presumed to be a motion velocity of one-tenth (0.1) inches per second over the range of one to one hundred Hz.

|  |
| --- |
| **Reaction of People and Damage to Buildings from Continuous Vibration Levels** |
| **Velocity Level, PPV (in/sec)** | **Human Reaction** | **Effect on Buildings** |
| 0.006 to 0.019 | Threshold of perception; possibility of intrusion | Damage of any type unlikely |
| 0.08 | Vibration readily perceptible | Recommended upper level of vibration to which ruins and ancient monuments should be subjected |
| 0.10 | Continuous vibration begins to annoy people | Virtually no risk of architectural damage to normal buildings |
| 0.20 | Vibration annoying to people in buildings | Risk of architectural damage to normal dwellings such as plastered walls or ceilings |
| 0.4 to 0.6 | Vibration considered unpleasant bypeople subjected to continuous vibrationsvibration | Architectural damage and possibly minor structural damage |
| Source: Whiffen and Leonard 1971 |   |

\_\_\_\_\_

|  | PotentiallySignificant Impact | Less Than SignificantWith MitigationIncorporation | Less Than Significant Impact | NoImpact |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **XIV. POPULATION AND HOUSING**Would the project: |  |  |  |  |
|  |
| a) Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and business) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)? |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |
|  |
|  |
| b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |
|  |

**Responses:**

**(a - b) No Impact.** This project will directly or indirectly induce limited growth resulting in minor growth.

According to the California Department of Finance, in January of 2012, the County wide population was 152,074 with a total of 49,334 housing units. This works out to an average of 3.33 persons per housing unit. The vacancy rate was 11.84%.

\_\_\_\_\_

|  | PotentiallySignificant Impact | Less Than SignificantWith MitigationIncorporation | Less Than Significant Impact | NoImpact |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **XV. PUBLIC SERVICES** |  |  |  |  |
|  |
| 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: |  |
|  |
|  |
| i) Fire protection? |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |
|  |
| ii) Police protection? |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |
|  |
| iii) Schools? |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |
|  |
| iv) Parks? |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |
|  |
| v) Other public facilities? |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |
|  |

**Responses:**

**(a-i) No Impact.** The proposed project will not result in commercial use in the area. It is anticipated that Fire Protection will be sufficient and will not be impacted by any increase in medical and fire calls to the existing agricultural use.

**(a-ii) No Impact.** No impacts are anticipated as a direct, indirect, short or long term impact as a result of this project.

The Madera County General Plan allocates three acres of park available land per 1,000 residents’ population.

**(a-iii) No Impact.** No impacts are anticipated as a result of this project as it does not relate to any educational programs or increase the surrounding population.

Single Family Residences have the potential for adding to school populations. The average per Single Family Residence is:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Grade | Student Generation per Single Family Residence |
| K – 6 | 0.425 |
| 7 – 8 | 0.139 |
| 9 – 12 | 0.214 |

**(a-iv) No Impact.** No impacts are anticipated as a direct, indirect, short or long term impact as a result of this project.

The Madera County General Plan allocates three acres of park available land per 1,000 residents’ population.

**(a - v) No Impact.**  No impacts identified as a result of this project.

\_\_\_\_\_

|  | PotentiallySignificant Impact | Less Than SignificantWith MitigationIncorporation | Less Than Significant Impact | NoImpact |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **XVI. RECREATION** |  |  |  |  |
|  |
| 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]**  |  |
|  |  |

**Responses:**

**(a - b) No Impact.**  No impacts have been identified to recreational facilities as a result of this project

\_\_\_\_\_

|  | PotentiallySignificant Impact | Less Than SignificantWith MitigationIncorporation | Less Than Significant Impact | NoImpact |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **XVII. TRANSPORTATION**Would the project: |  |  |  |  |
|  |
| 1. Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?
 |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |
|  |
|  |
| b) Would the project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |
|  |
| c) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g. sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |
|  |
|  |
| d) Result in inadequate emergency access? |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |
|  |

**Responses:**

**(a) Less than Significant Impact.** In the area around the proposed project, opportunities for bicycles and pedestrians, especially as an alternative to the private automobile, are significantly limited by lack of developed shoulders, sidewalks or pavement width accommodating either mode. The condition is not uncommon in rural areas where distances between origins and destinations are long and the terrain is either rolling or mountainous. In the locations outside urbanized portions of the County, the number of non-recreational pedestrians/cyclists would likely be low, even if additional facilities were provided. This project is required by Caltrans to provide public traffic improvements which will provide improvements to the site.

As with most rural areas, Madera County is served by limited alternative transportation modes. Currently, only limited public transportation facilities or routes exist within the area. Volunteer systems such as the driver escort service, as well as the senior bus system, operate for special purpose activities and are administered by the Madera County Action Committee. The rural densities which are prevalent throughout the region have typically precluded successful public transit systems, which require more concentrated populations in order to gain sufficient ridership.

Local circulation is largely deficient with these same State Highways and County Roads composing the only existing network of through streets. Most local streets are dead-end drives, many not conforming to current County improvement standards. Existing traffic, particularly during peak hour and key intersections, already exhibits congestion.

**(b)Less than Significant Impact.** While the project is a not a traffic inducing type of project, the overall amount of traffic expected to be generated from this facility is not expected to be significant in light of the whole.

Madera County currently uses Level Of Service “D” as the threshold of significance level for roadway and intersection operations. The following charts show the significance of those levels.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Level of Service | Description | Average Control Delay (sec./car) |
| A | Little or no delay | 0 – 10 |
| B | Short traffic delay | >10 – 15 |
| C | Medium traffic delay | > 15 – 25 |
| D | Long traffic delay | > 25 – 35 |
| E | Very long traffic delay | > 35 – 50 |
| F | Excessive traffic delay | > 50 |

Unsignalized intersections.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Level of Service | Description | Average Control Delay (sec./car) |
| A | Uncongested operations, all queues clear in single cycle | < 10 |
| B | Very light congestion, an occasional phase is fully utilized | >10 – 20 |
| C | Light congestion; occasional queues on approach | > 20 – 35 |
| D | Significant congestion on critical approaches, but intersection is functional. Vehicles required to wait through more than one cycle during short peaks. No long-standing queues formed. | > 35 – 55 |
| E | Severe congestion with some long-standing queues on critical approaches. Traffic queues may block nearby intersection(s) upstream of critical approach(es) | > 55-80 |
| F | Total breakdown, significant queuing | > 80 |

Signalized intersections.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Level of service | Freeways | Two-lane rural highway | Multi-lane rural highway | Expressway | Arterial | Collector |
| A | 700 | 120 | 470 | 720 | 450 | 300 |
| B | 1,100 | 240 | 945 | 840 | 525 | 350 |
| C | 1,550 | 395 | 1,285 | 960 | 600 | 400 |
| D | 1,850 | 675 | 1,585 | 1,080 | 675 | 450 |
| E | 2,000 | 1,145 | 1,800 | 1,200 | 750 | 500 |

Capacity per hour per lane for various highway facilities

Madera County is predicted to experience significant population growth in the coming years (62.27 percent between 2008 and 2030). Accommodating this amount of growth presents a challenge for attaining and maintain air quality standards and for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The increase in population is expected to be accompanied by a similar increase in vehicle miles traveled (VMT) (61.36 percent between 2008 and 2030).

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Horizon Year | Total Population (thousands) | Employment (thousands) | Average Weekday VMT (millions) | Total Lane Miles |
| 2010 | 175 | 49 | 5.4 | 2,157 |
| 2011 | 180 | 53 | 5.5 | NA |
| 2017 | 210 | 63 | 6.7 | NA |
| 2020 | 225 | 68 | 7.3 | 2,264 |
| 2030 | 281 | 85 | 8.8 | 2,277 |

Source: MCTC 2007 RTP

The above table displays the predicted increase in population and travel. The increase in the lane miles of roads that will serve the increase in VMT is estimated at 120 miles or 0.94 percent by 2030. This indicates that roadways in Madera County can be expected to become much more crowded than is currently experienced.

Emissions of CO (Carbon Monoxide) are the primarily mobile-source criteria pollutant of local concern. Local mobile-source CO emissions near roadway intersections are a direct function of traffic volume, speed and delay. Carbon monoxide transport is extremely limited; it disperses rapidly with distance from the source under normal meteorological conditions. Under certain meteorological conditions, however, CO concentrations close to congested roadway or intersection may reach unhealthy levels, affecting local sensitive receptors (residents, school children, hospital patients, the elderly, etc.). As a result, the SJVAPCP recommends analysis of CO emissions of at a local rather than regional level. Local CO concentrations at intersections projected to operate at level of service (LOS) D or better do not typically exceed national or state ambient air quality standards. In addition, non-signalized intersections located within areas having relatively low background concentrations do not typically have sufficient traffic volumes to warrant analysis of local CO concentrations.

**(c) No Impact.**  As this project is not within an airport/airspace overlay district, or in proximity to any airport or airstrip within the County, no impacts to airspace or air flight will occur as a result.

**(d) Less than Significant Impact.** There is no design work related to the roadway system adjacent to the project site that would impede emergency access.

\_\_\_\_\_

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | PotentiallySignificant Impact | Less Than SignificantWith MitigationIncorporation | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
| **XVIII. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES**Would the project: |  |
| 1. Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code Section 21074 as either a site, feature, place cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:
2. Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code Section 5020.1(k), or
3. 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]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |

 |
|  |

**Responses:**

Cultural resources can be defined as buildings, sites, structures, objects, or places of importance that may have historical, architectural, archaeological, cultural, or scientific importance (including those associated with Native Americans or Native American activities). Preservation of the County’s unique cultural heritage should be considered when planning for future development of the area.

The western area of the County was originally inhabited by the Northern Valley Yokuts. Ethnographic information about this group is sparse due to the early dissemination of the aboriginal populations in the lower San Joaquin Valley.

The Northern Valley Yokuts territory is defined roughly by the crest of the Diablo Range on the west, and the foothills of the Sierra Nevada on the east. The southern boundary is approximately where the San Joaquin River bends northwards, and the northern boundary is roughly half way between the Calaveras and Mokelumne Rivers.

Principle settlements were located on the tops of low mounds, on or near the banks of larger watercourses. Settlements were composed of single family dwellings, sweathouses, and ceremonial assembly chambers. Dwellings were small and lightly constructed, semi-subterranean and oval. The public structures were large and earth covered.

With the development of Spanish Ranchos throughout California, cattle husbandry was prevalent, while dairy farms remained crude and sparse.

As a result of AB 52, which requires jurisdictions to notify Tribal Governments that request such outreach, the County alerted Tribal Entities that requested initial review packets. The only Tribe that responded back was the Table Mountain Rancheria, and they indicated they had no concerns with the project

**(a) Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated.** The project site appeared to be absent of any cultural resource of significance as indicated by the prior assessment. However, the project will need to cease all grading and trenching activities in the event that human remains or artifacts are found and have a qualified professional verify if in fact they are of cultural significance.

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|  | PotentiallySignificant Impact | Less Than SignificantWith MitigationIncorporation | Less Than Significant Impact | NoImpact |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **XIX. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS**Would the project: |  |
|  |  |
| a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment, or stormwater drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects? |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
| b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
| c) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it had adequate capacity to serve the project’s projected demand in addition to the provider’s existing commitments? |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
| d) Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
| e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste? |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |
|  |  |

**Responses:**

Water Quality Issues

Erosion and sedimentation/siltation are two potentially significant impacts related to development with the entire Oakhurst area. These impacts are generally proportional to the intensity of development which occurs in an area, including the amount of the clearing and grading which is necessary.

Rainfall is unable to percolate into the portions of each site that are paved over and is converted almost entirely into storm run-off, often exceeding the capacity of existing drainage system, causing intermittent flooding, increased flooding and other adverse impacts. Pollutants associated with parking lots (oil & grease predominately) will be found in high quantities after the first rain of the season. These pollutants have the potential of contaminating ground and surface water sources.

Groundwater availability issues

Groundwater within the area is generally limited and unpredictable as a result of geologic formation which characterizes the mountain and foothill regions of Madera County. These areas are generally underlain by impervious bedrock, and “groundwater” is available only through water bearing fractures within these formations. Within these “fracture” systems the ability to store and transmit water is solely dependent on the development of secondary openings such as faults, joints and exfoliation planes.

Due to these concerns regarding the uncertainty of groundwater, the Area Plan outlines the need to both understand groundwater availability for the area, and to examine opportunities to develop a source of surface water for the community. Several potential surface water sources for the greater eastern Madera County area have been evaluated over the years. Planning documents for the area beginning in the early 1960's identified the potential for a “Soquel” reservoir above Oakhurst within the Sierra National Forest. Later concepts included purchasing surface rights and delivering water from Bass Lake or the Fresno River. Most recently, the potential to purchase and deliver water from Redinger Lake has been studied. The development and implementation of a plan for surface water source been hindered by the presence of existing commitments for all surface water in the area. Additionally, environmental clearances, technical requirements, and the costs associated with developing a surface water source are significant. Despite these hurdles, the Area Plan notes that a surface water source must be viewed as the long-term solution and includes as a policy the initiation of a study to examine opportunities for a surface water source. The following Area Plan policies are proposed to address issues related to the provision of water.

Wastewater Issues

The reliance on septic systems has generated concerns regarding potential impacts to both surface and ground water quality, particularly where septic systems are concentrated on individual lots. This project will have an on-site treatment facility.

Solid Waste Issues

According to the Madera County General Plan Background report, all solid waste generated in the unincorporated area is currently disposed of at the Fairmead Landfill, which is owned by the County and operated by Madera Disposal Systems, Inc. The landfill facility is located on 48 acres at the southeast corner of Road 19 and Avenue 22. The landfill is expected to reach capacity in 2020. If additional waste can be diverted, the life of the expansion area could be increased. There is the potential for approximately 28 residential units’ total that would be in need of disposing of residential related waste material to this landfill. Recycling measures are strongly encouraged. According to the California Integrated Waste Management Board, the generation rate per resident is 0.63 pounds per day of trash.

**(a - e)** **No Impact.** No impacts have been identified as a result of this land division.

**General Discussion**

Madera County has 34 County Service Areas and Maintenance Districts that together operate 30 small water systems and 16 sewer systems. Fourteen of these special districts are located in the Valley Floor, and the remaining 20 special districts are in the Foothills and Mountains. MD-1 Hidden Lakes, Bass Lake (SA-2B and SA-2C) and SA-16 Sumner Hill have surface water treatment plants, with the remaining special districts relying solely on groundwater.

The major wastewater treatment plants in the County are operated in the incorporated cities of Madera and Chowchilla and the community of Oakhurst. These wastewater systems have been recently or are planned to be upgraded, increasing opportunities for use of recycled water. The cities of Madera and Chowchilla have adopted or are in the process of developing Urban Water Management Plans. Most of the irrigation and water districts have individual groundwater management plans. All of these agencies engage in some form of groundwater recharge and management.

Groundwater provides almost the entire urban and rural water use and about 75 percent of the agricultural water use in the Valley Floor. The remaining water demand is met with surface water. Almost all of the water use in the Foothills and Mountains is from groundwater with only three small water treatment plants relying on surface water from the San Joaquin River and its tributaries.

In areas of higher precipitation (Oakhurst, North Fork, and the topographically higher part of the Coarsegold Area), groundwater recharge is adequate for existing uses. However, some problems have been encountered in parts of these areas due to well interference and groundwater quality issues. In areas of lower precipitation (Raymond-Hensley Lake and the lower part of the Coarsegold area), groundwater recharge is more limited, possibly requiring additional water supply from other sources to support future development.

Madera County is served by a solid waste facility (landfill) in Fairmead. There is a transfer station in North Fork. The Fairmead facility also provides for Household Hazardous Materials collections on Saturdays. The unincorporated portion of the County is served by Red Rock Environmental Group. Above the 1000 foot elevation, residents are served by EMADCO services for solid waste pick-up.

\_\_\_\_\_

|  | PotentiallySignificant Impact | Less Than SignificantWith MitigationIncorporation | Less Than Significant Impact | NoImpact |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **XX. Wildfire**If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:  |  |
|  |  |
| a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan? |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |
|  |
|  |  |
| b) Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to, pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |
|  |
|  |  |
| c) Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment? |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |
|  |
|  |  |
| d) Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |
|  |
|  |

**Responses:**

**(a-d) No Impacts.** No impacts identified as a result of this land division. This site is not located in a wooded area and is not in a fire hazard zone. The area is level agricultural land.

\_\_\_\_\_

|  | PotentiallySignificant Impact | Less Than SignificantWith MitigationIncorporation | Less Than Significant Impact | NoImpact |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **XIX. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF** **SIGNIFICANCE** |  |  |  |  |
|  |
| a) Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory? |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |
|  |  |
| b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (“Cumulatively considerable” means that the incremental effects of a project are significant when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.)  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |
|  |  |
| d) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly? |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |  | **[x]**  |  |  | **[ ]**  |  |
|  |  |

**Responses:**

CEQA defines three types of impacts or effects:

* Direct impacts are caused by a project and occur at the same time and place (CEQA §15358(a)(1).
* Indirect or secondary impacts are reasonably foreseeable and are caused by a project but occur at a different time or place. They may include growth inducing effects and other effects related to changes in the pattern of land use, population density or growth rate and related effects on air, water and other natural systems, including ecosystems (CEQA §15358(a)(2).
* Cumulative impacts refer to two or more individual effects which, when considered together, are considerable or which compound or increase other environmental impacts (CEQA §15355(b)). Impacts from individual projects may be considered minor, but considered retroactively with other projects over a period of time, those impacts could be significant, especially where listed or sensitive species are involved.

**(a - c)** **Less then Significant Impact.** While there have been some minimal impacts identified through this study, none are considered significant in and of themselves, and/or cumulative inducing enough to be considered significant. With appropriate mitigations, those impacts can be reduced to less than significant or not significant.

\_\_\_\_\_

**Mitigation Measures**

[Listing mitigation measures here is not part of the CEQA Guidelines checklist, but this is a good place to list them.]

**Bibliography**

Madera County General Plan

Madera County Agricultural Commission

San Joaquin Valley Unified Air Pollution Control District

California Integrated Waste Management Board

California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines

California Department of Conservation

California Department of Fish and Game “California Natural Diversity Database” <http://www.dfg.ca.gov/biogeodata/cnddb/>

Madera County Integrated Regional Water Management Plan

Madera County Department of Environmental Health

Madera County Department of Engineering

Madera County Roads Department

Chowchilla Yokuts Tribe

Table Mountain Rancheria Tribe

North Fork Mono Tribe