



# **SHENANDOAH ROAD / FIDDLETOWN ROAD INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENT PROJECT**

## **INITIAL STUDY/MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION AND MITIGATION MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRAM**

Prepared for:

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## INTRODUCTION

Amador County (County), in cooperation with the City of Plymouth (City), proposes to improve the intersection of Shenandoah Road and Fiddletown Road. As required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (California Public Resources Code (PRC) Sections 21000, et seq.), the County has prepared this Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) to determine whether the project may have a significant effect on the environment.

### 1. LEGAL AUTHORITY AND FINDINGS

The County has prepared this IS/MND in accordance with the *Guidelines for the Implementation of CEQA* (CEQA Guidelines) (California Code of Regulations (CCR), Title 14, Chapter 3, Sections 15000, et seq.). Although consultants assisted in the preparation of this IS/MND, all analysis, conclusions, findings, and determinations presented in the IS/MND represent the findings of the County, acting as the Lead Agency under CEQA. In accordance with the provisions of CEQA and the state and local CEQA Guidelines, as the Lead Agency, the County is responsible for reviewing the potential environmental effects, and after consideration, approving or denying the project.

The City of Plymouth is a Responsible Agency under CEQA. As identified in Section 1050(b) of the CEQA Guidelines, "...the decision-making body of each responsible agency shall consider the lead agency's EIR or negative declaration prior to acting upon or approving a project. Each responsible agency shall certify that its decision-making body reviewed and considered the information contained in the EIR or negative declaration on the project."

### 2. DOCUMENT PURPOSE

Section 15063(c) of the CEQA Guidelines defines an IS as the proper preliminary method of analyzing the potential environmental consequences of a project. The purposes of an IS are:

- To provide the Lead Agency with the necessary information to decide whether to prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR), an MND, or a Negative Declaration (ND);
- To enable the Lead Agency to modify a project and mitigate adverse impacts, thus avoiding the need to prepare an EIR; and
- To provide sufficient technical analysis of the environmental effects of a project to permit a judgment based on the record as a whole, that the environmental effects of a project have been adequately mitigated.

### 3. DOCUMENT ORGANIZATION

**Section I - Introduction:** Describes the CEQA context and purpose of an IS.

**Section II - Project Description:** Provides background information on the Lead Agency (County) and describes the project, in response to the *CEQA Environmental Checklist*.

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**Section III - Environmental Factors Potentially Affected:** Identifies Potentially Significant Impacts, which are later explained in Section V.

**Section IV – Determination:** Presents the determination regarding the appropriate environmental document for the project.

**Section V – Evaluation of Environmental Impacts:** Provides discussions of the possible environmental impacts of the project for specific issue areas that have been identified in the *CEQA Environmental Checklist*. For each issue area, potential effects are discussed and evaluated.

#### **4. TERMINOLOGY**

A “significant effect” is defined by Section 15382 of the CEQA Guidelines as “a substantial, or potentially substantial, adverse change in any of the physical conditions within the area affected by a project, including land, air, water, minerals, flora, fauna, ambient noise, and objects of historic or aesthetic significance.” According to Section 15358 of the CEQA Guidelines, “an economic or social change by itself shall not be considered a significant effect on the environment, but may be considered in determining whether the physical change is significant.”

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## ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

**1. Project Title:**

Shenandoah Road/Fiddletown Road Intersection Improvement Project

**2. Lead Agency Name and Address**

Amador County  
Department of Transportation and Public Works  
810 Court Street  
Jackson, CA 95642

**3. Contact Person and Phone Number**

Jered Reinking, Senior Civil Engineer  
(209) 223-6429  
[jreinking@amadorgov.org](mailto:jreinking@amadorgov.org)

**4. Project Location**

Intersection of Shenandoah Road and Fiddletown Road, Amador County, California

**5. Project Proponent's Name and Address**

Amador County  
Department of Transportation and Public Works  
810 Court Street  
Jackson, CA 95642

**6. General Plan Designation**

County right of way (ROW) and Agricultural General

**7. Zoning**

County ROW and AG (Exclusive Agriculture)

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## 8. Project Description

The County, in cooperation with the City, proposes to realign the intersection of Shenandoah Road and Fiddletown Road (project). The project is located just northeast of the city of Plymouth, in Amador County, California (see **Figure 1**, Project Vicinity Map and **Figure 2**, Project Location Map). The project would utilize federal Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) program funding and local fund sources.

The purpose of the project is to improve intersection safety and roadway geometrics by improving intersection visibility, maximizing sight distance through the project area, improving horizontal and vertical alignments, enhancing signage and pavement delineation, and installing traffic control improvements at the intersection. During the 5-year period between January 2007 and December 2011, there were 14 collisions at the Shenandoah Road/Fiddletown Road intersection, including one that resulted in a fatality. Collisions at the intersection are primarily related to poor roadway geometry, resulting in driver confusion.

Additionally, this intersection was identified as an intersection of high public concern for safety during public outreach efforts conducted by the City for a nearby intersection improvement project, as well as during cooperative public outreach efforts made by the City and County for this project.

Shenandoah Road traverses north to south through the project area, then curves west of the intersection and traverses east to west; Fiddletown Road extends east to west, east of the intersection (see **Figure 3**, Project Area Map). The project area primarily includes open grass lands with scattered clusters of oak trees. There are vineyards and agricultural facilities adjacent to the project area, south of Fiddletown Road. Shenandoah Valley Charter School/Amador Community School is approximately 500 feet west of the project area, at 10010 Shenandoah Road. The City of Plymouth water storage tank is located immediately east of the project area, south of Fiddletown Road.

The project would include the realignment of the existing intersection as a "T" intersection with a stop sign control on Fiddletown Road (see **Figure 4**, Preliminary Plans). The project would include shifting the Shenandoah Road alignment to the northwest, and constructing a new leg of Fiddletown Road to intersect with Shenandoah Road. The horizontal length of the new leg would be maximized to improve the approach roadway and intersection geometrics. Travel along Shenandoah Road would remain free flowing, while Fiddletown Road would be stop controlled at the intersection. Shenandoah Road would have a dedicated left-turn pocket at the intersection. A streetlight may be installed at the intersection to improve intersection visibility and safety. The vertical alignment of Shenandoah Road would be adjusted to raise the profile to accommodate acceptable intersection approach grading for the new leg of Fiddletown Road. A driveway would also be provided to the south for the Sutter Home Winery parcel to access the realigned Shenandoah Road.







Source: ESRI, 2014

0 mi 0.2 0.4



**FIGURE 2. PROJECT LOCATION MAP**  
**Shenandoah-Fiddletown Roads Intersection Improvement Project**







Source: Google Earth, 2015

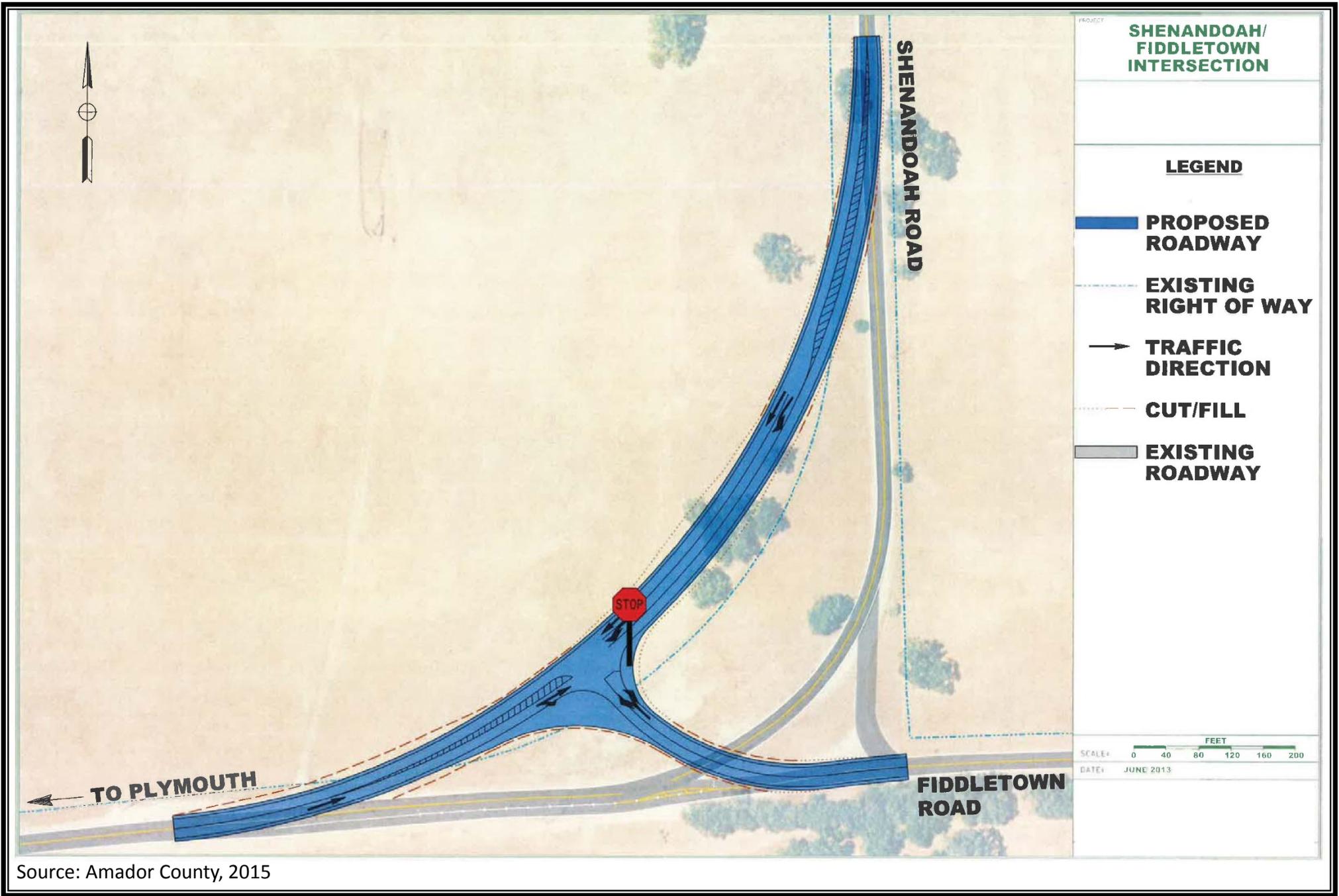
NO SCALE



**FIGURE 3. PROJECT AREA MAP**  
**Shenandoah-Fiddletown Roads Intersection Improvement Project**







**FIGURE 4. PRELIMINARY PLANS**  
**Shenandoah-Fiddletown Roads Intersection Improvement Project**





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Due to the topography of the project area, construction of the roadway would require over-excavation of areas surrounding the proposed roadway alignment in order to supply sufficient amounts of soil for the new roadbed. Areas of over-excavation would be located within County ROW, and would be between five feet and 25 feet deep.

Construction is anticipated to require six months to complete. Construction would require the acquisition of ROW and vegetation/tree removal. Prior to completion of construction, all areas disturbed by construction would be suitably re-graded, stabilized and hydroseeded with appropriate grasses.

## **9. Surrounding Land Uses and Setting**

The project is located in unincorporated Amador County, just northeast of the city of Plymouth, approximately 20 miles north of the city of Jackson, and 60 miles east of the city of Sacramento. The project is located in the western foothills of the Sierra Nevada mountain range, which runs for approximately 400 miles in a north-south direction on the border of California and Nevada.

Shenandoah Road traverses north to south through the project area, then curves west of the intersection and traverses east to west; Fiddletown Road extends east to west, east of the intersection (see **Figure 3**, Project Area Map). The project area primarily includes open grass lands with oak trees. There are vineyards and agricultural facilities adjacent to the project area, south of Fiddletown Road. Shenandoah Valley Charter School/Amador Community School is approximately 500 feet west of the project area, at 10010 Shenandoah Road. There are no residences near the project area, and the closest home is located approximately 1,500 feet east of the project area, south of Fiddletown Road. The City of Plymouth water storage tank is located immediately east of the project area on the south side of Fiddletown Road.

## **10. Other Public Agencies Whose Approval is Required**

- County: Various construction, grading, and encroachment permits
- City: Encroachment permit
- California Department of Transportation (Caltrans): Encroachment permit (for construction area signage on State Route 49)
- State Water Resources Control Board: Waste Discharge Identification (WDID) Number for the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Construction General Permit for Stormwater Discharges Associated with Construction and Land Disturbance Activities (CGP 2009-009-DWQ as amended by Order 2010-0014-DWQ and Order 2012-0006-DWQ (National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System No. CAS000002)

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## ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by the project, involving at least one impact that is a “Potentially Significant Impact” or a “Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation is Incorporated” as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aesthetics                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Greenhouse Gas Emissions                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Population & Housing                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture & Forestry Resources | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hazards & Hazardous Materials | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Services                               |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Air Quality           | <input type="checkbox"/> Hydrology & Water Quality                | <input type="checkbox"/> Recreation                                    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Biological Resources  | <input type="checkbox"/> Land Use & Planning                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation & Traffic                      |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cultural Resources    | <input type="checkbox"/> Mineral Resources                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Utilities & Service Systems                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Geology & Soils                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Noise                                    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mandatory Findings of Significance |

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## DETERMINATION

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

Jered Reinking, P.E.  
Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Amador County  
For

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## EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Potential environmental effects of the project are classified and described within the *CEQA Environmental Checklist* under the following general headings:

**“No Impact”** applies where the project would not result in an impact in a category.

**“Less Than Significant Impact”** applies where the project would result in an impact, but the magnitude of the impact is considered insignificant or negligible.

**“Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated”** applies where the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an impact from a “Potentially Significant Impact” to a “Less Than Significant Impact.”

**“Potentially Significant Impact”** applies where the project has the potential to result in a significant and unmitigable environmental impact.

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## 1. AESTHETICS

### REGULATORY SETTING

The County's General Plan identifies the following policy related to aesthetics (Amador County, 1967):

- To give careful consideration to the protection of natural scenic resources and environmental assets in all future major public and private development planning.

### AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

The project area is surrounded mostly by open grasslands with scattered oak trees. The topography consists of rolling foothills, with the project area sloping from the highest point at the north end of Shenandoah Road, to the lowest point at the west end of Shenandoah Road.

Photographs of the project area are shown in **Figure 5**, Existing Views. There are agricultural lands (vineyards) adjacent to the project area, south of Shenandoah Road (see **Figure 5**, Existing Views, View 1). The City of Plymouth water storage tank is located southeast of the project area on a hilltop south of Fiddletown Road. The view of the water storage tank is mostly shielded from roadway views by topography and dense vegetation consisting of small trees and shrubs (see **Figure 5**, Existing Views, View 2). The northwest portion of the project area consists of a hill sloping upwards to the northwest from the roadway (see View 3, Existing Views, **Figure 5**). This area is used primarily as grazing land and consists of grass lands with scattered medium and large oak trees. The northeast portion of the project area consists of a hill sloping upward to the north (see **Figure 5**, Existing Views, View 4). This area is used primarily as grazing land and consists of grass lands with scattered medium and large oak trees and a large pine tree. Utility poles and overhead lines are present along the roadway corridor.

### PROJECT IMPACTS

Would the project:

**a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion a):** A scenic vista is a viewpoint that provides expansive views of a highly valued landscape for the benefit of the general public. A substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista is one that would degrade the view from a designated scenic view spot.

**FIGURE 5. EXISTING VIEWS**



**View 1: Vineyard South of Shenandoah Road (view from eastbound Shenandoah Road approaching intersection)**



**View 2: Eastern Limit of Project Area (view from westbound Shenandoah/Fiddletown Road approaching intersection)**



**View 3: Northwest Portion of Project Area (view from eastbound Shenandoah Road approaching intersection)**



**View 4: Northern Portion of Project Area (view from southbound Shenandoah Road approaching intersection)**

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While the rolling hills and trees in the project area provide an attractive landscape for motorists passing through the project area, the project area does not meet the definition of a scenic vista. The project would include realigning the intersection of Shenandoah Road and Fiddletown Road and its roadway approaches to the northwest of its existing location, and would not include any vertical elements that would block or otherwise distort views of the surrounding area; therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

**b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion b):** According to the California Scenic Highway Mapping System, all of State Route 49 within Amador County and State Route 88 from the city of Jackson to the Dew Drop Ranger are designated as “Eligible State Scenic Highways – Not Officially Designated.” The project area is located approximately 0.33 mile away from State Route (SR) 49 at the closest point, and is not visible from the SR 49 corridor due to shielding from topography, vegetation, and urban development in the City of Plymouth. Because the project area is not located within a state scenic highway, and is not visible from a state scenic highway, there would be no impact.

**c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion c):** The project would include realigning the intersection of Shenandoah Road and Fiddletown Road and its roadway approaches to the northwest of its existing location, and would not include any vertical elements that would block or otherwise distort views of the surrounding areas. Vegetation and tree removal would be required to accommodate the intersection and roadway approaches realignment, which could result in a change in the visual setting of the project area; however, tree and vegetation removal would be reduced to the extent feasible to minimize visual changes, and the aesthetics of the project area would be similar to existing conditions following construction of the project. The project design would be compatible with the existing visual character and quality of the area. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

During construction of the project, there could be temporary visual impacts associated with vegetation removal and onsite storage of construction materials and debris; however, these

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impacts would be temporary, and following construction, temporarily disturbed areas would be restored to pre-project conditions. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

**d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion d):** Existing light or glare in the project area from vehicles traveling on the roadway would remain during project construction and operation, and there would be no change from these existing conditions after the project is implemented.

There are no existing streetlights the project area. The project may install a streetlight at the intersection to improve intersection visibility and safety. The streetlight would comply with the specifications of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) 2005 Roadway Lighting Design Guide. The streetlight would be directed downward to minimize “overspill” lighting outside of the intersection or into the night sky; would not consist of mercury vapor, low-pressure sodium, or fluorescent bulbs; not be of unusually high intensity or brightness; nor would it blink or flash. The project would not create substantial new sources of light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area. Therefore, there would be a less than significant impact.

## **2. AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES**

### **REGULATORY SETTING**

#### **State Regulations**

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 that are much lower than normal because they are based upon farming and open space uses as opposed to full market value (CDOC, 2015). The intent of the Williamson Act is to encourage voluntary land conservation, particularly conservation of agricultural land in California.

#### **Local Regulations**

The County’s General Plan identifies the following policy related to agriculture (Amador County, 1967):

- To provide all reasonable protection and encouragement to the preservation of agricultural soils and continued agricultural use of suitable soils.

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**AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT**

While there are trees in the project area, the tree coverage is not substantial enough to qualify as a forest, which generally includes at least 10 percent tree coverage. In addition, none of the trees in the project area are harvested as forestry resources; therefore, there are no forestry resources within or near the project area.

According to the County’s 2012 Important Farmland Map issued by the California Department of Conservation (CDOC), there is Unique Farmland south of the project area in the vineyard south of Shenandoah Road. The remainder of the land in and around the project area is identified as Grazing Land or Other Land (CDOC, 2014). There is no Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide or Local Importance in or near the project area (see **Figure 6**, Important Farmland Map).

The land surrounding the project area is zoned AG (Exclusive Agricultural District) on the County’s Zoning Map. The parcel in the northwest portion of the project area (Assessor’s Parcel Number [APN] 008-0030-016) is under protection of a Williamson Act contract.

**PROJECT IMPACTS**

Would the project:

**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 (FMMP) of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

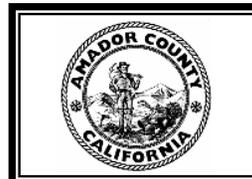
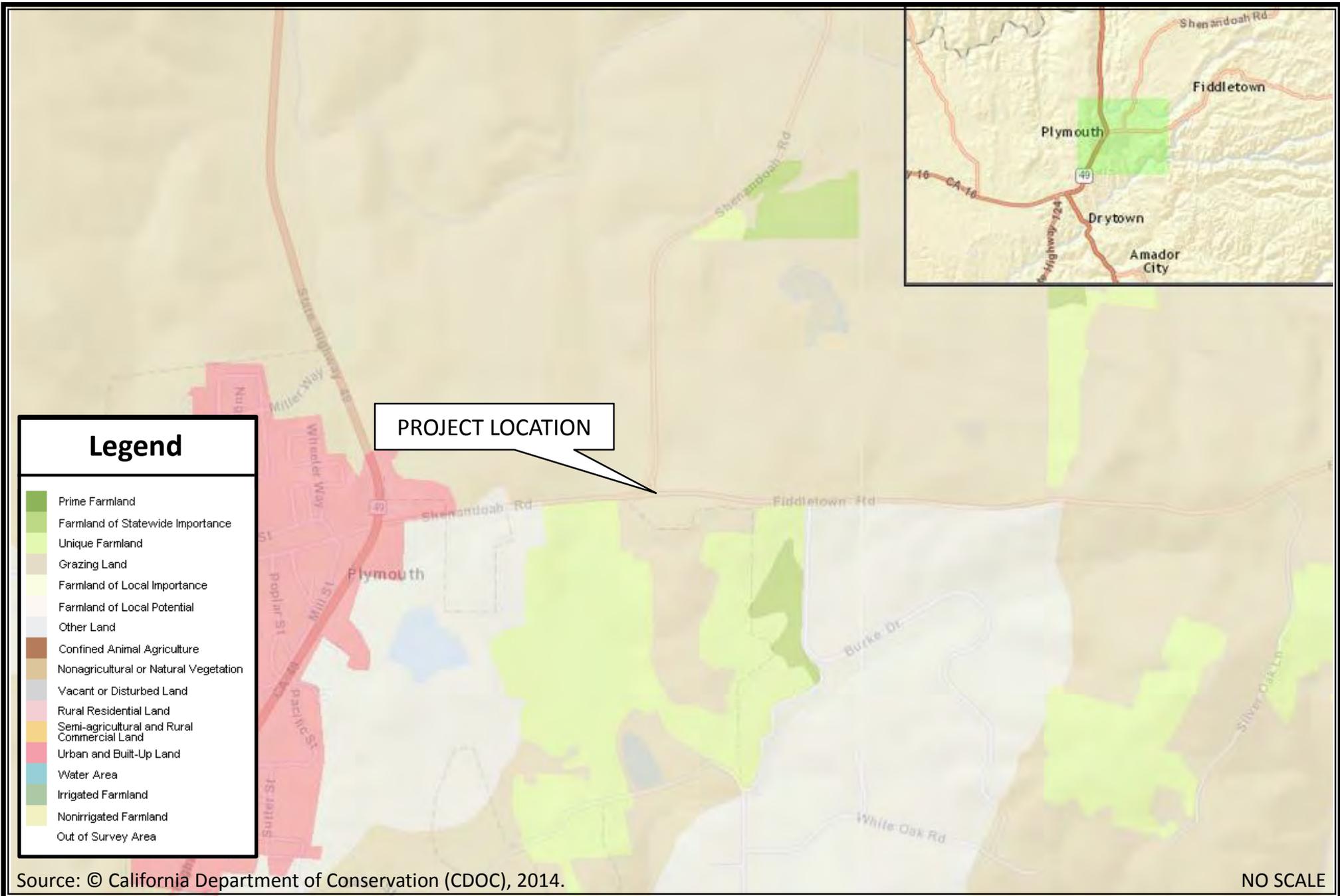
**Discussion a):** As shown on the County’s 2012 Important Farmland Map, the project area does not include any Prime Farmland or Farmland of Statewide Importance. There is Unique farmland to the south of the project area in the vineyard south of Shenandoah Road; however, this area would not be impacted by the project because the project would not require ROW acquisition from this area, and would not encroach upon this area or otherwise cause indirect conversion of the land. Therefore, there would be no impact.

**b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

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**FIGURE 6: IMPORTANT FARMLAND MAP**  
**Shenandoah-Fiddletown Roads Intersection Improvement Project**





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**Discussion b):** One parcel (APN 008-030-016) in the northwest portion of the project area is enrolled in a Williamson Act contract. The parcel is approximately 117 acres in size, and is used primarily for cattle grazing. The project would require acquisition of approximately five acres of land from this parcel. An additional small area may be required for a temporary construction easement (TCE) during construction; however, following construction, the land required for the TCE would be largely restored to pre-project conditions.

Section 51295 of the California Government Code says:

When an action to condemn or acquire less than all of a parcel of land subject to a [Williamson Act] contract is commenced, the contract shall be deemed null and void as to the land actually condemned or acquired and shall be disregarded in the valuation process only as to the land actually being taken, unless the remaining land subject to contract will be adversely affected by the condemnation, in which case the value of that damage shall be computed without regard to the contract (California Government Code, 2015).

Only the portion of the parcel under Williamson Act protection that would be acquired to accommodate the project (approximately five acres) would be removed from Williamson Act contract protection, and the remainder of the parcel (approximately 112 acres) would remain under contract protection.

The portion of the parcel required for ROW acquisition is located adjacent to Shenandoah Road, and the entire parcel is currently available for use for agricultural (grazing) purposes. Compared to the total acreage of the parcel (117 acres), the amount of land required for ROW (approximately five acres) would not be substantial (approximately 4.3 percent of the total parcel acreage). After project implementation, the remaining portion of the parcel (approximately 112 acres) would still be available for agricultural use, and no additional acreage would be indirectly affected. In addition, implementation of the project would not conflict with farming activities or uses on surrounding farmland, and would not result in an indirect conversion of neighboring farmland as a result of incompatibility. Because only five acres of the parcel under Williamson Act contract would be acquired for the project, the remaining 112 acres of the parcel would remain under contract protection under Section 51295 of the California Government Code. Implementation of the project would not conflict with farming activities on remaining land or result in indirect conversion of remaining land. Therefore, the project would not conflict with the Williamson Act contract in place for the remainder of the parcel, and impacts would be less than significant.

The project area is zoned as County ROW and AG (Exclusive Agriculture District). Approximately five acres of land zoned as AG would be required as permanent ROW for the realigned intersection and roadway approaches. Because the agricultural land required for the project is adjacent to Shenandoah Road, only a small portion of the parcel that lies along the roadway

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frontage would be converted to non-agricultural use. The proposed use as a roadway would not be incompatible with the existing use of the remainder of the agricultural land or adjacent agricultural uses. In addition, compared to the total acreage of the parcel (117 acres), the amount of land zoned as AG required for the project (approximately five acres) would not be substantial (approximately 4.3 percent of the total parcel acreages). With project implementation, the remaining land on the parcel would still be available for agricultural use, and no additional acreage would be indirectly affected. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

**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))?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion c):** The project area is an existing roadway and includes land zoned as AG (Exclusive Agricultural District). The project area is not zoned for forest land or timberland, and there are no forest or timber resources within or surrounding the project area. Therefore, there would be no impact.

**d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion d):** As stated in Discussion c) above, there is no forest land within or surrounding the project area. Therefore, there would be no impact.

**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?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion e):** As stated in Discussion c) above, there is no forest land within or surrounding the project area; therefore, there would be no impact from conversion of forest land.

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As stated in Discussion b) above, because the agricultural land required for the project is adjacent to Shenandoah Road, only a small portion of the parcel that lies along the roadway frontage would be converted to non-agricultural use. The proposed use as a roadway would be compatible with the use of the remainder of the agricultural land or adjacent agricultural uses. In addition, compared to the total acreage of the parcels (117 acres), the amount of land zoned as AG required for the project (approximately five acres) would not be substantial (approximately 4.3 percent of the total parcel acreages). After project construction, the remaining land on the parcel would still be available for agricultural use, and no additional acreage would be indirectly affected. Therefore, the project would not result in other changes in the existing environment that could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use, and impacts would be less than significant.

### **3. AIR QUALITY**

#### **REGULATORY SETTING**

##### **Federal and State Regulations**

The United States (U.S.) Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) is responsible for national and interstate air pollution issues and policies. The U.S. EPA sets national vehicle and stationary source emission standards, oversees approval of all State Implementation Plans (SIP), provides research and guidance for air pollution programs, and sets National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) under the Federal Clean Air Act (FCAA) for criteria pollutants, which are ozone (O<sub>3</sub>), particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub>), fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>), carbon monoxide (CO), nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>), sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>), and lead.

A SIP is a document prepared by each state describing existing air quality conditions and measures that will be followed to attain and maintain federal standards. The SIP for the State of California is administered by the California Air Resources Board (CARB), which has overall responsibility for statewide air quality maintenance and air pollution prevention. California's SIP incorporates individual federal attainment plans for regional air districts – these air districts prepare their federal attainment plans, which are sent to CARB to be approved and incorporated into the California SIP. Federal attainment plans include the technical foundation for understanding air quality (e.g., emission inventories and air quality monitoring), control measures and strategies, and enforcement mechanisms. .

Under the California Clean Air Act (CCAA), CARB requires that each local air district prepare and maintain an air quality management plan to achieve compliance with California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS). These standards are generally more stringent and apply to more pollutants than the NAAQS (i.e., visibility reducing particulates, hydrogen sulfide, and sulfates).

CARB has also passed numerous regulations to reduce the public's exposure to air emissions. For example, the In-Use Off-Road Diesel Vehicle Regulation includes enforceable elements, such as

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limits on vehicle idling to no more than five consecutive minutes, and equipment reporting and labeling.

### **Local Regulations**

The project area is located in the Amador County Air Pollution Control District (Amador APCD,) which is responsible for air quality regulation in Amador County. The following Amador APCD rules and regulations are applicable to the proposed project:

**Rule 202 – Visible Emissions:** This rule prohibits the discharge into the atmosphere from any single source of emission whatsoever any air contaminant for a period or periods aggregating more than three minutes in any one hour which is:

- a) As dark or darker in shade as that designated as No. 1 on the Ringlemann Chart, as published by the U.S. Bureau of Mines, or
- b) Of such opacity as to obscure an observer's view to a degree equal to or greater than does smoke described in subsection (A) of this section.

**Rule 205 – Nuisance:** This rule prohibits the discharge from any source whatsoever such quantities of air contaminants or other material which can cause injury, detriment, nuisance, or annoyance to any considerable number of persons, or to the public, or which endanger the comfort, repose, health or safety of any such persons, or the public, or which cause to have a natural tendency to cause injury or damage to business or property.

**Rule 207 – Particulate Matter:** This rule prohibits the release or discharge into the atmosphere from any source or single processing unit, exclusive of sources emitting combustion contaminants only, particulate matter emissions in excess of 0.1 grains per cubic foot of dry exhaust gas at standard conditions.

**Rule 218 – Fugitive Dust Emissions:** The purpose of this rule is to prevent and control fugitive dust emissions to the atmosphere by using good housekeeping and/or work practices. This rule applies to activities including, but not limited to, public or private construction, grading and/or clearing of land.

### **AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT**

#### **Local Climate and Meteorological Conditions**

The project area is located in the Mountain Counties Air Basin, which includes the foothills and western slope of the Sierra Nevada Mountain Range. Summer conditions are typically characterized by high temperatures and low humidity. Summer temperatures, as measured at the Sutter Hill Ranger Station (the nearest weather monitoring station to Plymouth), average 90 degrees Fahrenheit and above, while nighttime temperatures average 60 degrees Fahrenheit and below. Winter conditions are characterized by occasional rainstorms and/or occasional snow, interspersed with stagnant and sometimes foggy weather. Wintertime high temperatures

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average over 50 degrees Fahrenheit, and winter low temperatures average in the high 30s. During winter, northerly winds become more frequent, but southerly winds predominate.

**Ambient Air Quality Attainment Status**

Amador County is currently designated as a nonattainment area for the state and federal O<sub>3</sub> standard. For all other criteria pollutants, the County is designated as either attainment and/or unclassified (an area that cannot be classified on the basis of available information).

**PROJECT IMPACTS**

Would the project:

**a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion a):** Because the project area includes the existing roadway and open grass lands, existing air emissions in the project area are primarily from vehicles traveling along the roadway. Operation of the project would not generate new stationary or mobile sources of emissions because the project would maintain the same number of through lanes (one in each direction) and would not increase capacity or result in additional vehicles on the roadway. Therefore, project operation would not generate additional emissions above existing conditions, and would therefore not conflict with or obstruct implementation of applicable air quality plans. Therefore, there would be no impact on implementation of applicable air quality plans as a result of operation of the project.

Construction of the project would generate temporary, short-term emissions of various air pollutants. Pollutant emissions would vary from day to day depending on the intensity and type of construction activity. The types of construction emissions that would most likely result from the project are fugitive dust emissions (PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>) and mobile source emissions from construction equipment, which primarily include oxides of nitrogen (NO<sub>x</sub>), volatile organic compounds (VOC), CO, PM<sub>10</sub>, PM<sub>2.5</sub>, and diesel particulate matter (DPM). NO<sub>x</sub> and VOCs are also called, O<sub>3</sub> precursors, because they can lead to the formation of O<sub>3</sub> in the presence of sunlight and heat.

Construction activities with the potential to result in fugitive dust emissions include excavation and other earth-moving activities that disturb dirt and result in the release of dust particles into the air. The project would require earth-moving activities involving over-excavation of areas surrounding the proposed roadway to a depth of five to 25 feet, as well as earth moving activities to prepare the new intersection and approach roadways.

Mobile source emissions result from pollution sources that move, such as vehicles, engines, and motorized equipment that produce exhaust and other emissions. The project would require

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several construction activities that have the potential to result in mobile source emissions, such as the use of construction equipment (bulldozers, trucks, and scrapers), truck delivery of construction materials, hauling of construction debris, and workers commuting to and from the project area. Mobile source emissions from construction equipment are highest during use of heavy-duty, diesel-fueled equipment.

CARB has passed numerous regulations to reduce the public's exposure to DPM and NO<sub>x</sub> emissions. For example, the In-Use Off-Road Diesel Vehicle Regulation includes enforceable elements, such as limits on vehicle idling to no more than five consecutive minutes, and equipment reporting and labeling. Construction activities for the project would be required to comply with these regulations. Project construction would also be subject to Amador APCD rules and regulations, which include, but are not limited to:

- Rule 202 – Visible Emissions
- Rule 205 – Nuisance
- Rule 207 – Particulate Matter
- Rule 218 – Fugitive Dust Emissions

Project construction would be short-term and temporary (lasting approximately six months), and with implementation of standard measures in compliance with applicable regulations, the project's potential impacts on implementation of applicable air quality plans would be substantially minimized. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

**b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion b):** The air quality standards that would be applicable to the project include the NAAQS and CAAQS for criteria pollutant. In addition, soil and rocks in the project area may contain naturally occurring asbestos (NOA), which may be found in serpentine (a dark green mineral, sometimes spotted like a snake's skin), and other volcanic rocks. NOA was previously identified and removed at the Amador County School Expansion facility, located adjacent to the southwestern portion of the project area. In addition, a map prepared by the CDOC shows that the project area is near an area that is likely to contain NOA (CDOC, 2000). When soil or rocks containing NOA are disturbed, asbestos may become released and become airborne.

Because asbestos is a known carcinogen (a substance that causes cancer), the U.S. EPA and CARB have identified asbestos to be a toxic air contaminant (TAC), which is an air pollutant that may cause or contribute to an increase in mortality or serious illness, or which may pose a

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hazard to human health. TACs are usually present only in very small quantities in the air, but due to their high toxicity, may pose a threat to public health even at very low concentrations; therefore, there is no threshold level below which adverse health impacts are not expected to result from TACs. Unlike criteria pollutants that have NAAQS and CAAQS, TACs do not have state or federal standards. However, pursuant to the FCAA Amendments of 1990, the U.S. EPA is required to control TACs, also referred to as Hazardous Air Pollutants (HAP), and has set National Emission Standards for HAPs (NESHAP). NESHAPs are technology-based, source-specific regulations that limit allowable emissions of HAPs. The U.S. EPA has delegated the authority to enforce the NESHAPs for asbestos to CARB and the local air districts.

To enforce the NESHAPs for asbestos, CARB has developed an NOA Air Toxics Control Measure (ACTM) for Construction, Grading, Quarrying, and Surface Mining Operations (CCR, Title 17, Section 93105, effective November 19, 2002). The ACTM requires that road construction and maintenance operations use dust control measures for a specified set of emission sources, and prevent visible emissions crossing the project boundaries. Construction projects that will disturb more than one acre must prepare and obtain local air district approval of an asbestos dust mitigation plan. The local air district must also be notified before any work begins.

DPM has also been identified as a TAC, and is also considered a mobile source air toxic (MSAT), which is a subset of HAPs from mobile sources that are defined in the FCAA and federally regulated by the U.S. EPA. At the state level, CARB has passed numerous regulations to reduce the public's exposure to DPM and other mobile source emissions. For example, the In-Use Off-Road Diesel Vehicle Regulation includes enforceable elements, such as limits on vehicle idling to no more than five consecutive minutes, and equipment reporting and labeling.

Because the project area includes the existing roadway and open grass lands, existing air emissions in the project area are primarily from vehicles traveling along the roadway. In addition, there is currently no ongoing soil disturbance in the project area, and potential deposits of NOA are currently intact. Therefore, existing emissions in the project area do not violate any air quality standards or contribute to air quality violations.

Operation of the project would not generate new stationary or mobile sources of criteria pollutant emissions because the project would maintain the same number of through lanes (one in each direction on both Shenandoah Road and Fiddletown Road,) and would not increase capacity or result in additional vehicles on the roadway. In addition, after construction is completed, there would be no soil disturbance resulting from the operation of the project, and all soil that potentially contains NOA would be contained beneath asphalt covering the roadway, or stabilized and hydroseeded with appropriate vegetative cover. Therefore, project operation would not generate additional emissions above existing conditions, and would therefore not violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation.

As described in Discussion a) above, project construction could generate fugitive dust and mobile source emissions of criteria pollutants and DPM. However, with implementation of standard measures in compliance with applicable Amador APCD rules and regulations, the

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project's potential impacts from criteria pollutant and DPM emissions would be substantially minimized.

Project construction would require earth-moving activities involving over-excavation of areas surrounding the proposed roadway to a depth of five to 25 feet, and excavation would be conducted over an area that is greater than one acre. All excavated soil would remain within the project area, and no off-site disposal of soil would be required. Because soil and rocks in the project area may contain NOA, there is potential that project construction could result in the exposure of adjacent receptors to dust from asbestos-containing rock and soils during earth disturbance activities. This would be a potentially significant impact related to air quality standards and violations.

### ***Mitigation Measures***

With the implementation of the following mitigation measures, dust with potential NOA would be controlled and contained during construction, reducing potential impacts to a level that is less than significant.

AIR-1: A California-registered geologist knowledgeable about asbestos-containing formations will inspect the project area for the presence of asbestos. If the investigation determines that NOA is present, then the County shall prepare and implement an Asbestos Dust Control Plan, as required in Section 93105 of the California Health and Safety Code, including measures to reduce exposures consistent with Section 93105(d) and (e) of the California Health and Safety Code. These measures shall include the following, and shall be implemented throughout the duration of any construction activity associated with the project:

- Unpaved areas subject to vehicle traffic must be stabilized by being kept adequately wetted, treated with a chemical dust suppressant, or covered with material that contains less than 0.25 percent asbestos.
- The speed of any vehicles and equipment traveling across unpaved areas must be no more than fifteen (15) miles per hour unless the road surface and surrounding area is sufficiently stabilized to prevent vehicles and equipment traveling more than 15 miles per hour from emitting dust that is visible crossing the project boundaries.
- Storage piles and disturbed areas not subject to vehicular traffic must be stabilized by being kept adequately wetted, treated with a chemical dust suppressant, or covered with material that contains less than 0.25 percent asbestos.
- Activities must be conducted so that no track-out from any road construction project is visible on any paved roadway open to the public.
- Equipment and operations must not cause the emission of any dust that is visible crossing the project boundaries.

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The Asbestos Dust Control Plan shall be submitted to and approved by the Amador APCD prior to the commencement of construction activities. The County shall notify the Amador APCD in writing at least 14 days before any construction begins. Records related to the compliance with the Asbestos Dust Control Plan must be kept in the County's project files for seven years. The results of any air monitoring or sampling to document the applicability of, or compliance with, the regulation, and any other records specified in the Asbestos Dust Control Plan must be reported to the Amador APCD.

Timing/Implementation: Prior to start of any construction activities that could result in release of dust, and throughout project construction.

Enforcement/Monitoring: Amador County and Amador APCD.

**c) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?**

Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion c):** Based on monitored air pollutant concentrations, the U.S. EPA and CARB designate an area's status in attaining the NAAQS and CAAQS, respectively, for criteria pollutants. Amador County is currently designated as a nonattainment area for the state and federal O<sub>3</sub> standard. For all other criteria pollutants, the County is designated as either attainment and/or unclassified (an area that cannot be classified on the basis of available information).

Operation of the project would not add any new sources of criteria pollutant emissions to existing conditions because the project would maintain the same number of through lanes (one in each direction) and would not increase capacity or result in additional vehicles on the roadway. In addition, construction emissions would be short-term and intermittent, and with compliance with applicable Amador APCD rules and regulations, the project would not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of criteria pollutants. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

**d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?**

Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

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**Discussion d):** Sensitive receptors are persons who are more susceptible to air pollution than the general population, including children, athletes, the elderly, and the chronically ill. Typical land uses where substantial numbers of sensitive receptors are often found are schools, daycare centers, parks, recreation areas, medical facilities, nursing homes, and convalescent care facilities. Residential areas are also considered to be sensitive to air pollution because residents (including children and the elderly) tend to be at home for extended periods of time, resulting in sustained exposure to pollutants. The only sensitive receptor near the project area is the Shenandoah Valley Charter School/Amador Community School approximately 500 feet west of the project area.

Operation of the project is not expected to increase pollutant emissions because the project would maintain the same number of through lanes (one in each direction) and would not increase capacity or result in additional cars on the roadway. Also, the project would not move emission sources closer to sensitive receptors adjacent to the project area. In addition, after construction is completed, there would be no soil disturbance resulting from the operation of the project, and all soil that potentially contains NOA would be contained beneath asphalt covering the roadway, or stabilized and hydroseeded with appropriate vegetative cover. Therefore, project operation would not generate additional emissions above existing conditions, and would not expose sensitive receptors to pollutants above existing conditions.

Construction activities would result in short-term, project-generated emissions of criteria pollutants and DPM from the exhaust of construction vehicles and off-road, heavy-duty diesel equipment used for grading and paving activities. However, there would be relatively few pieces of off-road, heavy-duty diesel equipment in operation, and the construction period would be relatively short (approximately six months total). Construction activities and delivery of construction materials and equipment for the project would comply with standard measures and applicable rules and regulations to minimize construction emissions. In addition, DPM is highly dispersive, and construction-related emissions of DPM would not be expected to result in exposure of sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations.

Because soil and rocks in the project area may contain NOA, there is potential that project construction could result in the exposure of sensitive receptors to dust from asbestos-containing rock and soils during earth disturbance activities. With the implementation of mitigation measure AIR-1 listed in Discussion b) above, which requires an Asbestos Dust Control Plan to be approved by the Amador APCD and implemented in compliance with CARB's NOA ACTM, dust with potential NOA would be controlled and contained during construction, reducing potential impacts to a level that is less than significant.

**e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

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**Discussion e):** Operation of construction equipment (diesel exhaust) and paving operations could result in the generation of odors; however, these odors would be temporary in nature, would be completed during daytime hours only, and would be isolated within the immediate vicinity of construction activities where there is not a substantial number of people. Therefore, potential odors from the project would not be expected to affect a substantial number of people, and impacts would be less than significant.

## **4. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES**

### **REGULATORY SETTING**

The following discussion incorporates the results of the Natural Environment Study (GPA, 2015) and Biological Assessment (GPA, 2015) that were prepared for the project in August 2015 and November 2015, respectively. The following regulations are applicable to biological resources in the project area.

#### **Federal Regulations**

##### **Federal Endangered Species Act**

Section 7 of the Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA) requires federal agencies to ensure that actions they engage in, permit, or fund do not jeopardize the continued existence of endangered or threatened species, or result in the destruction or adverse modification of designated critical habitat for these species.

##### **Migratory Bird Treaty Act**

The Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) (50 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 10 and Part 21) protects migratory birds, their occupied nests, and their eggs from disturbance or destruction. "Migratory birds" include all nongame, wild birds found in the U.S., except for the house sparrow (*Passer domesticus*), European starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*), and rock pigeon (*Columba livia*).

#### **State Regulations**

##### **California Fish and Game Code**

Sections 3503, 3513, and 3800 of the California Fish and Game Code prohibit the take of birds protected under the MBTA, and protects their occupied nests. All bat species are also protected under Section 4150 of the California Fish and Game Code. State-listed species and those petitioned for listing are protected under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA). Under Section 2080.1 of the California Fish and Game Code, if a species is both federally and state listed, a consistency determination with the protections of FESA permits (if there would be take of listed species) is required. Under Section 2081, if a species is state-listed only, consultation with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) is required in order to obtain an incidental take permit if the project could result in take of a state-listed species. Because the

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project is not expected to result in impacts on state-listed species, consultation with the CDFW is not anticipated.

#### Invasive Species

Executive Order 13112 directs all federal agencies to refrain from authorizing, funding, or carrying out actions or projects that may spread invasive species. This order further directs federal agencies to prevent the introduction of invasive species, control and monitor existing invasive species populations, restore native species to invaded ecosystems, research and develop prevention and control methods for invasive species, and promote public education on invasive species. As the project proponent, the City or its designee, would be responsible for complying with Executive Order 13112 and ensuring that the project would not contribute to the spread of invasive species. Plants listed in the Pest Ratings of Noxious Weed Species and Noxious Weed Seed (California Department of Food and Agriculture, 2003) would not be used as part of the project.

#### Oak Woodland Conservation

In 2005, Senate Bill (SB) 1334 was passed by the California Legislature, mandating that counties require feasible and proportional habitat mitigation for impacts on oak woodlands as part of the CEQA process. Under Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 21083.4, a county is required to determine whether projects “may result in a conversion of oak woodlands that will have a significant effect on the environment.” The law applies to all oak woodlands except those dominated by black oak. When it is determined that a project may have a significant effect on oak woodlands, mitigation is required.

#### **Local Regulations**

The County’s General Plan does not include relevant biological resources policies that are directly applicable to the project, nor does the County have a tree preservation policy or ordinance.

#### **AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT**

The Biological Study Area (BSA) is in a rural area and existing vegetation consists primarily of non-native annual grasslands with sparse oak trees, blue oak woodland, and ruderal/disturbed roadside areas. There are vineyards and grazing land adjacent to the BSA. There are native and non-native plant species growing within and adjacent to the BSA.

The project area and BSA are located in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada Mountains. Topography in the BSA slopes gradually downward from east to west. To the west of Shenandoah Road, the land also slopes slightly downward from north to south. The elevation in the BSA ranges from approximately 1,205 feet above mean sea level (msl) at the eastern end to approximately 1,140 feet msl at the western end.

There are no aquatic resources, such as rivers, lakes, or streams, within or adjacent to the project area and BSA. There are intermittent roadside drainage ditches located adjacent to

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Shenandoah Road and Fiddletown Road, including two corrugated metal pipe culverts that convey water from north to south under Shenandoah Road, west of the intersection. These roadside drainage ditches convey water in a generally downhill, northeast to south/southwest direction. Drainages terminate in an isolated ditch on the vineyard parcel south of Shenandoah Road, where storm water percolates into the ground; therefore, roadside drainages in the area do not have connectivity to other drainage systems or waterways.

A search of the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB) was conducted, and a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) species list was reviewed for the project to identify potential special-status wildlife and plant species that may occur in the project area. Several candidate, sensitive, and special-status plant and wildlife species have potential to be in the project area, based on geographic distribution. **Appendix A** contains a list of species with potential to occur in the project area, based on geographic distribution.

A biological reconnaissance survey was conducted for the project on February 6, 2015 to identify special-status wildlife and plant species or their habitats in the project area. During the reconnaissance biological survey, the entire BSA was visually surveyed on foot, and all plant and animal species and vegetation communities were inventoried to identify existing biological resources and determine the potential for special-status species to be in the BSA.

#### Special-status Plants

A second focused plant survey was conducted on April 2, 2015 for special-status plant species with potential to be in the biological study area (BSA). Focused plant surveys included visually observing the existing plant species within the entire survey area. No special-status plant species were identified in the BSA during either biological survey.

#### Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle

The Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle (VELB) (*Desmocerus californicus dimorphus*) is listed as a threatened species under FESA. The VELB is typically found in riparian habitats and is completely dependent upon its host plant, the elderberry. The leaves and flowers of the elderberry provide food for adult VELB, and the stems and roots of the plants provide food and shelter for developing larva. Two elderberry shrubs with stems measuring one inch or greater in diameter at ground level were observed within the BSA south of Fiddletown Road, east of the intersection. Although, no sign of the VELB was observed during a thorough inspection of the elderberry shrubs, the shrubs are suitable habitat for the VELB, and there is potential for this species to be in the BSA.

#### California Red-legged Frog and California Tiger Salamander

During the February 6, 2015 reconnaissance survey, a habitat assessment was conducted for the California red-legged frog (CRLF) (*Rana draytonii*) and the California tiger salamander (CTS) (*Ambystoma californiense*), in accordance with the *USFWS Revised Guidance on Site Assessments and Field Surveys for the California Red-Legged Frog* (USFWS, 2005) and the *USFWS*

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*Interim Guidance on Site Assessment and Field Surveys for Determining Presence or a Negative Finding of the California Tiger Salamander (CDFW, 2003), respectively.*

The results of the habitat assessment conducted within the BSA and adjacent properties were negative for CRLF and CTS. The nearest areas of designated critical habitat for the CRLF are approximately 16.3 miles south and 19 miles west of the BSA, and the nearest recorded occurrence is approximately 9.4 miles north from the BSA. The nearest designated areas of critical habitat for the CTS are approximately 15.5 miles and 15.8 miles to the southwest of the BSA, and the nearest recorded occurrence is approximately 13 miles southwest from the BSA.

Bats

The pallid bat (*Antrozous pallidus*) has potential to be in the BSA based on existing habitat. During the biological survey conducted for the project, no bats were observed roosting in the trees, however, trees in the BSA may provide habitat for roosting bats, and there is the potential for bats to be in the BSA.

Birds

The BSA includes of trees and various types of vegetation that could provide suitable habitat for nesting birds, and there is the potential for migratory birds to be in the BSA. Thirteen bird species were observed foraging or flying over the BSA during surveys, including the acorn woodpecker (*Melanerpes formicivorus*), turkey vulture (*Cathartes aura*), yellow-billed magpie (*Pica nuttalli*), western scrub jay (*Aphelocoma californica*), spotted towhee (*Pipilo maculatus*), red-shouldered hawk (*Buteo lineatus*), red-tailed hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*), golden-crowned sparrow (*Zonotrichia atricapilla*), black phoebe (*Sayornis nigricans*), white-crowned sparrow (*Zonotrichia leucophrys*), American kestrel (*Falco sparverius*), common raven (*Corvus corvax*), and mourning dove (*Zenaida macroura*).

**PROJECT IMPACTS**

Would the project:

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

Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion a):** Because no special-status plants were identified in the project area, the project is expected to have no impacts on special-status plants. Additionally, because the habitat assessment completed for CRLF and CTS was negative, the project would have no impact on these species.

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VELB

Two elderberry shrubs are present adjacent to the project area, along a fence delineating the approximate County ROW line, approximately 50 feet south of Fiddletown Road. Although no sign of VELB were identified on the shrubs, the shrubs are considered potential habitat for the federally-listed VELB. While the project would not require removal of the shrubs, the USFWS states that construction activities within 100 feet of elderberry shrubs could result in indirect impacts on VELB from construction dust, modification of habitat surrounding the shrubs, and inadvertent encroachment and damage of the shrubs by construction crews. Because the project would require construction activities to take place within 100 feet of elderberry shrubs, the project could have potentially significant indirect impacts on VELB during project construction.

***Mitigation Measures***

After implementation of the following mitigation measures, adverse impacts on VELB would be less than significant.

- BIO-1 Fencing and flagging will be placed around the elderberry shrubs to be avoided during construction activities to ensure that no activities will be conducted within a minimum of 20 feet from the dripline of each elderberry shrub.
- BIO-2 Signs will be installed at a minimum of 50 feet along the edge of the avoidance area with the following information: "This area is habitat of the valley elderberry longhorn beetle, a threatened species, and must not be disturbed. This species is protected by the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended. Violators are subject to prosecution, fines, and imprisonment." The signs will be clearly readable from a distance of 20 feet, and will be maintained for the duration of construction.
- BIO-3 All work crews will be informed about the status of the VELB, and the need to protect the elderberry shrub as its host plant, and will be briefed on the possible penalties for not complying with the avoidance requirements.
- BIO-4 Upon completion of the project, all temporarily disturbed areas will be restored to pre-project conditions, as feasible.
- BIO-5 Any damage to the area within 100 feet of the elderberry shrubs will be restored following construction, and the area will be revegetated with native plants.
- BIO-6 Surrounding areas will be watered down to keep dust from the shrub's driplines.

Timing/Implementation: Prior to start of construction activities, and throughout project construction.

Enforcement/Monitoring: Amador County.

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## Bats

Bats could be directly impacted if they are roosting in the trees removed during construction. Construction noise and vibration could indirectly impact bats if they are roosting immediately adjacent to construction activities, and are disturbed by these activities. Tree removal could result in a minor reduction of available roosting habitat in the immediate area. These would be considered potentially significant impacts.

### ***Mitigation Measures***

After implementation of the following mitigation measures, adverse impacts on bats would be less than significant.

**BIO-67** Prior to construction, all trees within 100 feet of the project area will be surveyed by a qualified bat specialist to determine the presence/absence of bats and any active or potential bat-roosting cavities. During the non-breeding and active season, any bats roosting in trees will be safely evicted under the direction of a bat specialist and under consultation with the CDFW.

**BIO-78** Once it has been determined that all roosting bats have been safely evicted from roosting cavities, exclusionary devices approved by the CDFW will be installed and maintained to prevent bats from roosting in these cavities prior to and during construction.

**BIO-89** Pre-construction bat surveys will be conducted by a qualified bat specialist no more than seven days prior to the removal of the any trees within the project area to confirm that exclusionary measures have been successful and there are no bats within the project area. If no roosting bats are detected, no further surveys will be required provided the tree removal is completed within seven days. If removal is delayed more than seven days from the survey date, additional surveys will be conducted no more than seven days prior to tree removal to ensure that no bats have moved into the area.

**BIO-910** Surveys and exclusion measures are expected to prevent maternal colonies from becoming established within 100 feet of the project area. In the event that a maternal colony of bats is found, the CDFW will be consulted, and no work will be conducted within 100 feet of the maternal roosting site until the maternal season is over or the bats have left the site, or as otherwise directed by the CDFW. The site will be designated as a sensitive area and protected until the bats have left the site or the young bats are volant (i.e., capable of flying). No clearing and grubbing will be authorized within 100 feet adjacent to the roosting site. Combustion equipment, such as generators, pumps, and vehicles, will not be parked or operated under or within 100 feet of the roosting site. Construction personnel will not enter into areas beneath the colony, especially during the evening exodus.

Timing/Implementation: Prior to start of construction activities, and throughout project construction.

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Enforcement/Monitoring: Amador County.

**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 US Fish and Wildlife Service?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion b):** There is no riparian habitat or other sensitive natural communities located in the project area; therefore, there would be no impact on these resources.

**c) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion c):** There are no federally protected wetlands or other waters of the U.S. or state in or near the project area, nor do any storm water drainages in the project area have any connectivity to these resources; therefore, there would be no impact.

**d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion d):** The project does not contain any rivers, streams, or lakes; therefore, there would be no impacts on migratory fish. A query of the CDFW Biogeographic Information and Observation System (BIOS) and a site survey were conducted to determine the likelihood for the BSA to be used as a migratory wildlife corridor. The BSA consists of trees and various types of vegetation that could provide suitable habitat for nesting birds. Tree and vegetation removal could result in direct impacts on migratory birds and raptors if these activities are conducted while birds are nesting within or adjacent to the affected areas. Temporary noise-generating activities, such as excavation, grading, and paving, could also result in temporary indirect impacts on nesting birds and raptors if they were loud enough to result in disturbance. These would be considered potentially significant impacts.

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**Mitigation Measures**

With implementation of the following mitigation measures, adverse impacts on nesting migratory bird species and raptors would be less than significant.

BIO-~~10~~11 If construction is scheduled to begin during bird nesting season (typically February 15 to September 15), nesting bird surveys will be completed no more than 48 hours prior to construction to determine if there are any nesting birds or active nests within or adjacent to the project area (within 300 feet for birds and 500 feet for raptors). Surveys will be repeated if construction activities are suspended for three days or more.

BIO-~~11~~12 If nesting birds are found in the BSA, appropriate buffers consisting of orange flagging/fencing or similar (typically 300 feet for birds and 500 feet for raptors) will be installed and maintained until nesting activity has ended, as determined in coordination with the project biologist and regulatory agencies, as appropriate.

Timing/Implementation: Prior to start of construction activities, and throughout project construction.

Enforcement/Monitoring: Amador County.

**e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion e):** The County’s General Plan does not identify any policies to protect biological resources, nor does the County have a tree preservation policy or ordinance. Parcels south of Shenandoah Road, west of the intersection, are within the jurisdiction of the City of Plymouth, which requires a permit for removal of protected trees in accordance with the City’s municipal code. However no trees would be removed from parcels within the City of Plymouth jurisdiction; therefore, the City of Plymouth’s Municipal Code would not apply to the project.

The project would require removal of a small number of medium to large oak trees in the northwest and southeast portion of the project area, and possible removal of one pine tree in the southeast portion of the project area, to accommodate the intersection and approach roadways realignment. Because Amador County does not have any policies or ordinances to protect biological resources, including trees, the project would not conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, and impacts would be less than significant.

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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?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion f):** There are no Habitat Conservation Plans, Natural Community Conservation Plans, or other local, regional, or state habitat conservation plans that apply to the project area. Therefore, there would be no impact.

## **5. CULTURAL RESOURCES**

### **REGULATORY SETTING**

#### **Federal Regulations**

##### National Historic Preservation Act

The National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) is legislation intended to preserve historical and archaeological sites in the U.S. Section 106 of the NHPA requires federal agencies to take into account the effects of their undertaking on historic properties, and afford the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation a reasonable opportunity to comment.

#### **State Regulations**

##### CEQA Section 15064.5

Under CEQA, CCR, Title 14, Section 15064.5(a)(3), a resource is considered historically significant if it meets one of the following four criteria:

- It is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California’s history and cultural heritage
- It is associated with the lives of persons important in our past
- It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of installation, or represents the work of an important creative individual, or possesses high artistic values; or
- It has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

CEQA requires public agencies and private interests to identify the potential adverse impacts or environmental consequences of their project on any object or site of significance with respect to history. CEQA also provides protection for paleontological remains.

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California Public Resources Code

*PRC 21083.2, 5097.5, 30244, and 21084.1*

According to PRC 21083.2 (a), if archaeological resources are determined to be significant, then the impacts on that resource should be addressed. PRC 5097.5 prohibits the excavation and/or the removal of a “vertebrate paleontological site...or any other archaeological, paleontological or historical feature, situated on public lands, except with the express permission of the public agency having jurisdiction over such lands.” PRC 30244 requires reasonable mitigation of adverse impacts on paleontological resources resulting from development on public land.

PRC 21084.1 gives the lead agency power to determine that a resource is a historical resource, even if the resource is not listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources or a local register of historical places. In addition, the lead agency can also determine that a resource is a historical resource, even if it is not deemed significant in a historical resource survey.

*Native American Heritage Act (PRC 5097.9)*

The Native American Heritage Act, passed by California in 1976, established the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) for protecting Native American religious values on state property. The NAHC not only protects the heritage of Native Americans, but also ensures their participation in matters concerning heritage sites. The commission’s duty is to assist both federal and state agencies in protecting Native American sacred places and provide recommendations concerning Native American heritage in accordance with environmental law and policy. The act protects burials from disturbance, vandalism, and accidental destruction. It also stipulates which specific procedures laid out in the California Health and Safety Code must be implemented if a Native American burial is uncovered during project construction or archaeological data recovery.

*Assembly Bill 52 (PRC 21080.1, 21080.3.1, and 21080.3.2)*

As of July 1, 2015, Assembly Bill (AB) 52 requires public agencies to consult with California Native American tribes identified by the NAHC for the purpose of mitigating impacts on tribal cultural resources. The specific directives of the bill are as follows:

“Within 14 days of determining that an application for a project is complete or a decision by a public agency to undertake a project, the lead agency shall provide formal notification to the designated contact of, or a tribal representative of, traditionally and culturally affiliated California Native American tribes that have requested notice, which shall be accomplished by means of at least one written notification that includes a brief description of the project and its location, the lead agency contact information, and a notification that the California Native American tribe has 30 days to request consultation pursuant to this section (PRC Section 21080.1(d)).”

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### California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5

California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 requires that if human remains are discovered during ground disturbing activities, the County Coroner must be notified, and no further disturbance is authorized to occur until the County Coroner has made a determination of origin and disposition of the remains. If the human remains are determined to be prehistoric, the coroner must notify the NAHC, who will determine and notify a Most Likely Descendant (MLD). The MLD then inspects the site and may recommend scientific removal and nondestructive analysis of human remains and items associated with Native American burials.

### **Local Regulations**

The County's General Plan identifies the following objective related to historical resources (Amador County, 1967):

- To protect, and carefully develop where appropriate, the varied resources for public recreation in scenic and historical areas, hunting and fishing area, lakes and waterways, forests and wilderness, and urban open spaces.

### **AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT**

#### **Completed Studies and Consultations**

Cultural resources studies, including a Historic Property Survey Report (HPSR) and an Archaeological Survey Report (ASR), were prepared by William Self and Associates (WSA) in July 2015 to fulfill the requirements of CEQA, as well as several federal laws such as Section 106 of the NHPA (William Self and Associates, 2015). As part of this effort, a records search, consultation with local historical societies, consultation with the NAHC, and consultation with interested Native American individuals/organizations were conducted in an effort to identify any known cultural resources within a 1-mile radius of the project area.

The NAHC consultation did not identify any known prehistoric resources within the project study area. Ten potentially interested Native American parties identified by the NAHC were contacted by letter, telephone, and email for comment on the project. Roselynn Lwenya, speaking on behalf of Ms. Rhonda Morningstar Pope, chairperson of the Miwok of Buena Vista Rancheria, requested a copy of the report and requested that a tribal member monitor ground disturbance. Mr. Sam Baugh, Cultural Resources Representative for the Jackson Rancheria Band of Miwok Indians, indicated that the project area, and the surrounding countryside and roadways, could be sensitive for burials associated with early pioneers and epidemic victims in the county. No other recommendations or concerns were received as a result of Native American consultation.

Two cultural resource studies have been previously conducted within or immediately adjacent to the project area. Nineteen archaeological studies have been conducted within a 1-mile radius of the project area. No evidence of prehistoric cultural resources was found in the project area

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as a result of these investigations. One historic resource, the Plymouth Catholic Cemetery, has been identified just south of the Project area.

WSA conducted a pedestrian survey of the exposed and accessible ground surface within the project study area. No cultural resources were identified during the survey, and no evidence of prehistoric cultural deposits was found in the project area.

Assembly Bill 52 (PRC 21080.1, 21080.3.1, and 21080.3.2)

On September 1, 2015, the NAHC completed a Sacred Lands File records search of the project study area to identify known prehistoric sites and Native American traditional cultural places and cultural landscapes. No sites were identified as a result of the records search. The NAHC also provided a consultation list of Native American tribes with traditional lands or cultural places within the boundaries of the project study area to contact under the provisions of AB 52.

GPA contacted five Native American parties identified by the NAHC through letter, telephone, and email for comment on the project. Mr. Randy Yonemura, representing the Lone Band of Miwok Indians, called GPA's Environmental Project Manager, Ms. Melissa Logue, on October 2, 2015 to request more information on the project and to help him determine if there could be Native American sites in the project area. Mr. Yonemura indicated that a burial may be in the vicinity. Ms. Logue provided additional project information to Mr. Yonemura at his request, and conducted two follow-up phone calls and left voice mail messages to verify that the information provided met his needs. Mr. Yonemura was also asked if he wished to enter into consultation on the project under the provisions of AB 52. No further response, information, or communication was received from Mr. Yonemura following these communications. **Appendix B**, Summary of AB 52 Coordination, summarizes all correspondence and communication completed for the project pursuant to the requirements of AB 52.

### **Known Historic and Prehistoric Resources**

No historic or prehistoric cultural resources have been recorded or identified within the project study area. However, there are known resources adjacent to and surrounding the project area.

The Plymouth Catholic Cemetery is located immediately south of the project area. The Plymouth Catholic Cemetery consists of two graves, and is located south of Shenandoah Road and surrounded by the Sutter Home vineyard property. It is owned by the Catholic Church of Plymouth. This site is the presumed location of the graves of an Austrian miner, named Mr. Blas Glaich (died 1884), and another Austrian, Mrs. Perovich. During a 1978 oral history, Plymouth resident Mr. Martin Lubenko indicated that "he was told there were additional interments at the cemetery, but the locations of these burials is unknown" (William Self and Associates, 2015).

Nineteen historic cultural resources have been recorded within a 1-mile radius of the project area. These sites are primarily associated with sites related to the region's mining history (i.e., historic mines, mine tailings, quarries, water conveyance structures, etc.).

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Eleven prehistoric cultural resources were identified within a 1-mile radius of the project area. These resources consist primarily of Native American bedrock milling features, although other resource types, such as lithic scatters, hearth pits, and possible burials, were also identified.

### **Survey Results**

WSA conducted a pedestrian survey of the exposed and accessible ground surface within the project study area. During the course of the survey, no signs of cultural material were observed in the survey area. Due to the high grasses throughout the survey area, visibility was limited to 10 percent in most areas; however, the presence of frequent rodent burrows throughout the survey allowed for some observation of the sub-surface soil. As no cultural material was observed during the pedestrian survey, WSA determined that it is unlikely that cultural resources are located in the project area.

### **PROJECT IMPACTS**

Would the project:

**a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in §15064.5?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion a):** The project would include realigning the intersection of Shenandoah Road and Fiddletown Road and the roadway approaches to the northwest of the intersection’s existing location. The historic Plymouth Catholic Cemetery is located south of Shenandoah Road, outside of the existing County ROW and beyond the project area. Because project activities would be completed north of the existing County ROW through this area, it is anticipated that there would be no disturbance to the cemetery during project construction; however, the cemetery could be impacted if construction activities inadvertently extended south of the County ROW in this area. This could result in a potentially significant impact on an historic resource.

### ***Mitigation Measures***

After implementation of the following mitigation measures, impacts would be less than significant.

CUL-1 Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA) fencing, or another appropriate, highly-visible barrier, will be installed along the southern limit of the existing County ROW at an appropriate length to provide a visible and physical barrier between the cemetery and construction activities. The limits of the existing County ROW and location of ESA fencing will be identified in the project plans and specifications.

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Timing/Implementation: Prior to start of ground disturbing activities and throughout project construction.

Enforcement/Monitoring: Amador County

CUL-2 If human remains are uncovered during construction activities, ground disturbing activities in the area will stop, and the County Coroner will be notified pursuant to the requirements of the California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5. No further disturbance in the area will occur until the County Coroner has made a determination of origin and disposition of the remains. If the human remains are determined to be prehistoric, the coroner will notify the NAHC, who will determine and notify a MLD. The County will coordinate with the MLD to identify appropriate analyses and treatment or disposition of the remains and any items associated with Native American burials.

Timing/Implementation: Throughout project construction.

Enforcement/Monitoring: Amador County

**b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion b):** Project construction would require ground disturbance, with excavation up to 25 feet deep. Although there are no known archaeological sites within the project area, the discovery of archaeological resources is a possibility during sub-surface work, which could result in disturbance of the resources. Disturbance of a previously unidentified archaeological resource during construction would be a potentially significant impact.

**Mitigation Measures**

With implementation of the following mitigation measure, impacts would be less than significant.

CUL-3 If archaeological resources, paleontological resources, or unique geologic features are encountered during construction, all ground-disturbing work will be stopped until an archaeologist or monitor can properly assess the resources(s) and identify the appropriate measures to ensure that the resources will not be adversely affected.

Timing/Implementation: Throughout project construction

Enforcement/Monitoring: Amador County

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**c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion c):** See Discussion b) above. Although not anticipated, the discovery of paleontological or unique geologic features is a possibility during sub-surface work, which could result in disturbance of the resources and potentially significant impacts. However, with implementation of mitigation measure CUL-3 listed above, impacts would be less than significant.

**d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion d):** See Discussions a) and b) above. The historic Plymouth Catholic Cemetery is located adjacent to the project area. While two interments are identified within the cemetery, there is potential for other previously unidentified remains associated with the cemetery to be in the area. Also, although other burials have not been identified in the project area, consultations with Native American representatives indicates that there may be potential for other burials not associated with the cemetery (e.g., early pioneers, epidemic victims, and Native Americans) to be in the area. Although not anticipated, the discovery of human remains is a possibility during sub-surface work, which could result in disturbance of the resources and could be a potentially significant impact. However, with implementation of mitigation measures CUL-1, CUL-2, and CUL-3, impacts would be less than significant.

## **6. GEOLOGY AND SOILS**

### **REGULATORY SETTING**

#### **State Regulations**

##### Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act

The Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act (AP Act) (PRC Sections 2621 to 2630) was passed in 1972 to provide a statewide mechanism for reducing the hazard of surface fault rupture to structures used for human occupancy. The main purpose of the AP Act is to prevent the siting of buildings used for human occupancy across the traces of active faults. It should be noted that the AP Act addresses the potential hazard of surface fault rupture and is not directed toward other earthquake hazards, such as seismically induced ground shaking or landslides.

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The law requires the State Geologist to identify regulatory zones (known as Alquist-Priolo (AP) Fault Zones) around the surface traces of active faults, and to depict these zones on topographic base maps, typically at a scale of 1 inch to 2,000 feet. AP Fault Zones vary in width, although they are often 0.75 mile wide. Once published, the maps are distributed to the affected cities, counties, and state agencies for their use in planning and controlling new or renewed construction. With the exception of single-family wood-frame and steel-frame dwellings that are not part of a larger development (i.e., four units or more), local agencies are required to regulate development within the mapped zones. In general, construction within 50 feet of an active fault zone is prohibited.

#### Seismic Hazards Mapping Act

The Seismic Hazards Mapping Act (SHMA) (PRC Sections 2690 to 2699.6), which was passed in 1990, addresses earthquake hazards other than surface fault rupture. These hazards include strong ground shaking, earthquake-induced landslides, liquefaction, or other ground failures. Much like the AP Act discussed above, these seismic hazard zones are mapped by the State Geologist to assist local government in the land use planning process. SHMA states, "It is necessary to identify and map seismic hazard zones in order for cities and counties to adequately prepare the safety element of their general plans and to encourage land use management policies and regulations to reduce and mitigate those hazards to protect public health and safety." SHMA also states, "Cities and counties shall require, prior to the approval of a project located in a seismic hazard zone, a geotechnical report defining and delineating any seismic hazard."

#### California Building Code

The State of California provides minimum standards for building design through the California Building Standards Code (CBC) (CCR, Title 24). Where no other building codes apply, Chapter 29 regulates excavation, foundations, and retaining walls. The CBC applies to building design and construction in the state and is based on the federal Uniform Building Code (UBC) used widely throughout the country (generally adopted on a state-by-state or district-by-district basis). The CBC has been modified for California conditions with more detailed and/or more stringent regulations.

The State Earthquake Protection Law (California Health and Safety Code Section 19100, et seq.) requires that structures be designed to resist stresses produced by lateral forces caused by wind and earthquakes. Specific minimum seismic safety and structural design requirements are set forth in Chapter 16 of the CBC. The CBC identifies seismic factors that must be considered in structural design. Chapter 18 of the CBC regulates the excavation of foundations and retaining walls, and Appendix Chapter A33 regulates grading activities, including drainage and erosion control and construction on unstable soils, such as expansive soils and areas subject to liquefaction. The CBC is updated every three years, and the current 2013 CBC took effect January 1, 2014.

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## Local Regulations

The County's General Plan includes the following objective regarding seismic safety (Amador County, 2014):

- Objective A: the objective of the preparation and adoption of the Safety and Seismic Safety Element is to add safety considerations to the active planning processes within the planning area in order to reduce loss of life, injuries, damage to property, economic loss, and social disruption resulting from fire, seismic activity, and other possible disasters.

## AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

The project is located on the western slope of the Sierra Nevada geomorphic province. The 450-mile long Sierra Nevada mountain range is a 40- to 50-mile wide west dipping fault block (i.e., a very large block of rock) consisting of a series of uplifted Mesozoic (225 million years ago) granitic batholiths (i.e., rock that forms from cooled magma deep in the Earth's crust) overlain by metamorphic and volcanic rock units. Elevations in the mountain range extend from 400 feet in the western foothills up to 14,000 feet on its eastern edge where there are high peaks and dramatic relief. Steep, rocky faces and glacier carved valleys feed high-energy streams that flow to rolling foothills, where the province's western boundary abuts the Great Valley.

The project area is within an area of low seismic activity with a moderate earthquake risk. The project is not located within the AP Fault Zone, and is not in an area subject to liquefaction, ground failure, or surface rupture.

## PROJECT IMPACTS

Would the project:

**a) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:**

- i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.**

Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion a) i):** The project area is outside of the AP Fault Zone, and there are no AP faults in Amador County. The closest known AP fault is the Markleeville Fault approximately 55 miles northeast of the project area. Because the project would not include new structures, the potential for exposure of people or structures to risks of loss, injury, or death is considered low; therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

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**ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion a) ii):** See response a) i) above. The potential severity of ground shaking depends on many factors, including distance from the originating fault, the earthquake magnitude, and the nature of the subsurface materials. Because no residential dwellings would be constructed as part of the project, the potential for exposure of people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving strong seismic ground shaking is considered low; therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

**iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion a) iii):** See response a) i) above. Liquefaction in soils and sediments occurs during earthquake events when soil material is transformed from a solid state to a liquid state generated by an increase in pressure between pore space and soil particles. No specific liquefaction hazard areas have been identified in the county (Amador County, 2014). Because the project would be limited to improvements of an existing intersection and would not include new structures, the potential for exposure of people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving liquefaction is considered low; therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

**iv) Landslides?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion a) iv):** The project area is not located in an area that is typically associated with landslides. Additionally, according to the CDOC, the project area is not in a landslide hazard area. Therefore, there would be no impact.

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**b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion b):** According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Web Soil Survey, soils in the project area have a low to moderate susceptibility to erosion (USDA, 2013). Project construction would require the removal of some existing vegetation. Project construction would be subject to the requirements of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit required for the project, which requires implementation of best management practices (BMP) to minimize soil erosion and protect water quality. Typical BMPs include, but are not limited to, limiting the construction area to the smallest area required to complete construction; dust control measures, such as watering exposed soils; and use of silt fencing, fiber rolls, and sheeting to contain soils on site during storm events. Following construction, exposed soils would either be paved or be stabilized through compaction and/or new vegetation. With implementation of standard BMPs and compliance with the NPDES requirements, the project would not be expected to result in soil erosion or loss of topsoil; therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

**c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion c):** According to the CDOC, the project area is not in a landslide hazard area. The project area does not contain steep slopes or unstable terrain; therefore, there is low risk of landslides. The risk of land surface subsidence in Amador County is low, and there are no areas where subsidence has previously occurred in proximity to the project area. No specific liquefaction hazard areas have been identified in the county.

Project design would be consistent with standard engineering practices and would adhere to applicable standards related to safety. In addition, because the project would be limited to the improvements of a roadway and would not include new structures, the potential for the project to result in geologic or soil instability, or potentially result in lateral spreading, liquefaction, or collapse, is considered low. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

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**d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion d):** According to the County’s General Plan, Seismic Safety Element, the project area and surrounding areas have a low risk of expansive soils (Amador County, 2014). Therefore, there is a low potential that the project would be located on expansive soil, and there would be no impact.

**e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion e):** The project would be limited to improvements of an existing roadway intersection, and would not require the installation of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems. Therefore, there would be no impact.

## **7. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS**

### **REGULATORY SETTING**

#### **Federal Regulations**

##### Greenhouse Gas Endangerment

On December 7, 2009, the U.S. EPA signed two distinct findings regarding greenhouse gases (GHG) under Section 202(a) of the FCAA:

- The U.S. EPA finds that the current and projected concentrations of the mix of six key GHGs—carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), methane (CH<sub>4</sub>), nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O), hydrofluorocarbons (HFC), perfluorocarbons (PFC), and sulfur hexafluoride (SF<sub>6</sub>)—in the atmosphere threaten the public health and welfare of current and future generations. This is referred to as the endangerment finding.
- The U.S. EPA finds that the combined emissions of CO<sub>2</sub>, CH<sub>4</sub>, N<sub>2</sub>O, and HFCs from new motor vehicles and motor vehicle engines contribute to the atmospheric concentrations of these key GHGs and hence to the threat of climate change. This is referred to as the cause or contribute finding.

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The findings do not include any proposed regulations.

### **State Regulations**

There are numerous state plans, policies, regulations, and laws related to GHGs and global climate change that 1) establish overall state policies and GHG reduction targets; 2) require state or local actions that result in direct or indirect GHG emission reductions for the project; 3) require CEQA analysis of GHG emissions; and 4) provide generally-accepted guidance in performing GHG analyses. The major components of California’s climate change policy are reviewed below.

#### Assembly Bill 32, the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006

AB 32 was signed by former Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger in September 2006, and is now codified as Sections 38500–38599 of the California Health and Safety Code. Assembly Bill 32 requires that statewide GHG emissions be reduced to 1990 levels by 2020.

#### Senate Bill 97 and Amendments to the State CEQA Guidelines

As directed by Senate Bill 97, the California Natural Resources Agency adopted amendments to the State CEQA Guidelines on December 30, 2009, adding a new Section 15064.4, “Determining the Significance of Impacts from Greenhouse Gas Emissions,” and a new Section 15126.4(c), “Mitigation Measures Related to Greenhouse Gas Emissions.” The amendments became effective on March 18, 2010.

#### CARB GHG Emissions Data and Scoping Plan

AB 32 requires CARB to develop a scoping plan to lower the state’s GHG emissions to meet the 2020 limit. The AB 32 Scoping Plan was approved at the December 2008 CARB meeting, and the First Update to the AB 32 Scoping Plan was approved in May 2014 (CARB, 2014). Key elements of the scoping plan include expanding and strengthening existing energy efficiency programs and building and appliance standards; achieving a statewide renewable energy mix of 33 percent; developing a California cap and trade program linked with other similar programs; establishing targets for transportation-related GHG emissions for regions throughout California, and pursuing policies and incentives to achieve those targets; implementing existing laws and standards, such as California’s clean car standards, goods movement measures, and the Low Carbon Fuel Standard; and issuing targeted fees to fund the state’s long-term commitment to AB 32 administration.

### **AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT**

According to climate scientists, the earth’s climate has been warming for the past century; it is believed by 97 percent of climate scientists that this warming trend is related to the release of certain gases into the atmosphere by human activities (NASA, 2015). The most commonly recognized GHGs include CO<sub>2</sub>, CH<sub>4</sub>, N<sub>2</sub>O, water vapor, ozone, aerosols, HFCs, chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), PFCs, and SF<sub>6</sub>.

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Emissions of GHGs contributing to global climate change are largely attributable to human activities associated with industrial/manufacturing, utility, transportation, residential, and agricultural sectors. About 75 percent of human emissions of CO<sub>2</sub> to the global atmosphere during the past 20 years are a result of fossil fuel burning. Atmospheric concentrations of CO<sub>2</sub>, CH<sub>4</sub>, and N<sub>2</sub>O have increased 31 percent, 151 percent, and 17 percent, respectively, since the year 1750 (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, 2001).

Worldwide, California is ranked as the 12th largest emitter of GHGs. Based on the most recent GHG emissions inventory, California's gross annual emissions of GHGs in 2013 totaled 459.3 million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalents (MTCO<sub>2</sub>e) (CARB, 2013). Most of California's emissions, approximately 81 percent, consist of CO<sub>2</sub> produced from fossil fuel combustion. The transportation sector is the single largest category of California's GHG emissions, accounting for approximately 37 percent of the state's total GHG emissions, followed by electricity consumption (from both in-state and out-of-state providers), which accounts for a total of roughly 23 percent of the state's total GHG emissions, and then the industrial sector accounting for approximately 20 percent of the state's total GHG emissions. The contribution from each of the various other use sectors contribute roughly one to eight percent each to the total GHG emissions inventory (CARB, 2013).

## **PROJECT IMPACTS**

Would the project:

**a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion a):** Operation of the project would not be expected to increase GHG emissions because the same number of through lanes (one in each direction) would be maintained, and the project would not increase capacity or result in additional traffic volumes on the roadway. The use of heavy mobile construction equipment, such as bulldozers, trucks, scrapers, etc., delivery of construction materials, hauling of construction debris, and worker commutes would result in the generation of GHGs during construction. However, construction would be short-term and temporary (completed within six months), and the project's contribution of GHG emissions to climate change would be minimal. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

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**b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion b):** Statewide GHG emissions are currently regulated through AB 32, which requires the state’s GHG emissions to be reduced to 1990 levels by 2020. The use of heavy mobile construction equipment, delivery of construction materials, hauling of construction debris, and worker commutes would result in the generation of GHGs. However, because construction would be short-term and temporary, project contributions to GHG emissions would be minimal, and would not be expected to conflict with any local or state targets for GHG emissions reduction; therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

## **8. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS**

### **REGULATORY SETTING**

The following discussion incorporates the results of the Phase I Initial Site Assessment that was prepared for the project on May 2015 (GPA, 2015). The following regulations are applicable to hazards and hazardous materials in the project area.

#### **Federal Regulations**

##### U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

The U.S. EPA’s purpose is to protect human health and the environment by writing and enforcing regulations based on laws passed by Congress. The U.S. EPA relies on the National Priorities List (NPL), which is a list of national priorities among the known releases or threatened releases of hazardous substances, pollutants, or contaminants throughout the U.S. and its territories. The NPL is intended primarily to guide the U.S. EPA in determining which sites warrant further investigation.

CERCLIS is a database used by the U.S. EPA to track activities conducted under its Superfund program. Specific information is tracked for each individual site. WasteLAN is the name of the regional version of this database.

##### Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA)

RCRA Subtitle C addresses hazardous waste generation, handling, transportation, storage, treatment, and disposal. RCRA establishes a system that uses hazardous waste manifests to track the movement of hazardous waste from generation to disposal (cradle-to-grave). The 1984 amendments to RCRA created a national priority for waste minimization. Subtitle D establishes national minimum requirements for solid waste disposal sites and practices, and requires States to develop plans for the management of wastes within their jurisdictions. Subtitle I requires

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monitoring and containment systems for underground storage tanks (USTs) that hold hazardous materials. Owners of USTs must demonstrate financial assurance for the cleanup of a potential leaking tank.

## **State Regulations**

### Hazardous Waste and Substances Site List - Site Cleanup (Cortese List)

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

### Department of Toxic Substances Control (EnviroStor/Haznet)

The mission of the DTSC is to provide the highest level of safety, and to protect public health and the environment from toxic harm. DTSC provides a listing of all existing information on permits and corrective action at hazardous waste facilities, as well as site cleanup projects on the EnviroStor/Haznet database.

### California Hazardous Waste Control Law

The California Hazardous Waste Control Law (HWCL) is the primary hazardous waste statute in the California. The law states that generators have the primary duty to determine whether their wastes are hazardous and to ensure their proper management. HWCL also establishes criteria for the reuse and recycling of hazardous wastes. The law exceeds RCRA requirements by mandating source reduction planning, and a much broader requirement for permitting facilities that treat hazardous waste. The law also regulates a number of types of wastes and waste management activities that are not covered by RCRA.

### California Code of Regulations

Most state and federal regulations and requirements that apply to generators of hazardous waste are spelled out in CCR, Title 22, Division 4.5. Title 22 contains detailed compliance requirements for hazardous waste generators and transporters, and treatment, storage, and disposal facilities. Most RCRA regulations have been duplicated and integrated into Title 22. However, because DTSC regulates hazardous waste more stringently than the U.S. EPA, Title 22 contains fewer exemptions and exclusions than RCRA, and regulates a wider range of waste types and waste management activities. To make regulatory requirements more accessible and easier to follow, California compiled the hazardous materials, waste, and toxics-related regulations into CCR, Title 26, "Toxics."

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## **Local Regulations**

The County Environmental Health Department is a Certified Unified Program Agency (CUPA) and administers a consolidated hazardous materials program in the county. State-wide hazardous materials programs were established by Senate Bill 1082 and enforced by the California Environmental Protection Agency. This bill unified hazardous waste and hazardous materials management through the use of a regulatory program.

The Amador County Sheriff's Office of Emergency Services is responsible for coordinating emergency response and evacuation procedures in the project area, and implementing the Amador County Evacuation Plan and Amador County Emergency Operations Plan.

## **AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT**

A May 2015 Phase I Initial Site Assessment (ISA) was prepared for the project by Wallace-Kuhl and Associates (WKA) to evaluate environmental conditions associated with the property's past and current use. The Phase I ISA was prepared in accordance with the scope and limitations of American Standard of Testing Materials (ASTM) Standard Practice for Environmental Site Assessments: Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) Process (Designation E 1527-05, Standard Practice for ESAs). The purpose of the Phase I ISA was to assist the County in recognizing "environmental conditions" in the project area. A recognized environmental condition (REC) is defined by the ASTM as:

The presence or likely presence of hazardous substances or petroleum products on a property under conditions that indicate an existing release, a past release, or a material threat of a release of any hazardous substances or petroleum products into structures on the property or into the ground, groundwater or surface water of the property. The term includes hazardous substances or petroleum products even under conditions in compliance with laws. The term is not intended to include de minimis conditions that generally do not present a material risk of harm to public health or the environment and that generally would not be the subject of an enforcement action if brought to the attention of appropriate governmental agencies. Conditions determined to be de minimis are not recognized environmental conditions.

## **Regulatory Database Records Review**

A records search was conducted to obtain and review records that would help evaluate RECs associated with the project area and surrounding properties. Environmental Data Resources (EDR®) performed a search of federal, tribal, state, and local databases regarding the project area and nearby properties. A review of the EDR® report indicates the project area is not listed on any federal, state or local databases.

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## Surrounding Properties

No surrounding or adjacent properties were identified in the Phase I ISA with potential to result in impacts on the project area. However, the Amador Community School Expansion facility is located adjacent to the southwestern side of the project area where NOA was identified as a substance of concern. A Removal Action Workplan was implemented in 2007, and a Removal Action Completion Report was approved by DTSC on April 13, 2009. This facility is not likely to negatively impact the project area; however, there is a potential for NOA to be present in the project area based on the proximity to this facility.

## Preliminary Screen for Vapor Encroachment Conditions

WKA conducted a preliminary screening for vapor encroachment conditions (VEC) beneath the project area using the Tier 1 vapor encroachment screening evaluation. Based on the completion of the VEC-screening matrix, VEC does not or is not likely to exist in the project area.

## PROJECT IMPACTS

Would the project:

**a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion a):** The project would not change the amount or nature of vehicular travel through the project area; therefore, no additional hazardous materials would be used or transported above existing conditions during operation of the project.

During construction, hazardous materials, such as petroleum products (gasoline and oil) for construction equipment and concrete or asphalt for paving operations, would be transported, used, stored, and disposed of according to county, state, and federal regulations.

Because soil and rocks in the project area may contain NOA, there is potential that project construction could result in the exposure of residents and other sensitive receptors to dust from asbestos-containing rock and soils during earth moving activities. With the implementation of mitigation measure AIR-1 listed in Section 3. Air Quality, which requires an Asbestos Dust Control Plan to be approved by the Amador APCD and implemented throughout project construction in compliance with CARB's NOA ACTM, dust with potential NOA would be controlled and contained during construction, reducing potential impacts to a level that is less than significant.

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**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?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion b):** See Discussion a) above. The project consists of improvements to improve intersection safety. The project may involve the minor use of hazardous materials, including diesel fuel and other motor lubricants during construction. The use of these substances is not expected to create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset or accident. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

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

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion c):** The project area is approximately 500 feet from the Amador County School Expansion Facility (Shenandoah Valley Charter School/Amador Community School). During project operation, no additional hazardous materials would be used or transported above existing conditions.

The handling of hazardous materials associated with project construction would be conducted in compliance with county, state, and federal regulations, and, therefore, they would not pose a significant risk of release or contamination at the nearby school site.

Because soil and rocks in the project area may contain NOA, there is potential that project construction could result in the exposure of sensitive receptors to dust from asbestos-containing rock and soils during earth disturbance activities. With the implementation of mitigation measure AIR-1 listed in Section 3. Air Quality, which requires an Asbestos Dust Control Plan to be approved by the Amador APCD and implemented throughout project construction in compliance with CARB's NOA ACTM, dust with potential NOA would be controlled and contained during construction, reducing potential impacts to a level that is less than significant.

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**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?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion d):** According to the Phase I ISA completed for the project, the Amador County School Expansion Facility is located adjacent to the southwestern side of the project area, and is listed as California DTSC Cleanup Site because NOA was previously identified at the facility (Wallace Kuhl & Associates, 2015). County records indicate that a Removal Action Workplan was implemented at the facility in 2007, and a Removal Action Completion Report was approved by the DTSC on April 13, 2009. Therefore, the facility is not likely to adversely affect the project area. As stated previously, the project area has the potential to contain NOA, but it is not currently listed as a hazardous materials site compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5. Therefore, there would be no impact.

**e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion e):** The project area is more than seven miles northwest of the nearest public airport, the Westover Field Amador County Airport (JAQ). The project area is not within JAQ's airport influence area or within two miles of a public airport or public use airport. In addition, no vertical structures or sources of substantial light or glare would be included in the project that could result in airport safety hazards. Therefore, there would be no impact.

**f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion f):** The project area is more than three miles northeast of the nearest private airstrip, Horse Shoe A Ranch Airport (CA71). No vertical structures or sources of substantial light or glare would be included in the project that could result in safety hazards; therefore, there would be no impact.

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**g) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion g):** The Amador County Sheriff’s Office of Emergency Services is responsible for coordinating emergency response and evacuation procedures in the project area, and implementing the Amador County Evacuation Plan and Amador County Emergency Operations Plan. During project operation, implementation of emergency response and evacuation procedures would be expected to improve above existing conditions because the project would improve intersection safety and roadway geometrics by improving intersection visibility, maximizing sight distance through the project area, and improving horizontal and vertical alignments.

During project construction, traffic flow along Shenandoah and Fiddletown Roads, and other nearby roadways, could be temporarily affected because of construction vehicles and equipment traveling along these roadways. However, roadways would remain open during construction, and the project would not be expected to substantially interfere with emergency response or evacuation. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

**h) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion h):** The project area is surrounded by agricultural and residential uses. The agricultural land adjacent to the project area is currently vegetated with annual grasses, and although this area is designated for agricultural uses, for the purposes of fire hazard analysis it is considered wildlands, and there is a risk for wildland fire in these areas. During project operation, operations along the roadway would remain similar to existing conditions, and the project would not result in additional heat sources or combustible materials in the project area. During project construction, wildland fires could result from sparks from construction equipment or use of other flammable materials. Fire hazards would be minimized through standard spark-preventing measures, such as using spark arresters, not driving onto dry grass, and other measures to control use of flammable materials. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

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## 9. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

### REGULATORY SETTING

#### **Federal Regulations**

##### Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

FEMA administers the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) to provide subsidized flood insurance to jurisdictions that comply with FEMA regulations to limit development within floodplains. FEMA also prepares Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) to identify areas subject to flooding. These FIRMs provide flood information and identify flood hazard zones. FEMA's minimum level of flood protection for new development is the 100-year flood event, also described as a flood having a one percent chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year with an average recurrence interval of 100 years.

##### Clean Water Act

U.S. EPA serves as the lead federal agency responsible for water quality management. The CWA of 1972 is the primary federal law that governs and authorizes water quality control activities by the U.S. EPA and individual states. Section 303 of the CWA requires individual states to adopt water quality standards for all surface waters of the U.S.

The NPDES permit program was established under Section 402 of the CWA to regulate municipal and industrial discharges to surface waters of the U.S. from municipal separate storm sewer systems (MS4s). Federal NPDES permit regulations have been established for a broad range of discharges, including point source municipal waste discharges and non-point source storm water runoff.

##### Safe Drinking Water Act

Under the Safe Drinking Water Act (Public Law 93-523), passed in 1974, the U.S. EPA regulates contaminants of concern to domestic water supply. Contaminants of concern relevant to domestic water supply are defined as those that pose a public health threat or that alter the aesthetic acceptability of the water. These types of contaminants are regulated by the U.S. EPA's primary and secondary maximum contaminant levels (MCLs), which are applicable to treated water supplies delivered to a distribution system.

The U.S. EPA has delegated to the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) the responsibility for administering California's drinking-water program. The CDPH is accountable to the U.S. EPA for program implementation and for adopting standards and regulations that are at least as stringent as those developed by the U.S. EPA. The applicable state primary and secondary MCLs are set forth in CCR, Title 22, Division 4, Chapter 15, Article 4.

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## State Regulations

### Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act

The Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act (Porter-Cologne Act) of 1969 is California's statutory authority for the protection of water quality. Under the Porter-Cologne Act, the State must adopt water quality policies, plans, and objectives that protect the State's waters for the use and enjoyment of its residents. The Porter-Cologne Act requires the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) and its Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCB) to adopt and periodically update water quality control plans (Basin Plans). Basin Plans are the regional water quality control plans required by both the CWA and Porter-Cologne Act, in which beneficial uses, water quality objectives, and implementation programs are established for each of the RWQCBs. The Porter-Cologne Act also requires waste dischargers to notify the RWQCBs of their activities through the preparation of Reports of Waste Discharge, and authorizes the SWRCB and its RWQCBs to issue and enforce waste discharge requirements, NPDES permits, Section 401 water quality certifications, and other approval actions.

In California, the SWRCB has broad authority over water quality control issues for the state. The SWRCB is responsible for developing statewide water quality policy and exercises the powers delegated to the State by the federal government under the CWA. Other state agencies with jurisdiction over water quality regulation in California include the California Department of Health Services for drinking water regulations, the California Department of Pesticide Regulation, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and the Office of Environmental Health and Hazard Assessment.

Regional authority for planning, permitting, and enforcement is delegated to the RWQCBs. The regional boards are required to formulate and adopt water quality control plans for all areas in the region and establish water quality objectives in those plans. Amador County is within the jurisdiction of the Central Valley RWQCB.

### NPDES Permit System and Waste Discharge Requirements for Construction

The 1972 amendment to the CWA established the NPDES permit program. The NPDES permit program outlined in the CWA contains effluent limitation guidelines, water quality requirements, and permit program requirements for discharges to waters of the United States. The EPA has overall responsibility for the NPDES program, but administration of the program in California has been delegated to the SWRCB and the nine RWQCBs.

## Local Regulations

### Amador County General Plan

The County's General Plan identifies the following policies and objective related to hydrology and water quality that are applicable to the project (Amador County, 1967):

- It is the policy of the County to:
  - a. Protect human life and health;

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- b. To minimize expenditure of public money for costly flood control projects;
  - c. To minimize the need for rescue and relief efforts associated with flooding and generally undertaken at the expense of the general public;
  - d. To minimize prolonged business interruptions
  - e. To minimize damage to public facilities and utilities such as water and gas mains, electric, telephone and sewer lines, streets and bridges located in areas of special flood hazards;
  - f. To help maintain a stable tax base by providing for the sound use and development of areas of special flood hazard so as to minimize future flood blight areas;
  - g. To insure that potential buyers are notified that property in an area of special flood hazards; and
- Objective 1: To preserve, protect and where appropriate, promote the development of natural resources in water, mineral, timber, and soils resources.

Mokelumne/Amador/Calaveras (MAC) Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) Plan

The January 2013 IRWM Plan developed by the East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD), includes the following policies for water resources:

- Maintain and improve water quality;
- Improve water supply reliability and ensure long-term balance of supply and demand;
- Practice resource stewardship; and
- Focus on areas of common ground and avoid prolonged conflict.

Amador County Stormwater Management Regulations

Title 15 of the County Code (“Buildings and Construction”) describes the County’s regulations, provisions, and ordinances for stormwater management and enforcement. The provisions include standards for erosion control during and post construction.

Chapter 15.40 (“Erosion Control Ordinance”) sets forth the County’s rules and regulations for review and permitting of excavation, grading, and earthwork construction, including fills and cuts, embankments and impoundment structures are required to be reviewed and permitted. This chapter establishes an administrative procedure for the issuance of required permits involving excavation, the approval of plans and inspection of all permitted excavation, and the establishment of measures to control erosion and other adverse impacts of excavation. Chapter 17.48 sets forth standards for drainage facilities, and Section 17.90.120 “Drainage Standards” includes standards for streets and roads. The County’s Public Works Department has jurisdiction over the permitting, inspecting, and enforcing of erosion control measures and grading permits (Ord. 1619 §2(part), 2005).

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**AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT**

The project area is within the Cosumnes Subbasin, which lies within the San Joaquin Valley Groundwater Basin (SJVGB). The Cosumnes Subbasin is bounded on the south and southwest by the Eastern San Joaquin Subbasin and on the north to northwest by the South American Subbasin of the SJVGB. The Cosumnes Subbasin drains westward through the Cosumnes River on the north, Dry Creek in the approximate center of the subbasin, and the Mokelumne River on the south. Camanche Reservoir is located along a portion of the Mokelumne River in the southeast part of the subbasin.

Annual precipitation (rainfall and snowfall) is extremely variable in the project area. Within a given year, precipitation is highly seasonal with most precipitation normally occurring between November and May, and very little occurring between late spring and fall. Peak flows in the area streams and rivers normally occur during winter storms or during the spring snow-melt season from March through June. River and stream flows decrease to a minimum in late summer or fall.

Groundwater in most of the County is not well defined. The majority of available groundwater is transient and found in fractured rock. Groundwater quantity and quality in the region varies greatly from well site to well site due to the small and unpredictable yields of the fractured rock system that typifies the foothill geology (Amador County, 2007).

There are no water bodies or other aquatic resources within or adjacent to the project area. There are intermittent roadside drainage ditches located adjacent to Shenandoah Road and Fiddletown Road, including two corrugated metal pipe culverts that convey water from north to south under Shenandoah Road, west of the intersection. These roadside drainage ditches convey water in a generally downhill, northeast to south/southwest direction. Drainages terminate in an isolated ditch on the vineyard parcel south of Shenandoah Road, where storm water percolates into the ground; therefore, roadside drainages in the area do not have connectivity to other drainage systems or waterways.

According to FEMA, the project area is located in Zone X, an area that is outside the Special Flood Hazard Area subject to inundation by the 100-year flood (FEMA, 2008).

**PROJECT IMPACTS**

Would the project:

**a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion a):** There are no waste discharge requirements applicable to the project area, as the project area includes a roadway where no wastewater is discharged. During construction, water quality impacts could result from ground disturbance activities because soil and other debris

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could be carried away by storm water runoff, resulting in degraded water quality. Project construction would be subject to the requirements of the NPDES permit required for the project, which requires implementation of BMPs to minimize soil erosion and protect water quality. Typical BMPs include, but are not limited to, limiting the construction area to the smallest area required to complete construction; dust control measures, such as watering exposed soils; and use of silt fencing, fiber rolls, and sheeting to contain soils on site during storm events. Following construction, exposed soils would either be paved or be stabilized through compaction and/or new vegetation. With implementation of standard BMPs and compliance with the NPDES requirements, the project would not be expected to violate water quality standards.

Existing roadside drainages would be realigned along with the new intersection and approach roadway locations; however, after project implementation, storm water drainage patterns in the project area would remain largely unchanged from existing conditions. Storm water would continue to be conveyed downhill where it would terminate in the existing isolated drainage ditch on the vineyard parcel south of Shenandoah Road, where storm water would percolate into the soil.

The project would not result in any new connections to downstream waterways.

Also, because the project would not increase the number of traffic lanes through the area, or increase the number of vehicles using the intersection, the project would not result in an increase in pollutants (oil, dirt, etc.) from roadway use beyond existing conditions; therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

**b) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion b):** The project would not require excavation that would have the potential to reach groundwater. The project would increase the amount of impervious surface in the project area slightly; however, this additional area would not be large enough to substantially interfere with groundwater recharge. In addition, the new impervious areas would be surrounded by natural surfaces and vegetation. Surface waters running off of paved areas would percolate into the surrounding subsurface soils, and eventually into the groundwater supply. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

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**c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion c):** The project would include intersection improvements and realignment resulting in a slight increase in impervious surfaces within the project area; however, drainage patterns in the project area would remain similar to existing conditions, and no substantial erosion or siltation would result on site or off site; therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

**d) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion d):** The project would result a slight increase in the amount of impervious surfaces within the project area, which could result in increased storm water runoff. However, drainage patterns in the project area would remain similar to existing conditions, and the project would be designed to accommodate anticipated runoff levels as required by standard design guidelines used by the County; therefore, no flooding would be expected to result on site or off site, and, impacts would be less than significant.

**e) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion e):** While the project would increase the impervious surface in the area slightly, which could result in a small increase in stormwater runoff, the project would be designed to accommodate existing and anticipated runoff levels as required by standard design guidelines used by the County. Also, because the project would not increase the number of traffic lanes through the area, or increase the number of vehicles using the intersection, the project would not result in an increase in pollutants (oil, dirt, etc.) from roadway use beyond existing conditions. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

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**f) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion f):** See Discussion a) above. The project design, as well as compliance with all federal, state, and local regulations regarding water quality standards, would ensure that the project would not substantially degrade water quality. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

**g) Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion g):** The project would not include residential dwellings. In addition, according to FEMA, the project area is located in Zone X, an area that is outside the Special Flood Hazard Area subject to inundation by the 100-year flood (FEMA, 2008). Therefore, there would be no impact.

**h) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures which would impede or redirect flood flows?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion h):** The project would not include structures that would impede or redirect flows. In addition, according to FEMA, the project area is located in Zone X, an area that is outside the Special Flood Hazard Area subject to inundation by the 100-year flood (FEMA, 2008). Therefore, there would be no impact.

**i) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion i):** The project would not increase risk of flooding from levee or dam failure, because there are no dams or levees in proximity to the project area. The nearest dam to the project

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area is the Pardee Dam, approximately 14 miles south of the project area. Also, the reconfigured roadside drainage ditches would be designed with sufficient capacity such that no flooding would result, and no people or structures would be exposed to risks of loss, injury, or death involving flooding. Therefore, there would be no impact.

**j) Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion j):** A tsunami is a large ocean wave associated with a seismic event; and a mudflow is the rapid, downhill movement of a large mass of mud formed from loose soil and water. The project area is not in proximity to the ocean and would therefore not be impacted by tsunamis. In addition, the project area and vicinity is not located in an area that is at risk for mudflows.

A seiche is an oscillation of a land-locked water body, such as a lake or dam, typically caused by strong winds and rapid changes in atmospheric pressure. There are no land-locked waterways located in or adjacent to the project area. Therefore, there would be no impact from risk of tsunami, mudflows, or seiche.

## 10. LAND USE AND PLANNING

### REGULATORY SETTING

#### State Regulations

California Government Code Section 65300, et seq. establishes the obligation of cities and counties to adopt and implement general plans. The general plan is a comprehensive, long-term, and general document that describes plans for the physical development of a city or county and of any land outside its boundaries that, in the City’s or County’s judgment, bears relation to its planning. The general plan addresses a broad range of topics, including at a minimum, land use, circulation, housing, conservation, open space, noise, and safety. In addressing these topics, the general plan identifies the goals, objectives, policies, principles, standards, and plan proposals that support the city’s or county’s vision for the area.

The State Zoning Law (California Government Code Section 65800, et seq.) establishes that zoning ordinances, which are laws that define allowable land uses within a specific zone district, are required to be consistent with the general plan.

#### Local Regulations

The County’s General Plan identifies the following objectives and policies related to land use and planning (Amador County, 1967):

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Objectives:

- Objective 1: To preserve, protect and where appropriate, promote the development of natural resources in water, minerals, timber and soils resources.
- Objective 6: To provide and maintain rural and urban services and facilities of high quality for adequate health, safety and comfort, and educational, cultural and recreational facilities for the public benefit and enjoyment.

Policies:

- Compatibility of Land Uses: Urban, Residential, Industrial, Agricultural and Recreational, will be fostered and encouraged. All future reservoir sites, prime farmland, or commercial grade timber land, or areas of outstanding scenic or recreational significance shall be preserved against subdivision or other urban development, and zoned to preserve their present use and value.

**AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT**

The County's current land use pattern is comprised of large areas of forest land, agriculture (including crops and livestock), rural residences, industrial and mining/mineral resource extraction, and a number of unincorporated communities that have a mixture of land uses, including commercial, industrial, and residential uses. Land uses designations in the project area include County ROW and Agricultural General. The zoning designations in the project area include County ROW and AG (Exclusive Agriculture).

APN 008-030-016, in the northwest portion of the project area, is under a conservation easement held by the Mother Lode Land Trust (MLLT). According to the MLLT, a conservation easement is:

A voluntary, negotiated legal agreement between a landowner and the land trust. Conservation easements protect agricultural, scenic, historic, and archaeological values, and wildlife habit by placing permanent restrictions on the future use of the land. The restrictions are dependent on the conservation goals and tailored to the needs and desires of each landowner. The landowner retains fee title to the property and can sell, devise, or otherwise transfer title to the land, subject only to the terms of the conservation easement. Public access is not granted unless the landowner requests that option. The land trust is charged with monitoring the property to ensure that the conservation values are being protected and the terms of the conservation easement upheld.

The MLLT conservation easement was recorded in 1997. As described in the recorded easement document, the MLLT conservation easement is intended to "preserve the Property in its current agricultural, scenic, open space, wildlife and wooded wildlife habitat condition in perpetuity, and to protect it from any use that will significantly impair or interfere with its Agricultural and Conservation Values." The easement lists several restrictions on activities or uses of the parcel

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that would be inconsistent with the purpose and intent of the easement. The list of prohibited uses does not include use of a portion of the parcel for a public roadway.

**PROJECT IMPACTS**

Would the project:

**a) Physically divide an established community?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion a):** The project would include improvements to an existing roadway intersection located just northeast of the city limits of Plymouth. The project would realign the intersection and approach roadway. The project does not consist of features that would physically disrupt or divide an established community. Due to its location outside the city of Plymouth, no established neighborhoods would be divided. Therefore, there would be no impact.

**b) Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion b):** There are no land use plans, policies, or regulations that have been adopted for the project area for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect; therefore, there would be no impact.

**c) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion c):** There are no habitat conservation plans or natural community conservation plans that are applicable to the project area; therefore, there would be no impact.

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## 11. MINERAL RESOURCES

### REGULATORY SETTING

#### Local Regulations

The County's General Plan identifies the following policies related to mineral resources (Amador County, 1967):

- Mineral deposits identified as being of regional or statewide significance will be protected using compatibility criteria developed by the State Mining and Geology Board and the regulatory authority of general plans contained in the State Planning and Zoning Act.
- Where feasible, Amador County will utilize guide lines prepared by the State Mining and Geology Board for compatibility of land uses near areas designated as mineral resource zones (MRZ) in the Amador County General Plan.

### AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

The primary mineral resources in the county are copper, zinc, silver and gold. The CDOC identifies a portion of the project area as being within Mineral Resource Zone 3a (MRZ-3a). MRZ-3a is defined as areas "considered to have a moderate potential for the discovery of economic mineral deposits."

### PROJECT IMPACTS

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?**

Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion a):** According to the County's General Plan, mineral resources near the project area are gold and limestone. There are abandoned mines located near the project area (Amador County, 1967). Some areas adjacent to the project area would be excavated between 5 to 25 feet deep. However, the project is limited to intersection improvements and would not extract mineral resources from the project area, or significantly limit access to mineral resources that may be in the area. Therefore, the project is not expected to result in the loss of availability of any nearby mineral resources, and there would be no impact.

**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?**

- Potentially Significant Impact     
  Less Than Significant with Mitigation     
  Less Than Significant Impact     
  No Impact

**Discussion b):** See response a) above. The project is limited to intersection improvements and would not 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. Therefore, there would be no impact.

**12. NOISE**

**REGULATORY SETTING**

The County’s General Plan addresses noise sources, acceptable noise levels for various land uses, and abatement measures. , which states, “noise levels contributed by a proposed noise generating project to adjoining properties identified by the County as being noise sensitive shall not raise the existing ambient noise level at the property line beyond the following levels unless a statement of overriding considerations has been adopted pursuant to Section 15093 of the State CEQA Guidelines or other acceptable mitigation measures have been incorporated into the project” (Amador County, 1988). The levels referred to in the General Plan are shown in **Table 1** below. The noise levels are described in terms of Ldn, which is the adjusted average of sound level over a 24-hour day.

**TABLE 1: ALLOWABLE SOUND LEVEL INCREASE**

Existing Ambient Noise Level	Allowed Increase
Ldn 55 dBA	Ldn 3 dBA
Ldn 60 dBA	Ldn 2 dBA
Ldn 65 dBA	Ldn 1 dBA

*Source: Amador County, 1988*

*Notes: A-weighted decibels (dBA) are a common unit of sound level. Ldn is the Day-Night Sound Level, an adjusted average A-weighted sound level for a 24-hour day, which is calculated by adding a 10-dBA adjustment to sound levels during nighttime hours (10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.). This adjustment compensates for the increased sensitivity to noise during the typically quieter nighttime hours.*

The County does not have a noise ordinance that regulates construction noise. Caltrans Standard Specifications Section 14-8.02 requires that noise levels from construction between the hours of 9:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. not exceed 86 A-weighted decibels (dBA) at a distance of 50 feet from the construction area.

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## **AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT**

Existing noise sources in the project area and vicinity are predominantly from vehicle traffic along Shenandoah Road and Fiddletown Road, agricultural activities (e.g., vineyard operations,) and natural noise sources. (e.g., animals, wind, etc.). Traffic levels in the project area are relatively low, with an estimated Average Daily Traffic (ADT) count of less than 2,000 vehicles per day. Because traffic is the dominant noise source, ambient noise levels are assumed to be the highest during the peak traffic hours, generally between 7:00 a.m. to 9 a.m. The only sensitive noise receptor near the project area is Shenandoah Valley Charter School, located approximately 500 feet west of the westernmost edge of the project area, and more than 1,200 feet west of the center of the existing intersection.

## **PROJECT IMPACTS**

Would the project result in:

**a) Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion a):** The project would maintain the same number and width of through lanes (one lane in each direction) and would not increase capacity, result in additional vehicles on the roadway, or move traffic closer to sensitive noise receptors. Therefore, operation of the project would not change the existing noise environment in the project vicinity.

Construction activities for the project could result in short-term and intermittent increases in noise levels in the project area. Noise levels would vary depending on construction activity, equipment type, duration of use, and the distance between noise source and receiver. Typical sound emission characteristics of construction equipment that may be used during project construction are provided in **Table 2** below. The noise levels are described in terms of Lmax, which is the maximum sound level of a particular noise event.

**TABLE 2: CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT NOISE LEVELS**

<b>Equipment Type</b>	<b>Maximum Noise Level (Lmax) of Equipment at 50 Feet (in A-weighted decibels (dBA))</b>
Dump Truck	76
Front End Loader	79
Air Compressor	78
Pneumatic Tools	85

Concrete Mixer Truck	79
Concrete Pump Truck	81
Bulldozer	85

Source: U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, 2011

Notes: The noise levels shown above are actual, measured noise levels based on measurements performed for the Central Artery/Tunnel Project. Noise measurements were averaged to compute the actual emission level.

Noise produced by construction equipment decreases at a rate of about 6 dBA per doubling of distance from the source. The closest noise sensitive receptor, the Shenandoah Valley Charter School/Amador Community School, is approximately 500 feet west of the project area at its closest point; therefore, the noise levels shown in **Table 2** above would be reduced by at least 18 dBA at the school (with at least three doublings of distance). In addition, standard building construction with the windows closed provides approximately 20 to 25 dBA of noise reduction in interior spaces. Therefore, potential construction noise inside the school buildings would be approximately 38 to 43 dBA lower than what is shown in **Table 2** above. While actual noise levels may vary depending on the type and number of equipment pieces used and the duration of use, based on the distance of the project area from the school, it is anticipated that construction activities would not result in substantial levels of noise at the school.

Construction activities would be short-term and intermittent, and project construction would be conducted in compliance with Caltrans Standard Specifications Section 14-8.02, which would minimize potential impacts. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

**b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?**

- Potentially Significant Impact     
 Less Than Significant with Mitigation     
 Less Than Significant Impact     
 No Impact

**Discussion b):** Groundborne vibration results from sound waves radiating through the ground. The sound caused by groundborne vibration is called groundborne noise. The ground motion caused by groundborne vibration is measured as peak particle velocity (PPV) in inches per second, and groundborne noise is measured as vibration decibels (Vdb). Typical outdoor sources of perceptible groundborne vibration and noise are construction equipment and traffic on rough roads.

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) has published standard vibration level and peak particle velocities for construction equipment operations. The calculated root mean square (RMS) velocity level expressed in Vdb and PPV for construction equipment at distances of 25, 50, and 100 feet are listed below in **Table 3**.

**TABLE 3: VIBRATION LEVELS OF CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT**

Equipment	PPV at 25 feet (ft.) in inches per second (in/sec)	RMS at 25 ft. (Vdb)	PPV at 50 ft. (in/sec)	RMS at 50 ft. (Vdb)	PPV at 100 ft. (in/sec)	RMS at 100 ft. (Vdb)
Loaded Truck	0.0760	86	0.0269	77	0.0095	68
Jackhammer	0.0350	79	0.0124	70	0.0044	61
Small Bulldozer	0.0030	58	0.0011	49	0.0004	40

Source: Federal Transit Administration, 2006

Notes: PPV = peak particle velocity; in/sec = inches per second; RMS = root mean square; Vdb = vibration decibels

The FTA uses a PPV of 0.2 inch per second as the vibration damage threshold for fragile buildings and a PPV of 0.12 inch per second for extremely fragile historic buildings. The FTA criterion for infrequent groundborne noise events (fewer than 30 events per day) that may cause annoyance are 80 Vdb for residences and other buildings where people normally sleep. While this project is not a transit project being proposed by the FTA, these FTA thresholds are being used for this analysis as a comparison to the FTA-published vibration levels for construction equipment.

The project would maintain the same number of through lanes (one in each direction), would not increase capacity or result in additional vehicles on the roadway, and would not bring traffic closer to adjacent noise receptors. Therefore, operation of the project would not change the existing groundborne vibration or noise levels in the project vicinity.

As shown in **Table 3**, the groundborne vibration level of construction equipment would be below the most conservative FTA damage threshold of 0.12 inch per second PPV for extremely fragile historic buildings at a distance of 25 feet from the project area; therefore, buildings near the project area would not be damaged by construction-generated groundborne vibration. The only sensitive noise receptor near the project area is the Shenandoah Valley Charter School/Amador Community School located approximately 500 feet west of the project area. Based on the distance of the school from the project area, it is unlikely that the school would be exposed to groundborne noise levels above the FTA threshold of 80 Vdb for annoyance to residences and other buildings.

It is expected that groundborne vibration and noise from project construction would be intermittent and would be localized near the project area. In addition, project construction would comply with Caltrans Standard Specifications Section 14-8.02, which requires that noise levels from construction between the hours of 9:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. not exceed 86 dBA at a distance of 50 feet from the construction area. Compliance with these regulations would minimize potential impacts. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

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**c) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion c):** See Discussion a) above.

**d) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion d):** See Discussion a) above.

**e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion e):** The project area is more than seven miles northwest of the nearest public airport, the Westover Field Amador County Airport (JAQ). The project area is not within JAQ's airport influence area or within two miles of a public airport or public use airport; therefore, there would be no impact.

**f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion f):** The project area is more than three miles northeast of the nearest private airstrip, Horse Shoe A Ranch Airport (CA71). The project area is not near a private airstrip and would not expose people to excessive noise levels; therefore, there would be no impact.

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### 13. POPULATION AND HOUSING

#### REGULATORY SETTING

No federal, state or local plans, policies, regulations, or laws related to population and housing are applicable to the project.

#### AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

The project area is surrounded mostly by agricultural land uses and a school approximately 500 feet to the west. Residential uses in the project vicinity are located along Burke Drive approximately 0.33 mile to the west, along Shenandoah Road approximately 0.47 mile to the north, and in the City of Plymouth adjacent and to the west.

Would the project:

**a) Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion a):** The project would not include new homes or businesses, or extend the roadway or other infrastructure within the project area. Shenandoah Road and the Shenandoah Road/Fiddletown Road intersection would be realigned to improve intersection safety; however the project would not include any improvements that would induce population growth in the area. Therefore, there would be no impact.

**b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion b):** The project would not displace people or housing; therefore, there would be no impact.

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**c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion c):** See Discussion b) above.

## **14. PUBLIC SERVICES**

### **REGULATORY SETTING**

No federal, state or local plans, policies, regulations, or laws related to public services are applicable to the project.

### **AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT**

The Amador Fire Protection District (AFPD) is responsible for providing emergency medical services in the project area. The AFPD's service area encompasses approximately 491 square miles, mostly within unincorporated areas of the County. Emergency response time standards vary by area; the response time guideline established by the California Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Agency is five minutes in urban areas, 15 minutes in suburban or rural areas, and as quickly as possible in wilderness areas. According to the AFPD, their average response time is approximately 7.4 minutes (Amador County Fire Protection District, 2015). The nearest fire stations to the project area are Station No. 122, located approximately 0.92 mile to the west, and Station No. 123, approximately 4.43 miles to the east.

The County Sheriff's Office provides law enforcement services to the project area, and unincorporated areas of the county and surrounding communities. According to the Sheriff's Office, there are approximately 27 deputies assigned to their Patrol Bureaus who patrol the larger portion of the 592 square miles of land and the 12 square miles of water in the service area. The Patrol Bureau operates six patrol beats throughout the county (Amador County Sheriff's Department, 2015).

The Amador County Unified School District (ACUSD) provides Kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade education to students living in the county. The ACUSD currently operates 13 schools throughout the county, including two high schools, one continuation high school, one independent study, two junior high schools, and six elementary schools, as well as a County Office of Education. The ACUSD had a 2012–2013 school year enrollment of 3,884 students.

According to the Amador County Park and Recreation Master Plan, excluding the 652 square miles of land in the county that is occupied by the El Dorado National Forest, there are 278 acres of land that is used for urban recreation and open space purposes. Many of the 30 urban parks

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offer limited recreational opportunities. In 2012, the Amador County Recreation Agency (ACRA) adopted a policy requiring provision of five acres of parkland for every 1,000 residents.

**PROJECT IMPACTS**

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?**
- ii) **Police protection?**
- iii) **Schools?**
- iv) **Parks?**
- v) **Other public facilities?**

Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion a) i) – v):** The project is limited to improvements to an existing intersection. The project would not adversely impact fire protection services, response times, or personnel and facility requirements, or increase demand for police protection services. The project would not involve the development of residential dwellings or otherwise contribute to an increase in the school-aged child population, necessitating the construction or expansion of schools. The project would not create new housing units or induce population growth due to employment, which would result in the need for new or expanded parks or other public facilities. Therefore, there would be no impact.

**15. RECREATION**

**REGULATORY SETTING**

Amador County General Plan

The following objective in the County’s General Plan is relevant to the project (Amador County, 1967):

- Objective A: To utilize the outstanding natural recreational assets of the County to the fullest reasonable extent; to recognize and fulfill the various recreational needs of all local residents and visitors; to coordinate the recreation plans of federal, state, local governmental, public and strict utility agencies; to recognize and encourage and the role of

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private enterprise in recreation activities; and to utilize such financial assistance as may be available to the County from federal, state, and other sources in the accomplishment of elements of the plan.

Amador County Recreation Master Plan

In 2006, the County Recreation Agency developed a Recreation Master Plan, which provides the foundation for a park and recreation program for the residents of the county. The Recreation Master Plan also identifies existing deficiencies and future recreational and park needs.

**AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT**

According to the County Recreation Agency, the five cities and the County are the primary providers of urban park and recreational facilities in the region. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) manages small parcels throughout the county, but most are not designated for recreational purposes. The El Dorado National Forest offers a wide range of activities, including camping, hiking, skiing, boating, and wilderness areas. The forest contains about 652 square miles of land.

The project area primarily includes open grass lands with oak trees. There are vineyards and agricultural facilities adjacent to the project area, south of Fiddletown Road. Shenandoah Valley Charter School/Amador Community School is approximately 500 feet west of the project area. According to the County's Geographic Information Systems Land Use Viewer, there are no parks in or near the project area. According to the USFWS, the nearest wildlife refuge is the Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge, located more than 35 miles southwest of the project area, and the nearest park is Main Street Park, located less than one mile to the west in the city of Plymouth.

**PROJECT IMPACTS**

Would the project:

**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?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion a):** The project would not create new housing units or induce new population growth, which would accelerate the deterioration of existing parks or recreational facilities; therefore, there would be no impact.

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**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?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion b):** The project would not create new housing units or induce new population growth that would require the expansion or construction of recreational facilities; therefore, there would be no impact.

## **16. TRANSPORTATION AND TRAFFIC**

### **REGULATORY SETTING**

#### **Federal Regulations**

##### Federal Highway Administration’s Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)

The goal of the program is to achieve a significant reduction in traffic fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads, including non-State-owned public roads and roads on tribal lands. The HSIP requires a data-driven, strategic approach to improving highway safety on all public roads.

#### **Local Regulations**

##### Amador County General Plan, Circulation Element

The following objective is applicable to the project:

- To encourage major state and federal water development, transportation, and other projects which will assist in the accomplishment of the foregoing.

##### Amador Countywide Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan

The Amador Countywide Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan was developed to improve pedestrian and bicycle access for residents and visitors of the county. The Plan also serves as a countywide Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) transition plan for public rights of way. The following goal is applicable to the project:

- To develop a safe, functional and convenient non-motorized transportation network throughout Amador County that addresses the mobility needs of pedestrians and bicyclists in a manner than enhances community identity and livability.

##### Amador County Long Range Transit Development Plan

The Amador County Transportation Commission (ACTC) has initiated a Long Range Transit Development Plan to consider the long-range impact of the changing community and how these

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changes will impact the large-scale transit needs within the region in the coming decades. Rather than focusing on short-range operating details, this study takes a long view of changes likely to occur in the community, including planned developments and transportation infrastructure changes, population projections, and employment development prospects, and evaluates the need for transit services and transit infrastructure.

Amador Countywide Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)

The RTP is a multi-modal, long-range planning document prepared by the ACTC. The current 2004 RTP includes programs and policies for congestion management, transit, bicycles and pedestrians, roadways, freight, and constrained financing.

**AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT**

**Transportation Network**

The roadway network that serves the county consists of Arterials, Major Collectors, Minor Collectors, and Local Roads. The county Arterials are all state highways, including SR 16, SR 26, SR 49, SR 88, and SR124. There are no freeways in the county. The roadway network that serves the project area consists of Shenandoah Road and Fiddletown Road, which are both identified as Major Arterials. The project area is not currently served by a public transportation or bus system.

**Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities**

The project area is currently not served by a pedestrian or bicycling system, as indicated in the Amador Countywide Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan.

**PROJECT IMPACTS**

Would the project:

- a) **Conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation including mass transit and non-motorized travel and relevant components of the circulation system, including but not limited to intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit?**

Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion a):** During operation, the project would maintain the same number of through lanes (one in each direction) and would not increase capacity or result in additional vehicles on the roadway. Short-term construction traffic would primarily include limited numbers of construction personnel commuting to and from the project area. Construction activities

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associated with construction of the project would be expected to last approximately six months. The roadway would remain open during construction; however, traffic flow could be temporarily affected by slight delays or slightly increased travel time from construction vehicles and activities in the project area. Traffic flow would be restored to existing conditions after construction is complete. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

**b) Conflict with an applicable congestion management program, including, but not limited to level of service standards and travel demand measures, or other standards established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion b):** The project would maintain the same number of through lanes (one in each direction) and would not increase capacity or result in additional vehicles on the roadway; therefore, the project would have no impact on existing traffic operations, and there would be no impact.

**c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion c):** The project area is approximately five miles northeast of Westover Field Airport. The project would not result in an increase in air traffic levels or change in location of air traffic. The project would not include any vertical structures or sources of substantial light or glare that could affect air traffic. Therefore, there would be no impact.

**d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion d):** The purpose of the project is to improve traffic safety through the project corridor by realigning the intersection, increasing visibility, enhancing signage, and installing traffic control improvements. The project would not increase hazards because of a design feature or incompatible use, and is expected to improve the safety of the intersection. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

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**e) Result in inadequate emergency access?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion e):** The project does not include any elements that would impede emergency access to or from the project area. Traffic flow at the intersection could be temporarily affected during project construction. However, the intersection would remain open during construction, and emergency vehicles would continue to have access through the area. Following construction, emergency access would be improved with the enhanced traffic safety at the intersection. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

**f) Conflict with adopted policies, plans or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such facilities?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion f):** There are no bicycle or pedestrian facilities in the project area, and no transit or bus routes currently run through the project area. Therefore, there would be no impact.

## **17. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS**

### **REGULATORY SETTING**

#### **Federal and State Regulations**

No federal or state plans, policies, regulations, or laws related to utilities and service systems are applicable to the project. However, the following local ordinance is applicable to the project:

#### **Local Regulations**

##### Amador County Stormwater Management Regulations

Title 15 of the County Code (“Buildings and Construction”) describes the County’s regulations, provisions, and ordinances for stormwater management and enforcement. The provisions include standards for erosion control during and post construction.

### **AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT**

The project area lies within the Amador Water Agency (AWA), which provides the entire county with water and wastewater services. The Amador Water Service (AWS) provides water to the county through surface and groundwater supplies. ACES Waste Services provides waste disposal services to the county and project area.

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**PROJECT IMPACTS**

Would the project:

**a) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB)?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion a):** The project would not involve the development of residential dwellings or any other facilities that would contribute to an increase in the amount of wastewater generated. The project is limited to existing intersection improvements, focusing on the safety of the intersection. Therefore, there would be no impact.

**b) Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion b):** See Discussion a) above. The project would not involve the development of residential dwellings or any other facilities that would contribute to an increase in the amount of wastewater generated. Therefore, there would be no impact.

**c) Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion c):** The project would result in a slight increase in impervious surfaces within the project area, which could result in small amounts of increased stormwater runoff. Additionally, existing roadside stormwater drainages would need to be realigned to conform to the realigned intersection and roadway approaches. However, drainage patterns would remain similar to existing conditions, and the project would be designed to accommodate existing and anticipated runoff levels as required by standard design guidelines used by the County.

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Project construction would comply with the requirements of the NPDES permit required for the project, which requires implementation of BMPs to minimize soil erosion and protect water quality. Typical BMPs include, but are not limited to, limiting the construction area to the smallest area required to complete construction; dust control measures, such as watering exposed soils; and use of silt fencing, fiber rolls, and sheeting to contain soils on site during storm events. Following construction, exposed soils would either be paved or be stabilized through compaction and/or new vegetation. With implementation of standard BMPs and compliance with the NPDES requirements, the project would not be expected to result in substantial water quality impacts, requiring the need for new or expanded storm water drainage facilities. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

**d) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion d):** The project may require minimal amounts of water during construction (for mixing cement or watering areas to stabilize loose soils) or during operation (for routine cleaning of the roadway). However, the project would not be expected to require the need for new or expanded entitlements; therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

**e) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion e):** The project would not require any wastewater treatment; therefore, there would be no impact.

**f) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

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**Discussion f):** The project would generate small amounts of solid waste during the construction phase, which could be accommodated by existing area landfills. Operation of the project would not result in an increase of solid waste; therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

**g) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion g):** Solid waste generated during short-term construction activities, as well as during routine maintenance activities during project operation, would be disposed of in accordance with all federal, state, and local regulations. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

**18. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE**

**a) Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, 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?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion a):** There is minimal habitat for wildlife species in the project area, and there are no sensitive natural communities. No special-status fish or wildlife species were observed during field surveys, and the likelihood of special-status wildlife species to be in the project area is considered low. With implementation of mitigation measures outlined in Section 4. Biological Resources, impacts on wildlife species would be less than significant. In addition, there are no known archaeological sites within the project area. Although there is potential for cultural resources to be in the project area, with implementation of mitigation measures listed in Section 5. Cultural Resources, impacts on historical and prehistorical resources would be less than significant.

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**b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion b):** The project area is surrounded primarily by agricultural land uses. A query of the California Office of Planning and Research (OPR) CEQAnet environmental database was conducted for projects dating from November 2014 through November 2015 (OPR, 2015). Based on this research, a list was compiled of recent and future development projects in Amador County (see **Appendix C**).

As shown in **Appendix C**, 53 projects are currently or have recently been under environmental review in Amador County. These projects vary from residential, industrial, transportation, habitat restoration, and infrastructure projects in various locations within the county. None of these projects are directly adjacent to the project area. As described in this IS/MND, the project would not have any individually significant impacts that cannot be mitigated to a less than significant level. With compliance with local, state, and federal regulations and implementation of mitigation measures, project impacts would be less than significant. Current and future projects in the project vicinity would be expected to implement similar measures. Therefore, when viewed in connection with other planned projects, the project's contribution to cumulative impacts would be less than cumulatively considerable and less than significant.

**c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?**

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less Than Significant with Mitigation       Less Than Significant Impact       No Impact

**Discussion c):** The project would include realigning and improving an intersection and its roadway approaches to improve traffic safety. Traffic flow through the project area could be temporarily affected during project construction. However, the intersection would remain open during construction, and traffic flow would be restored to existing conditions after construction is complete. Construction noise would be minimized through compliance with Caltrans Standard Specifications Section 14-8.02, which requires that noise levels from construction between the hours of 9:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. not exceed 86 dBA at a distance of 50 feet from the construction area. The project would not result in substantial adverse effects on human beings; therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

## VI. RESPONSE TO COMMENTS ON DRAFT IS/MND

The County made the Draft IS/MND available for review at the Amador County Department of Transportation offices located at 810 Court Street, Amador, CA between the hours of 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and the City of Plymouth Planning Department located at 9436 Main Street, Plymouth, CA. The Notice of Intent (NOI) was directly mailed to adjacent property owners and other interested parties, and was also published in the Amador Ledger Dispatch newspaper, on December 11, 2016. The County invited public comments (by mail or email) during the public review period, which was from Friday, December 11, 2015 through Monday, January 11, 2016 at 5:00 p.m.

The Draft IS/MND, NOI, and Notice of Completion (NOC) were posted with the State Clearinghouse. The State Clearinghouse submitted the documents to selected state agencies for review. The review period closed on Monday, January 11, 2016. Comments were received by written letter and email. The following letters and emails were received during the comment period and are addressed in this section.

Letter	Commenter	Affiliation
A	Stephanie Tadlock Environmental Scientist	Central Valley Regional Water Quality Board 11020 Sun Center Drive, Rancho Cordoba, CA 95670
B	Ellie Routt Executive Director	Mother Lode Land Trust
1	John Guthrie	Local Resident
2	Anne Hellman	Local Resident
3	Duncan M. Herring	Area Resident
4	Lynda Philipp	Area Resident
5	Elaine Zorbas	Area Resident
6	Katherine Venturelli	Area Resident
7	Reno Farinelli	Area Resident
8	Butch Cranford	Area Resident
9	Hall Huffsmith	Vineyard Planning Trinchero Estates
10	George Reitter	Area Resident
11	Mara Feeney	Area Resident

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12	Bob Clevenger	Area Resident
13	Michelle Grondin	Area Resident

Written comments on the Draft IS/MND are scanned into this document on the following pages. Responses to those comments follow. To assist in referencing comments and responses, each commenter and issue that has been raised has been assigned a number. Responses are coded to correspond to each issue. Comments received from Agencies or organizations are coded with letters and comments received from individuals are coded with numbers. Minor edits to the Draft IS/MND are indicated in revision marks (underline strikethrough) format (e.g., underline strikethrough).

CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(a) requires that responses be made to only those comments that are specific to environmental issues received from persons who reviewed the CEQA document. Beyond the requirements set by CEQA and relevant court cases, every attempt has been made to respond to comments that address the project in general, in an effort to provide the most complete information possible.



# Letter A



## Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board

5 January 2016

Jered Reinking  
Amador County  
812 Court Street  
Jackson, CA 95642

CERTIFIED MAIL  
91 7199 9991 7035 8418 1331

### COMMENTS TO REQUEST FOR REVIEW FOR THE MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION, SHENANDOAH ROAD AND FIDDLETOWN ROAD INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, SCH# 2015122026, AMADOR COUNTY

Pursuant to the State Clearinghouse's 11 December 2015 request, the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Central Valley Water Board) has reviewed the *Request for Review for the Mitigated Negative Declaration* for the Shenandoah Road and Fiddletown Road Intersection Improvement Project, located in Amador County.

Our agency is delegated with the responsibility of protecting the quality of surface and groundwaters of the state; therefore our comments will address concerns surrounding those issues.

#### I. Regulatory Setting

##### Basin Plan

The Central Valley Water Board is required to formulate and adopt Basin Plans for all areas within the Central Valley region under Section 13240 of the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act. Each Basin Plan must contain water quality objectives to ensure the reasonable protection of beneficial uses, as well as a program of implementation for achieving water quality objectives with the Basin Plans. Federal regulations require each state to adopt water quality standards to protect the public health or welfare, enhance the quality of water and serve the purposes of the Clean Water Act. In California, the beneficial uses, water quality objectives, and the Antidegradation Policy are the State's water quality standards. Water quality standards are also contained in the National Toxics Rule, 40 CFR Section 131.36, and the California Toxics Rule, 40 CFR Section 131.38.

The Basin Plan is subject to modification as necessary, considering applicable laws, policies, technologies, water quality conditions and priorities. The original Basin Plans were adopted in 1975, and have been updated and revised periodically as required, using Basin Plan amendments. Once the Central Valley Water Board has adopted a Basin Plan amendment in noticed public hearings, it must be approved by the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board), Office of Administrative Law (OAL) and in some cases,

KARL E. LONGLEY ScD, P.E., CHAIR | PAMELA C. CREEDON P.E., BCCE, EXECUTIVE OFFICER  
11020 Sun Center Drive #200, Rancho Cordova, CA 95670 | [www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley)



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the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). Basin Plan amendments only become effective after they have been approved by the OAL and in some cases, the USEPA. Every three (3) years, a review of the Basin Plan is completed that assesses the appropriateness of existing standards and evaluates and prioritizes Basin Planning issues.

For more information on the *Water Quality Control Plan for the Sacramento and San Joaquin River Basins*, please visit our website:  
[http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/water\\_issues/basin\\_plans/](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/water_issues/basin_plans/).

### **Antidegradation Considerations**

All wastewater discharges must comply with the Antidegradation Policy (State Water Board Resolution 68-16) and the Antidegradation Implementation Policy contained in the Basin Plan. The Antidegradation Policy is available on page IV-15.01 at:  
[http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalleywater\\_issues/basin\\_plans/sacsjr.pdf](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalleywater_issues/basin_plans/sacsjr.pdf)

A-1

In part it states:

*Any discharge of waste to high quality waters must apply best practicable treatment or control not only to prevent a condition of pollution or nuisance from occurring, but also to maintain the highest water quality possible consistent with the maximum benefit to the people of the State.*

*This information must be presented as an analysis of the impacts and potential impacts of the discharge on water quality, as measured by background concentrations and applicable water quality objectives.*

The antidegradation analysis is a mandatory element in the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System and land discharge Waste Discharge Requirements (WDRs) permitting processes. The environmental review document should evaluate potential impacts to both surface and groundwater quality.

## **II. Permitting Requirements**

### **Construction Storm Water General Permit**

Dischargers whose project disturb one or more acres of soil or where projects disturb less than one acre but are part of a larger common plan of development that in total disturbs one or more acres, are required to obtain coverage under the General Permit for Storm Water Discharges Associated with Construction Activities (Construction General Permit), Construction General Permit Order No. 2009-009-DWQ. Construction activity subject to this permit includes clearing, grading, grubbing, disturbances to the ground, such as stockpiling, or excavation, but does not include regular maintenance activities performed to restore the original line, grade, or capacity of the facility. The Construction General Permit requires the development and implementation of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan

A-2

(SWPPP).

For more information on the Construction General Permit, visit the State Water Resources Control Board website at:  
[http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water\\_issues/programs/stormwater/constpermits.shtml](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/stormwater/constpermits.shtml).

**Phase I and II Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Permits<sup>1</sup>**

The Phase I and II MS4 permits require the Permittees reduce pollutants and runoff flows from new development and redevelopment using Best Management Practices (BMPs) to the maximum extent practicable (MEP). MS4 Permittees have their own development standards, also known as Low Impact Development (LID)/post-construction standards that include a hydromodification component. The MS4 permits also require specific design concepts for LID/post-construction BMPs in the early stages of a project during the entitlement and CEQA process and the development plan review process.

A-3

For more information on which Phase I MS4 Permit this project applies to, visit the Central Valley Water Board website at:  
[http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/water\\_issues/storm\\_water/municipal\\_permits/](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/water_issues/storm_water/municipal_permits/).

For more information on the Phase II MS4 permit and who it applies to, visit the State Water Resources Control Board at:  
[http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water\\_issues/programs/stormwater/phase\\_ii\\_municipal.shtml](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/stormwater/phase_ii_municipal.shtml)

**Industrial Storm Water General Permit**

Storm water discharges associated with industrial sites must comply with the regulations contained in the Industrial Storm Water General Permit Order No. 2014-0057-DWQ.

For more information on the Industrial Storm Water General Permit, visit the Central Valley Water Board website at:  
[http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/water\\_issues/storm\\_water/industrial\\_general\\_permits/index.shtml](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/water_issues/storm_water/industrial_general_permits/index.shtml).

A-4

**Clean Water Act Section 404 Permit**

If the project will involve the discharge of dredged or fill material in navigable waters or wetlands, a permit pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act may be needed from the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACOE). If a Section 404 permit is required by the USACOE, the Central Valley Water Board will review the permit application to ensure that discharge will not violate water quality standards. If the project requires surface water

A-5

<sup>1</sup> Municipal Permits = The Phase I Municipal Separate Storm Water System (MS4) Permit covers medium sized Municipalities (serving between 100,000 and 250,000 people) and large sized municipalities (serving over 250,000 people). The Phase II MS4 provides coverage for small municipalities, including non-traditional Small MS4s, which include military bases, public campuses, prisons and hospitals.

drainage realignment, the applicant is advised to contact the Department of Fish and Game for information on Streambed Alteration Permit requirements.

If you have any questions regarding the Clean Water Act Section 404 permits, please contact the Regulatory Division of the Sacramento District of USACOE at (916) 557-5250.

**Clean Water Act Section 401 Permit – Water Quality Certification**

If an USACOE permit (e.g., Non-Reporting Nationwide Permit, Nationwide Permit, Letter of Permission, Individual Permit, Regional General Permit, Programmatic General Permit), or any other federal permit (e.g., Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act or Section 9 from the United States Coast Guard), is required for this project due to the disturbance of waters of the United States (such as streams and wetlands), then a Water Quality Certification must be obtained from the Central Valley Water Board prior to initiation of project activities. There are no waivers for 401 Water Quality Certifications.

A-6

**Waste Discharge Requirements – Discharges to Waters of the State**

If USACOE determines that only non-jurisdictional waters of the State (i.e., "non-federal" waters of the State) are present in the proposed project area, the proposed project may require a Waste Discharge Requirement (WDR) permit to be issued by Central Valley Water Board. Under the California Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act, discharges to all waters of the State, including all wetlands and other waters of the State including, but not limited to, isolated wetlands, are subject to State regulation.

A-7

For more information on the Water Quality Certification and WDR processes, visit the Central Valley Water Board website at:  
[http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/help/business\\_help/permit2.shtml](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/help/business_help/permit2.shtml).

**Dewatering Permit**

If the proposed project includes construction or groundwater dewatering to be discharged to land, the proponent may apply for coverage under State Water Board General Water Quality Order (Low Risk General Order) 2003-0003 or the Central Valley Water Board's Waiver of Report of Waste Discharge and Waste Discharge Requirements (Low Risk Waiver) R5-2013-0145. Small temporary construction dewatering projects are projects that discharge groundwater to land from excavation activities or dewatering of underground utility vaults. Dischargers seeking coverage under the General Order or Waiver must file a Notice of Intent with the Central Valley Water Board prior to beginning discharge.

A-8

For more information regarding the Low Risk General Order and the application process, visit the Central Valley Water Board website at:

[http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/board\\_decisions/adopted\\_orders/water\\_quality/2003/wqo/wqo2003-0003.pdf](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/board_decisions/adopted_orders/water_quality/2003/wqo/wqo2003-0003.pdf)

For more information regarding the Low Risk Waiver and the application process, visit the Central Valley Water Board website at:

[http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/board\\_decisions/adopted\\_orders/waivers/r5-2013-0145\\_res.pdf](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/board_decisions/adopted_orders/waivers/r5-2013-0145_res.pdf)

**Regulatory Compliance for Commercially Irrigated Agriculture**

If the property will be used for commercial irrigated agricultural, the discharger will be required to obtain regulatory coverage under the Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program. There are two options to comply:

1. **Obtain Coverage Under a Coalition Group.** Join the local Coalition Group that supports land owners with the implementation of the Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program. The Coalition Group conducts water quality monitoring and reporting to the Central Valley Water Board on behalf of its growers. The Coalition Groups charge an annual membership fee, which varies by Coalition Group. To find the Coalition Group in your area, visit the Central Valley Water Board's website at: [http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/water\\_issues/irrigated\\_lands/app\\_approval/index.shtml](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/water_issues/irrigated_lands/app_approval/index.shtml); or contact water board staff at (916) 464-4611 or via email at [IrrLands@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:IrrLands@waterboards.ca.gov).
2. **Obtain Coverage Under the General Waste Discharge Requirements for Individual Growers, General Order R5-2013-0100.** Dischargers not participating in a third-party group (Coalition) are regulated individually. Depending on the specific site conditions, growers may be required to monitor runoff from their property, install monitoring wells, and submit a notice of intent, farm plan, and other action plans regarding their actions to comply with their General Order. Yearly costs would include State administrative fees (for example, annual fees for farm sizes from 10-100 acres are currently \$1,084 + \$6.70/Acre); the cost to prepare annual monitoring reports; and water quality monitoring costs. To enroll as an Individual Discharger under the Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program, call the Central Valley Water Board phone line at (916) 464-4611 or e-mail board staff at [IrrLands@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:IrrLands@waterboards.ca.gov).

A-9

A-10

**Low or Limited Threat General NPDES Permit**

If the proposed project includes construction dewatering and it is necessary to discharge the groundwater to waters of the United States, the proposed project will require coverage under a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit. Dewatering discharges are typically considered a low or limited threat to water quality and may be covered under the General Order for *Dewatering and Other Low Threat Discharges to Surface Waters* (Low Threat General Order) or the General Order for *Limited Threat Discharges of Treated/Untreated Groundwater from Cleanup Sites, Wastewater from Superchlorination Projects, and Other Limited Threat Wastewaters to Surface Water* (Limited Threat General Order). A complete application must be submitted to the Central Valley Water Board to obtain coverage under these General NPDES permits.

A-11

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Shenandoah Road and Fiddletown  
Road Intersection Improvement Project  
Amador County

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For more information regarding the Low Threat General Order and the application process, visit the Central Valley Water Board website at:  
[http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/board\\_decisions/adopted\\_orders/general\\_orders/r5-2013-0074.pdf](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/board_decisions/adopted_orders/general_orders/r5-2013-0074.pdf)

For more information regarding the Limited Threat General Order and the application process, visit the Central Valley Water Board website at:  
[http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/board\\_decisions/adopted\\_orders/general\\_orders/r5-2013-0073.pdf](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/board_decisions/adopted_orders/general_orders/r5-2013-0073.pdf)

If you have questions regarding these comments, please contact me at (916) 464-4644 or [Stephanie.Tadlock@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:Stephanie.Tadlock@waterboards.ca.gov).



Stephanie Tadlock  
Environmental Scientist

cc: State Clearinghouse unit, Governor's Office of Planning and Research, Sacramento

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**Response to Comment A-1:** This comment notes that the project must comply with the Antidegradation Policy (State Water Board Resolution 68-16) and states that the environmental review document should evaluate potential impacts to both surface and groundwater quality. Draft IS/MND Section V.(9) Hydrology and Water Quality specifically evaluated the project's potential impacts to both surface and groundwater quality, noted that the project would be required to comply with the NPDES requirements, and determined that there would be less than significant impacts to surface and groundwater quality resulting from construction of the project. Because the Draft IS/MND adequately evaluated the project's potential impacts to surface and groundwater quality, the County will not make any changes to the IS/MND as a result of this comment.

**Response to Comments A-2 through A-11:** These comments outline various permitting requirements that the project may be subject to, depending on the proposed action. Of the potential permits listed, the project would only be subject to the Construction Stormwater General Permit. The requirement to obtain a Construction Stormwater General Permit for the project is noted in Section II.(10) Other Public Agencies Whose Approval if Required. Because these comments did not include any comment on the adequacy of the CEQA document, the County will not make any changes to the IS/MND and no further response is required.

## Letter B



Letter concerning the Fiddletown/Shenandoah Road intersection improvement project #120315 .

Dear Mr. Reinking,

The Mother Lode Land Trust (MLLT) appreciates the opportunity to comment to on the Notice of intent to file a negative declaration for the Fiddletown/Shenandoah Road intersection improvement project. The Mother Lode Land Trust, through a Conservation Easement, has a vested interest in the agricultural property on the northwest portion of the project area (APN 008-030-016). In the Initial Study (IS) this property is referred to as being under a Williamson Act contract. This is accurate, but the Property is also covered under a Conservation Easement, which is a deed restriction that is more restrictive than the Williamson Act, is in perpetuity, and has specific language in it about subdivision and eminent domain. Furthermore, it is the responsibility of the Conservation Easement holder, the MLLT, to ensure that the restrictions placed on the Property are upheld and that the intent of the Conservation Purpose is honored.

B-1

Item 4e in the IS states that there are no impacts, but there will be the removal of heritage oak trees and oak woodland habitat with no mitigation proposed. We feel this should be considered potentially significant unless there are mitigations proposed. State law requires that a registered professional forester (RPF) evaluate the site to determine if oak woodlands are to be impacted by this project. Did the consultant who prepared the report contract with a RPF to evaluate the impacts to oak woodlands? In Item 10 the IS states that there is a conservations easement on the property, but that there are no impacts. We feel that this item should be a potential significant impact if not mitigated.

B-2

Additionally, it is more disconcerting to discover that even though the County has already done planning at this intersection and has previously purchased right of way, they are changing the project in light of federal funding, which requires a 55 mph turn radius. We feel that the project should primarily address public safety, and engineering a 55 mph turn just because the funding requires it, doesn't seem to be in the best interests of public safety. The County has already purchased significant right of way in

B-3

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this area for an intersection re-alignment, and it is our impression that the existing right-of-way is more than adequate to develop a safe intersection. We would like to officially ask that the County maintain their project within the existing right of way on the northwestern side of the project area. We feel that this intersection should be designed to standards of a curve radius to support traffic speeds of less than 45 mph. There is a 35 mph turn just north of the project location that would mean that even if the new curve radius is built to support 55 mph speeds, drivers would be entering and/or leaving (depending on the direction of travel) the turn at a much slower rate of speed. The same is true for the west end of the project area, except that at this end of the turn drivers will be entering (or coming from) a 25 mph school zone. While the school itself is mentioned in the IS, there is no mention to the fact that there will be a 25 mph zone in that area. According to figures 3 and 4 of the IS, the turn heading westbound will end its curve right in front of the School. This means that about half of a 55 mph turn will consist of speeds well under 55 mph. Also, we feel that it is unsafe to encourage traffic to travel at a speed of 55 mph in an area where you have a "T" intersection where Fiddletown Road intersects Highway 16.

B-4

In conclusion we would like to reiterate that we are asking that the County develops this project within the existing right of way, and that if it can't do this, then it appropriately addresses the impacts to the Conservation Values protected under the Conservation Easement on this property.

Thank you for your consideration. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Ellie Routt

Executive Director

Mother Lode Land Trust

(209) 304-8804 (w) (209) 419-2861 (c)

[ellie.routt@motherlodelandtrust.org](mailto:ellie.routt@motherlodelandtrust.org)

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**Response to Comment B-1:** The Draft IS/MND, Section III.(10) Land Use and Planning, Affected Environment section, second paragraph, identifies that parcel APN 008-030-016 is under a conservation easement held by MLLT, and provides a description of that easement, including a list of the restrictions on activities or uses of the parcel that the easement identifies as being inconsistent with the purpose and intent of the easement. The list of prohibited uses does not include use of a portion of the parcel for a public roadway. Because the information provided in the comment is already noted in the Draft IS/MND, and this comment did not address the adequacy of the CEQA document, the County will not make any changes to the IS/MND and no further response is required.

**Response to Comment B-2:** The comment that Item 4e identified *no impacts* from conflicts with local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources is incorrect. Section V.4(e) of the IS/MND determined that the project would have *less than significant impacts* from conflicts with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance. Applicable local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, including any tree preservation policies or ordinances, were identified in the Regulatory Setting: Local Regulations section of Section V.4 Biological Resources. As identified in this section, Amador County does not have any policies or ordinances protecting biological resources that are applicable to the project, nor any tree preservation policy or ordinance. While the County acknowledges that conservation easement on the parcel in question is intended to “preserve the Property in its current agricultural, scenic, open space, wildlife and wooded wildlife habitat condition in perpetuity, and to protect it from any use that will significantly impair or interfere with its Agricultural and Conservation Values,” it must be understood that a conservation easement is strictly an agreement between a property owner and a land trust for an individual parcel, and is not tantamount to a policy or ordinance. Therefore, the project’s potential impacts from conflicts with local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources would remain less than significant, as discussed in the Draft IS/MND, and no changes to the IS/MND will be made in response to this comment.

The comment also states that state law requires that a Registered Professional Forester (RPF) evaluate the site to determine if oak woodlands are to be impacted by the project, and asks if a RPF evaluated the site to determine if oak woodlands would be impacted by the project. The commenter does not identify a specific law in the comment, so it is unknown what state law the commenter is referring to. CEQA Guidelines Section 15204(c) requires that “reviewers should explain the basis for their comments, and should submit data or references offering facts, reasonable assumptions based on facts, or expert opinion supported by facts in support of their comments. Pursuant to Section 15064, an effect shall not be considered significant in the absence of substantial evidence.” Because the commenter does not identify a specific law in the comment, so it is unknown what state law the commenter is referring to, the County is unable to provide

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further response to this comment; however, to clarify what state laws exist regarding oak woodland conservation, the following text is added to Section II.4 Regulatory Setting: State Regulations, beginning on page 38:

Oak Woodland Conservation

In 2005, Senate Bill (SB) 1334 was passed by the California Legislature, mandating that counties require feasible and proportional habitat mitigation for impacts on oak woodlands as part of the CEQA process. Under Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 21083.4, a county is required to determine whether projects “may result in a conversion of oak woodlands that will have a significant effect on the environment.” The law applies to all oak woodlands except those dominated by black oak. When it is determined that a project may have a significant effect on oak woodlands, mitigation is required.

As discussed in Draft IS/MND Section II.4.e) the County identified less than significant impacts from oak tree removal as a result of the project. Because the Draft IS/MND adequately addresses the project’s potential effects from oak tree removal, no further changes will be made to the IS/MND in response to this comment.

The comment also states that Item 10 in the IS/MND [Land Use and Planning section] states that there is a conservation easement on the property in question, but that there are no impacts, and the commenter feels that this item should be a potentially significant impact if not mitigated. Section V.10(c) specifically examines potential project conflicts with an applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan, and states that, because there are no habitat conservation plans or natural community conservation plans applicable to the project area, there would be no impacts from conflicts with these plans. As stated above, the County acknowledges the conservation intentions of the conservation easement on the parcel in question; however a conservation easement is strictly an agreement between a property owner and a land trust for an individual parcel, and is not tantamount to a habitat conservation plan or a natural community conservation plan. Therefore, the project’s potential impacts from conflicts with habitat conservation plans or natural community conservation plans would remain “no impact”, as discussed in the Draft IS/MND, and no changes to the IS/MND will be made in response to this comment.

**Response to Comment B-3:** The comment that the County previously acquired right of way in this area for a planned roadway is correct. According to information available to County Public Works Department staff, right of way was acquired in the 1970s for a proposed roadway improvement project from the intersection of SR 49 to Shenandoah School Road, which included the current project area. For reasons that are no longer clear today, the roadway improvements were only completed from the intersection of SR 49 to 2200 feet east, and did not include any improvements to the curve of Shenandoah Road at the intersection of Fiddletown Road. Contrary to the statement made in the comment, the proposed project is not a change to the project proposed in the 1970s, but

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is instead a new project proposed in response to the high number of collisions that have occurred at the intersection in the past several years and to correct the non-standard configuration of the intersection in general. The proposed project is being designed to meet current design standards required by County policy, which include Amador County Code (Local Standards), the guidance of the Caltrans Highway Design Manual (State Standards), and/or the roadway design policies established by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, AASHTO (Federal Standards). Regardless of the utilization of federal funding or not, it is County policy to adhere to all applicable design standards whenever feasible. Because this comment does not address the adequacy of the Draft IS/MND, no further response is required and no changes will be made to the IS/MND in response to this comment.

The comment also requests that the County maintain the existing right of way in the northwestern portion of the project area, and suggests that the project should be designed to support a curve radius of less than 45 mph. The commenter also states that she feels it is unsafe to encourage traffic to travel at a speed of 55 mph in an area of a “T” intersection where Fiddletown Road intersection Highway 16 [*sic*, Shenandoah Road]. As discussed previously, the proposed project is being designed to meet all applicable current design standards, which are intended to provide standard and functional roadways and traffic operations. The Draft IS/MND Section V.(16) Traffic and Transportation, Discussion d) identifies that the project would have less than significant impacts from hazards due to a design feature or incompatible use. Because the Draft IS/MND adequately address this topic related to hazards from design features, no changes will be made to the IS/MND in response to this comment.

The County considered project designs that could avoid the need to acquire additional right of way from parcels surrounding the project area; however no current feasible alternative was identified which avoids the need to acquire additional right of way. Designing the project to support a 45 mph speed, or some other reduced speed, would likely not be effective in slowing traffic through this area, as evidenced by that fact that the existing curve radius is already insufficient to support posted speeds, and drivers continue to regularly travel through the area at high rates of speed.

While the County considered opportunities for reducing posted speeds through this segment of Shenandoah Road as a possible means to improve safety along this segment of road, setting speed limits that are below the speed that most motorists perceive to be reasonable for the given road has been shown to be largely ineffective. Several studies completed on the effects of lowering or raising speed limits, including FHWA’s 1992 Final Report on the Effects of Raising and Lowering Speed Limits (Report No. FHWA-RD-92-084), found that reducing posted speed limits does little to reduce vehicle speeds and resulting accidents on a roadway, and primarily serves to only increase driver violations of the speed limit (FHWA, 1992). As a practical matter and using the existing intersection as a prime example, any potential design concept or configuration that does not achieve

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general motorist perceptions and expectations for the type of roadway, would likely remain geometrically deficient and possibly dangerous. This situation does not address the identified problems in the long term and should not be considered for implementation.

**Response to Comment B-4:** Because this comment is a reiteration of previous comments, the response to this comment is provided as part of Responses B-1 through B-3, and no additional response is provided here, nor will any changes be made to the IS/MND be made in response to this comment.

## Letter 1

DATE: December 15, 2015

TO: Jered Reinking, Amador County Department of  
Transportation and Public Works  
810 Court Street  
Jackson, CA 95642

Supervisor Brian Oneto  
Amador County Offices  
810 Court Street  
Jackson, CA 95642

FROM: John Guthrie  
17696 Overlook Ct. E.  
Plymouth, CA 95669-9747  
Tele: 209-245-3319

REGARDING: PUBLIC NOTICE  
"NOTICE OF INTENT TO ADOPT A MITIGATED  
NEGATIVE DECLARATION"

RECEIVED

DEC 18 2015

TRANSPORTATION  
& PUBLIC WORKS

Gentlemen:

In the "NOTICE OF INTENT TO ADOPT A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION,"  
(Copy Attached), "The purpose of the project is to improve inter-  
section safety". Yet, per the notice, "Based upon the findings  
contained in the IS, it is determined that the project will not  
have a significant effect on the environment, based on mitigation  
measures that will be attached to the project as conditions of  
approval". The project therefore does not achieve the intended  
purpose of "improve intersection safety". 1-1

The "project" is a comparative of which exits as opposed to the  
superlative or most safe improvement. 1-2

The most safe intersection per studies in a rural setting is a  
"Roundabout". 1-3

Fiddletown/Oleta Road is the only fire escape East of the proposed  
improved intersection. To place a STOP sign on this Road is  
tantamount, in my opinion, of locking a fire escape. 1-4

I request you to re-visit the "Project" with a more practical  
safety approach for the Residents (Young, Old and the ones falling  
behind) East of the proposed improved intersection. 1-5

This proposed project stands to only reinvent what we already  
know does not work, 1.25 miles away at the Main Street/Highway 49  
intersection. Example: from a STOP at the "T"(s) of Main Street/  
Highway 49, to a 4 WAY STOP to the pending construction of a  
ROUNDAABOUT. 1-6

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December 14, 2015

Jered Reinking  
Brian Oneto

Page 2

Regarding additional funding for a ROUNDABOUT at Shenandoah Road and Fiddletown Road, I would suggest monies from California Fire Prevention Fee. 1-7

Gentlemen, let's get this project right the first time, lives are at stake.

Respectfully Submitted,



John Guthrie

Enclosure Work Shop Submission May 27, 2013

CC: John Plasse, District 1  
Richard Forster, District 2  
Lynn Morgan, District 3  
Louis Boitano, District 4

**PUBLIC NOTICE  
NOTICE OF INTENT TO ADOPT  
A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION**

**SHENANDOAH ROAD AND FIDDLETOWN  
ROAD  
INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENT PROJECT**  
Amador County, California

The Amador County Department of Transportation and Public Works announces the availability of a Draft Initial Study/ Mitigated Negative Declaration (Draft IS/MND) prepared for the Shenandoah Road and Fiddletown Road Intersection Improvement Project (project). The purpose of the project is to improve intersection safety. The County proposes to realign the existing Shenandoah Road/Fiddletown Road intersection as a "T" intersection with a stop sign control on Fiddletown Road. The project would include shifting the Shenandoah Road alignment to the northwest, and constructing a new leg of Fiddletown Road to intersect with Shenandoah Road.

In accordance with CEQA, the County conducted an initial study (IS) to evaluate the potential effects of the project. Based upon the findings contained in the IS, it is determined that the project will not have a significant effect on the environment, based on mitigation measures that will be attached to the project as conditions of approval. Therefore, the County intends to adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the project.

The public review period begins on Friday, December 11, 2015 and closes on Monday, January 11, 2016. All comments must be received by 5:00 PM on January 11, 2016. Comments may be submitted to Jered Reinking, Amador County Department of Transportation and Public Works, at 810 Court Street, Jackson, CA 95642. If submitting comments, please include your name and an address, e-mail, or phone number where you may be contacted.

The proposed IS/MND is available for review at the following locations:

- Amador County Department of Transportation and Public Works, 810 Court Street, Jackson, CA 95642, Monday through Friday between 8:00 AM and 5:00 PM.
- City of Plymouth Planning Department, 9436 Main Street, Plymouth, CA 95669, Monday through Friday between 8:00 AM and 5:00 PM.

A copy of the Draft IS/MND may also be viewed at the Amador County Department of Transportation and Public Works website: <http://www.co.amador.ca.us/departments/transportation-and-public-works/current-public-works-projects>.

co.amador.ca.us/departments/transportation-and-public-works/current-public-works-projects.

A public hearing is not planned to be held by Amador County for this project.

For additional information, please call the Amador County Department of Transportation and Public Works at (209) 223-6429.

**December 11, 2015-R245**

REGARDING: Oleta Road, Shenandoah Road, E 10

Submitted by: John Guthrie, 17696 Overlook Ct. E., Plymouth, CA, 95669

Option Solution: A simple Geometry solution for a Geometry Challenged Intersection. An Eggabout or Y-about design compliments the selection by the City of Plymouth for a Roundabout at the Main Street Highway 49 Intersection.

**Roundabouts**

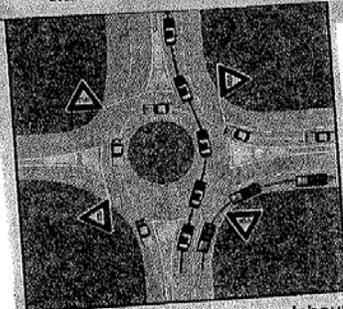
A roundabout is an intersection where traffic travels around a central island in a counter-clockwise direction. Vehicles entering or exiting the roundabout must yield to all traffic including pedestrians.

- When you approach a roundabout:
- Slow down as you approach the roundabout.
  - Yield to pedestrians and bicyclists crossing the roadway.
  - Watch for signs and/or pavement markings that guide you or prohibit certain movements.

- Enter the roundabout when there is a big enough gap in traffic.
- Drive in a counter-clockwise direction. Do not stop or pass other vehicles.
- Use your turn signals when you change lanes or exit the roundabout.
- If you miss your exit, continue around until you return to your exit.

For roundabouts with multiple lanes, choose your entry or exit lane based on your destination as shown in the graphic. For example, to:

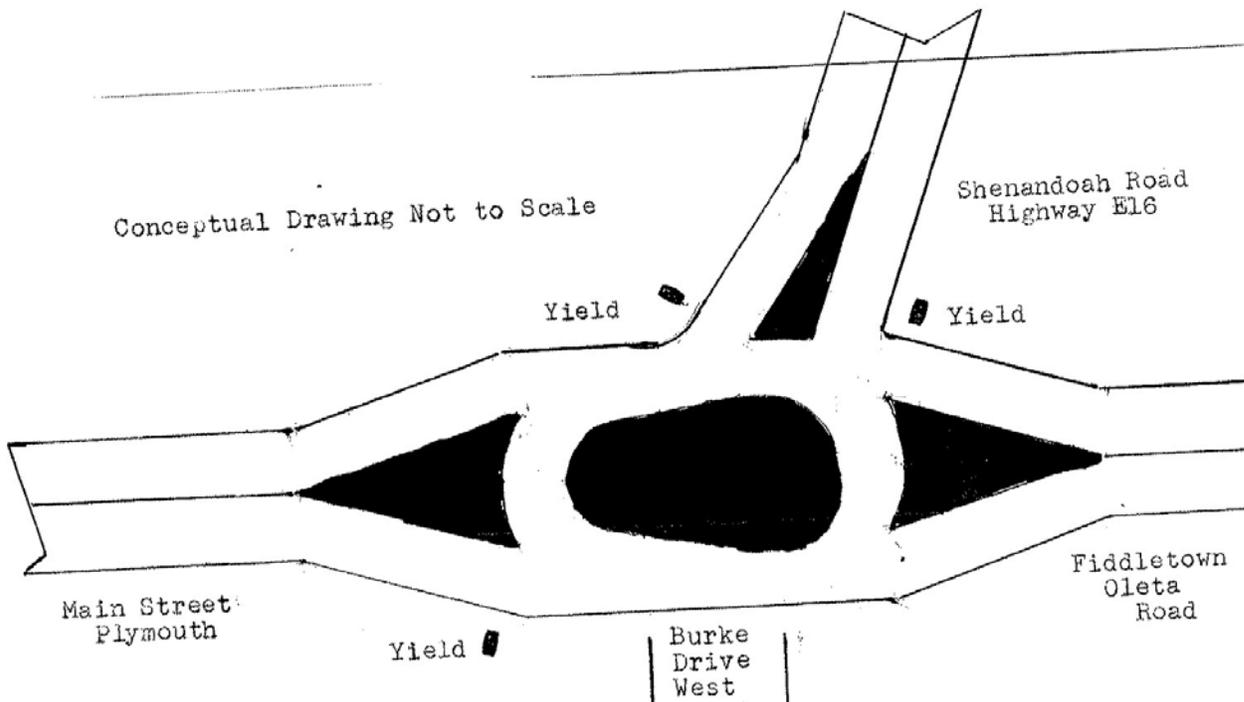
- Turn right at the intersection (blue car), choose the right-hand lane and exit in the right-hand lane.
- Go straight through the intersection (red car), choose either lane, and exit in the lane you entered.
- Turn left (yellow car), choose the left lane, and exit.



Multiple and single lane roundabout  
EGGABOUT OR Y-ABOUT

Copy 2013 California Driver Handbook Pages 25, 28

The old fashion "Y" in the road replaced with the futuristic Eggabout. No broken yokes here people and/or vehicles. Caution by design.



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**Response to Comment 1-1:** The statement that the purpose of the project is to improve intersection safety is correct; however the commenter's conclusion that, because the IS/MND determined that the project would not have a significant effect on the environment, the project does not achieve the intended purpose of improving intersection safety is incorrect. Contrary to the assertion of the comment, a project does not need to result in a significant impact to the environment in order to achieve the project's purpose of improving safety. In fact, CEQA Guidelines Section 15021(a) explicitly establishes "a duty for public agencies to avoid or minimize environmental damage where feasible." The proposed project both meets the project purpose of improving safety, and complies with the requirement to avoid or minimize environmental damage, in this case, to a less than significant level after implementation of measures, to avoid, minimize and mitigate for potentially significant environmental impacts. Because the Draft IS/MND adequately analyzes and disclosed potential environmental impacts that may result from the project, no changes will be made to the IS/MND in response to this comment.

**Response to Comment 1-2:** This comment identifying the project as a comparative instead of a superlative or most safe improvement is noted; however because this comment does not address the adequacy of the IS/MND, no further response is required and no changes will be made to the IS/MND in response to this comment.

**Response to Comment 1-3:** This comment regarding the most safe intersection in a rural setting is a roundabout is noted; however because this comment does not address the adequacy of the IS/MND, no further response is required and no changes will be made to the IS/MND in response to this comment.

**Response to Comment 1-4:** This comment stating that Fiddletown/Oleta Road is the only fire escape east of project area, and that the commenter feels that installing a stop sign at the intersection is tantamount to "locking a fire escape" is noted. The IS/MND, Section V.(8) Hazards and Hazardous Materials, identifies the Amador County Sheriff's Office of Emergency Services as responsible for coordinating emergency response and evacuation procedures in the project area, and for implementing the Amador County Evacuation Plan and Amador County Emergency Operations Plan. Should emergency evacuation of any portion of Amador County be required for any reason, including fire, the Office of Emergency Services would implement the Amador County Evacuation Plan and the Amador County Emergency Operations Plan. As discussed in IS/MND Section V.(8)(g), the project would have less than significant impacts from the impairment of or physical interference with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan, specifically because the project is expected to improve intersection safety and visibility. Additionally, as discussed in IS/MND Section V.(16)(e) identifies that the project would have less than significant impacts to emergency access. Because the IS/MND adequately addresses the project's potential effects to implementation of emergency response plans, emergency evacuation plans, and to emergency access, no changes will be made to the IS/MND in response to this comment.

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**Response to Comment 1-5:** This comment requests the County to re-visit the project with more practical safety approaches has been included in the final environmental document. Please see response to Comment 1-4 related to the IS/MND's analysis of the project's potential effects to implementation of emergency response plans and emergency evacuation plans.

**Response to Comment 1-6:** This comment stating that the project would only reinvent a project design that does not work, like at the intersection of SR 49 and Main Street in Plymouth, is noted; however because this comment does not address the adequacy of the IS/MND, no further response is required and no changes will be made to the IS/MND in response to this comment.

**Response to Comment 1-7:** This comment regarding suggested funding for a roundabout is noted; however, CEQA does not require an analysis of project funding or fees, and this comment does not address the adequacy of the IS/MND; therefore, no further response is required and no changes will be made to the IS/MND in response to this comment.

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Comment Letter #2: Anne Hellman, Area Resident.

## Letter 2

From: Anne Hellman <[anne.anehellman@gmail.com](mailto:anne.anehellman@gmail.com)>  
Date: Wed, Jan 6, 2016 at 12:24 PM  
Subject: Fiddletown/Shenandoah Rd. Intersection  
To: [jreinking@amadorgov.org](mailto:jreinking@amadorgov.org)

Mr. Reinking,

I am distressed by the scale of the proposed intersection. I would be happier with a change that entailed a slower speed and a less invasive use of the farm land.

2-1

Thank you for your consideration. I have a property on Fiddletown Rd.

Anne Hellman

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**Response to Comment 2-1:** This comment expressing preference for an intersection design that would entail a slower speed and a less invasive use of farmland is noted. Please see response to Comment B-3 for a response to the portion of the comment addressing a project design that would entail a slower speed. As discussed in IS/MND Section V.(2)(b), the project would require acquisition of land from an agricultural parcel that is also under a Williamson Act contract; however the project would result in less than significant impacts from conflicts with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract. Because the IS/MND adequately addresses the project’s potential effects to farmland and Williamson Act lands, no changes will be made to the IS/MND in response to this comment.

Letter 3



16150 Rolling Oaks Court

Fiddletown CA, 95629

January 30, 2015

Mr. Jared Reinking

Amador County

Department of Transportation & Public Works

810 Court Street, Jackson CA, 95642

An assumption that a negligible amount of traffic travels of Fiddletown Road could have been valid twenty years ago; however, such is certainly not the case today. As a result, the intersection of Shenandoah Road and Fiddletown Road needs appropriate improvements.

3-1

Approaching the current Fiddletown Road intersection at 55 miles per hour on Shenandoah Road toward Plymouth is truly confusing. One glimpses an apparent left turn that leads to Fiddletown Road, but is difficult to see that the north bound traffic on Fiddletown Road is about to merge with the vehicles on Shenandoah Road toward Plymouth. A first time Shenandoah Road driver would likely be unaware should traffic be present on Fiddletown Road and a dangerous merging situation be about to take place.

3-2

A driver approaching the current Shenandoah Road intersection on Fiddletown Road would likely be unable to see all of the traffic moving on Shenandoah Road toward Plymouth, and stopping at the yield sign would risk a rear end collision without substantially improving the view of Shenandoah Road from many low to the ground vehicles. For most drivers, the subsequent merge onto Shenandoah Road toward Plymouth is, at best, a gamble.

3-3

The present plan begins to address the situation. This present plan does move the entire intersection to the north; it does stop the traffic on Fiddletown Road; it does provide a merge lane to Fiddletown Road for drivers who approach the new intersection from Plymouth; and it does include a second merge lane toward Shenandoah Valley for drivers on Fiddletown Road.

3-4

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JAN 03 2016

TRANSPORTATION & PUBLIC WORKS

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Unfortunately three problems would certainly develop, should Amador County implement the proposed SHENANDOAH ROAD / FIDDLETOWN ROAD INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENT PROJECT in its current form.

1. The new intersection would continue to be quite dangerous; because traffic would move unimpeded in both directions on Shenandoah Road at 55 miles per hour.
  2. The proposed new intersection plan would make it very difficult for traffic on Fiddletown Road to enter Shenandoah Road toward Plymouth during large winery events in Shenandoah Valley when long lines of traffic form behind the stop sign at Highway 49 and Shenandoah Road and this traffic extends past our intersection at Shenandoah Road and Fiddletown Road.
  3. Building our new intersection under the current plan would require an acquisition of five acres of farm land and destroy a beautiful grove of trees.
- The first problem with this present Amador County plan is that the new intersection would be quite dangerous; because traffic would move unimpeded in both directions on Shenandoah Road at 55 miles per hour.

3-5

A much safer solution would include signs to slow the traffic in all directions and a three way stop where Fiddletown Road meets Shenandoah Road. The traffic on Fiddletown Road would stop. The traffic on Shenandoah Road toward Shenandoah Valley would stop. The traffic on Shenandoah Road toward Plymouth would stop. All traffic would proceed safely when it was their turn to enter the intersection. These results would be somewhat similar to the safe situation that now exists at the recently installed four way stop where Shenandoah Road and Main Street meet Highway 49 in Plymouth. A stop sign solution that works well at Shenandoah Road and Highway 49 would work just as well at Shenandoah Road and Fiddletown Road.

Imagine a pickup truck towing a horse trailer from Fiddletown Road, stopping and lumbering into the intersection toward Plymouth on Shenandoah Road. I must believe that a driver unfamiliar with Shenandoah Road, perhaps a driver who just left a Shenandoah Valley winery, would be glad he noticed the signs, slowed from 55 miles per hour, spotted the horse trailer entering the intersection, and stopped at Fiddletown Road before driving safely through Plymouth on his way home. Imagine the same driver approaching the Fiddletown Road intersection at 55 miles per hour on Shenandoah Road and confronting the same horse trailer entering the highway. I am quite sure that all of us here in Amador County are good enough hosts to desire a safe solution at the intersection of Shenandoah Valley Road and Fiddletown Road for our winery guests, many of whom are traveling our roads for the first time.

- 
- **The second problem with the present Amador County plan is that it would be very difficult for traffic on Fiddletown Road to enter Shenandoah Road toward Plymouth when large winery events in Shenandoah Valley cause a long lines of traffic to form behind the stop sign at Highway 49 and Shenandoah Road and extend past the new intersection at Shenandoah Road and Fiddletown Road.**

3-6

A three way stop at Shenandoah Road and Fiddletown Road would allow traffic during an event to move through this intersection in an orderly fashion from either the Shenandoah Valley wineries or Fiddletown Road.

- **The third problem with the present plan is that this implementation would involve moving our new intersection quite far north onto five acres of adjacent farm land and destroying a beautiful grove of trees along with the associated wildlife.**

3-7

A three way stop at Shenandoah Road and Fiddletown Road would certainly encourage traffic to move more slowly while approaching this new intersection. It would appear that were the traffic moving at a more moderate speed, it would only be necessary for Shenandoah Road to be straight enough to allow drivers to see the new intersection clearly along with the traffic moving through it and any stopped vehicles with drivers that are waiting their turn to proceed. Would it be possible to place our new intersection far enough to the north to provide good visibility in all directions and easy access from Fiddletown Road yet let the new path of Shenandoah Road pass by the beautiful grove of trees that drivers currently see? After all, simple panoramas such as these trees make Amador County a desirable area to live in and a wonderful place to visit.

Sincerely,



Duncan Herring

(209) 245-6945

[duncanherring@volcano.net](mailto:duncanherring@volcano.net)

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**Response to Comment 3-1:** This comment regarding amounts of traffic and statement that the Shenandoah Road and Fiddletown Road needs appropriate improvements is noted; however because this comment does not address the adequacy of the Draft IS/MND, no further response is required and no changes will be made to the IS/MND in response to this comment.

**Response to Comment 3-2:** This comment regarding the confusing nature of the existing intersection configuration is noted; however because this comment does not address the adequacy of the Draft IS/MND, no further response is required and no changes will be made to the IS/MND in response to this comment.

**Response to Comment 3-3:** This comment regarding the design deficiencies of the existing intersection is noted; however because this comment does not address the adequacy of the Draft IS/MND, no further response is required and no changes will be made to the IS/MND in response to this comment.

**Response to Comment 3-4:** This comment regarding how the proposed project design addresses the existing intersection's design deficiencies is noted; however because this comment does not address the adequacy of the Draft IS/MND, no further response is required and no changes will be made to the IS/MND in response to this comment.

**Response to Comment 3-5:** This comment stating that the proposed project design of Shenandoah Road would be dangerous and the suggestion to create a three-way stop sign controlled intersection that would stop traffic in all directions is noted. As discussed in IS/MND Section II.(8) Project Description, the purpose of the project is to improve intersection safety and roadway geometrics. The project design would meet all current design standards and requirements; therefore, the project would have adequate roadway geometry, intersection visibility and site distance, signage and traffic control to ensure a safe intersection for the posted speed of 55 mph. As discussed in IS/MND Section V.(16)(d), the project would have less than significant impacts from hazards due to a design feature or incompatible use. The proposed project design meets the project purpose of improving safety, and the topic of the project's potential impacts from hazards due to a design feature or incompatible use was adequately addressed in the Draft IS/MND; therefore no changes will be made to the IS/MND in response to this comment.

**Response to Comment 3-6:** The comment stating that the proposed project design would make it difficult for vehicles to enter Shenandoah Road from Fiddletown Road during large winery events in the Shenandoah Valley is noted. Traffic Impacts from large special events in the Shenandoah Valley are evaluated separately on a case-by-case basis. Typically, any special event that would create enough traffic to warrant studying specific traffic impacts could require a conditional use permit and/or an encroachment permit from Amador County. The proposed project accommodates traffic generated as contemplated under the Amador County General Plan and Regional Transportation Plan.

**Response to Comment 3-7:** This comment states that the project would relocate the intersection to the northwest and impact five acres of adjacent farmland and remove a grove of

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trees. Draft IS/MND Section V.(2) Agriculture and Forestry Resources identifies that the project would acquire land from a parcel that is zoned for agricultural use and under a Williamson Act contract. Section V.(2)(b) determined that the project would result in less than significant impacts from conflicts with existing zoning for agricultural use and Williamson Act contracts.

Draft IS/MND Section V.(1) Aesthetics discusses that the project would result in the removal of trees within the project area, and that construction of the project would result in a change in the visual character of the project area; however the project would not substantially degrade the visual quality of project area, and impacts were identified as less than significant.

Draft Section V.4(e) determined that the project would have less than significant impacts from conflicts with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance. As identified in this section, Amador County does not have any policies or ordinances protecting biological resources that are applicable to the project, nor any tree preservation policy or ordinance. Because the Draft IS/MND already adequately addressed the topics of acquisition of land from an agricultural zoned parcel and Williamson Act parcel, and of aesthetic and biological impacts from tree removal, no changes will be made to the IS/MND in response to this comment.

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Comment Letter #4: Lynda Philipp, Area Resident.

### Letter 4

From: Lynda Philipp <[lyndap7@hughes.net](mailto:lyndap7@hughes.net)>  
Date: Tue, Jan 5, 2016 at 10:54 AM  
Subject: Shenandoah/Fiddletown Roads intersection project  
To: [jreinking@amadorgov.org](mailto:jreinking@amadorgov.org), [boneto@amadorgovb.org](mailto:boneto@amadorgovb.org)

As a person living in the Fiddletown area, I use the intersection in question quite often. I feel that upgrading Shenandoah Rd. to 55 mph standards will increase the difficulty and decrease the safety of vehicles trying to get onto Shenandoah Rd. If the curve is improved to increase the speed of movement to and from the wineries It will be dangerously difficult for those on Fiddletown Rd. Please reconsider the speed on Shenandoah Rd.

4-1

Lynda Philipp  
19000 Quercus Ct.  
Fiddletown, CA 95629

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**Response to Comment 4-1:** This comment stating that the proposed project would decrease safety and increase difficulty for vehicles traveling from Fiddletown Road onto to Shenandoah Road, and requesting that the County reconsider the speed on Shenandoah Road is noted. As discussed in IS/MND Section V.(16)(d), the project would have less than significant impacts from hazards due to a design feature or incompatible use. As stated in Response 3-5, the project design would meet all current design standards and requirements; therefore, the project would have adequate roadway geometry, intersection visibility and site distance, signage and traffic control for the posted speed of 55 mph. The proposed project design meets the project purpose of improving safety of the existing intersection, and the topic of the project’s potential impacts from hazards due to a design feature or incompatible use was adequately addressed in the Draft IS/MND; therefore no changes will be made to the IS/MND in response to this comment.

Please see Response B-3 regarding reducing posted speeds through the project area. As stated in Response B-3, although the County considered opportunities for reducing posted speeds through this segment of Shenandoah Road as a possible means to improve safety along this segment of road, setting speed limits that are below the speed that most motorists perceive to be reasonable for the given road has been shown to be largely ineffective. Any potential design concept or configuration that does not achieve general motorist perceptions and expectations for the type of roadway, would likely remain geometrically deficient and possibly dangerous. This situation does not address the identified problems in the long term and should not be considered for implementation. Because this comment does not address the adequacy of the IS/MND, no changes will be made to the IS/MND in response to this comment.

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Comment Letter #5: Elaine Zorbas, Area Resident.

**Nancy Champlin**

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**From:** outlook\_4153f22e7aa31752@outlook.com on behalf of Elaine Zorbas  
**Sent:** Monday, January 04, 2016 4:02 PM  
**To:** jreinking@amadorgov.org  
**Cc:** boneto@amadorgov.org; nancy@actc-amador.org; jonec@att.net; Dimitris Zorbas  
**Subject:** Intersection of Fiddletown Rd. and Shenandoah Rd.  
**Attachments:** Intersection Fiddletown Rd and Shenandoah Rd.docx; Intersection proposal 3 stop signs.pdf

Dear Jered Reinking,

This message is in response to the report of the *Shenandoah Road/ Fiddletown Road Intersection Improvement Project*, prepared by GPA Consulting in El Segundo. We agree that this is a dangerous and confusing intersection for vehicles heading west towards Plymouth from the perspectives of both Fiddletown Road and Shenandoah Road. Whereas the report addresses legal and environmental issues and also proposes a solution, it seems to completely leave off the views and perspective from Fiddletown Road, or the type of truck traffic coming and going on both roads.

Here are a number of questions and comments:

- Have daily traffic counts been conducted for each road?
- Were observations made about the type of vehicles on both roads, ranging from pick-up trucks, dump trucks, logging trucks, trucks with trailers pulling heavy equipment, pickups pulling trailers such as horse trailers, RVs, etc.?
- The topography of Fiddletown Road was ignored in the report. It rises to a higher elevation than Shenandoah Road. What happens to the hill for the extended new leg? The report does not show Views from Fiddletown Road, yet this is the most dangerous crossing.
- Were other options considered?
- To our knowledge public meetings were not held to discuss possible alternatives, as they were for the intersection of Hwy 49 and Shenandoah Road.

5-1

**Recommendations for the intersection**

- Maintain speed on Shenandoah Road 35-40 mph. heading to and from Plymouth for safety. As vehicles approach Plymouth near the school, the speed limit is already 25 mph. This would be a more logical transition, and a continuation of slowing required for passing curves by Young’s Winery.
- Align new curve for Shenandoah Valley Road to the fence line of adjacent agricultural land. There is already a sizable swathe of land between the road and fence for changing the curve. Intruding into the Williamson Act land under a Conservation Easement would result in the loss of trees and a small hill to the north, part of the scenic view. Impacts from tree removal, disturbance of nesting birds and bats would be minimized with this alignment.
- Put in three STOP signs – at new leg of Fiddletown Road, and in both directions along Shenandoah Road where it intersects with Fiddletown Road. This would slow traffic on both roads and give equal rights of way to vehicles making turns. (see attached Diagram).

5-2

5-3

5-4

There are other options for this dangerous intersection as well. We have attached a document that discusses the use of BOTH roads for further awareness of the issues involved, and that also refers to some of the impacts in the report.

Thank you for your consideration.

Elaine and Dimitris Zorbas  
Fiddletown

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## FIDDLETOWN-SHENANDOAH VALLEY ROAD INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENT

Comments by Elaine & Dimitris Zorbas, Fiddletown

### Context of the intersection and issues

**Shenandoah Road** at the intersection under discussion is the gateway to the majority of wineries in Amador County and the point where attractive views begin.

- The rural views of grazing land, rolling hills with large oak trees are aesthetically pleasing to tourists and locals. *The removal of large oaks will degrade the view.*
- Visitors heading from the wineries and returning to Plymouth, first come to sharp curve after Young's Winery that forces drivers to slow down. The lower speed of 35-40 mph should be maintained when coming to the intersection in question. *A speed limit of 55 mph is inappropriate and dangerous for this intersection, where traffic crossing from Fiddletown Road may not be anticipated.*
- When several wineries have events, there is a long line-up of vehicles leaving Shenandoah Valley towards Plymouth. Drivers trying to turn left from Fiddletown Road towards Plymouth are unable to make the turn for a long period. *A stop sign for Fiddletown Road alone will back up traffic on Fiddletown Road and make it impossible to turn left under these circumstances.*
- The five-acre parcel to be removed from Williamson Act land for a new curve ignores the potential use of this land as prime grape growing land. It also is under a Conservation Easement for agricultural use. *The removal of this land from agriculture would be a serious loss, demanding adequate compensation for its potential use.*

5-5

**Fiddletown Road** is used by residents who live at higher elevations. It is also a short-cut to and from the Sierras, lakes in the High Country, and to Lake Tahoe. Many tourists, residents and commuters use this road. There is also frequent truck traffic.

- *Vehicles travelling west on Fiddletown Road toward Plymouth must merge with Shenandoah Valley Road at a dangerous angle that requires craning one's neck far to the right to see vehicles on Shenandoah Road moving west along the curve. At the same time, vehicles on Fiddletown Road must look straight ahead for oncoming traffic moving northeast on Shenandoah Road.*
- Drivers on Fiddletown Road are often not aware of the need to look in both directions. Those coming from ski and recreational areas are not familiar with the intersection.
- *Accidents have occurred at this intersection because of the failure of drivers on Fiddletown Road to slow down and yield, endangering vehicles on Shenandoah Road crossing from either direction. One personal collision occurred when the driver on Fiddletown Road stopped for oncoming traffic, whereas behind him a pickup pulling a trailer with a generator looked only to the right instead of also looking straight ahead. The pickup truck ploughed into the stopped vehicle, totaling the car.*
- *Fiddletown Road follows Dry Creek and is also scenic byway in the county. Like Shenandoah Road, it is very curvy.*

5-6

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**Special impacts discussed in the report.**

Views 1-4 – none show approach from Fiddletown Road

Visuals needed to show problem intersection from Fiddletown perspective

1. Aesthetics

Even if it does not meet the definition of “scenic,” the project is in a beautiful area that attracts tourists. *It is the gateway to vineyards and the historic town of Fiddletown.* 5-7

Vegetation and tree removal will affect aesthetics: need to define where removal will take place.

“May install a street light at intersection to improve intersection visibility & safety” (pg.26). *A street light will be unsightly and totally out of character with the rural environment.*

2. Agriculture and Forestry Products

Northwest property adjacent to road is in a Conversation Easement, limiting development. The report only refers to it as Williamson Act contract. *The proposed realignment in the report would remove five acres of precious agricultural land, with vineyard potential.* 5-8

3. Air quality

Area has naturally occurring asbestos (p.32-33), released into air when disturbed – project is near an area where there will be soil disturbance during construction. *Excavation would impact wildlife, grazing cattle, and workers in the adjacent vineyard. Disturbance of asbestos is hazardous, as can be seen from remediation at nearby school.* 5-9

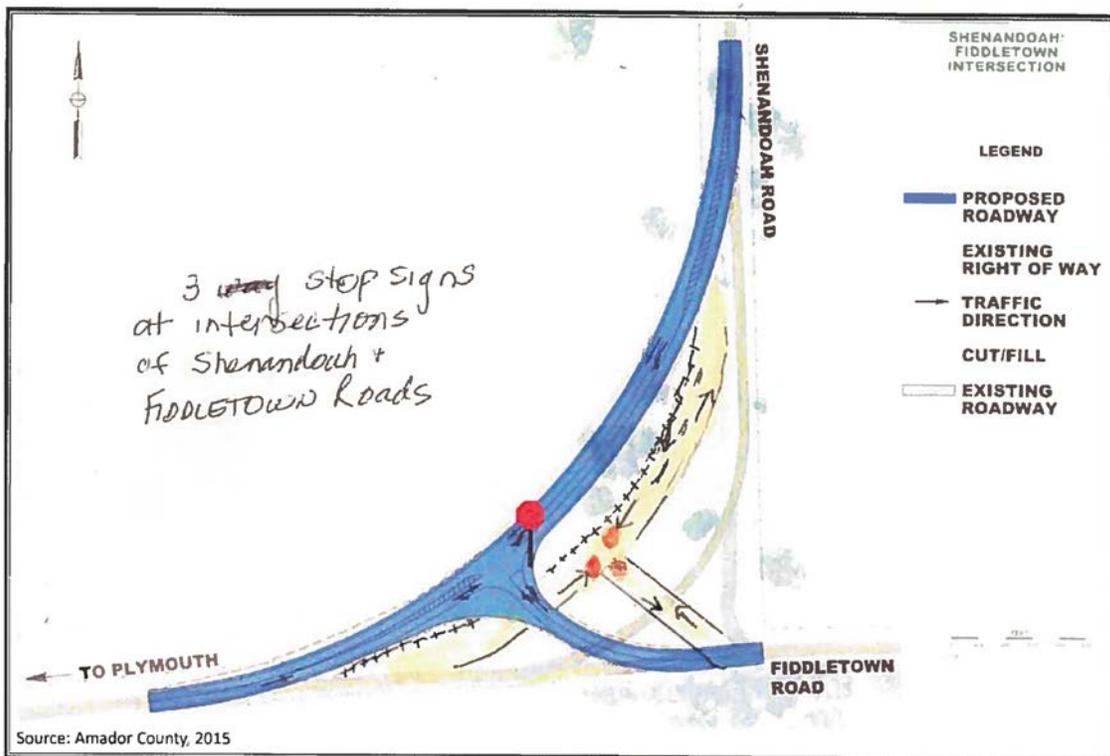
Pg. 33 only refers to through lanes on Shenandoah Road—one in each direction. It completely ignores Fiddletown Road.

4. Biological resources

No specifics given as to where tree removal will occur, potentially affecting birds and bats. – will it be on east side of Shenandoah Road – oaks and Ponderosa pines on hill by Fiddletown Road? 5-10

Bat and bird surveys – migratory bird nesting season Feb. 15-Sept 16. *Schedule construction at time of least impact to birds and wildlife– summer rather than spring* (pg. 43) 5-11

Pg. 44 specifies tree removal of medium to large oak trees northwest and southeast portion of project area. *Removal of oaks by Shenandoah Road will degrade the view by also taking down a hill with the trees as well as destroying habitat for birds.* Report also mentions “possible removal” of one pine tree in southeast portion. *The two pines leading by hill on Fiddletown Road are important sentinels and landmarks – removal of one tree will be a big loss.* 5-12



 **FIGURE 4. PRELIMINARY PLANS**  
**Shenandoah-Fiddletown Roads Intersection Improvement Project** 

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**Response to Comment 5-1:** This comment asks several questions. A response to each question is provided below:

- The County has recent traffic counts and estimates for ADT of the roadways.
- The County has observed various types of vehicles utilizing the intersection. The project accommodates various types of vehicles. The largest vehicle accommodated by the project is a California Legal Truck with Semi-Trailer configuration.
- The slope of Fiddletown Road east of the existing northbound turn lane on to Shenandoah Road would remain largely unchanged from existing conditions after construction of the project. Pavement improvements, striping and signage would be installed in this area; however there would not be significant grading to substantially modify this slope from existing conditions. The project proposes to extend the length of the terminus of Fiddletown Road to meet the realigned Shenandoah Road, which would provide the required vertical grade and site distance required to meet current roadway design standards at the intersection approach. Figure 5, View 2 in the Draft IS/MND shows a photo of westbound Fiddletown Road approaching the intersection of Shenandoah Road. Upon review of this section during preparation of the Final IS/MND, it was discovered that this figure was labeled incorrectly as “View 2: Eastern Limit of Project Area (view from westbound Shenandoah Road approaching intersection)” in the Draft IS/MND. The following edits have been made to correct this mistake.



**View 2: Eastern Limit of Project Area (view from westbound Shenandoah Road approaching intersection)**

- 
- The County evaluated several potential project designs, and determined that the proposed design was the most appropriate design to meet the project's purpose of improving safety and roadway geometrics of the existing intersection, while minimizing right of way acquisition and environmental impacts to the greatest extent feasible.
  - Public meetings were conducted to discuss various intersection design options and selection criteria. The meetings were conducted at: the Amador County Board of Supervisors Meeting(s) on May 14, 2013, June 4, 2013, and June 25, 2013; and the City of Plymouth Council Meeting on July 11, 2013.

**Response to Comment 5-2:** This comment recommending a speed of 35 to 40 mph on Shenandoah Road is noted. Please Response B-3 for a response to this comment.

**Response to Comment 5-3:** This comment recommending an alternative curve alignment of Shenandoah Road that would conform to the fence line of the existing right of way in the northwest portion of the project area, and the statement that this alignment would minimize impacts from tree removal, disturbance of nesting birds and bats is noted. Please see Response B-3 for a response to the recommendation for the project alignment to conform to the fence line of the existing right of way. Regarding minimization of impacts from tree removal and disturbance of nesting birds and bats, Section V.(1) Aesthetics identifies less than significant impacts to aesthetics from the project, and Section V.(4) Biological Resources identifies less than significant impacts to bats and nesting birds after mitigation is incorporated. Because the Draft IS/MND adequately addressed the topics of aesthetic and biological impacts from tree removal and impacts on nesting birds and bats, no changes will be made to the IS/MND in response to this comment.

**Response to Comment 5-4:** This comment recommending placement of three stop signs at the intersection is noted. Because this comment does not address the adequacy of the IS/MND, no further response is required and changes will not be made to the IS/MND in response to this comment.

**Response to Comment 5-5:** This comment includes statements regarding several topics. Responses to each statement is provided below:

- Please see Response 3-7 above for a response this comment regarding degradation of views resulting from the project. Because this topic was adequately addressed in the Draft IS/MND, no changes will be made to the IS/MND in response to this comment.
- Please see Response 3-5 above for a response to this comment regarding appropriate speed limits through the project area. Because this comment does not address the adequacy of the Draft IS/MND, no further response is required and no changes to the IS/MND will be made in response to this comment.
- Please see Response 3-6 above for a response to this comment regarding vehicles turning from westbound Fiddletown Road onto westbound Shenandoah Road during winery events.

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**Response to Comment 5-6:** This comment enumerating several design and operational deficiencies of the existing intersection is noted; however because this comment does not address the adequacy of the Draft IS/MND, no further response is required and changes to the IS/MND will not be made in response to this comment.

**Response to Comment 5-7:** Please see Response 5-1 for a response to the first part of this comment.

The portion of the comment identifying the project area as “the gateway to vineyards and the historic town of Fiddletown” is noted. The comment further states that vegetation and tree removal will affect aesthetics and that the IS/MND needs to define where removal will take place. Draft IS/MND Section V.(1) Aesthetics discusses that vegetation and tree removal would result in changes to the visual setting of the project area, but that the changes would be less than significant. The details of the project design are still in development until the project has completed the CEQA review; as such, project design has not progressed to a level of detail that pinpoints what specific trees would be removed by the project; however by identifying that the project would result in removal of trees from the northwest portion of the project area, the IS/MND adequately discloses the potential impacts of the project from tree removal; therefore, no changes to the IS/MND will be made in response to this comment.

The last portion of this comment states that a street light would be unsightly and out of character with the rural environment. IS/MND Section V.(1)(d) describes what characteristics of a streetlight installed as part of the project would follow in order to minimize effects to aesthetic resources, and identifies that the project would have less than significant impacts from a new source of lighting. Because the Draft IS/MND adequately address the project’s potential impacts from lighting, no changes to the IS/MND will be made in response to this comment.

**Response to Comment 5-8:** Please see Response B-1 for a response to this comment regarding the project’s conversion of agricultural land to non-agricultural uses.

**Response to Comment 5-9:** Draft IS/MND Section 8.(a) identifies mitigation measures to minimize the exposure of residents and other sensitive receptors to dust from asbestos-containing rock and soils during earth moving activities. Because the Draft IS/MND adequately addresses the project’s potential impacts from release of Naturally Occurring Asbestos during project construction, no changes to the IS/MND will be made in response to this comment.

The following minor edit to Section V.(2)(b), 6<sup>th</sup> paragraph, is made to clarify the analysis:

Operation of the project would not generate new stationary or mobile sources of criteria pollutant emissions because the project would maintain the same number of through lanes (one in each direction on both Shenandoah Road and Fiddletown Road,) and would not increase capacity or result in additional vehicles on the roadway. In addition, after construction is completed, there would be no soil disturbance resulting from the operation of the project, and all soil that potentially contains NOA would be contained beneath asphalt covering the roadway, or stabilized and hydroseeded with appropriate vegetative cover. Therefore, project operation would not generate

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additional emissions above existing conditions, and would therefore not violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation.

**Response to Comment 5-10:** Please see Response 5-7 for a response to this comment regarding the location of tree removal. Additionally, implementation of mitigation measures BIO-7 through BIO-12 would ensure that impacts to bats and nesting birds would be reduced to less than significant levels, regardless of the specific locations of tree removals. Because the Draft IS/MND adequately addressed the topics of potential impacts from tree removal and potential impacts to bats and nesting birds, no changes to the IS/MND will be made in response to this comment.

**Response to Comment 5-11:** This recommendation to schedule construction during the non-nesting season for birds and bats is noted; however, implementation of mitigation measures BIO-7 through BIO-12 would ensure that impacts to bats and nesting birds would be reduced to less than significant levels, regardless of the time of year construction would take place. Because the Draft IS/MND adequately addressed the topics of potential impacts to bats and nesting birds, no changes to the IS/MND will be made in response to this comment.

**Response to Comment 5-12:** Please see Responses 5-7, 5-10, and 5-11 for a response to this comment.

Letter

*K. Venturelli  
P.O. Box 4  
Fiddletown, CA  
95629*

*Good Thinking*

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JAN 04 2016

TRANSPORTATION  
& PUBLIC WORKS

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JAN 06 2016

TRANSPORTATION  
& PUBLIC WORKS

January 6, 2016

Dear Jered Reinking and Whom it May Concern,

On a daily basis, I utilize the intersection which has been proposed for changes. Here are some concerns and comments/recommendations that I hope you will seriously consider before any action is taken to change the intersection to the current proposed draft.

FIDDLETOWN-SHENANDOAH VALLEY ROAD INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENT

The report of the Shenandoah Road/ Fiddletown Road Intersection Improvement Project, prepared by GPA Consulting in El Segundo, addresses legal and environmental issues without displaying an insight into how both roads are used. We agree that this is indeed a dangerous and confusing intersection for vehicles heading west towards Plymouth from the perspectives of both Fiddletown Road and Shenandoah Road. Here are a number of questions, and an explanation of the traffic entering and leaving both Fiddletown Road (which is not discussed in the report) and Shenandoah Road. Options with diagrams are at the end.

Was the given solution (that extends the curve from Shenandoah Road into agricultural land with a new leg and stop sign for Fiddletown Road) presented by the county beforehand to the consultants, who then examined environmental and potentially adverse impacts?

6-1

- Were daily traffic counts been conducted for each road? 6-2
- Were observations made about the type of vehicles on both roads, ranging from pick-up trucks, dump trucks, logging trucks, vehicles pulling trailers such as horse trailers, RVs, etc.? The topography of Fiddletown Road was ignored in the report. It is much higher than Shenandoah Road. 6-3
- What happens to the hill for the extended new leg? The report does not show Views from Fiddletown Road, yet this is the most dangerous crossing. What other options were considered? 6-4
- Why were public meetings to discuss options not held, as they were for the intersection of Hwy 49 and Shenandoah Road? 6-5

Recommendations for the intersection (see also attached diagrams and Options at end)

- Reduce speed on Shenandoah Road 35-40 mph. heading to and from Plymouth for safety. As vehicles approach Plymouth near the school, the speed limit is already 25 mph. This would be a more logical transition, and a continuation of slowing required for passing curves by Young's Winery. Do not consider a 55mph curve! 6-6
- Align new curve for Shenandoah Valley Road to the fence line of adjacent agricultural land. There is already a sizable swathe of land between the road and fence for changing the curve. Intruding into the Williamson Act land under a Conservation Easement would result in the loss of trees and a small hill to the north, part of the scenic view. 6-7

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Context of the intersection and issues

JAN 04 2016

**Shenandoah Road** at the intersection under discussion is the gateway to the majority of wineries in Amador County and the point where attractive views begin.

JOHN W. COOPER, JR.  
& PUBLIC WORKS

- The rural views of grazing land, rolling hills with large oak trees are aesthetically pleasing to tourists and locals. *The removal of large oaks will degrade the view.* 6-8
- Visitors heading from the wineries and returning to Plymouth, first come to sharp curve after Young's Winery that forces drivers to slow down. The lower speed of 35-40 mph should be maintained when coming to the intersection in question. *A speed limit of 55 mph is inappropriate and dangerous for this intersection, where traffic crossing from Fiddletown Road may not be anticipated.* 6-9
- When several wineries have events, there is a long line-up of vehicles leaving Shenandoah Valley towards Plymouth. Drivers trying to turn left from Fiddletown Road towards Plymouth are unable to make the turn for a long period. *A stop sign for Fiddletown Road alone will back up traffic on Fiddletown Road and make it impossible to turn left under these circumstances.* 6-10
- The five-acre parcel to be removed from Williamson Act land for a new curve ignores the potential use of this land as prime grape growing land. It also is under a Conservation Easement for agricultural use. *The removal of this land from agriculture would be a serious loss, demanding adequate compensation for its potential use.* 6-11

**Fiddletown Road** is used by residents who live at higher elevations. It is also a short-cut to and from the Sierras, lakes in the High Country, and to Lake Tahoe. Many tourists and commuters use this road.

- *Vehicles travelling west on Fiddletown Road toward Plymouth must merge with Shenandoah Valley Road at a dangerous angle that requires craning one's neck far to the right to see vehicles on Shenandoah Road moving west along the curve. At the same time, vehicles on Fiddletown Road must look straight ahead for oncoming traffic moving northeast on Shenandoah Road.*
- Drivers on Fiddletown Road are often not aware of the need to look in both directions. Those coming from ski and recreational areas are not familiar with the intersection.
- *Accidents have occurred at this intersection because of the failure of drivers on Fiddletown Road to slow down and yield, endangering vehicles on Shenandoah Road crossing from either direction. One personal collision occurred when the driver on Fiddletown Road stopped for oncoming traffic, whereas behind him a pickup pulling a trailer with a generator looked only to the right instead of also looking straight ahead. The pickup truck ploughed into the stopped vehicle, totaling the car.* 6-12

**Options to consider (see diagrams)**

- Roundabout for the intersection, preferably to the west of the proposed new leg for Fiddletown Road. Such a design would allow flow of traffic from both Fiddletown Road and Shenandoah Valley without the necessity for stop signs, eliminating additional air pollution. An issue remains as to how much surrounding land – would be needed for such a solution. It may take too much land. A roundabout is planned for the intersection of Hwy 49 and Shenandoah Valley Road. 6-13

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- Design a new leg for Fiddletown Road traffic more to the north with a stop sign, having good visibility of Shenandoah Road in both directions. **Keep one lane of existing Fiddletown Road for traffic going east from Plymouth.** Two stop signs would be needed – one at the intersection and another where cars turning left encounter the “old” lane on Fiddletown Road. 6-14
- Three way stop signs – at new leg of Fiddletown Road, and in both directions along Shenandoah Road where it intersects with Fiddletown Road. Impacts (release of asbestos, tree removal, disturbance of nesting birds and bats) would be minimized by confining construction to changes on Fiddletown Road *only* by designing a new lane towards the bottom of the hill that would redirect west bound traffic to Plymouth and that would end with a stop sign for right and left turns onto Shenandoah Road. This would be a more economical solution that does not disturb agricultural land on the conservation easement. 6-15

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Katherine Venturelli, Fiddletown Resident

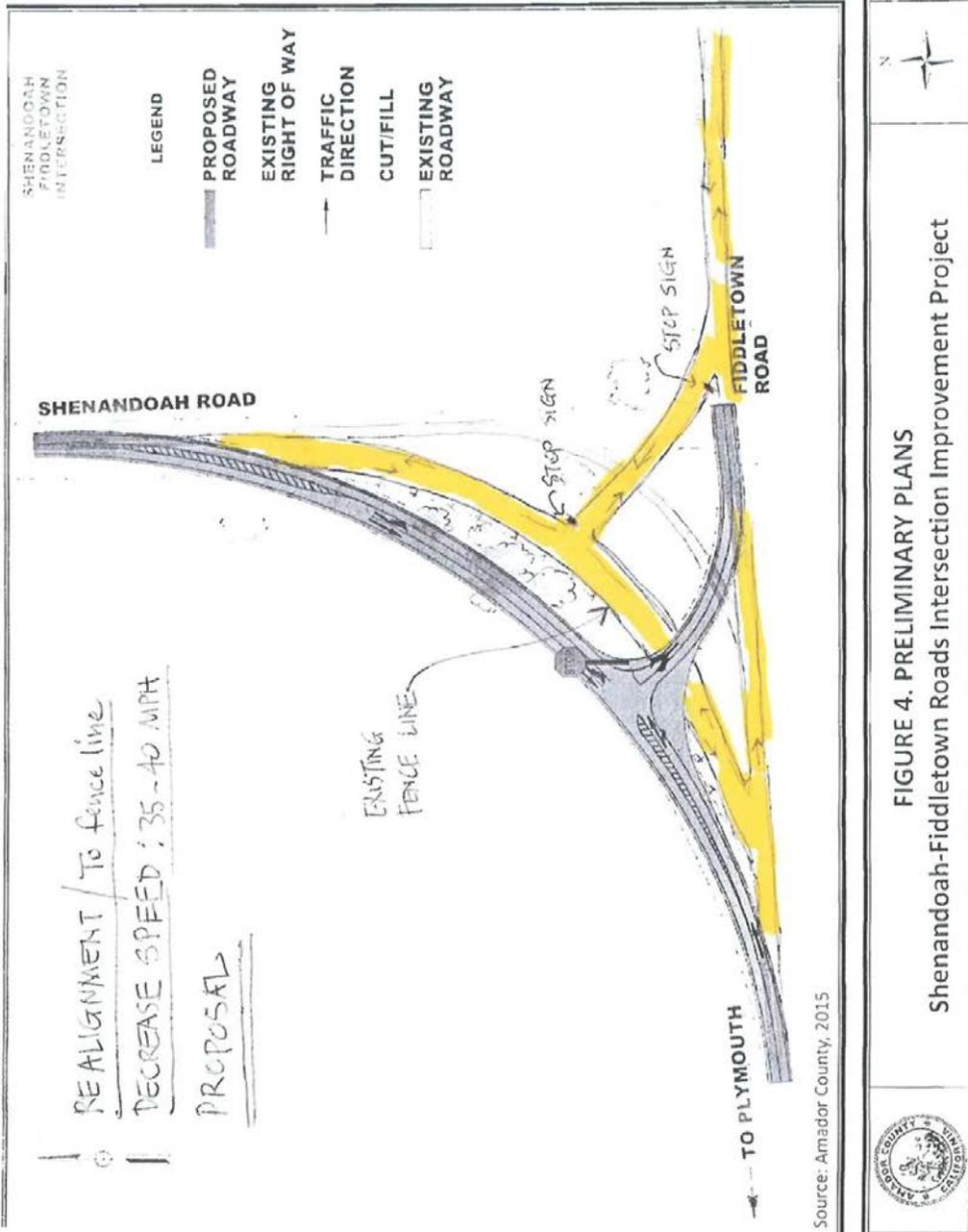
*Katherine Venturelli*

and other Concerned Citizens

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JAN 04 2016

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& PUBLIC WORKS

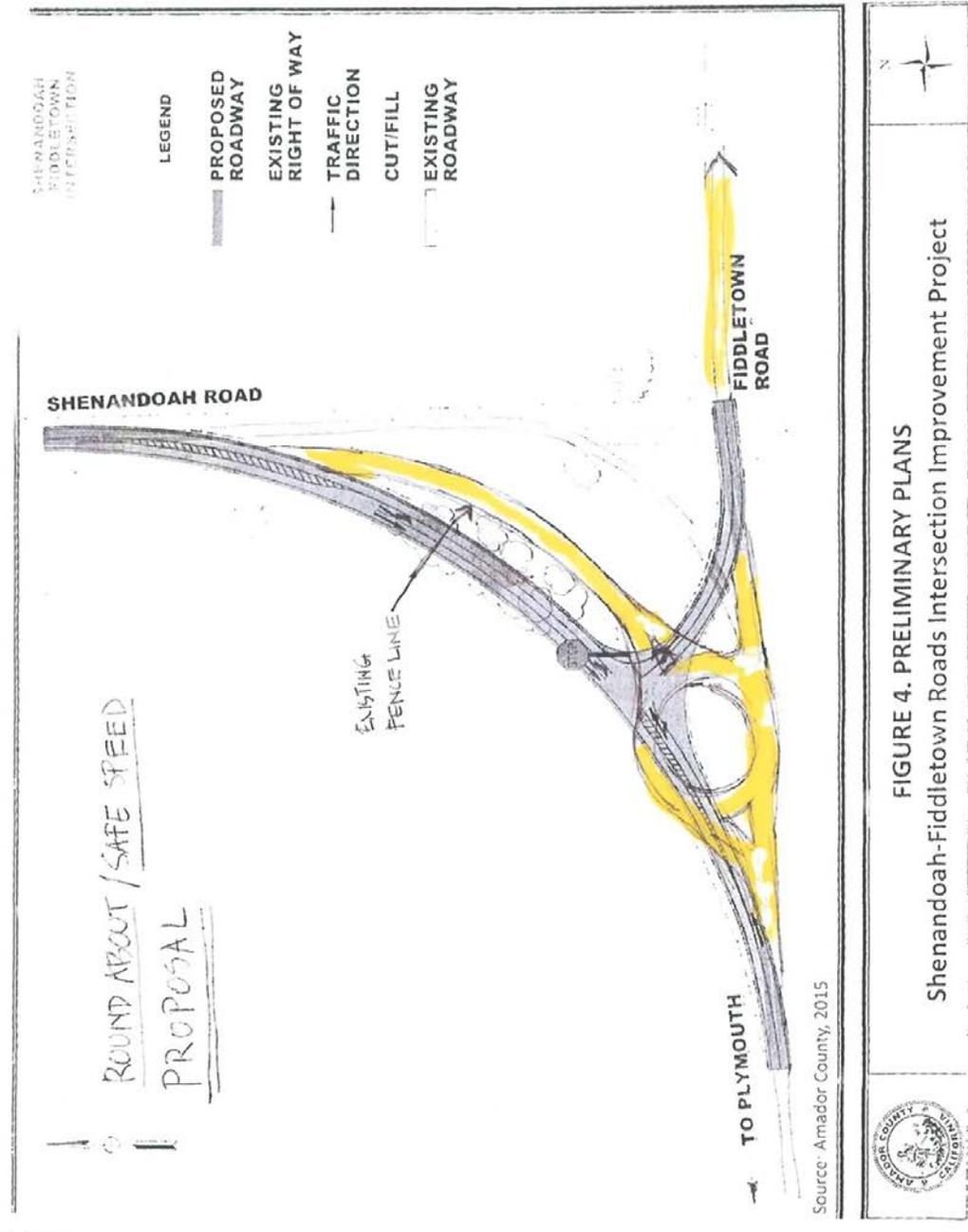


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JAN 04 2016

TRANSPORTATION & PUBLIC WORKS

ROUNDABOUT  
MAY TAKE TOO  
MUCH LAND?



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JAN 04 2016

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*with 3 stops -  
May back up  
traffic?*

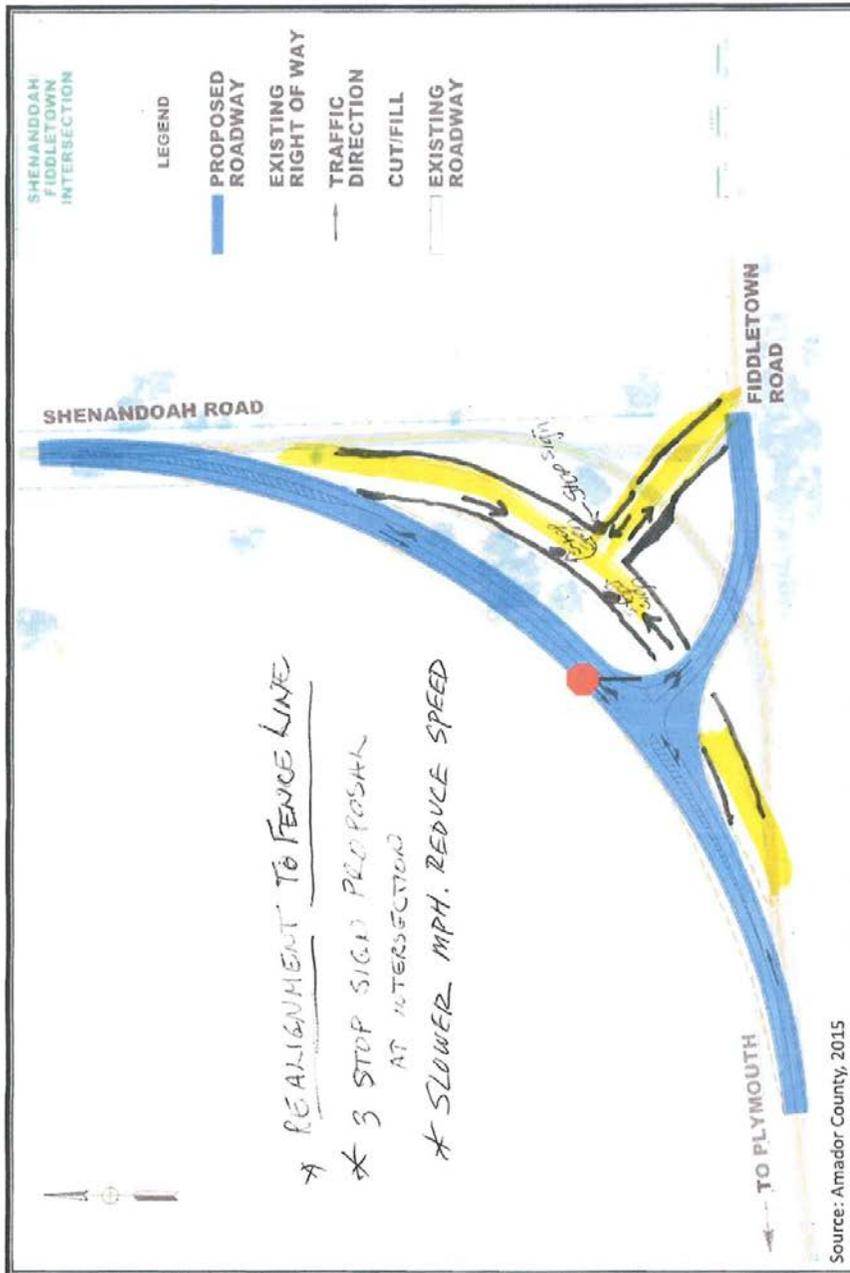


FIGURE 4. PRELIMINARY PLANS  
Shenandoah-Fiddletown Roads Intersection Improvement Project



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From: **Katherine Venturelli** <[kventurelli@peoplepc.com](mailto:kventurelli@peoplepc.com)>

Date: Tue, Jan 5, 2016 at 10:00 AM

Subject: Concerns about proposed intersection for Shenandoah/Fiddletown Intersection

To: [jreinking@amadorgov.org](mailto:jreinking@amadorgov.org), [nancy@actc-amador.org](mailto:nancy@actc-amador.org)

Cc: Brian Oneto <[boneto@amadorgov.org](mailto:boneto@amadorgov.org)>, jon colburn <[jonec@att.net](mailto:jonec@att.net)>, Lynn Morgan <[ladairmorgan@gmail.com](mailto:ladairmorgan@gmail.com)>

Greetings Jered and Nancy,

Yesterday, as you know I left a packet containing impact concerns and other input regarding the current proposal draft for our Fiddletown/Shenandoah Rd. intersection improvement project. I mentioned that I would email these also.

Everyday I utilize this intersection as well as other Amador County residents. I hope you will seriously consider some of this input before any action is taken to use the design from the El Segundo GPA Consulting firm.

Thank you for your consideration.

Best to all of you in 2016!

Sincerely,

Katherine Venturelli

Fiddletown Resident

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**Response to Comment 6-1:** This comment asking if the proposed project description was provided by the County to the consultants [GPA Consulting], who then examined potential environmental impacts is noted. The County did provide a Project Description and preliminary project design information, which are included in Section II.(8) Project Description, to GPA Consulting prior to GPA Consulting initiating the environmental analysis for the project.

For the sake of better public understanding of the project development process, the County wishes to clarify that County staff initiated and is completing the design of the proposed project. GPA Consulting is a consultant retained by the County to complete the environmental analysis of the proposed project as required under CEQA. GPA Consulting is a CEQA consultant responsible for preparing the IS/MND document, and is not a design engineering firm that is developing the proposed project design.

Because this comment does not address the adequacy of the Draft IS/MND, no further response is required and no changes to the IS/MND will be made in response to this comment.

**Response to Comment 6-2:** Please see Response 5-1 for a response to this comment regarding traffic counts.

**Response to Comment 6-3:** Please see Response 5-1 for a response to this comment regarding vehicle types that utilize the roads in the project area.

**Response to Comment 6-4:** Please see Response 5-1 for a response to this comment regarding the proposed project description as it relates to Fiddletown Road, illustrations of views from Fiddletown Road in the Draft IS/MND, and consideration of alternative project designs.

**Response to Comment 6-5:** Please see Response 5-1 for a response to this comment regarding public meetings conducted for this project.

**Response to Comment 6-6:** Please see Responses B-3 and 5-2 for a response to this comment recommending a reduced speed in the project area.

**Response to Comment 6-7:** Please see Response 5-3 for a response to this comment recommending alignment of Shenandoah Road along the existing right of way fence line.

**Response to Comment 6-8:** Please see Responses 3-7 and 5-5 for a response to this comment regarding impacts to views from tree removal.

**Response to Comment 6-9:** Please see Responses 3-5 and 5-5 for a response to this comment regarding speed limits in the project area.

**Response to Comment 6-10:** Please see Responses 3-6 and 5-5 for a response to this comment regarding vehicles turning from westbound Fiddletown Road to westbound Shenandoah Road during large winery events.

**Response to Comment 6-11:** Please see Responses B-1 and 5-8 for a response to this comment regarding the projects impacts from conversion of agricultural land.

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**Response to Comment 6-12:** Please see Response 5-6 for a response to this comment enumerating existing design and operational deficiencies at the existing intersection.

**Response to Comment 6-13:** This comment recommending different intersection concepts or configuration over the proposed "T" intersection design does not address the adequacy of the IS/MND, and no further response is required under CEQA; however, the County is providing additional information on how the proposed "T" intersection design was evaluated and selected for implementation.

As described in Draft IS/MND Section II(8) Project Description, beginning on page 4, the purpose of the project is "to improve intersection safety and roadway geometrics by improving intersection visibility, maximizing sight distance through the project area, improving horizontal and vertical alignments, enhancing signage and pavement delineation, and installing traffic control improvements at the intersection." This paragraph also described that "during the 5-year period between January 2007 and December 2011, there were 14 collisions at the Shenandoah Road/Fiddletown Road intersection, including one that resulted in a fatality. Collisions at the intersection are primarily related to poor roadway geometry, resulting in driver confusion."

As a result of the analysis of the accident history, improvements to the roadway geometry are warranted and, thus, improvements to roadway safety features are mandatory. Collisions at this intersection are primarily related to non-standard roadway geometrics. From an engineering perspective, if the existing intersection were proposed today, it would require several design exceptions for failure to meet Amador County Code (Local Standards), the guidance of the Caltrans Highway Design Manual (State Standards), and/or the roadway design policies established by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, AASHTO (Federal Standards). Consideration and approval of "design exceptions" are critical decisions made by designated responsible persons. For the existing intersection, the most severe exceptions to standard design practice are:

- Non-standard angle of the intersection between Shenandoah Road and Fiddletown Road;
- Non-standard vertical alignment (Fiddletown Road intersects Shenandoah Road at a 14% grade);
- Non-standard horizontal alignment (Shenandoah Road has too small of a radius through this intersection for the posted limit);
- Non-standard decision sight distance and non-standard intersection sight distance (for vehicles on either road to see vehicles entering the intersection).

The proposed "T" intersection design corrects these severe deficiencies by:

- Improving the horizontal alignment geometry for Shenandoah Road and Fiddletown Road to greatly improve sight distance at for all intersection approaches;
- Improving the vertical alignment geometry of Shenandoah Road required for standard a "T" intersection with Fiddletown Road;

- 
- Extending and correcting the vertical alignment (i.e., “flatten” the grade) of the Fiddletown Road approach to Shenandoah Road, thereby improving visibility approaching the intersection and correcting the steep grade at the intersection approach;
  - Correcting the curve radius of Shenandoah Road through this area to meet required design guidelines for the posted 55 mph speed limit.

The design alternatives proposed in the comment would not correct the severe deficiencies listed above. Design alternatives that do not correct the severe deficiencies listed above would not meet the purpose of the project to improve intersection safety and roadway geometrics.

**Response to Comment 6-14:** Please see Response 6-13 above for a response to this comment regarding alternative project designs.

**Response to Comment 6-15:** Please see Response 6-13 above for a response to this comment regarding alternative project designs.

Letter 7

Mr. Farinelli,

Thank you for sending in your question. I believe Aaron has already responded, but I just wanted to let you know that I received it as well. For any further questions, I will still be available to answer if you choose.

--  
Jered C. Reinking, PE  
Senior Civil Engineer  
Amador County Department of Transportation and Public Works  
810 Court Street, Jackson CA 95642  
209.223.6429 - Department  
209.223.6226 - Direct  
[jreinking@amadorgov.org](mailto:jreinking@amadorgov.org)

On Sun, Jan 3, 2016 at 8:19 PM, reno farinelli <[reno@packardshutter.com](mailto:reno@packardshutter.com)> wrote:

I know we need a stop sign going down the hill but traveling up that hill from a dead stop with trucks and trailers will be impossible to get them started from a dead stop in a turn... then travel up that hill. Man, that is gonna be a total waste of energy every time going up that hill. ... Cant we keep the up hill lane separate from the stoping intersection.

7-1

Thats my input.

Thanks Reno Farinelli Fiddletown Res.

reno farinelli  
[reno@packardshutter.com](mailto:reno@packardshutter.com)

[209-245-5719](tel:209-245-5719)

---

From: John Gedney <[john@actc-amador.org](mailto:john@actc-amador.org)>  
Date: Mon, Jan 4, 2016 at 9:16 AM  
Subject: Fwd: FW: fiddletown rd  
To: [reno@packardshutter.com](mailto:reno@packardshutter.com)  
Cc: Nancy Champlin <[nancy@actc-amador.org](mailto:nancy@actc-amador.org)>, "[abrusatori@amadorgov.org](mailto:abrusatori@amadorgov.org)"  
<[abrusatori@amadorgov.org](mailto:abrusatori@amadorgov.org)>

Hello Mr. Farinelli,  
Thank your input and concerns regarding the Fiddletown/Shenandoah Road intersection improvement project. Since Amador County is the Lead Agency for this project, I'm copying Aaron Brusatori (Public Works Director) on this response. Please contact Mr. Brusatori for details regarding project design.

Thank you,

From: reno farinelli [<mailto:reno@packardshutter.com>]  
Sent: Sunday, January 03, 2016 8:20 PM  
To: [nancy@actc-amador.org](mailto:nancy@actc-amador.org)  
Subject: fiddletown rd

I know we need a stop sign going down the hill but traveling up that hill from a dead stop with trucks and trailers will be impossible to get them started from a dead stop in a turn... then travel up that hill. Man, that is gonna be a total waste of energy every time going up that hill. .. Cant we keep the up hill lane separate from the stoping intersection. Thats my input.

Thanks Reno Farinelli Fiddletown Res.  
reno farinelli  
[reno@packardshutter.com](mailto:reno@packardshutter.com)

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**Nancy Champlin**

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**From:** reno farinelli  
**Sent:** Monday, January 04, 2016 9:25 AM  
**To:** John Gedney  
**Cc:** nancy@actc-amador.org; Brian Onelo  
**Subject:** Re: fiddletown rd

Yeah, I sent a copy to all. The waste of fuel will be forever and folks will not be happy following the slow vehicles going up that hill. BUT they will do what they need to do with no regard to how well it will work...other than a stop sign. I agree with that part, just not loosing our up hill lane.

reno

On Jan 4, 2016, at 9:16 AM, John Gedney <[john@actc-amador.org](mailto:john@actc-amador.org)> wrote:

Hello Mr. Farinelli,  
Thank your input and concerns regarding the Fiddletown/Shenandoah Road intersection improvement project. Since Amador County is the Lead Agency for this project, I'm copying Aaron Brusatori (Public Works Director) on this response. Please contact Mr. Brusatori for details regarding project design.

Thank you,

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** Nancy Champlin <[nancy@actc-amador.org](mailto:nancy@actc-amador.org)>  
**Date:** Mon, Jan 4, 2016 at 9:05 AM  
**Subject:** FW: fiddletown rd  
**To:** John Gedney <[john@actc-amador.org](mailto:john@actc-amador.org)>

Nancy Champlin  
Administrative Secretary  
Amador County Transportation Commission  
117 Valley View Way  
Sutter Creek, CA 95685  
(209) 267-2282  
[www.actc-amador.org](http://www.actc-amador.org)

-----Original Message-----

**From:** reno farinelli [mailto:[reno@packardshutter.com](mailto:reno@packardshutter.com)]  
**Sent:** Sunday, January 03, 2016 8:20 PM  
**To:** [nancy@actc-amador.org](mailto:nancy@actc-amador.org)  
**Subject:** fiddletown rd

I know we need a stop sign going down the hill but traveling up that hill

1

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**Response to Comment 7-1:** This comment regarding difficulties of trucks traveling uphill through the proposed project is noted. As described in Draft IS/MND Section II.(8) Project Description, and as illustrated in Figure 4. Preliminary Plans, the project proposes a stop sign at westbound Fiddletown Road at its intersection with Shenandoah Road. The project is not proposing a stop sign on Shenandoah Road that would cause traffic to come to a complete stop in the eastbound direction before turning uphill onto eastbound Fiddletown Road. Because this comments does not address the adequacy of the Draft IS/MND, no further response is required and no changes to the IS/MND will be made in response to this comment.

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Comment Letter #8: Butch Cranford, Area Resident.

Letter 8

From: DW Cranford <[bcranford4588@att.net](mailto:bcranford4588@att.net)>  
Date: Fri, Dec 18, 2015 at 3:27 PM  
Subject: Fiddletown Shenandoah Road Project  
To: [jreinking@amadorgov.org](mailto:jreinking@amadorgov.org)

Jered,

Is there a description of the project available on line or can I pick one up at the County Offices?

Given the current fiscal situation in California and Amador County I have some fiscal concerns as well as concerns about the proposed changes as I understand them.

I would like a description of the project to better understand why it is necessary, what the proposed project improves and what benefit it provides to Amador County.

I live in Burke Ranch and use this intersection multiple times a day and have for the past 27 years.

8-1

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**Response to Comment 8-1:**

The following response was provided via email to the commenter on December 22, 2016 from Jered Reinking, P.E. at Amador County Department of Public Works.

Mr. Cranford,

Thank you for your request for additional information on the proposed Shenandoah/Fiddletown Road Intersection project. A complete project description is included as part of the Draft Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (Draft IS/MND) prepared for the project. A copy of the Draft IS/MND is available on the County's website at the following location:

<http://www.co.amador.ca.us/home/showdocument?id=21843>

Hard copies of the Draft IS/MND are also available for review at the County Department of Transportation and Public Works offices located at 810 Court Street, Jackson, as well as at the City of Plymouth Planning Department located at 9436 Main Street, Plymouth.

The Project Description section begins on Page 4 of the Draft IS/MND document.

If you would like me to email you a complete copy of the Draft IS/MND document in PDF format, I'd be happy to do so. The file is approximately 4 Mb in size.

Thank you again for your interest in this project. Please let me know if you have any comments on the adequacy of the Draft IS/MND, or if I can answer additional questions about the project.

Sincerely,

Jered C. Reinking, PE

Senior Civil Engineer

Amador County Department of Transportation and Public Works

810 Court Street, Jackson CA 95642

209.223.6429 - Department

209.223.6226 - Direct

jreinking@amadorgov.org

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Comment Letter #9: Hal Huffsmith, Senior Vice President, Vineyard Planning Trinchero Family Estates.

## Letter 9

From: Hal Huffsmith <[hhuffsmith@tfewines.com](mailto:hhuffsmith@tfewines.com)>  
Date: Mon, Dec 21, 2015 at 10:48 AM  
Subject: Shenandoah and Fiddletown Road Intersection Project  
To: "[jreinking@amadorgov.org](mailto:jreinking@amadorgov.org)" <[jreinking@amadorgov.org](mailto:jreinking@amadorgov.org)>  
Cc: Kevin Steward <[ksteward@tfewines.com](mailto:ksteward@tfewines.com)>, Jeff Meyers <[jmeyers@tfewines.com](mailto:jmeyers@tfewines.com)>

Jered,

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I work for Sutter Home Winery and have reviewed the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Dec document for the Intersection Improvement Project. Thanks for addressing the construction of a new driveway for access to the Sutter Home Vineyard property but Figure 4 (Preliminary Plans) does not clearly show the location of south boundary of the "Proposed Roadway" or access to Fiddletown Road from Burke Drive. Do you have a map/drawing that will show that information?

9-1

Hal

Hal Huffsmith | Senior Vice President, Vineyard Planning  
Trinchero Family Estates  
Office: [1-707-302-3031](tel:1-707-302-3031) | Ext. 2701 | Mobile: [1-707-486-2343](tel:1-707-486-2343)  
[hhuffsmith@tfewines.com](mailto:hhuffsmith@tfewines.com)

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**Response to Comment 9-1:**

The following response was provided via email to the commenter on December 22, 2016 from Jered Reinking, P.E. at Amador County Department of Public Works.

Good Afternoon Mr. Huffsmith:

Thank you for sending us your comment/question. The project design is still in development and has not yet proceeded to a level of detail to identify the final location of the south boundary of the proposed roadway. However, as noted in the Project Description section of the Draft IS/MND, the project would realign the intersection and roadway to the northwest of the existing location. The driveway extension from the Sutter Home Winery property to the realigned Shenandoah Road would be designed to meet applicable design and safety standards, and its final location coordinated with the property owner to ensure that adequate access is provided to the realigned roadway. A map or plan set showing the proposed driveway location will be provided to the property owner during this coordination.

At this point in time, I do not have any drawings showing what the proposed driveway would look like. We've only made spot checks/confirmations that we could fit the driveway in with the new road. I would think we will start developing details later this spring assuming we stay on schedule.

The access from Burke Drive to Fiddletown Road would not change as a result of the project because no improvements are proposed near the Burke Drive intersection.

Sincerely,

Jered C. Reinking, PE

Senior Civil Engineer

Amador County Department of Transportation and Public Works

810 Court Street, Jackson CA 95642

209.223.6429 - Department

209.223.6226 - Direct

jreinking@amadorgov.org

Letter 10

From: George Reitter <[gwr7@aol.com](mailto:gwr7@aol.com)>—  
Date: Sat, Jan 9, 2016 at 1:21 PM  
Subject: FIDDLETOWN-SHENANDOAH VALLEY ROAD INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENT  
To: [jreinking@amadorgov.org](mailto:jreinking@amadorgov.org), [boneto@amadorgov.org](mailto:boneto@amadorgov.org)  
Cc: [kventurelli@peoplepc.com](mailto:kventurelli@peoplepc.com), [gwr7@aol.com](mailto:gwr7@aol.com)

Jered Reinking,

I took your proposal for the above intersection improvement and simplified it (see attachment). Take the right lane on Fiddletown Road and run it perpendicular into Shenandoah Valley Road. After stopping for the stop sign travelers can turn left for Plymouth or right to go north on Shenandoah Valley Road. The right lane heading east would remain as it is. That is the right lane goes to Fiddletown while the left lane goes north to the Shenandoah Valley. This would be much less intrusive as well as a lot less money. The savings could be used to pave North Quartz Mountain and New Chicago creating a more useable connection to Drytown, Amador City and Sutter Creek which would reduce some of the westward traffic on Fiddletown Road. I also believe the speed limit from Young's to the school should be 35 mph to make the intersection safer.

10-1

I hope this suggestion helps.

George Reitter

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**Response to Comment 10-1:** Please see Response 6-13 for a response to the portion of the comment suggesting an alternative project design. Please see Responses B-3, 5-2, and 6-6 above for a response to the comment regarding speed limits through the project area.

Letter 11

**Nancy Champlin**

**From:** Brian Oneto  
**Sent:** Sunday, January 10, 2016 12:36 AM  
**To:** Mara Feeney  
**Cc:** jreinking@amadorgov.org; nancy@acto-amador.org  
**Subject:** Re: Fiddletown-Shenandoah Roads Intersector Improvement Project

Ms. Feeney,

I appreciate your well reasoned and thoughtful comments. I believe the paved shoulders as currently engineered should be wide enough for bike traffic. I will keep bike accessibility in mind as the project progresses. However no promises though, as we are having some heartburn over recent major increases in construction cost estimates.

Thank you,  
Brian Oneto

On Saturday, January 9, 2016, Mara Feeney <mara@marafeeney.com> wrote:  
Comments on the proposed Fiddletown-Shenandoah Roads Intersection Improvement Project

I am pleased to see the County addressing potential improvements to this confusing intersection that provides a vital link between Plymouth services and residents of the Fiddletown area and beyond. I have reviewed the initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration and have few comments. I think the proposed improvements will result in a less confusing and safer intersection. I like the idea of making the curve on the Shenandoah Road longer and less sharp, to improve visibility in both directions. Elongating (and flattening?—not clear from the project description) the Fiddletown Road approach to the Shenandoah Road is also a good idea. Even though the proposed stop sign will make the trip to Plymouth just a bit longer, I think the trade-off for safety is worth it. 11-1

Since drivers entering Shenandoah Road from Fiddletown Road will be doing so from a dead stop under the proposed plan, it would be a good idea to slow down the Shenandoah Road traffic in the vicinity of the new intersection. This also would make for a less abrupt transition to the 25 mph zone near the elementary school and Rory's. I am not in favor of some of the other ideas being floated—such as another roundabout, or a 3-way stop. Both seem more cumbersome than the proposed plan, and I do not see how they would enhance safety any better. Also, I am not too concerned about visual or farmland impacts associated identified for the proposed improvement project. Both seem relatively minor, and worth it for the improvements to traffic flow and safety that would be achieved. 11-2

I do think it would be good, if possible, to work in enough shoulder to make it safe for bikers using the roadway in the vicinity of this intersection. I see a fair number of bicyclists using both roadways, and the current conditions make it very dangerous, with almost no separation from automobile traffic possible on a tight curve with little visibility. I trust you will schedule construction on the various segments of this project in such a way as to minimize impacts on traffic flow for the duration of construction. 11-3

Mara Feeney  
 21004 Ostrom Road  
 Fiddletown CA 95629

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**Response to Comment 11-1:** This comment stating that the project would result in a less confusing and safer intersection and that adjusting the curve of Shenandoah Road and installing a stop sign at the intersection would be a safety improvement is noted; however this comment does not address the adequacy of the Draft IS/MND; therefore, no further response is required and no changes to the IS/MND will be made in response to this comment.

**Response to Comment 11-2:** Please see Responses B-3, 5-2, 6-6, and 10-1 above for a response to the portion of the comment regarding slowing traffic in the vicinity of the new intersection.

The portion of the comment stating that the commenter is not concerned about the visual or farmland impacts identified for the proposed project and that the impacts seem relatively minor is noted. IS/MND Section V.(1) Aesthetics and V.(2) Agricultural and Forestry Resources identified less than significant impacts to aesthetic and agricultural resources from the project. Because the Draft IS/MND adequately address the potential impacts to these resources, no changes to the IS/MND will be made in response to this comment.

**Response to Comment 11-3:** The portion of the comment recommending that roadway shoulders be wide enough to accommodate bicycles that utilize the area is noted. The project would include shoulders that meet the minimum requirements of current roadway design standards, however, wider shoulders through the project limits are desired for implementation by County Staff. As discussed in Draft IS/MND Section V.(16) Transportation and Traffic, the project area is not currently a designated bikeway. Discussion f) in this section identifies that the project would result in no impact from conflicts with adopted policies, plans, or programs regarding bicycle facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such facilities. Because the Draft IS/MND adequately addressed the topic of bicycle facilities, no changes to the IS/MND will be made in response to this comment.

The portion of the comment stating the commenter's presumption that construction will be completed in such a way as to minimize impacts to traffic during construction is noted. Project design and stage construction does consider minimizing impacts to traffic during construction. Draft IS/MND Section V.(16)(a) identifies less than significant impacts to traffic in the project area during construction of the project. Because the Draft IS/MND adequately addressed the topic of construction traffic impacts, no changes to the IS/MND will be made in response to this comment.

Letter 12

From: Bob Clevenger <[bobc@volcano.net](mailto:bobc@volcano.net)>  
Date: Mon, Jan 11, 2016 at 8:24 AM  
Subject: Intersection of Shenandoah and Fiddletown Roads  
To: [jreinking@amadorgov.org](mailto:jreinking@amadorgov.org), [boneto@amadorgov.org](mailto:boneto@amadorgov.org), [nancy@actc-amador.org](mailto:nancy@actc-amador.org),  
[ladairmorgan@gmail.com](mailto:ladairmorgan@gmail.com), [jonec@att.net](mailto:jonec@att.net)

I much prefer the roundabout option for one very important reason. Both of the other two options effectively cut off access to Plymouth and Highway 49 for residents who travel on Fiddletown Road on any day when there are major wine events. The traffic on Shenandoah Road on those days is so heavy that you will create accidents when people try to make it on to a heavily congested Shenandoah Road from Fiddletown Road for to trip to Plymouth.

12-1

Bob Clevenger

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**Response to Comment 12-1:** Please see Response 6-13 above for a response to the portion of this comment regarding alternative project designs. Please see Responses 3-6, 5-5, and 6-10 for a response to the portion of this comment regarding vehicle access from westbound Fiddletown Road to westbound Shenandoah Road during large winery events.

## Letter 13

From: michelle grondin <[vitalhealthmassage2@yahoo.com](mailto:vitalhealthmassage2@yahoo.com)>  
Date: Mon, Jan 11, 2016 at 10:28 AM  
Subject: Fiddletown/Shenandoah Road plan  
To: "[jreinking@amadorgov.org](mailto:jreinking@amadorgov.org)" <[jreinking@amadorgov.org](mailto:jreinking@amadorgov.org)>  
Cc: Brian Oneto <[boneto@amadorgov.org](mailto:boneto@amadorgov.org)>, "[nancy@actc-amador.org](mailto:nancy@actc-amador.org)" <[nancy@actc-amador.org](mailto:nancy@actc-amador.org)>, "[ladairmorgan@gmail.com](mailto:ladairmorgan@gmail.com)" <[ladairmorgan@gmail.com](mailto:ladairmorgan@gmail.com)>, "[jonec@att.net](mailto:jonec@att.net)" <[jonec@att.net](mailto:jonec@att.net)>

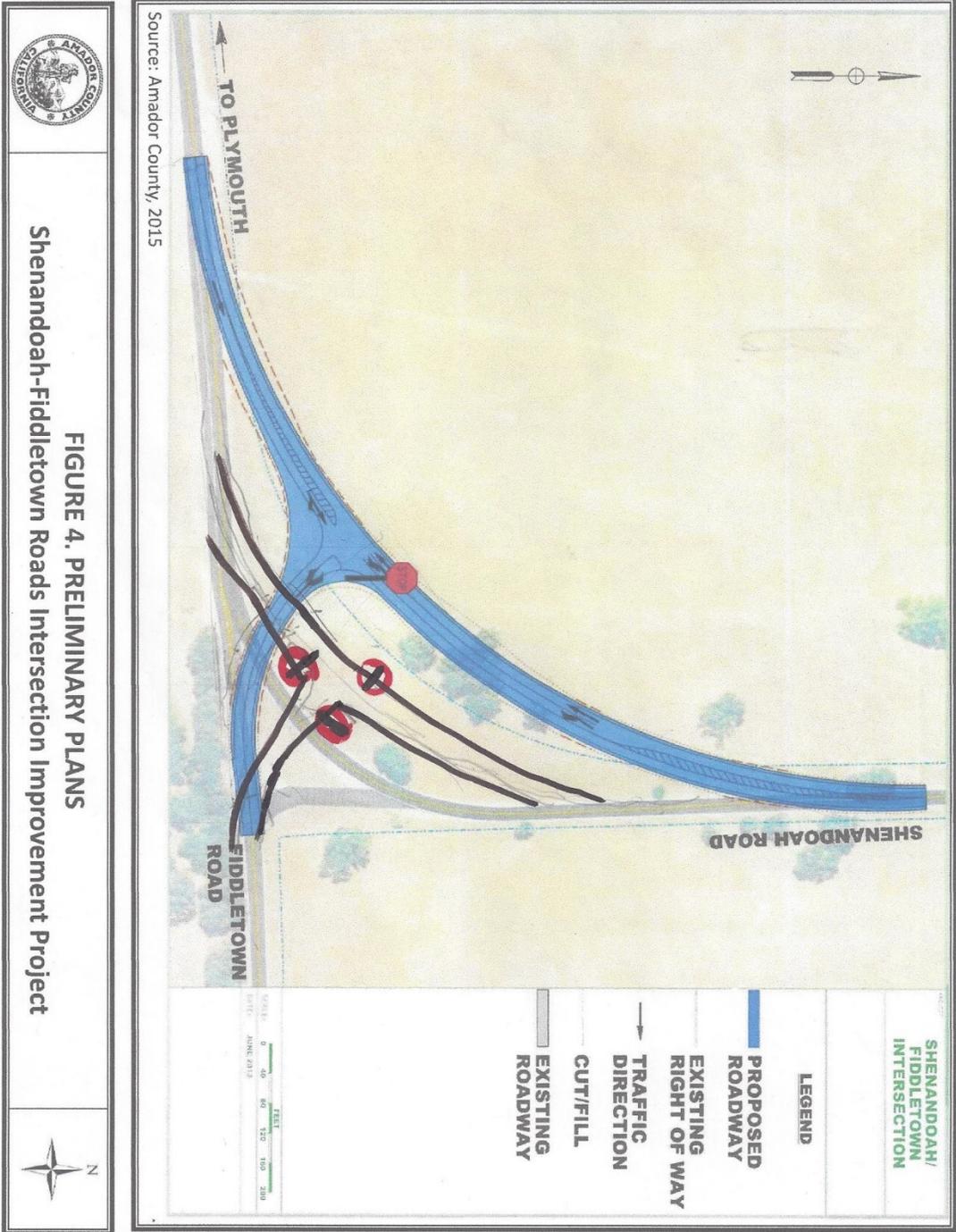
Good morning,

We would like to voice our concern over the Shenandoah Road/Fiddletown Road Intersection Improvement Project. We feel it is unnecessary and ill-advised to intrude into the agricultural land in the Williamson Act and to widen the road to include turning lanes. We believe a 3 stop sign option using only the current right-of-way land is the most practical option. Reducing the curve of Shenandoah Rd. has the potential of creating the equivalent of a speedway, making it even more dangerous for people on Fiddletown Rd. unless all parties are required to stop. We are attaching a copy of the county plan's figure 4 with our preferred 3-stop option drawn in.

Thank you for your attention to the matter.

Michelle Grondin  
209-419-2503

13-1



**FIGURE 4. PRELIMINARY PLANS**  
**Shenandoah-Fiddletown Roads Intersection Improvement Project**

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**Response to Comment 13-1:** Please see Response 6-13 above for a response to this comment regarding alternative project designs.

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## REFERENCES

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**APPENDIX A: LIST OF SPECIES WITH POTENTIAL TO OCCUR IN THE PROJECT AREA**



Common and Scientific Names	Status			General Habitat Description	Habitat Present/Absent	Rationale
	Federal USFWS	State CDFW	CNPS			
Plants						
<i>Arctostaphylos myrtifolia</i> lone manzanita	FT	--	1B.2	Perennial evergreen shrub found in chaparral and cismontane woodland in acidic soil, lone soil, clay, or sandy soils. Blooming period: November – March Elevation: 196 – 1,902 feet	A	There is no habitat for this species in the BSA; therefore, this species is not expected to be in the BSA.
<i>Balsamorhiza macrolepis</i> Big-scale balsamroot	--	--	1B.2	Perennial herb found in chaparral, cismontane woodland, and valley and foothill grassland on sloped habitat. Blooming period: March – June Elevation: 295 – 5,101 feet	HP	A focused survey was conducted for this species on April 2, 2015, and the survey was negative. Because the survey was conducted during the appropriate blooming period for this species, and because this species was not observed, the big-scale balsamroot is presumed absent from the BSA at this time.
<i>Castilleja campestris</i> ssp. <i>succulent</i> Succulent owl's-clover	FT	SE	1B.2	Annual herb found in vernal pools. Blooming period: April – May Elevation: 164 – 2,460 feet	A	There is no habitat for this species in the BSA; therefore, this species is not expected to be in the BSA.
<i>Chlorogalum grandiflorum</i> Red Hills soaproot	--	--	1B.2	Perennial, bulbiferous herb found in chaparral, cismontane woodland, and lower montane coniferous forest. Blooming period: May – June Elevation: 803 – 4,068 feet	A	There is no habitat for this species in the BSA; therefore, this species is not expected to be in the BSA.
<i>Clarkia biloba</i> ssp. <i>brandegeae</i>	--	--	4.2	Annual herb found in chaparral, cismontane woodland, and lower montane coniferous forest habitats, often	A	There is no habitat for this species in the BSA; therefore, this species is not expected to be in the BSA.

Brandegee's clarkia				in roadcuts. Blooming period: May - July Elevation: 246 – 3,002 feet		
<i>Crocanthemum suffrutescens</i> Bisbee Peak rush-rose	--	-	3.2	Perennial, evergreen shrub found in chaparral habitat often in gabbroic or lone soil, and often in burned or disturbed areas. Blooming period: April – August Elevation: 246 – 2,198 feet	A	There is no habitat for this species in the BSA; therefore, this species is not expected to be in the BSA.
<i>Erigonum apricum</i> var. <i>apricum</i> lone buckwheat	FE	SE	1B.1	Perennial herb found in chaparral habitat in lone soil. Blooming period: July – October Elevation: 196 – 476 feet	A	There is no habitat for this species in the BSA, and the BSA is substantially above the elevation range where this species is found; therefore, this species is not expected to be in the BSA.
<i>Eriogonum apricum</i> var. <i>prostratum</i> Irish Hill buckwheat	FE	SE	1B.1	Perennial herb found in chaparral habitat in lone soil. Blooming period: June – July Elevation: 295 – 393 feet	A	There is no habitat for this species in the BSA, and the BSA is substantially above the elevation range where this species is found; therefore, this species is not expected to be in the BSA.
<i>Eryngium pinnatisectum</i> Tuolumne button-celery	--	--	1B.2	Annual/perennial herb found in foothill woodland, yellow pine forest, freshwater wetlands, and wetland-riparian communities in vernal pool habitat. Found nearly always under natural conditions in wetlands. Blooming period: May – August Elevation: 229 – 3,002 feet	A	There is no habitat for this species in the BSA; therefore, this species is not expected to be in the BSA.
<i>Horkelia parryi</i> Parry's horkelia	--	--	1B.2	Perennial herb found in chaparral and cismontane woodland. Blooming period: April – September	A	There is no habitat for this species in the BSA; therefore, this species is not expected to be in the BSA.

				Elevation: 262 – 3,510 feet		
<i>Navarretia myersii</i> ssp. <i>myersii</i> Pincushion navarretia	--	--	1B.1	Annual herb found in vernal pools. Blooming period: April – May Elevation: 65 – 1,083 feet	A	There is no habitat for this species in the BSA; therefore, this species is not expected to be in the BSA.
<i>Orcuttia viscida</i> Sacramento Orcutt grass	FE, CH	SE	1B.1	Annual herb found in vernal pools. Blooming period: April – September Elevation: 98 – 328 feet	A	There is no habitat, including critical habitat, for this species in the BSA, and the BSA is substantially above the elevation range where this species is found; therefore, this species is not expected to be in the BSA.
<i>Sphenopholis obtusata</i> Prairie wedge grass	--	--	2B.2	Perennial herb found in cismontane woodland, meadows, and seeps. Blooming period: April – July Elevation: 984 – 6,561 feet	A	There is no habitat for this species in the BSA; therefore, this species is not expected to be in the BSA.
Insects						
<i>Banksula rudolphi</i> Rudolph’s cave harvestman	--	--		Found in limestone habitats in Chrome Cave and Pardee Reservoir in Amador County.	A	Chrome Cave and Pardee Reservoir are not in the BSA and there is no habitat for this species in the BSA; therefore, this species is not expected to be in the BSA.
<i>Chrysis tularensis</i> Tulare cuckoo wasp	--	--		Found within the foothills of the San Joaquin Valley, the Tulare cuckoo wasp is a poorly understood species. The CNDDDB does not provide information on its habitat but many species in the Chrysis genus are found in open, sunny habitats and feed on flower nectar. Like other members of the Hymenopteran family, the Tulare cuckoo wasp may parasitize the nests of other wasps and bee larvae by	A	According to the CNDDDB, this species was documented within the city of Plymouth, although the CNDDDB does not indicate the exact date and location. Dr. Kimsey’s records indicate that the species was documented in Plymouth in 1967, and no further recordings of the species have been made in Amador County since that time. Because of the lack of information for this species, it is difficult to determine whether there is appropriate

			<p>laying eggs that will hatch and consume the host's eggs and/or young. Individuals are generally active as adults between May and August. During this time, the adults follow the potential hosts into their burrows to lay their eggs. Dr. Lynn Kimsey, professor of entomology and Director of the Bohart Museum of Entomology at University of California, Davis, was consulted to provide further information on this species (Dr. Lynn S. Kimsey, personal communication, May 18, 2015). Dr. Kimsey confirmed that no host is known for this species, but that other members of the species group attack solitary vespid wasps as their hosts. Because of the Tulare cuckoo wasp's relatively large body size, Dr. Kimsey estimates that this species would most likely attack ground nesting wasps, or wasps using large beetle burrows in wood. She noted that ground-nesting vespid wasps only build nests in areas of open, sunny soil.</p>		<p>habitat for the Tulare cuckoo wasp in the BSA. However, based on the absence in the BSA of open, sunny soil that is used by the likely host species, it is presumed that suitable habitat is not present in the BSA. In addition, this species has not been documented in the area since 1967; therefore, this species is not expected to be in the BSA.</p>
<p><i>Desmocerus californicus dimorphus</i> valley elderberry longhorn beetle</p>	FT	--	<p>Found in riparian habitat from southern Shasta County to Fresno County, in association with elderberry shrubs (<i>Sambucus</i> sp.). Prefers to lay eggs in elderberries with stems measuring two to eight inches in diameter; some preference shown for "stressed" elderberries.</p>	HP	<p>There are two elderberry shrubs with stems measuring one inch or greater in diameter within the BSA; therefore, there is potential for this species to be in the BSA.</p>
<p><i>Hydroporus</i></p>	--	--	<p>Found in freshwater ponds, shallow</p>	A	<p>There is no habitat for this species in the BSA; therefore, this species is not expected to be in</p>

<i>leechi</i> Leech's skyline diving beetle			streams, marshes, and lakes.		the BSA.
Crustaceans					
<i>Branchinecta conservatio</i> Conservancy fairy shrimp	FE	--	Found in highly turbid water in vernal pools.	A	There is no habitat for this species in the BSA; therefore, this species is not expected to be in the BSA.
<i>Branchinecta lynchi</i> Vernal pool fairy shrimp	FT, CH	--	Primarily found in vernal pools, but may be found in alkali pools, seasonal drainages, stock ponds, vernal swales, and rock outcrops. Found from southern Oregon to southern California.	A	There is no habitat, including critical habitat, within the BSA; therefore, this species is not expected to be in the BSA.
<i>Lepidurus packardii</i> vernal pool tadpole shrimp	FE, CH	--	Inhabits vernal pools and swales in the Sacramento Valley containing clear to highly turbid water. Pools commonly found in grass-bottomed swales of unplowed grasslands. Some pools are mud-bottomed and highly turbid.	A	There is no habitat, including critical habitat, for this species in the BSA; therefore, this species is not expected to be in the BSA.
<i>Stygobromus gradyi</i> Grady's Cave amphipod	--	--	Found in springs and caves in Central California where there is limestone substrate.	A	There is no habitat for this species in the BSA; therefore, this species is not expected to be in the BSA.
Amphibians					
<i>Ambystoma californiense</i> California tiger salamander	FT, CH	ST	Found in grassland, oak savannah, and edges of mixed woodland and lower elevation coniferous forest. Need underground refuges, especially ground squirrel burrows, and vernal pools or other seasonal water sources for	A	There is no critical habitat for this species in the BSA. According to CNDDDB, the nearest recorded occurrence of this species was in 2010, approximately 13 miles southwest of the BSA. There are gopher burrows, grasslands, and oak woodland habitat in the BSA, which

			breeding. This species will travel up to 1.24 miles from aquatic habitat to upland habitat.		could provide upland habitat for this species; however, there is no vernal pool or other aquatic breeding habitat within or adjacent to the BSA. There is a cattle pond approximately 0.40 mile to the northeast of the BSA; however, this pond is inundated throughout the year, and likely contains predator species such as fish and bullfrogs, which need a permanent water source. Therefore, this pond is not expected to provide breeding and/or larval habitat for the CTS. No other potential breeding ponds were identified within 1.24 miles of the BSA; therefore, the BSA is not likely to be used as dispersal habitat for the CTS, and is not expected to be in the BSA.
<i>Anaxyrus canorus</i> Yosemite toad	FPT	PX	Found in wet mountain meadows, willow thickets, and the borders of forests, usually not more than 100 meters from a permanent water source.	A	There is no habitat for this species in the BSA; therefore, this species is not expected to be in the BSA.
<i>Rana boylei</i> Foothill yellow-legged frog	--	SSC	Found in partly shaded, shallow streams, and riffles with a rocky substrate in forests, chaparral, and woodlands. Require some cobble-sized substrate for egg-laying.	A	There is no habitat for this species in the BSA; therefore, this species is not expected to be in the BSA.
<i>Rana draytonii</i> California red-legged frog	FT, CH	--	Found near ponds in humid forests, woodlands, grasslands, coastal scrub, and streams with plant cover. Most common in lowlands or foothills.	A	There is no critical habitat for this species in the BSA. According to the CNDDDB, the nearest recorded occurrence of this species was in 1942, approximately 9.4 miles north of the BSA. There are several ponds within one mile of the BSA, and grasslands and oak woodlands in the BSA, which could be used by the CRLF; however, recent intensive surveys have confirmed there are no extant populations of

					the CRLF in Amador County (Barry and Fellers, 2013). The study indicated that only one historical record out of 21 records in the Sierra Nevada contains a persisting population; this extant historical population is located in Placer County Therefore, this species is not expected to be in the BSA.
<i>Rana sierrae</i> Mountain yellow-legged frog	FE, CH	PX	Found in lakes, ponds, meadow streams, isolated pools, and sunny riverbanks in the Sierra Nevada Mountains.	A	There is no habitat, including critical habitat in the BSA; therefore, this species is not expected to be in the BSA.
Fish					
<i>Hypomesus transpacificus</i> Delta smelt	FT	--	Found in the freshwater-saltwater mixing zone of estuaries.	A	There is no habitat in the BSA; therefore, there is no potential for this species to be in the BSA.
<i>Oncorhynchus clarki henshawi</i> Lahontan cutthroat trout	FT	--	Found in cold waters of the Lahontan Basin. Requires gravel riffles in streams for spawning. Cannot tolerate the presence of other salmonids.	A	The BSA is not within the Lahontan Basin; therefore, there is no potential for this species to be in the BSA.
<i>Oncorhynchus mykiss irideus</i> Central Valley steelhead DPS	FT, CH	--	Populations found in the Sacramento and San Joaquin rivers and their tributaries.	A	There is no habitat, including critical habitat, in the BSA; therefore, there is no potential for this species to be in the BSA.
<i>Oncorhynchus tshawytscha</i> Central valley spring-run Chinook salmon; winter-run Chinook salmon	FT/FE	--	Prefer deeper streams than other salmon species. May spend from three months to two years in freshwater before migrating to the ocean to feed and mature.	A	There is no habitat in the BSA; therefore, there is no potential for this species to be in the BSA.

Reptiles					
<i>Emys marmorata</i> Western pond turtle	--	SSC	Found in slow moving rivers, streams, lakes ponds, wetlands, reservoirs, and brackish estuarine waters. Prefers areas with logs, algae, or vegetation for cover and boulders for basking.	HP	There is suitable upland habitat in the BSA for this species; however, the nearest suitable aquatic habitat is approximately 0.4 mile from the BSA, and this species is not expected to be in the BSA.
<i>Thamnophis gigas</i> giant garter snake	FT	ST	Found in marshes, sloughs, drainage canals, irrigation ditches, and occasionally in slow-moving creeks. Requires emergent herbaceous wetland vegetation for escape and foraging. Preys upon fish and amphibians.	A	There is no habitat in the BSA; therefore, this species is not expected to be in the BSA.
Birds					
<i>Agelaius tricolor</i> tricolored blackbird	--	--	Highly colonial species, most numerous in Central Valley and vicinity. Found in freshwater marshes dominated by cattails and bulrushes. Requires open water, protected nesting substrate, and foraging area with insect prey within one mile of the colony.	A	There is no habitat in the BSA; therefore, this species is not expected to be in the BSA.
<i>Ardea herodias</i> Great blue heron	--	--	Nests colonially in tall trees, cliff sides, and sequestered spots on marshes. Forages in marshes, lake margins, tide flats, rivers, streams, and wet meadows. Rookery sites are in close proximity to foraging areas.	A	There is no habitat in the BSA; therefore, this species is not expected to be in the BSA
<i>Strix nebulosa</i> Great gray owl	--	SE	Found in conifer, red fir forest, and meadow habitats. Requires large diameter tree cavities in forests with high canopy closure.	A	There is no habitat in the BSA; therefore, this species is not expected to be in the BSA.
Mammals					

<i>Antrozous pallidus pallidus</i> pallid bat	--	SSC	Found in deserts, grasslands, shrublands, woodlands and forests. Most common in open, dry habitats with rocky areas for roosting. Day roosts are in caves, crevices, mines, and occasionally hollow trees and buildings. Night roosts may be in more open sites, such as porches and open buildings. Roosts must protect bats from high temperatures.	HP	There are hollow trees in the BSA; therefore, there is potential for this species to roost in the BSA.
<i>Corynorhinus townsendii</i> Townsend's big-eared bat	--	SSC	Found in a variety of habitat types, including coniferous forests, deserts, native prairies, riparian communities, agricultural areas, and coastal habitats. Roosts in caves, and cave-like structures, such as exposed cavity-forming rock and mines. Prefer to roost in large rooms and do not tuck themselves into cracks and crevices like many bat species do.	A	There is no suitable roosting habitat in the BSA; therefore, this species is not expected to be in the BSA.
<i>Martes pennaniti</i> fisher	FC	SCT	Found in closed canopy habitats of mature and old-growth forests and avoid open areas. Will use burrows and coarse woody debris for resting in winter.	A	There is no habitat in the BSA; therefore, this species is not expected to be in the BSA.
Natural Communities					
Central Valley Drainage Hardhead/Squaw-fish Stream		SNR	Perennial low- to mid- elevation streams with deep bedrock pools, low temperatures, and clear water.	A	There are no streams within the BSA.
lone Chaparral	S1.1 = very threatened (less than 2,000 acres)		A chaparral of low shrubs and scattered herbs dominated by lone manzanita. Shrub cover in mature stands usually exceeds 50 percent, with very little understory.	A	There are no lone manzanita shrubs in the BSA.

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*Table Key: Absent [A] - no habitat present and no further work needed. Habitat Present [HP] -habitat is, or may be present. The species may be present. Present [P] - the species is present. Critical Habitat [CH] - project footprint is located within a designated critical habitat unit, but does not necessarily mean that appropriate habitat is present. Status: Federal Endangered (FE); Federal Threatened (FT); Federal Proposed (FP, FPE, FPT); Federal Candidate (FC), Federal Species of Concern (FSC); State Endangered (SE); State Threatened (ST); Fully Protected (FP); State Rare (SR); State Candidate Threatened (SCT); State Species of Special Concern (SSC); Proposed critical habitat (PX); State No Rank (SNR); California Native Plant Society (CNPS), etc. 1B= Plant species that are rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere; 2.2= Plant species that are rare, threatened, or endangered in California, but are more common elsewhere; 3.2= Plants about which we need more information; fairly threatened in California*

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**APPENDIX B: SUMMARY OF AB 52 COORDINATION**



**NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE COMMISSION**

1550 Harbor Blvd., Suite 100  
West Sacramento, CA 95691  
(916) 373-3710  
(916) 373-5471 FAX



September 1, 2015

Melissa Logue  
GPA Consulting

Sent by Email: [Melissa@gpaconsulting-us.com](mailto:Melissa@gpaconsulting-us.com)  
Number of Pages: 3

RE: Native American Consultation, Pursuant to Public Resources Code Sections 21080.1, 21080.3.1 and 21080.3.2, Shenandoah/Fiddletown Roads Intersection Improvement project, Amador County

Dear Ms. Logue:

As of July 1, 2015, Public Resources Code Sections 21080.1, 21080.3.1 and 21080.3.2 require public agencies to consult with California Native American tribes identified by the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) for the purpose mitigating impacts to tribal cultural resources:

Within 14 days of determining that an application for a project is complete or a decision by a public agency to undertake a project, the lead agency shall provide formal notification to the designated contact of, or a tribal representative of, traditionally and culturally affiliated California Native American tribes that have requested notice, which shall be accomplished by means of at least one written notification that includes a brief description of the proposed project and its location, the lead agency contact information, and a notification that the California Native American tribe has 30 days to request consultation pursuant to this section. (Public Resources Code Section 21080.1(d))

The law does not preclude agencies from initiating consultation with the tribes that are culturally and traditionally affiliated with their jurisdictions. The NAHC believes that in fact that this is the best practice to ensure that tribes are consulted commensurate with the intent of the law. Attached is a consultation list of tribes with traditional lands or cultural places located within the boundaries of the potential "area of project affect" (APE).

In accordance with Public Resources Code Section 21080.1(d), formal notification must include a brief description of the proposed project and its location, the lead agency contact information, and a notification that the California Native American tribe has 30 days to request consultation. The NAHC believes that agencies should also include with their notification letters information regarding any cultural resources assessment that has been completed on the APE, such as:

1. The results of any record search that may have been conducted at an Information Center of the California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS), including, but not limited to:
  - A listing of any and all known cultural resources have already been recorded on or adjacent to the APE;
  - Copies of any and all cultural resource records and study reports that may have been provided by the Information Center as part of the records search response;

- If the probability is low, moderate, or high that cultural resources are located in the APE.
  - Whether the records search indicates a low, moderate or high probability that unrecorded cultural resources are located in the potential APE; and
  - If a survey is recommended by the Information Center to determine whether previously unrecorded cultural resources are present.
2. The results of any archaeological inventory survey that was conducted, including:
- Any report that may contain site forms, site significance, and suggested mitigation measures.
- All information regarding site locations, Native American human remains, and associated funerary objects should be in a separate confidential addendum, and not be made available for public disclosure in accordance with Government Code Section 6254.10.
3. A search of the NAHC Sacred Lands File was completed for the APE referenced above. Please note that the absence of specific site information in the Sacred Lands File does not indicate the absence of Native American traditional cultural places or cultural landscapes in any APE. While in this case, a search of the NAHC Sacred Lands File did not indicate the presence of any sites within the APE you provided, a Native American tribe or individual may be the only source for the presence of traditional cultural places. Enclosed is a list of Native American individuals/organizations who may have knowledge of traditional cultural places in your project area. This list should provide a starting place in locating any areas of potential adverse impact.
4. Any ethnographic studies conducted for any area including all or part of the potential APE; and
5. Any geotechnical reports regarding all or part of the potential APE.

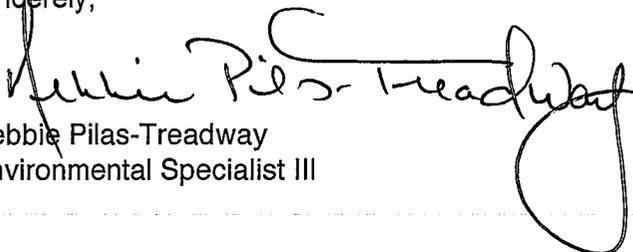
Lead agencies should be aware that records maintained by the NAHC and CHRIS is not exhaustive, and a negative response to these searches does not preclude the existence of a cultural place. A tribe may be the only source of information regarding the existence of a tribal cultural resource.

This information will aid tribes in determining whether to request formal consultation. In the case that they do, having the information beforehand will help to facilitate the consultation process.

If you receive notification of change of addresses and phone numbers from tribes, please notify me. With your assistance we are able to assure that our consultation list contains current information.

If you have any questions, please contact me at [dpt\\_nahc@pacbell.net](mailto:dpt_nahc@pacbell.net)

Sincerely,

  
Debbie Pilas-Treadway  
Environmental Specialist III

**Native American Heritage Commission  
Tribal Consultation List  
Amador County  
September 1, 2015**

Buena Vista Rancheria  
Rhonda Morningstar Pope, Chairperson  
1418 20th Street, Suite 200 Me-Wuk / Miwok  
Sacramento, CA 95811  
rhonda@buenavistatribe.com  
(916) 491-0011 Office

Calaveras Band of Mi-Wuk Indians  
Charles Wilson, Chairperson  
546 Bald Mountain Road Mi-Wuk  
West Point, CA 95255  
(209) 293-2189

Ione Band of Miwok Indians  
Yvonne Miller, Chairperson  
P.O. Box 699 Miwok  
Plymouth, CA 95669  
administrator@ionemiwok.org  
(209) 245-5800 Office

Jackson Rancheria Band of Miwok Indians  
Adam Dalton, Chairperson  
P.O. Box 1090 Me-Wuk - Miwok - Mi-  
Jackson, CA 95642  
(209) 223-1935 Office

Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California  
Darrell Kizer, Chairperson  
919 Highway 395 South Washoe  
Gardnerville, NV 89410  
ktrovato@washoetribe.us  
(775) 265-4191 Office

This list is current only as of the date of this document.

Distribution of this list does not relieve any person of statutory responsibility as defined in Section 7050.5 of the Health and Safety Code, Section 5097.94 of the Public Resources Code and Section 5097.98 of the Public Resources Code.  
This list is applicable only for consultation with Native American tribes under Public Resources Code Sections 21080.3.1 and 21080.3.2.  
Shenandoah/Fiddletown Roads Intersection Improvement project, Amador County

**Shenandoah/Fiddletown Roads Intersection Project  
Correspondence with Native American Contacts under AB 52**

Name/Affiliation	Contact Person	Contact number	Date Letter/Email Sent	Letter Delivered	Letter/Email/ Both	Date of Follow-Up Phone Call	Comments	Date of 2nd Follow-Up Phone Call	Comments
Buena Vista Rancheria	Rhonda Morningstar Pope	(916) 491-0011	9/4/2015	Delayed/In-transit	Both	9/24/2015	The receptionist, Desiree, was going to pass on the information to Dr. Roselynn Lwenya. Gave them PM contact information. Letter still in-transit 9/24/2015		Spoke to admin assistant, Dr. Lwenya was on another call. Left Melissa Logue's contact information.
Calaveras Band of Mi-Wuk Indians	Charles Wilson	(209) 293-2189	9/4/2015	9/22/2015	Letter	9/24/2015	Letter out for Redelivery 9/15/2015. Follow-up call made 9/24/2015 no answer and no voicemail available.		Spoke to Charles Wilson about the letter and he referred me to Sam Baugh. He did not have contact information but he said that he is in charge of projects.
Ione Band of Miwok Indians	Yvonne Miller	(209) 245-5800	9/4/2015	9/8/2015	Both	9/24/2015	Follow-Up call made 9/24/2015 left voicemail		Randy Yonemura call Melissa Logue at GPA on 10/2/15. Indicated that a resource (burial) may be located in the area, and requested additional information to help determine if resources may be present. Ms. Logue provided Project Description, maps, and records search summary via email on 10/5/15. Ms. Logue made follow-up phone call on 10/6/15. Ms. Logue left voice mail asking if information provided on 10/5/15 was sufficient and inquire if Mr. Yonemura wished to conduct consultation for the project under the provisions of AB 52. No response was received. Ms. Logue places a second follow-up call on 10/12/15. Ms. Logue left voice mail with same information as 10/6/15 message. No response was received. No additional information or communication has been received from Mr. Yonemura since his initial phone call.
Jackson Rancheria Band of Miwok Indians	Adam Dalton	(209) 223-1935	9/4/2015	9/9/2015	Letter	9/24/2015	Follow-Up call made 9/24/2015 left voicemail	10/1/2015 Follow up call made. Left a voicemail.	
Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California	Barrell Kizer (former Chairperson) Neil Mortimer (current)	(775) 265-4191	9/4/2015	9/8/2015	Both	9/24/2015	Follow-Up call made 9/24/2015 left voicemail	10/1/2015 Follow up call made. Left a voicemail.	

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**APPENDIX C: RECENT AND FUTURE PROJECTS IN AMADOR COUNTY**





Click Project Title link to display all related documents. Document Type link will display full document description.

Records Found: 53

[[First](#)] [[Next](#)] [[Previous](#)] [[Last](#)]

Page: 1 2

Query Parameters: Amador None All

Date Range: 2014-11-01 to 2015-11-30

SCH#	Lead Agency	Project Title	Description	Document Type	Date Received
2015062092	Sutter Creek, City of	<a href="#">Sutter Creek Bridge Replacement Project</a>	The City of Sutter Creek proposes to replace the Sutter Creek Bridge (Main Street Bridge over Sutter Creek). As part of the bridge replacement, rehabilitation of the approach roadways would also be made approximately 200 feet north and south of the bridge. The proposed project would replace the existing bridge with a new bridge that would meet current design standards. The proposed bridge would be approximately 70 feet in length. The new structure would accommodate at a minimum the existing 11 foot sidewalks, 4 foot shoulders and two 12 foot lanes. Including barriers and railings, the resulting bridge width is 79'-4". The work to be performed would include removal of the existing 3 span structure, including 12 columns in the creek. The existing stone abutments will be left in place.	<a href="#">FIN</a>	11/23/2015
2015-23	Bureau of Indian Affairs	<a href="#">Buena Vista Rancheria of Me-Wuk Indians of California APN: 012-130-011-000</a>	The subject property consists of two parcels of land, encompassing approximately 54.90 acres more or less, commonly referred to as Assessor's Parcel Number: 012-130-011-000. The parcels are approximately 2,570 feet southwest of the existing reservation. The Tribe intends to continue to utilize the land as open space/grazing land to further enhance self-determination and increase the welfare of the Tribal members.	<a href="#">BIA</a>	11/16/2015
2012122038	Corrections and Rehabilitation, Department of	<a href="#">Level II Infill Correctional Facilities Project at MCSP - Secondary Effluent Spray Field Enhancement Measures</a>	Note: Final Subsequent CDCR is proposing to (1) contract additional administrative/program support offices to meet the needs of Level II Enhanced Outpatient Program inmates that will be housed at the new complex, (2) upgrade / enhanced the remaining approximately 200 acres spray fields within prison grounds that are necessary for application of disinfected secondary wastewater effluent, (3) install approximately 45 acres of new secondary effluent spray fields on vacant areas within prison grounds, and (4) potentially install piping to facilitate an internal connection within MCSP grounds and a second section of piping extending from near the City of Lone's tertiary treatment plant to approximately 100 acres of existing agricultural land on the adjacent Greenrock Ranch.	<a href="#">FIN</a>	11/13/2015
2015102080	Plymouth, City of	<a href="#">Rancho Victoria Vineyard Recycled Water Project</a>	Development Agreement between the City of Plymouth and Rancho Victoria Vineyard (RVV) for the City to provide treated effluent (recycled water) to RVV to drip irrigate approximately 100 acres of wine grapes. The project involves a pump station, 6,000 lineal feet of main water lines, a water filtration station, extension of overhead electrical power lines, and irrigation mains and laterals. Comprises approximately 14-acre total project area.	<a href="#">MND</a>	10/28/2015
2015102066	Caltrans #6	<a href="#">State Route 88 Pine Grove Corridor Improvement Project</a>	Caltrans, in cooperation with the Amador County Transportation Commission, proposes to make improvements to the segment of SR 88 from post mile 21.6 near Climax Road to post mile 24.6 near Tabeaud Road in the town of Pine Grove in Amador County, CA. The project improvements include intersection and lane reconfiguration, pedestrian and bicycle improvements, and roadway-related improvements along SR 88. Construction of the project will be phased.	<a href="#">MND</a>	10/22/2015
2015108272	Toxic Substances Control, Department of	<a href="#">Critical Removal Action at the Argonaut Mine Tailings Site</a>	The Most of the Site is covered with mine tailings consisting of grey sands. These sands contain arsenic; the highest level onsite is 32,000 parts per million. These tailings were believed to be processed from the Argonaut Mine Stamp Mill roughly 1/3 of a mile north of the site. The depth of grey sands at the northern tip of the site is approximately 25 feet; while at the southern limit the grey sands may exceed a depth of 60 feet. There is an intermittent creek that runs through the length of the Site.	<a href="#">NOE</a>	10/20/2015
2015102038	Amador County	<a href="#">ARCO AM-PM Convenience Store &amp; Carwash</a>	Construction of a 4,500 sf convenience store/carwash with 12 fuel pumps.	<a href="#">MND</a>	10/14/2015
2012122038	Corrections and Rehabilitation,	<a href="#">Level II Infill Correctional Facilities</a>	Note: Shorten Review CDCR is proposing to (1) contract additional administrative/program support offices to meet the	<a href="#">SIR</a>	10/1/2015

	Department of	<a href="#">Project at MCSP - Secondary Effluent Spray Field Enhancement Measures</a>	needs of Level II Enhanced Outpatient Program inmates that will be housed at the new complex, (2) upgrade / enhanced the remaining approximately 200 acres spray fields within prison grounds that are necessary for application of disinfected secondary wastewater effluent, (3) install approximately 45 acres of new secondary effluent spray fields on vacant areas within prison grounds, and (4) potentially install piping to facilitate an internal connection within MCSP grounds and a second section of piping extending from near the City of Ione's tertiary treatment plant to approximately 100 acres of existing agricultural land on the adjacent Greenrock Ranch.		
2015098404	Fish & Wildlife #2	<a href="#">Streambed Maintenance (Streambed Alteration Agreement NO. 1600-2015-0190-R2)</a>	Project is limited to the removal of approx. 3-miles of vegetation from the channels using hand tools and mechanical vegetation cutters and shredders to maintain capacity. Debris and dead vegetation will be removed by hand. Vegetation would be limited to ruderal grasses and trees and shrubs less than 4 inches diameter at breast height. Trees greater than 4 inches DBH will be retained, but may be limbed up. Riparian vegetation that is not obstructing flow will be retained. Near the intersection of Court Street and Water Street approx. 10 cubic yards of sediment will be excavated.	<a href="#">NOE</a>	9/24/2015
2013022015	Caltrans #10	<a href="#">State Route 49 and Main Street/Shenandoah Road Intersection Improvement Project</a>	Intersection improvements on SR 49 and Main Street.	<a href="#">NOD</a>	9/1/2015
2014042033	Plymouth, City of	<a href="#">Plymouth Wastewater Treatment Plant Improvements</a>	Installation of a new floating outlet, modifications to the existing outlet and seepage return system, and minor grading of the reservoir.	<a href="#">NOD</a>	8/21/2015
2015088221	State Water Resources Control Board	<a href="#">El Dorado Irrigation District Water Transfer</a>	El Dorado Irrigation District proposes to transfer 700 acre-feet of water to Westlands Water District by Reservoir release from Weber Reservoir under License 2184.	<a href="#">NOE</a>	8/20/2015
2015062065	El Dorado Irrigation District	<a href="#">2015 El Dorado Irrigation District to Westlands Water District Temporary Water Transfer Project</a>	EID proposes to transfer up to 3,100 acre-feet of water to Westland's Water District during summer and fall 2015. EID would make the water available through re-operations of EID reservoirs to release water otherwise planned to be consumed by EID customers and/or stored within the EID network of reservoirs. The transfer quantity includes approximately 700 AF that would be released from Weber Reservoir, and approximately 2,400 AF that would be released from Silver Lake. But for the Project, EID would otherwise retain the 700 AF in Weber Reservoir and add the 2,400 AF to storage in Jenkinson lake or use it directly to meet summer/fall 2015 demands that would instead be met with water previously stored in Jenkinson Lake.	<a href="#">NOD</a>	7/27/2015
2015022003	Amador County	<a href="#">George Read Residential Driveway Bridge</a>	The CDFE has executed Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement No. 1600-2013-0234-R2, pursuant to section 1602 of the Fish and Game Code to the project Applicant, George W. Reed. The project consists of the installation of a 60 foot long recycled flatcar bridge. The clear-span between concrete abutments will be 48 feet. Steel handrails/guardrails (approximately 120 linear feet total) will be installed on both sides of the bridge. The concrete abutments will be constructed from approximately 60 cubic yards of steel reinforced concrete. The abutments will be placed above the ordinary high water mark and backfilled with clean imported soil. The top of abutment footings will be protected from scour with approximately 70 cubic yards of light facing rip rap. A temporary stream crossing constructed from gravel will be used to access the north bridge abutment construction and driveway fill. The temporary crossing will be removed after construction is complete.	<a href="#">NOD</a>	7/9/2015
2015062092	Sutter Creek, City of	<a href="#">Sutter Creek Bridge Replacement Project</a>	The City of Sutter Creek proposes to replace the Sutter Creek Bridge (Main Street Bridge over Sutter Creek). As part of the bridge replacement, rehabilitation of the approach roadways would also be made approximately 200 feet north and south of the bridge. The proposed project would replace the existing bridge with a new bridge that would meet current design standards. The proposed bridge would be approximately 70 feet in length. The new structure would accommodate at a minimum the existing 11 foot sidewalks, 4 foot shoulders and two 12 foot lanes. Including barriers and railings, the resulting bridge width is 79'-4". The work to be performed would include removal of the existing 3 span structure, including 12 columns in the creek. The existing stone abutments will be left in place.	<a href="#">MND</a>	6/30/2015
2015042036	Jackson, City of	<a href="#">French Bar Road at South Fork Jackson Creek Bridge (26C0035) Replacement Project</a>	The City of Jackson intends to replace the existing French Bar Road Bridge (26C-0035) over South Fork Jackson Creek to improve roadway safety and comply with the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) guidelines. The overall 36 ft wide replacement structure will accommodate two approximately 10-ft traffic lanes, two 3-ft shoulders, a 6-ft wide sidewalk on the south side of the bridge, and 2-ft wide standard metal bridge railing barriers on	<a href="#">NOD</a>	6/26/2015

			both sides of the bridge. The new bridge abutments will be realigned to provide improved hydraulic capacity through the project area. The new bridge will be raised approximately 3 ft to comply with Caltrans Standards.		
2011082008	Amador County	<a href="#">Ridge Road/New York Ranch Road Intersection Project</a>	The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) has executed Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement number 1600-2012-0154-R2, pursuant to section 1602 of the Fish and Game Code to the project Applicant, Amador County Department of Transportation and Public Works. This project consists of adding three culvert extensions to existing culverts at engineer's stations 16+90 (Work Site #1), 26+00 (Work Site #2), and 9+20 (Work Site #3) (see Exhibit A). The culverts cross under Ridge Road and NY Ranch Road and the roads will then be widened for safety.	<a href="#">NOD</a>	6/19/2015
2013022015	Caltrans #10	<a href="#">State Route 49 and Main Street/Shenandoah Road Intersection Improvement Project</a>	The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) has executed Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement number 1600-2015-0025-R2, pursuant to section 1602 of the Fish and Game Code to the project Applicant, City of Plymouth. The project is limited to the replacement of a four-way intersection at SR 49 and Main Street/Shenandoah Road with a single-lane rural roundabout, culverts and a roadside ditch (Arroyo Ditch). Cumulatively, the project will result in 0.041 acres of temporary impacts to waters of the US due to fill of wetlands and other waters for a roadway project (i.e., culvert replacements and ditch removal/replacement).	<a href="#">NOD</a>	6/15/2015
2015032096	Caltrans #10	<a href="#">1602 Routine Maintenance Agreement</a>	The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) proposes to enter into a ten year routine maintenance agreement (RMA) with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), under the Streambed Alteration program (1602). This RMA would cover work occurring on state highway drainage facilities, in waterways in Caltrans' District 10, in the following counties: Alpine, Amador, Calaveras, and San Joaquin.	<a href="#">NOD</a>	6/15/2015
2015062031	Amador County	<a href="#">Hope Foundation / Whispering Pines Christian School Gymnasium</a>	Construction of a 4,800 sf gymnasium for the Whispering Pines Christian School.	<a href="#">MND</a>	6/12/2015
2015058144	Caltrans #10	<a href="#">Amador Culvert Liners - 0Y830</a>	Caltrans proposes to install culvert liners at four (4) locations on State Route (SR) 124; post mile (PM) 0.39, 0.44, 0.50, and 0.56. The purpose of this project is to extend the service life and prevent culvert failure. This project is needed due to existing deterioration of the culverts.	<a href="#">NOE</a>	5/18/2015
2015032001	Amador County	<a href="#">2015 Amador County Regional Transportation Plan</a>	The proposed project is the adoption and implementation of the 2015 Amador County Regional Transportation Plan Update (RTP). The RTP contains three primary elements: Policy Element, Action Element, and Financial Element. The RTP is a comprehensive transportation plan for all modes including: highways, local streets and roads, transit, bicycle, rail, and goods movement. The RTP contains policies, actions, and financial strategies for short-term and long-term transportation projects. More detailed information on the RTP can be found at the ACTC website, (www.actc-amador.org).	<a href="#">SIR</a>	5/15/2015
2015058111	River Pines Public Utility District	<a href="#">River Pines Water Rehabilitation Study</a>	Inventory the existing Community water system and develop a network hydrologic model; identify problems and deficiencies within the existing water supply, storage and distribution system; identify and evaluate improvements to the system and recommend a feasible project to address the deficiencies.	<a href="#">NOE</a>	5/14/2015
2013022015	Caltrans #10	<a href="#">State Route 49 and Main Street/Shenandoah Road Intersection Improvement Project</a>	Caltrans proposes to improve the SR 49 and Main Street/Shenandoah Road Intersection in the City of Plymouth, CA by constructing a round-about and relocating an existing ditch. The proposed project would improve traffic operations, improve local traffic circulation, and enhance traffic and pedestrian safety. The project would improve pedestrian and bicycle facilities, as well as drainage and City utilities throughout the project area.	<a href="#">NOD</a>	5/11/2015
2011011010	San Luis and Delta Mendota Water Authority	<a href="#">Long-Term North to South Water Transfer Program</a>	On April 28, 2015, EBMUD approved transfers of Central Valley Project (CVP) water from Glenn-Colusa Irrigation District (GCID), Sycamore Mutual Water Company (SMWC), and Reclamation District 1004 (RD 1004). The water would be made available for transfer through cropland idling/crop shifting and be delivered via the Freeport Regional Water Facility (Project). EBMUD recently declared a stage 4 critical drought and the need to use the Freeport Facility to deliver supplemental water to EBMUD's service area. Due to an unexpectedly low CVP allocation, EBMUD is implementing the Project to secure additional water to address water supply shortages.	<a href="#">NOD</a>	5/1/2015
2012122038	Corrections and Rehabilitation, Department of	<a href="#">Level II Infill Correctional Facilities Project at MCSP - Secondary Effluent</a>	The California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) has prepared, considered, and accepted an addendum to the certified 2013 Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Level II Infill Correctional Facilities Project. The April 2015	<a href="#">NOD</a>	4/30/2015

		<a href="#">Spray Field Enhancement Measures</a>	Addendum addresses minor modifications to the scope of the project at the Mule Creek State Prison site. The modifications include, but are not limited to, temporary areas needed for construction support activities (offices, parking, pre-fabrication areas, equipment storage, etc.), relocation of the stormwater detention basin to protect a wetland, safety modifications to the temporary construction access road, installation of temporary and permanent underground utilities, closure/protection of a cultural resource site, realignment of an internal access road to avoid sensitive resources, the addition of a small stormwater detention facility, and modifications to a proposed parking lot. CDCR has made no other changes to the scope of the project at the Mule Creek State Prison site as described in the approved 2013 EIR.		
2015048273	Caltrans #10	<a href="#">SAte Route (SR) 88 Carson Pass Overlay (Project No. 10.1E430)</a>	This project will overlay this section of the highway. The purpose of this project is to repair areas of failing or damaged pavement and to extend the service life of State Route 88. This project is needed to prevent further deterioration of the paved highway surface.	<a href="#">NOE</a>	4/23/2015
2015042036	Jackson, City of	<a href="#">French Bar Road at South Fork Jackson Creek Bridge (26C0035) Replacement Project</a>	The City of Jackson intends to replace the existing French Bar Road Bridge (26C-0035) over South Fork Jackson Creek to improve roadway safety and comply with the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) guidelines. The overall 36 ft wide replacement structure will accommodate two approximately 10-ft traffic lanes, two 3-ft shoulders, a 6-ft wide sidewalk on the south side of the bridge, and 2-ft wide standard metal bridge railing barriers on both sides of the bridge. The new bridge abutments will be realigned to provide improved hydraulic capacity through the project area. The replacement bridge will be raised approximately 3 ft to comply with the Hydraulic Design Criteria established in the Caltrans Local Procedures Manual.	<a href="#">MND</a>	4/10/2015
2011011010	San Luis and Delta Mendota Water Authority	<a href="#">Long-Term North to South Water Transfer Program</a>	SLDMWA Participating Members experience severe reductions in Central Valley Project (CVP) water supplies during dry hydrologic years. A number of entities upstream from the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta have expressed interest in transferring water to reduce the effects of CVP shortages to these agencies. The alternatives evaluated include transfers to CVP contractors that are made available through groundwater substitution, cropland idling, reservoir release, and conservation from 2015 to 2024.	<a href="#">NOD</a>	4/9/2015
2015038403	U.S. Forest Service	<a href="#">Pardoe's Point Boat Ramp Improvement Project</a>	The Amador Ranger District proposes to extend the length of the Pardoe's Point boat ramp to improve safety and provide easier access for launching boats for the public. Improvements will include adding 220 feet by 20 feet to the existing boat ramp with the construction of a re-bar enforced concrete pad over rock shoreline.	<a href="#">NOE</a>	4/1/2015
2015048003	U.S. Forest Service	<a href="#">Pardoe's Point Boat Ramp Improvement Project</a>	The Amador Ranger District proposes to extend the length of the Pardoe's Point boat ramp to improve safety and provide easier access for launching boats for the public. Improvements will include adding 220 feet by 20 feet to the existing boat ramp with the construction of a re-bar enforced concrete pad over rock shoreline.	<a href="#">NOE</a>	4/1/2015
2015032096	Caltrans #10	<a href="#">1602 Routine Maintenance Agreement</a>	Caltrans proposes to enter into a ten year routine maintenance agreement (RMA) with the CDFW, under the Streambed Alteration program (1602). This RMA would cover work occurring on state highway drainage facilities, in waterways in Caltrans' District 10, in the following counties: Alpine, Amador, Calaveras, and San Joaquin.	<a href="#">Neg</a>	3/30/2015
2015032080	Sutter Creek, City of	<a href="#">2014-2019 City of Sutter Creek Joint Housing Element</a>	The 2014-2019 Joint Housing Element Update is an update to the existing General Plan Housing Element. This document supersedes previously adopted Housing Elements and replaces the existing Housing Element in the City of Sutter Creek General Plan. The 2014-2019 Draft Housing Element addresses the requirements of California Government Code 65583, for the planning period from 2014 to 2019. The Draft Housing element includes several sections including goals, policies, and implementation programs to support housing at all income levels, a housing needs assessment, review of constraints on housing development, resources analysis, a review of the previous Housing Element, and SB 244 Analysis. The IS assesses the impacts of implementing the 2014-2019 Joint Housing Element Update within the City of Sutter Creek.	<a href="#">Neg</a>	3/24/2015
2015038221	Parks and Recreation, Department of	<a href="#">Artifacts Room Monitoring Project</a>	Improve climate control in teh Chaw'se REgional Indian Museum artifacts room in Indian Grinding Rock State Historic Park to better preserve the Native American artifacts housed at this location.	<a href="#">NOE</a>	3/23/2015
2011011010	San Luis and Delta Mendota Water Authority	<a href="#">Long-Term North to South Water Transfer Program</a>	Note: Extended Review This Draft EIS/EIR evaluates water transfer that originate from willing sellers in northern CA to meet existing demands of Central Valley Project buyers south of the	<a href="#">FIN</a>	3/20/2015

Sacramento San Joaquin Delta and in the San Francisco Bay Area. Water transfers would occur through various methods such as groundwater substation, cropland idling, reservoir releases, or conservation and would include individual and multi-year transfers from 2015 through 2024. The transfers could originate in Colusa, Butte, Glenn, Merced, Placer, Sacramento, Shasta, Solano, Sutter, Tehama, Yolo, Or Yuba counties. The transfer buyers could be in Alameda, Contra Costa, Fresno, Kings, Merced, San Benito, San Joaquin, Santa Clara, or Stanislaus countries.

2011072039	Amador County	<a href="#">Newman Ridge Project</a>	Notes: Response to Comment The proposed project consists of the following two components: 1) the Newman Ridge Quarry; and 2) the Edwin Center North. The Newman Ridge Quarry is an andesite quarry on approximately 278 acres, with operations occurring on approximately 216 acres. The production level of the Quarry is anticipated to be 5 million tons per year, to be extracted over approximately 50 years, depending on market demand. The Edwin Center North site would host various material processing facilities on approximately 141.37 acres, including an aggregate plant, an asphalt concrete (AC) plant, ready-mix concrete plant, an asphalt and concrete recycling plant, and a rail load out facility for finished products, as well as ancillary administration and support facilities (e.g., fuel storage, truck scales, temporary construction trailer). Mining would not occur within the Edwin Center North, which is geographically separate from the Quarry. The railroad load out facility would be located directly off the existing Union Pacific-lone Branch rail. The majority of material processed at the Edwin Center would be railed to regional markets, rather than trucked, to the regional market.	<a href="#">Oth</a>	3/16/2015
2015038082	Caltrans #10	<a href="#">Amador Washout and Scour Repair</a>	Caltrans proposes to implement an Emergency Director's Order to construct rip rap rock slope protection (RSP). The purpose of the project is to prevent further deterioration of the road. This project is needed due to the washout and scour that will undermine the roadway.	<a href="#">NOE</a>	3/12/2015
2015032001	Amador County	<a href="#">2015 Amador County Regional Transportation Plan</a>	The proposed project is the adoption and implementation of the 2015 Amador County Regional Transportation Plan Update (RTP). The RTP contains three primary elements: Policy Element, Action Element, and Financial Element. The RTP is a comprehensive transportation plan for all modes including: highways, local streets and roads, transit, bicycle, rail, and goods movement. The RTP contains policies, actions, and financial strategies for short-term and long-term transportation projects. More detailed information on the RTP can be found at the ACTC website, (www.actc-amador.org).	<a href="#">NOP</a>	3/2/2015
2015032002	Amador County	<a href="#">Amador County Draft Housing Element Update 2014-2019</a>	The County of Amador proposes to adopt an update to the General Plan Housing Element pursuant to Article 10.6, Section 65580 B of California State Law. As required by State law, the proposed Housing Element Update has been prepared to ensure the County accommodates its share of California's projected housing needs. The County has analyzed local housing needs and resources and identified specific sites for potential development. It has then developed policies and implementation programs intended to meet the housing needs of all income segments of the County for the 2014-2019 planning period.	<a href="#">Neg</a>	3/2/2015
2015022096	lone, City of	<a href="#">Gold Village</a>	The project consists of a General Plan Amendment, Rezone, and Tentative Subdivision Map for the development of 79 single-family residential lots on 12.2 acres, a 2.72-acre parcel for future development of 41 multi-family residential units, a 1.07-acre parcel for future development of approximately 6,000 sf of commercial uses, a 0.60-acre stormwater detention basin, two open space parcels totaling 0.87 acres, and 3.13 acres of public road right-of-way. The project site will be divided into two villages: Gold Village East and Gold Village West divided by the planned Foothill Boulevard extension.	<a href="#">MND</a>	2/27/2015
2015028226	Amador County Water Agency	<a href="#">Disinfection By Product Compliance/Backwash Water Reuse Project</a>	This project will add facilities to recycle the filter backwash saving 18 million gallons of water annually and adding Aluminum Chlorohydrate for compliance with Disinfection By Product Regulations. The facilities will be located within the existing water treatment plant site and will not increase the plant capacity.	<a href="#">NOE</a>	2/23/2015
2015022003	Amador County	<a href="#">George Read Residential Driveway Bridge</a>	The project involves installing a residential driveway bridge across Rancheria Creek to replace and existing low-water crossing. The crossing will consist of a 60' x 12' prefabricated steel bridge, mounted to 1' wide headwalls on each side of Rancheria Creek. All permanent land disturbances will be located outside of the Ordinary High Water Line. The project site is not located within a Special Flood Hazard Area as delineated on the most recent Flood Insurance Rate Map, dated July 20, 2010.	<a href="#">Neg</a>	2/2/2015
2015018213	Regional Water Quality Control Board, Region 5	<a href="#">Camanche Reservoir North Shore Boat Dock Replacement Project</a>	The Regional Water Board is issuing a 401 Water Quality Certification for the Project. The Project will replace a previously removed boat dock with a new floating, metal boat dock that is of	<a href="#">NOE</a>	1/26/2015

(Central Valley),  
Sacramento

substantially the same size and capacity. A trench will be dredged from the reservoir to run an electrical conduit to the replacement dock.

2012122038	Corrections and Rehabilitation, Department of	<a href="#">Level II Infill Correctional Facilities Project at MCSP - Secondary Effluent Spray Field Enhancement Measures</a>	CDCR is proposing to install and operate additional spray fields within existing CDCR property for the purpose of disposal of disinfected secondary-treated effluent generated by the MCSP WWTP. The proposed project would involve the installation of piping and irrigation equipment within approximately 60-70 acres situated between the new Level II dormitory complex, Preston Reservoir, and former Preston Youth Correctional Facility. New piping would connect to existing spray field distribution network. Effluent disposal activities within the proposed spray fields would occur weekly between the months of March and October pending soil conditions and would be monitored such that runoff does not leave the spray fields, in accordance with CVRWQCB requirements.	<a href="#">NOP</a>	1/21/2015
2015018156	Amador County Water Agency	<a href="#">lone WTP Backwash Water Reuse Project</a>	This project will add facilities to recycle the filter backwash and return it to the headworks of the lone Water Treatment Plant saving 16 million gallons of water annually. The facilities will be located within the existing water treatment plant site and will not increase the plant capacity.	<a href="#">NOE</a>	1/21/2015
1998082005	El Dorado Irrigation District	<a href="#">Acquisition, Permanent Repair and Operation of the El Dorado Hydroelectric Project (Project No.184)</a>	The activities addressed in the Acquisition, Permanent Repair, and Operation of the El Dorado Hydroelectric Project and Acquisition of 17,000 Acre-feet per year of New Consumptive Water Final EIR included acquiring Project 184 and associated features from Pacific Gas and Electric Company, conducting various permanent repairs to restore operation of Project 184, continuing to operate Project 184 consistent with Federal Energy Regulatory Commission requirements, and acquiring 17,000 acre-feet of consumptive water supplies to be diverted for the benefit of the El Dorado Irrigation District (District) customers at Folsom Reservoir through a Warren Act Contract with the U.S. bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation). The Final EIR did not contemplate the potential for a Contract amount less than full 17,000 acre-feet of consumptive water supplies provided by the water right permit held by the District. For the purposes of this temporary Contract, Reclamation and EID have agreed to limit the withdrawal of consumptive supplies made available by this water right permit to no more than 8,500 acre feet per year. No changes are proposed in the operation of Project 184 associated with the Project, and no new facilities are proposed. The Project 184 five-year Warren Act Contract and acquisition of 8,500 acre-feet will require minor, technical changes to the Final EIR. Therefore, an Addendum has been completed by the District in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15164.	<a href="#">NOD</a>	1/12/2015
2014058350	River Pines Public Utility District	<a href="#">2014 Drought Emergency Water Supply Project</a>	The State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB), as the responsible agency, will be issuing a water supply permit. The River Pines Public Utility District proposed project included drilling a replacement well on property owned by the District. This well will be 12 inches in diameter and will be drilled to approximately 550 feet. The well is expected to yield approximately 35 gallons per minute.	<a href="#">NOE</a>	1/9/2015
2014128249	Fish & Wildlife #2	<a href="#">0Y020 Culvert Maintenance Project (Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement No. (1600-2014-0239-R2)</a>	The proposed project will replace in kind two existing 24-inch corrugated steel pipes. The pipes will be replaced by excavating a 6 foot by 83 foot trench from the top of the existing road. The proposed project will not required the removal of any riparian vegetation and all staging areas will only occur in previously disturbed areas.	<a href="#">NOE</a>	12/22/2014
2014042033	Plymouth, City of	<a href="#">Plymouth Wastewater Treatment Plant Improvements</a>	The Project includes construction and replacement of components and improved operation of the City's existing wastewater treatment and disposal facilities to meet the requirements of the CVRWQCB for the discharge of treated wastewater, and to prevent future violations of the WDR.	<a href="#">NOD</a>	12/19/2014
2014122012	Jackson, City of	<a href="#">Pitt Street Bridge Replacement Project</a>	The City of Jackson proposes to replace the Pitt Street Bridge in the City of Jackson. The existing bridge carries Pitt Street over the Middle Fork of Jackson Creek, immediately southwest of Water Street. The existing bridge and resulting tie-in with Pitt Street would be accomplished within the existing right-of-way. The existing bridge was originally constructed in 1925 and is currently classified as structurally deficient. As of June, 2009, it is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The existing bridge would be removed and stored at the City's Corporation Yard for future use. The proposed bridge would continue to be a one-lane road, however it would be widened by approximately 8-10 feet and have an additional 6-foot wide sidewalk on the upstream side of the bridge. The road would be fully closed during construction and detours would be made available.	<a href="#">MND</a>	12/5/2014

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**APPENDIX D: MITIGATION MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRAM**





# **SHENANDOAH ROAD / FIDDLETOWN ROAD INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENT PROJECT**

## **California Environmental Quality Act Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program**

SCH # 2015122026

*Prepared by:*

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**January 2016**



## Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program

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CEQA requires that a reporting or monitoring program be adopted for the conditions of project approval that are necessary to mitigate or avoid significant effects on the environment (Public Resources Code 21081.6). The mitigation monitoring and reporting program is designed to ensure compliance with adopted mitigation measures during project implementation.

For each mitigation measure recommended in the Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND), specifications are made herein that identify the action required and the monitoring that must occur. In addition, a responsible agency is identified for verifying compliance with individual conditions of approval contained in the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP).

To implement this MMRP, Amador County will designate a Project Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Coordinator (“Coordinator”). The Coordinator will be responsible for ensuring that the mitigation measures incorporated into the project are complied with during project implementation.

The following table will be used as the Coordinator’s checklist to determine compliance with required mitigation measures.

**TABLE 1**  
**MITIGATION MONITORING AND MINIMIZATION AND REPORTING PROGRAM**

MITIGATION MEASURE	ACTION REQUIRED	TIMING/PHASE	MONITORING FREQUENCY	RESPONSIBLE AGENCY OR PARTY	COMPLIANCE VERIFICATION		
					INITIAL	DATE	COMMENTS
<b>AIR QUALITY</b>							
<p><b>AIR-1</b></p> <p>A California-registered geologist knowledgeable about asbestos-containing formations will inspect the project area for the presence of asbestos. If the investigation determines that NOA is present, then the County shall prepare and implement an Asbestos Dust Control Plan, as required in Section 93105 of the California Health and Safety Code, including measures to reduce exposures consistent with Section 93105(d) and (e) of the California Health and Safety Code. These measures shall include the following, and shall be implemented throughout the duration of any construction activity associated with the project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unpaved areas subject to vehicle traffic must be stabilized by being kept adequately wetted, treated with a chemical dust suppressant, or covered with material that contains less than 0.25 percent asbestos.</li> <li>• The speed of any vehicles and equipment traveling across unpaved areas must be no more than fifteen (15) miles per hour unless the road surface and surrounding area is sufficiently stabilized to prevent vehicles and equipment traveling more than 15 miles per hour from emitting dust that is visible crossing the project boundaries.</li> <li>• Storage piles and disturbed areas not subject to vehicular traffic must be stabilized by being kept adequately wetted, treated with a chemical dust suppressant, or covered with material that contains less than 0.25 percent asbestos.</li> <li>• Activities must be conducted so that no track-out from any road construction project is visible on any paved roadway open to the public.</li> <li>• Equipment and operations must not cause the emission of any dust that is visible crossing the project boundaries.</li> </ul> <p>The Asbestos Dust Control Plan shall be submitted to and approved</p>	<p>Plan check – ensure requirements are incorporated into plans and specifications.</p> <p>Develop Asbestos Dust Control Plan and implement during project construction.</p>	<p>Prior to start of any construction activities that could result in release of dust.</p>	<p>Throughout project construction</p>	<p>Amador County and Amador APCD</p>			

Shenandoah Road/Fiddletown Road Intersection Improvement Project  
Mitigation Monitoring and Minimization and Reporting Program

MITIGATION MEASURE	ACTION REQUIRED	TIMING/PHASE	MONITORING FREQUENCY	RESPONSIBLE AGENCY OR PARTY	COMPLIANCE VERIFICATION		
					INITIAL	DATE	COMMENTS
by the Amador APCD prior to the commencement of construction activities. The County shall notify the Amador APCD in writing at least 14 days before any construction begins. Records related to the compliance with the Asbestos Dust Control Plan must be kept in the County's project files for seven years. The results of any air monitoring or sampling to document the applicability of, or compliance with, the regulation, and any other records specified in the Asbestos Dust Control Plan must be reported to the Amador APCD.							
<b>BIOLOGY</b>							
<b>BIO-1</b> Fencing and flagging will be placed around the elderberry shrubs to be avoided during construction activities to ensure that no activities will be conducted within a minimum of 20 feet from the dripline of each elderberry shrub.	Plan check – ensure requirements are incorporated into plans and specifications.  Install fencing or flagging at least 20 feet from dripline of elderberry shrubs.	Prior to start of construction activities, and throughout project construction.	Once at project initiation, and regularly monitor as needed to ensure fencing remains in place and in effective condition.	Amador County			
<b>BIO-2</b> Signs will be installed at a minimum of 50 feet along the edge of the avoidance area with the following information: "This area is habitat of the valley elderberry longhorn beetle, a threatened species, and must not be disturbed. This species is protected by the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended. Violators are subject to prosecution, fines, and imprisonment." The signs will be clearly readable from a distance of 20 feet, and will be maintained for the duration of construction.	Plan check – ensure requirements are incorporated into plans and specifications.  Install signs along edge of avoidance area.	Prior to start of construction activities, and throughout project construction.	Once a project initiation, and regularly monitor as needed to ensure fencing remains in place and in effective condition.	Amador County			
<b>BIO-3</b> All work crews will be informed about the status of the VELB, and the need to protect the elderberry shrub as its host plant, and will be briefed on the possible penalties for not complying with the	Plan check – ensure requirements are incorporated into	Prior to start of construction activities, and throughout	Throughout project construction	Amador County			

Shenandoah Road/Fiddletown Road Intersection Improvement Project  
Mitigation Monitoring and Minimization and Reporting Program

MITIGATION MEASURE	ACTION REQUIRED	TIMING/PHASE	MONITORING FREQUENCY	RESPONSIBLE AGENCY OR PARTY	COMPLIANCE VERIFICATION		
					INITIAL	DATE	COMMENTS
avoidance requirements.	plans and specifications.  Complete worker awareness training of all work crews who enter project site.	project construction.					
<b><u>BIO-4</u></b> Upon completion of the project, all temporarily disturbed areas will be restored to pre-project conditions, as feasible.	Plan check – ensure requirements are incorporated into plans and specifications.  Restore temporarily disturbed to as close to pre-project conditions as feasible following construction.	Prior to project completion.	Once	Amador County			
<b><u>BIO-5</u></b> Any damage to the area within 100 feet of the elderberry shrubs will be restored following construction, and the area will be revegetated with native plants.	Plan check – ensure requirements are incorporated into plans and specifications.  Restore and revegetate damaged areas within 100 ft. of elderberry shrubs.	Prior to project completion.	Once	Amador County			
<b><u>BIO-6</u></b>	Plan check – ensure	Throughout project	Throughout project	Amador County			

Shenandoah Road/Fiddletown Road Intersection Improvement Project  
Mitigation Monitoring and Minimization and Reporting Program

MITIGATION MEASURE	ACTION REQUIRED	TIMING/PHASE	MONITORING FREQUENCY	RESPONSIBLE AGENCY OR PARTY	COMPLIANCE VERIFICATION		
					INITIAL	DATE	COMMENTS
Surrounding areas will be watered down to keep dust from the shrub's driplines.	requirements are incorporated into plans and specifications.  Water areas surrounding elderberry shrubs to prevent construction dust off of elderberry shrubs.	construction.	construction				
<b><u>BIO-7</u></b> Prior to construction, all trees within 100 feet of the project area will be surveyed by a qualified bat specialist to determine the presence/absence of bats and any active or potential bat-roosting cavities. During the non-breeding and active season, any bats roosting in trees will be safely evicted under the direction of a bat specialist and under consultation with the CDFW.	Plan check – ensure requirements are incorporated into plans and specifications.  Survey all trees within 100 feet of project area for bats and roosting cavities.	Prior to start of construction activities.	Once	Amador County			
<b><u>BIO-8</u></b> Once it has been determined that all roosting bats have been safely evicted from roosting cavities, exclusionary devices approved by the CDFW will be installed and maintained to prevent bats from roosting in these cavities prior to and during construction.	Plan check – ensure requirements are incorporated into plans and specifications,  Install exclusionary devices in roosting cavities.	Prior to start of construction activities, and throughout project construction.	Once, and regularly monitor as needed to ensure exclusionary devices remain in place and in effective condition.	Amador County			
<b><u>BIO-9</u></b> Pre-construction bat surveys will be conducted by a qualified bat	Plan check – ensure requirements are	No more than seven days prior to start of	Once	Amador County			

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specialist no more than seven days prior to the removal of the any trees within the project area to confirm that exclusionary measures have been successful and there are no bats within the project area. If no roosting bats are detected, no further surveys will be required provided the tree removal is completed within seven days. If removal is delayed more than seven days from the survey date, additional surveys will be conducted no more than seven days prior to tree removal to ensure that no bats have moved into the area.	incorporated into plans and specifications.  Complete pre-construction bat survey to verify absence of roosting bats.	tree removal.					
<b>BIO-10</b> Surveys and exclusion measures are expected to prevent maternal colonies from becoming established within 100 feet of the project area. In the event that a maternal colony of bats is found, the CDFW will be consulted, and no work will be conducted within 100 feet of the maternal roosting site until the maternal season is over or the bats have left the site, or as otherwise directed by the CDFW. The site will be designated as a sensitive area and protected until the bats have left the site or the young bats are volant (i.e., capable of flying). No clearing and grubbing will be authorized within 100 feet adjacent to the roosting site. Combustion equipment, such as generators, pumps, and vehicles, will not be parked or operated under or within 100 feet of the roosting site. Construction personnel will not enter into areas beneath the colony, especially during the evening exodus.	Plan check – ensure requirements are incorporated into plans and specifications	Prior to start of construction activities, and throughout project construction.	Once	Amador County			
<b>BIO-11</b> If construction is scheduled to begin during bird nesting season (typically February 15 to September 15), nesting bird surveys will be completed no more than 48 hours prior to construction to determine if there are any nesting birds or active nests within or adjacent to the project area (within 300 feet for birds and 500 feet for raptors). Surveys will be repeated if construction activities are suspended for three days or more.	Plan check – ensure requirements are incorporated into plans and specifications.  Complete bird nesting surveys prior to start of construction.	48 hours prior to start of construction activities, and throughout project construction.	Throughout project construction	Amador County			
<b>BIO-12</b> If nesting birds are found in the BSA, appropriate buffers consisting of orange flagging/fencing or similar (typically 300 feet for birds and 500 feet for raptors) will be installed and maintained until nesting	Plan check – ensure requirements are incorporated into	Prior to start of construction activities, and throughout	Throughout project construction	Amador County			

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					INITIAL	DATE	COMMENTS
activity has ended, as determined in coordination with the project biologist and regulatory agencies, as appropriate.	plans and specifications.  Install buffers around active nests.	project construction.					
<b>CULTURAL</b>							
<b>CUL-1</b> Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA) fencing, or another appropriate, highly-visible barrier, will be installed along the southern limit of the existing County ROW at an appropriate length to provide a visible and physical barrier between the cemetery and construction activities. The limits of the existing County ROW and location of ESA fencing will be identified in the project plans and specifications.	Plan check – ensure requirements are incorporated into plans and specifications.  Install ESA fencing to provide barrier between cemetery and construction activities.	Prior to start of ground disturbing activities and throughout project construction.	Once, and regularly monitor as needed to ensure fencing remains in place and in effective condition.	Amador County			
<b>CUL-2</b> If human remains are uncovered during construction activities, ground disturbing activities in the area will stop, and the County Coroner will be notified pursuant to the requirements of the California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5. No further disturbance in the area will occur until the County Coroner has made a determination of origin and disposition of the remains. If the human remains are determined to be prehistoric, the coroner will notify the NAHC, who will determine and notify a MLD. The County will coordinate with the MLD to identify appropriate analyses and treatment or disposition of the remains and any items associated with Native American burials.	Plan check – ensure requirements are incorporated into plans and specifications.	Throughout project construction	Throughout project construction.	Amador County			
<b>CUL-3</b> If archaeological resources, paleontological resources, or unique geologic features are encountered during construction, all ground-disturbing work will be stopped until an archaeologist or monitor can properly assess the resources(s) and identify the appropriate	Plan check – ensure requirements are incorporated into plans and	Throughout project construction	Throughout project construction.	Amador County			

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measures to ensure that the resources will not be adversely affected.	specifications						