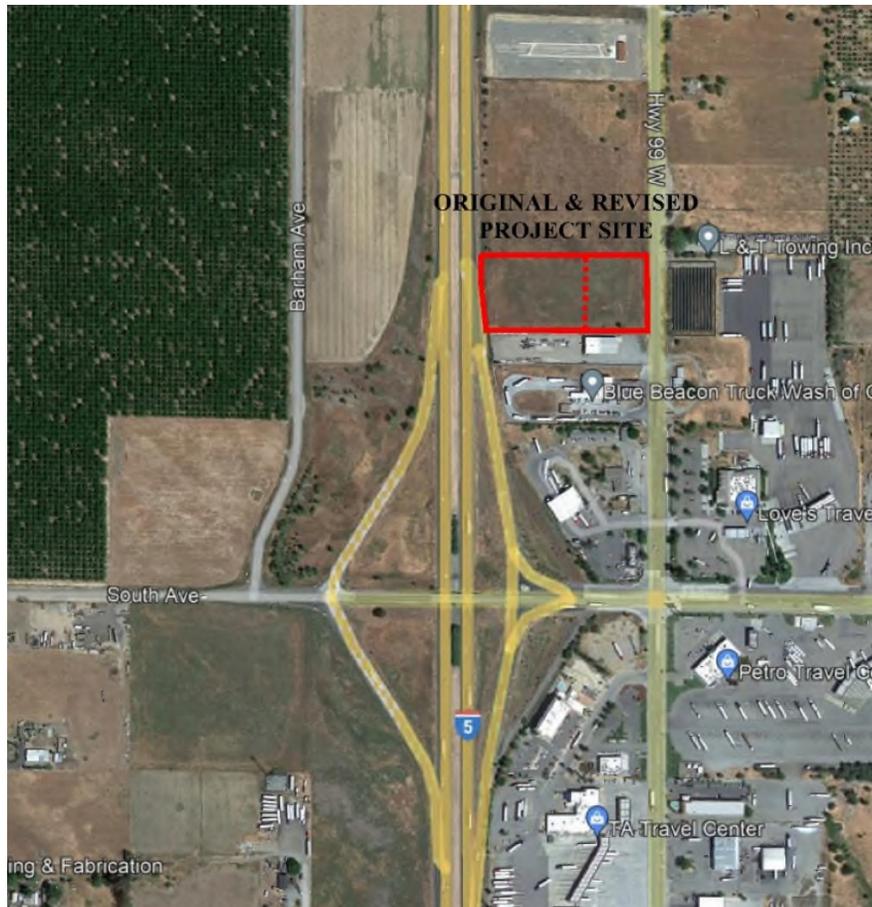


CITY OF CORNING
LAUREL AG & WATER STORAGE YARD EXPANSION
PROJECT

USE PERMIT 2022-304

INITIAL STUDY &
MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION
ADMINISTRATIVE DRAFT

State Clearinghouse No.



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September 19, 2022

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PROJECT OVERVIEW

1. **Project Title: Laurel Ag & Water Storage Yard Expansion Project – Use Permit 2022-304**
2. **Lead Agency Name and Address:**
City of Corning
794 Third Street
Corning, CA 96021
3. **Contact Person, Phone Number, E-mail:**
Christina Meeds, Planner II
(530) 824-7036
cmeeds@corning.org
4. **Project Location:** The proposed Project is located immediately north of the existing 1.68 acre Laurel Ag & Water facility. The business sells and installs agricultural irrigation pipes, pumps, and equipment. The existing business site is located in the City of Corning, on the west side of Hwy 99W and the east side of Interstate 5, approximately 1000 feet north of the intersection of Hwy 99W and South Avenue. The site is adjacent to and directly north of the Blue Beacon Truck Wash. Laurel Ag & Water proposes to increase their existing outside materials and equipment storage yard by expanding onto a portion or portions of a parcel directly north of the sales building and existing storage yard (refer to **Figure 1, LOCATION MAP**, and **Figure 2, VICINITY MAP**).
5. **Applicant Name and Address:**
Laurel Ag & Water
Jesse Lopez, Branch Manager
2920 Hwy. 99W.
Corning, CA 96021
6. **General Plan Classification:** Hwy. 99W Corridor Specific Plan
7. **Zoning District Designation:** CH-CBDZ, Highway Service Commercial District, Corning Business Development Zone
8. **Project Description:** Laurel Ag & Water (herein also referred to as "Applicant") proposes to expand the storage of their existing irrigation material area onto an undeveloped 4.47-acre parcel (APN 087-040-073) that they have leased adjacent to and directly north of their current location. The additional area will be used not only for storing irrigation materials but also to accommodate the equipment and vehicles used by their construction crews. The existing storage yard is currently at capacity.

Initially established in the City of Corning in 2010 as Lodi Irrigation, Laurel Ag & Water purchased Lodi Irrigation in July 2017. Laurel Ag & Water has other California locations in Lodi, Delano, Bakersfield, and Yuma, Arizona. They offer a full range of agricultural irrigation-related services and products. Aside from the retail pipe, parts, and material sales, they provide irrigation pipe rental, full-service irrigation design and installation services, maintenance and repair services, and systems and supplies. The primary reason for the proposed Project is that Laurel Ag & Water needs more storage land area for irrigation pipes and associated materials for retail sales, service, and construction services.

Laurel Ag & Water currently employs 25 persons at the Corning facility. Eight persons are at the facility, five in the office and three in the storage yard, who, on average, also make material deliveries three to five times per week. The balance of the 17 employees basically work offsite

most of the time over six days. The construction operation has two – five-person crews who may be at the facility once or twice weekly. The remaining seven employees include two service technicians, two irrigation pump technicians, and three automation service persons. They usually are also not at the facility on a daily basis. Due to the proposed Project, the number of employees may increase by an additional pump technician and an automation service employee. However, the number of office and storage/warehouse area employees will not increase.¹

Laurel Ag & Water has a 14-vehicle fleet that includes: three vehicles for the construction crews, one for a supervisor and two for the crews; five for the service and automation service personnel; three for the pump technicians; and three for the storage/warehouse employees. The number of fleet vehicles will not increase due to the proposed Project.²

The existing Laurel Ag & Water operation is open to the public Monday through Friday between 7:00 AM and 4:30 PM and on Saturday between 8:00 AM and Noon. Internal operations occur between 5:00 AM and 6:00 PM on Monday through Friday and between 5:00 AM and Noon on Saturday. It is estimated that approximately 15 to 20 customers per day come to obtain supplies, equating to 30 to 40 round trips per day. The proposed Project will not likely see a significant increase in retail sales customers since the sales area is not being expanded. The business is open approximately 300 days per year. These days and hours will not change due to the proposed Project.

On average, Laurel Ag & Water has about two to three irrigation material deliveries per day Monday through Friday, or 10 to 15 over a week to the Corning Area, Tehama County in general, and outside the County. On average, two to three deliveries are by semi-trucks, and five to ten are by service vehicles. The proposed Project is not expected to significantly increase the number of material deliveries other than by having more available inventory at the storage yard that can be delivered in a timelier fashion.³

On average, material shipments are received from various vendors two to three times per day during the weekdays, equivalent to four to six vehicle roundtrips per day. Due to the storage/warehouse area increase, vendor deliveries may initially increase daily; however, once the existing and expanded yard is at capacity, daily deliveries may slightly decrease since inventory will not need to be restocked as frequently.

The applicant's operation was originally permitted by Use Permit 2010-259 on the approximate 1.68 acres comprised of APN 087-040-071 (1.41 acres) and 072 (0.27 acres). Once the City granted UP 2010-259, the applicant converted the existing 3,200 sq. Ft. building that was previously used as a retail tire shop to office space. An outdoor gravel surfaced storage area was developed and enclosed with a six-foot-high chain link fence with earth tone slats. The fence enclosed a portion of the parcel along the southern and western property lines. Along the northern property line, the fence extended from the northwest corner of the western fence to the western edge of the building (refer to **Figure 3, ASSESSORS PARCEL MAP**, and **Figure 4, ORIGINAL & REVISED PROJECT SITE**). Other than a business license, Laurel Ag & Water is not required to obtain any additional permits to operate.

The Project initially proposed was to remove the existing fence along the north property line to enclose an approximately 2.5-acre Project Site of the 4.47-acre leased parcel shown in **Figure 5, ORIGINAL PROJECT SITE**. Potential wetlands identified in the May 12, 2022; *Biological / Wetland Screening for Laurel AG & Water Storage Yard Expansion* letter report were found to be

¹ Jesse Lopez, Branch Manager – Corning, e-mail message to Eihnard Diaz, August 11, 2022.

² Ibid, August 13, 2022

³ Ibid, September 13, 2022

spread throughout the 2.5 Project Site (**APPENDIX A**). Because wetlands were observed on the Project Site, the screening evaluation was extended for the remaining 1.97 acres within the 4.47-acre leased parcel to Highway 99W to the east to allow consideration of possible development alternatives that would avoid the wetlands. A total of 4.47 acres were identified as a Study Area. **Figure 6, WETLAND SCREENING RESULTS**, shows the approximate sizes and boundaries of the Project Site wetlands and the wetlands on the 1.97 acres, which in total comprises APN 087-040-073.

A review of the original Project Site within the biological Study Area determined that there exist six wetland pools totaling 0.163 acres (7,100 square feet). Within the remaining 1.97 acres, there are four pools comprising 0.207 acres (9,017 square feet). Cumulatively, 10 wetland pools encompassing 0.37 acres (16,117 square feet) are located throughout the 4.47 -acre leased area (**Figure 6, WETLAND SCREENING RESULTS**). The existence of wetlands, their location, and sizes were not known when the Project Applicant made an application to the City to utilize a 2.5-acre portion of the leased 4.47 acres for a materials storage yard. Therefore, this Initial Study recommends that the Project Site be expanded to include the entire 4.47 acres. This provides the Project Applicant flexibility to avoid all the wetland pools and to provide a fenced buffer area around each wetland pool. This allows utilization of a 2.5-acre Project Site area originally proposed and the opportunity to expand onto portions or all of the remaining 1.97 acres. However, as stated in the *Biological / Wetland Screening* letter report that if the Applicant desires to work within the wetland pool features, “additional study and issuance of regulatory agency permits would be required.” Therefore, the Project Site area totals 4.47 acres which this Initial Study evaluates (**Figure 7, REVISED PROJECT SITE**). It is the Applicant’s intention at this stage in the process to restrict the expansion of the storage yard to the 2.5-acre Project Site area originally proposed. Should the Applicant wish to expand into the additional 1.97 acres, the City would require a Use Permit Amendment whereby additional conditions of approval could be imposed.

The areas to be utilized for outside storage on the Project Site will be leveled, graded, and covered with approximately four inches of uniform road base and gravel. Outside storage will include but is not limited to irrigation materials such as PVC pipe, drip irrigation pipe, PVC parts, and drainage material. The existing drainage ditch along Hwy 99W will be modified as necessary to accommodate stormwater runoff. The City will require that any modifications be addressed as part of the submittal of improvement plans for City review and approval. The areas identified as potential wetlands will be enclosed with a four-foot-high field fence setback approximately 10 to 15 feet from the edge of each wetland pool to serve as a buffer. No additional structures or improvements are proposed. The existing 3,200 retail Ag & irrigation sales building and warehouse, and the parking area will not be modified except for the removal of the existing northern fence. The Project Site will be accessed from Hwy 99W via the existing driveway. The existing northern fence of the existing 1.68 acre facility will be removed and relocated to the northern property line of the 4.77 acre parcel. There will be no other access driveways to and from the overall Laurel Ag & Water facility which would be expanded to 6.45 acres.

9. **Surrounding Land Uses and Setting:** The Project Site abuts the eastern right-of-way of Interstate 5 and fronts Hwy 99W, a City-maintained road that provides access from the south City limits to the north City limits. The project area is within the Hwy 99W Corridor Specific Plan and zoned for various commercial and light industrial uses to serve travelers along I-5 and local users. The area north of the proposed storage expansion Project Site is 9.69 acres of vacant land under the same ownership as the Revised Project Site leased parcel. Further to the north, the City has issued a Use Permit for a mobile home sales dealership that has partially developed the site but is not yet in business. South of the existing Laurel Ag operation is a Blue Beacon Truck Wash, a motel, a liquor store, and Jack in the Box fast food restaurant.

The area surrounding the South Avenue and Hwy 99W intersection is developed with truck stops, restaurants, truck repair, and tire shops with three motels to serve travelers along I-5. Directly across Hwy 99W is a solar power array for the Love's Truck Stop. To the north of Love's is a large truck and vehicle towing service. The area is served by City water and sewer and is designated for retail and light industrial uses.

10. **Other Public Agencies Whose Approval Is Required (e.g., permits, financing approval, or participation agreement.):** There are no other public agency approvals required. Any City required permits will need to be obtained.

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED:

The proposed Project could potentially affect the environmental factors identified below; however, mitigations in the Initial Study have been incorporated into the Project so that there are no **Potentially Significant Impacts** as indicated by the ensuing Initial Study checklist.

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

DETERMINATION

On the basis of the initial evaluation:

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

: I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

: I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.

: I find that the proposed project MAY have a "potentially significant" impact or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.

: I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

Copies of the Initial Study and related materials and documentation may be obtained at the City of Corning Planning Department, 794 Third Street, Corning, CA 96021. Contact Ms. Christina Meeds, Planner I, at (530) 824-7036 or e-mail at cmeeds@corning.org.

Christina Meeds, Planner II

Date

EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS:

A brief explanation is required for all answers except "No Impact" answers that are adequately supported by the information sources a lead agency cites in the parenthesis following each question. A "No Impact" answer is adequately supported if all the referenced information sources show that the impact simply does not apply to projects like the one involved (e.g., the project falls outside a fault rupture zone). A "No Impact" answer should be explained where it is based on project-specific factors as well as general standards (e.g., the project will not expose sensitive receptors to pollutants, based on a project-specific screening analysis).

All answers must take into account the whole action involved, including offsite as well as onsite, cumulative as well as project-level, indirect as well as direct, and construction as well as operational impacts.

Once the lead agency has determined that a particular physical impact may occur, then the checklist answers must indicate whether the impact is *potentially significant*, *less than significant with mitigation*, or *less than significant*. "*Potentially Significant Impact*" is appropriate if there is substantial evidence that an effect may be significant. When the determination is made, an environmental impact report (EIR) is required if there are one or more "*Potentially Significant Impact*" entries.

A Negative Declaration may be made where a "*Less-than-significant With Mitigation Incorporated*" determination is made and applies where the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from "*Potentially Significant Impact*" to a "*Less-than-significant Impact*." The lead agency must describe the mitigation measures and briefly explain how they reduce the environmental effect to a *less than significant level*.

Earlier analyses may be used where, pursuant to the tiering, program EIR, or other CEQA processes, an effect has been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or Negative Declaration. Section 15063(c)(3)(D). In this case, a brief discussion should identify the following:

- a) Earlier Analysis Used. Identify and state where they are available for review.
 - b) Impacts Adequately Addressed. Identify which effects from the above checklist were within the scope of and adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and state whether such effects were addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis.
 - c) Mitigation Measures: For effects that are "Less-than-significant with Mitigation Measures Incorporated," describe the mitigation measures which were incorporated or refined from the earlier document and the extent to which they address site-specific conditions for the project.
- 6) Lead agencies are encouraged to incorporate into the checklist references to information sources for potential impacts (e.g., General Plans, zoning ordinances). Reference to a previously prepared or outside document should, where appropriate, include a reference to the page or pages where the statement is substantiated.
 - 7) Supporting Information Sources: A source list should be attached, and other sources used or individuals contacted should be cited in the discussion.
 - 8) This is only a suggested form, and lead agencies are free to use different formats; however, lead agencies should normally address the questions from this checklist that are relevant to a project's environmental effects in whatever format is selected.
 - 9) The explanation of each issue should identify the following:
 - a) The significance criteria or threshold, if any, used to evaluate each question; and
 - b) The mitigation measure identified, if any, to reduce the impact to less-than-significant.

I. AESTHETICS: Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-Than-Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?				X
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a State scenic highway?				X
c) In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from a publicly accessible vantage point). If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?				X
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?				X

Discussion: Based on the related documents listed in the Sources of Documentation for Initial Study Checklist, review of the proposed Project, and evaluations of the Project Site and the vicinity, the following determinations can be made:

- a) Scenic vistas are defined as expansive views of highly valued landscapes from publicly accessible viewpoints. Scenic vistas include views of natural features such as topography, water courses, outcrops, natural vegetation, and man-made scenic structures. The Project Site is located in an area developed with three truck stops and several other businesses that provide services to I-5 travelers, such as restaurants. The topography is relatively level, and no scenic vistas can be viewed from the Project Site. There is no impact.
- b) The City has not designated specific scenic vistas in the immediate project area as a part of the Hwy 99W Specific Plan. Additionally, there are no designated State or Federal scenic highways or scenic highway corridors in the vicinity of the proposed project. Therefore, the proposed Project will not impact any scenic vistas or resources.
- d) The Project is the expansion of an existing agricultural irrigation materials, vehicular, and equipment storage area. Fencing and storage materials will be similar to what is currently located in the general area, so there will be no change to the visual character or quality of the site. However, concerns have been raised regarding the use of chain-link fence along Hwy 99W frontage.

As previously noted under the Project Description, it is the Applicant's intention at this stage in the process to restrict the expansion of the storage yard to the 2.5-acre Project Site area originally proposed. A chain-link fence with neutral colored slat inserts is proposed. However, should the Applicant wish to expand onto the additional 1.97 acres that fronts Hwy 99W, a Use Permit Amendment would be required whereby additional conditions of approval could be imposed to address the type of fence and landscape treatment that could be constructed along Hwy 99W frontage.

- d) Light pollution occurs when nighttime views of the stars and sky are diminished by an over-abundance of light emitted by a project. In addition, glare often occurs during the day due to reflective materials. The proposed Project will not be adding materials or light fixtures that could cause substantial glare or light adversely affecting day or nighttime views in the surrounding vicinity. The Project Site is located in a commercial and light industrial area where exterior lighting, particularly from the truck stops are

on during the night for driving and pedestrian safety and security. Therefore, there will be minimal if any lighting impacts on residential areas. If exterior lighting of any type is used, the lighting will comply with the State Title 24 energy standards. The standard regulates outdoor lighting including uplight and glare control.

Findings: The proposed Project is an expansion of an adjacent established business within a commercial and light industrial area that has stored similar materials for over ten years. Given the location and surrounding land uses which does not include residential development, potential impacts from lighting which would adhere to State energy standards, particularly during nighttime hours would be minimal. Overall, the proposed Project **will not impact** the Project Site's and general area's existing or future *Aesthetics*.

II. AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES: In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-Than-Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?				X
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act Contract?				X
c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?				X
d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?				X
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?				X

Discussion: Based on the related documents listed in the Sources of Documentation for Initial Study Checklist, review of the proposed Project, and evaluations of the Project Site and the vicinity, the following determinations can be made:

a,e) The Project Site has been historically used for agricultural purposes and contains soils prime for agricultural production. The California Department of Conservation identifies the Project Site. California Important Farmland Finder as being Urban and Built-Up Land. A review of the Highway 99W Specific Plan shows that the 1.14-acre APN 87-04-71 parcel where Laurel Ag & Water existing operations are located was identified as existing Commercial land before the Specific Plan was adopted,

whereas the proposed Project Site was Agricultural Land. However, the adoption of the Specific Plan permanently converted any existing agricultural lands for commercial and light industrial uses.

b,c)The project area is not under a Williamson Act Contract or Timberland Production, nor is it zoned for agricultural or forest land use by the City of Corning Zoning Code. Consequently, there would be no impact from the proposed Project.

d) This issue is not applicable since the Project Site is not forest land. Public Resources Code section 12220(g) defines forest land as “Land that can support 10-percent native tree cover of any species, including: hardwoods, under natural conditions, and that allows for management of one or more forest resources, including timber, aesthetics, fish and wildlife, biodiversity, water quality, recreation, and other public benefits.”

Findings: There are *no impacts* associated with *Agricultural and Forestry Resources* since the adoption of the Highway 99W Specific Plan permanently converted the Project Site to be used for commercial and/or light industrial uses.

III. AIR QUALITY: Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management district or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-Than-Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?			X	
b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation.			X	
c) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?			X	
d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?			X	
f) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?				X

Discussion: Based on the related documents listed in the Sources of Documentation for Initial Study Checklist, review of the proposed Project, and evaluations of the Project Site and the vicinity, the following determinations can be made:

a-d)The Tuscan Buttes area in Tehama County is located in a non-attainment area for the state ambient air quality standard for 8-hour ozone and particulate matter. Air districts within the State that have not attained air quality standards must develop and implement attainment plans. To this end, the air districts of the NSVAB have jointly prepared and adopted the Northern Sacramento Valley Planning Area 2021 Triennial Air Quality Attainment Plan. The purpose of the plan is to obtain compliance with State air quality standards. “The 2021 Plan assesses the progress made in implementing the previous triennial update completed in 2018 and proposes modifications to the strategies necessary to attain the CAAQS by the earliest practicable date.

The 2018 through 2020 monitoring data shows a slight increase in the number of exceedances of the 1-hour ozone CAAQS. However, wildfires continue to be a major contributor to these exceedances and the data continues to show a downward trend in the number of exceedances of 8-hour ozone CAAQS.

The projected emissions show a downtrend for both ROG and NO_x, which are the precursor emissions for ozone. The NO_x emissions are forecasted to reduce by 44% and the ROG emissions are forecasted to reduce by 19% between 2012 and 2025.”⁴

Due to the scale and type of project it was determined that undertaking a CalEEMod air quality analysis was not necessary. When air quality impacts need to be quantified, emissions need to be modeled using the California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod). CalEEMod is a statewide land use emissions computer model designed to quantify potential criteria pollutant emissions associated with both construction and operations from a variety of land use projects.

For the proposed Project, the largest generator of emissions would be vehicular traffic; however, as previously discussed under the Project Description, the proposed expansion of the storage yard does not generate potential significant traffic. The existing employment of employees may increase from 25 to 27, but the existing number of office and storage/warehouse area employees will not increase. The existing 14-vehicle fleet will not increase. It is estimated that approximately 15 to 20 customers per day come to obtain supplies. The proposed Project will not likely see a significant increase in retail sales customers since the sales area is not being expanded and the availability of more stocked materials will assist to reduce customer return trips.

On average, Laurel Ag & Water has about two to three irrigation material deliveries per day Monday through Friday to the Corning Area, Tehama County in general, and outside the County. The proposed Project is not expected to significantly increase the number of material deliveries other than by having more available inventory at the storage yard that can be delivered in a timelier fashion.

On average, material shipments are received from various vendors two to three times per day during the weekdays. Due to the storage/warehouse area increase, vendor deliveries may initially increase daily; however, once the existing and expanded yard is at capacity, daily deliveries may slightly decrease since inventory will not need to be restocked as frequently.

Potential impacts associated with increased employees, number of company vehicles, additional retail sales, material deliveries to customers, and material shipments received are considered less than significant, and Project related mitigation measures are not required.

The Tehama County Air Pollution Control District (TCAPCD) is designated by law to adopt and enforce regulations to achieve and maintain ambient air quality standards. In addition, the TCAPCD adopts and enforces controls on stationary sources of air pollutants through its permit and inspection programs, and it regulates agricultural burning. Other responsibilities include monitoring air quality, preparing clean air plans, and responding to citizen complaints concerning air quality. All projects in Tehama County are subject to applicable TCAPCD rules and regulations in effect at the time of construction. Due to the small scale and type of the proposed Project, which is an outside storage facility for agricultural-related irrigation materials, further analysis is not required to determine the extent to which increases in Nitrogen (NO_x), Reactive Organic Gasses (ROG), and Inhalable Particulate Matter (PM₁₀) generated from project construction, and operational activities may conflict with or obstruct implementation of the Air Quality Attainment Plan. All motorized equipment being used to

⁴ Sacramento Valley Air Quality Engineering and Enforcement Professionals. *Northern Sacramento Valley Planning Area 2021 Triennial Air Quality Attainment Plan*. Page 39
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construct the Project will be subject to TCAPCD oversight and rules and regulations. Potential impacts are considered less than significant, and Project related mitigation measures are not required.

- e) Due to the limited size and type of the proposed Project and associated operations being proposed, the Project would not result in potentially significant air emissions that would create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people.

Findings: Due to the nature and type of Project proposed, impacts associated with *Air Quality* were found to be *less than significant*.

IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES: Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-Than-Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Have a substantial effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?			X	
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local of regional plans, policies, and regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?			X	
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on state or Federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?			X	
d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?				X
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?				X
f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community, Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or State habitat conservation plan?				X

Discussion: Based on the related documents listed in the Sources of Documentation for Initial Study Checklist, review of the project, and observations on the project site and in the vicinity, the following determinations can be made:

a-d) Potential wetlands identified in the May 12, 2022, *Biological / Wetland Screening for Laurel AG & Water Storage Yard Expansion* letter report were found to be spread throughout the 2.5 Project Site (**APPENDIX A**). Because wetlands were observed on the Project Site, the screening evaluation was extended for the remaining 1.97 acres within the 4.47-acre leased parcel to Highway 99W to the east to allow consideration of possible development alternatives that would avoid the wetlands. A total of 4.47 acres were identified as the Biological Study Area. **Figure 6, WETLAND SCREENING RESULTS**, shows the approximate sizes and boundaries of the Project Site wetlands and the wetlands on the remaining 1.97 acres, which comprise APN 087-040-073.

A review of the original Project Site within the Biological Study Area determined that six wetland pools totaling 0.163 acres (7,100 square feet) exist. Within the remaining 1.97 acres are four pools comprising 0.207 acres (9,017 square feet). Cumulatively, ten wetland pools encompassing 0.37 acres (16,117 square feet) are located throughout the 4.47-acre leased area (**Figure 6, WETLAND SCREENING RESULTS**). Since the existence of wetlands, their location and sizes were not known when the Project proponent made an application to the City to utilize a 2.5-acre portion of the 4.47 acres for material storage; it is recommended that the Project Site be expanded to include the entire 4.47 acres. This allows the Project proponent flexibility to avoid all the wetland ponds and to provide a fenced buffer area around each pool; therefore, allowing utilization of a 2.5 acre Project Site area proposed initially and the opportunity to expand onto portions of the remaining 1.97 acres. Therefore, the Project Site area totals 4.47 acres as illustrated on **Figure 7, REVISED PROJECT SITE**.

The evaluation noted, "Various records were reviewed to obtain information on reported occurrences of special-status species in the project vicinity. Records reviewed consisted of species lists and critical habitat data maintained by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, California Natural Diversity Data Base (CNDDDB) records, and California Native Plant Society (CNPS) records of rare plant occurrences (Appendix A). National Marine Fisheries Service records for anadromous fish were not considered because no streams are present on or adjacent to the site."

"ENPLAN conducted a field evaluation of the study area on April 30, 2022. Many of the special-status species potentially occurring in the area would have been evident at the time the fieldwork was conducted. The potential presence of species not readily identifiable during the field studies was determined on the basis of observed habitat characteristics."

"The sole plant community/wildlife habitat on the site is an annual grassland with seasonal wetland inclusions. Small seasonal wetlands are present and support primarily Mediterranean barley, annual ryegrass, saltgrass, and hyssop loosestrife. Native vernal pool plant species are almost completely absent from the wetlands.

The screening evaluation found that the Project Site and immediate Project Area "does not support any special-status plant species, and is not expected to support special-status animals."

The seasonal wetlands in the Biological Study Area are comprised of 10 small wetland pools totaling 0.370 acres (16,117 square feet). Within the original Project Site, there are six ponds totaling 0.163 acres (7,100 square feet). Ponds range in size between 0.003 acres (131 square feet) and 0.103 acres (4,487 square feet). The remaining 1.97 acres to the east within the Biological Study Area contains four ponds totaling 0.207 acres (9,017 square feet), with ponds ranging between 0.012 acres (523 square feet) and 0.143 acres (6,229 square feet). Wetlands will be avoided to the maximum degree feasible. **Figure 6, WETLAND SCREENING RESULTS**, identifies the location of the wetlands.

- e) The proposed Project would not conflict with any city ordinances or policies which protect biological resources.
- f) There are currently no adopted Habitat Conservation Plans, Natural Community Conservation Plans, or other approved local, regional, or State habitat conservation plans for the project site or Study Area. There would not be any conflict with local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, nor with any habitat conservation plans. No impacts would occur in this regard.

Findings: In the course of the above evaluation, impacts associated with potential wetlands could have been found to be potentially significant. However, the proposed Project Site area was revised to avoid impacts on the wetland pools. The proposed Project will incorporate a four-foot-high field fence setback buffer of approximately 10 to 15 feet from the edge of each wetland pool. Therefore, potential wetland impacts are *less than significant*, and no mitigation measures are necessary. The Project Site does not

support any special-status plant species and is not expected to support special-status animals, resulting in *less than significant* impacts. No mitigation measures are required.

V. CULTURAL RESOURCES: Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-Than-Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to §15064.5?			X	
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?		X		
c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?				X
d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?		X		

Discussion: Based on the related documents listed in the Sources of Documentation for Initial Study Checklist, review of the proposed Project, and evaluations of the Project Site and the vicinity, the following determinations can be made:

a-d)ENPLAN conducted a cultural resources screening for the original 2.5-acre Project Site and prepared a *Cultural Resources Screening for Laurel Ag & Water Storage Yard Expansion Project* letter report (**Appendix B**).

Native American consultation was undertaken with comment solicitation letters sent by ENPLAN on June 2, 2022. Two responses were received. One letter from the Enterprise Rancheria Estom Yumeka Maidu noted the Project Site was outside their territory. Another response by the Wintu Tribe of Northern California "did not identify any cultural resources on or near the site."

On July 2, 2022, field reconnaissance was conducted by ENPLAN archaeologist Evan Wiant, who surveyed the site "with transects spaced approximately 50 feet apart. Ground visibility averaged approximately 50 percent, with grasses covering a significant portion of the APE. All bare earth and ground disturbances, such as rodent burrows, were examined for potential cultural resources. No cultural resources were identified as a result of the survey."

The ENPLAN Cultural Resources Screening letter report noted, "Based on the results of the Native American consultation and the field evaluation, no cultural resources were identified, and the site is very unlikely to contain such resources." Whereas this directly applies to the original Project Area, the same conclusion is applicable to the Revised Project Area of 4,47 acres which includes the 2.5 acres addressed in the letter report. Native American consultation noted that the Wintu Tribe of Northern California "did not identify any cultural resources on or near the site." Whereas the actual cultural resources field evaluation was restricted to the 2.5-acre original Project Site, ENPLAN stated that the remaining 1.97 acres will also be "very unlikely to contain" cultural resources.⁵ This is based on previous use of the site for agricultural purposes and existing site conditions, including topography, vegetative type, and wetlands. There does not appear to be a need for further Native American consultations since as noted above previous consultation "did not identify any cultural resources on or near the site."

⁵ E-mail communication between Don Burk and Eihnard Diaz on August 8, 2022 confirmed that the ENPLAN archaeologist Evan Wiant agrees that the 1.97 acres "also had a very low potential to contain cultural resources."

As noted in the Cultural Resources Screening letter report, "there is always some potential for previously unknown cultural resources to be encountered during earth-moving activities. Therefore, ENPLAN recommends that the following stipulations be included as conditions of project approval and that these stipulations be included on all project construction/design plans; however, for purposes of this Initial Study and the proposed Project, the stipulations will be considered as **Mitigation Measures** even though technically they are not since State law address the potential associated impacts:

CR-1 *If any human remains are encountered during any phase of construction, all earth-disturbing work shall stop within 50 feet of the find. The county coroner shall be contacted to determine whether an investigation of the cause of death is required, as well as to determine whether the remains may be Native American in origin. Should Native American remains be discovered, the county coroner must contact the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC). The NAHC will then determine those persons it believes to be most likely descended from the deceased Native American(s). Together with representatives of the people of most likely descent, a qualified archaeologist can make an assessment of the discovery and recommend/implement mitigation measures as necessary.*

CR-2. *If any previously unevaluated cultural resources (i.e., burnt animal bone, midden soils, projectile points, or other humanly modified lithics, historical artifacts, etc.) are encountered, all earth-disturbing work shall stop within 50 feet of the find until a qualified archaeologist can make an assessment of the discovery and recommend/implement mitigation measures as necessary. Depending on the type and significance of the find, subsequent monitoring by an archaeologist or Native American may be warranted.*

Findings: The probability of *Cultural Resources* being encountered during construction is very low and limited. However, adherence to state law and incorporation of the **Mitigation Measures CR-1** and **CR-2** into the Project Conditions of Approval limits potential *Cultural Resources* impacts to a **less than significant** level.

VI. ENERGY: Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-Than-Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources during project construction or operation?				X
b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?				X

Discussion: Based on the related documents listed in the Sources of Documentation for Initial Study Checklist, review of the proposed Project, and evaluations of the Project Site and the vicinity, the following determinations can be made:

- a) The development proposed for the Project Site does not result in the construction of new structures, which avoids the need for an HVAC or electricity. Construction equipment will require the utilization of fuel for the replacement and construction of fencing plus the use of fuels to grade, gravel, and compact the surface of the new storage area. Perimeter security light standards may be installed which will utilize LED lighting, thereby minimizing the use of significant amounts of electricity.
- b) The proposed Project would not conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency. The Project has no effect on the state or local plans for the development of renewable energy resources.

Findings: The storage of additional agricultural and irrigation materials will **not impact** *Energy Resources*.

VII. GEOLOGY AND SOILS: Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-Than-Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 Publications 42. ii) Strong seismic ground shaking? iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction? iv) Landslides? 				X
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?				X
c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or offsite landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse?				X
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?				X
e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?				X
f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?				X

Discussion: Based on the related documents listed in the Sources of Documentation for Initial Study Checklist, review of the proposed Project, and evaluations of the Project Site and the vicinity, the following determinations can be made:

- a) The Project would not directly or indirectly 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?
 - ii. Strong seismic ground shaking?
 - iii. Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?
 - iv. Landslides?

Active earthquake faults can be found throughout California; however, as part of the City, the Revised Project Site is located in an area considered to be relatively free of seismic hazards in the immediate vicinity. The most significant seismic activity that may occur in the area is ground shaking generated by seismic events on distant faults. The Elder Creek Fault is the closest of which lies approximately five miles to the southwest. There is no evidence of a "potentially active fault" located in the area, which could significantly damage structures and associated infrastructure.

The City of Corning, and in turn, the Revised Project Site, is not affected by Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zones as of May 1, 1999, as determined by the California Geologic Survey. In addition, the City is located in a low severity earthquake area designated by the California Geologic Survey and is considered at low risk for impacts associated with earthquakes. Consequently, the Project Site is also

at low risk for geologic events commonly associated with earthquakes, including liquefaction, subsidence, lurch cracking, and ground shaking. Therefore, there is a less than significant impact concerning potential seismic-related impacts.

Landslides can be triggered by heavy rains or earthquakes and result in the sometimes rapid movement of soil from areas of higher elevation to those of lower elevation. The potential of rockslides is negligible since slopes are basically level. Therefore, there are no impacts associated with potential landslides.

- b) The potential for erosion is minimal since the Revised Project Site is essentially flat, and the storage surface area will be covered with approximately four inches of road base and gravel. Grading will be minimal. Therefore, due to the topography and covering of the soils, there is no impact.
- c) The threat of landslides, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse is insignificant since the area's geology demonstrates stability and the topography is flat.
- d) No structures will be constructed to support the Project, and existing soils will be covered and compacted with approximately four inches of Uniform Road Base and gravel. No impact would occur in this regard.
- e) The proposed Project does not propose any wastewater facilities or the development of any onsite septic systems, therefore no impacts could result.
- f) It is highly unlikely that the Revised Project Site contains unique paleontological resources or geologic features; however, since no major excavation will occur from the grading, any unknown resources or features will not be impacted.

Findings: Based on the above evaluation, there are *no impacts* associated with *Geology and Soils*.

VIII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS: Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-Than-Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?			X	
b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?				X

Discussion: Based on the related documents listed in the Sources of Documentation for Initial Study Checklist, review of the proposed Project, and evaluations of the Project Site and the vicinity, the following determinations can be made:

- a) GHG emissions and global climate change are, by nature, cumulative impacts. Unlike criteria pollutants, which are pollutants of regional and local concern, GHGs are global pollutants and are not limited to the area in which they are generated. The California State legislature has adopted numerous programs and regulations to reduce statewide GHG emissions to which Tehama County must adhere and implement, when applicable, by the TCAPCD. Impacts associated with greenhouse gas emissions are more appropriately evaluated on a large regional basis, such as the Northern Sacramento Valley Air Basin, than at a general project scale, as greenhouse gas impacts on the atmosphere are generally independent of the point of emission.

As identified in the Air Quality discussion the internal combustion of fuels to power heavy equipment for the short-term construction of the Project which entails fence removal and installation, limited grading and road base and gravel application, will result in very limited amounts of greenhouse gas

emissions. Since the proposed Project is just the expansion of the existing storage yard to accommodate more irrigation pipe and associated materials and equipment, there will be no significant increase in vehicles trips associated with the Laurel Ag & Water operation that will generate significant greenhouse gases. The construction and operation-related emissions would occur at such a minimal level that they will have a negligible effect to climate change. Potential impacts are less than significant.

- b) Due to the type and size of the Proposed Project and ensuing operations, the Project does not conflict with any applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for reducing greenhouse gases, and therefore, there is no significant impact.

Findings: Based on the above discussion and with the implementation of region-wide alternative transportation improvements, energy conservation measures, and State regulations for the reduction of GHG emissions, overall GHG emissions can be further reduced. Therefore, the proposed Project's impact on global warming and climate change is considered *less than significant*. Impacts associated with *Greenhouse Gas Emissions* were found *not to be potentially significant*.

IX. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS: Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-Than-Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?				X
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?				X
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?				X
d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?				X
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?				X
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?				X
g) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?				X
h) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires?				X

Discussion: Based on the related documents listed in the Sources of Documentation for Initial Study Checklist, review of the proposed Project, and evaluations of the Project Site and the vicinity, the following determinations can be made:

- a) Hazards are those physical safety factors that can cause injury or death, and while by themselves in isolation may not pose a significant safety hazard to the public, when combined with the development of projects can exacerbate hazardous conditions. Hazardous materials are typically chemicals or processes that are used or generated by a project that could pose harm to people working at the site or

on adjacent areas. Many of these chemicals can cause hazardous conditions to occur should they be improperly disposed of or accidentally spilled as part of project development or operations. Hazardous materials are also those listed as hazardous pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5.

The Tehama County Environmental Health Department (TCEHD) is the administering agency and the Certified Unified Program Agency (CUPA) for Tehama County, with responsibility for regulating hazardous materials handlers, hazardous waste generators, underground storage tank facilities, above-ground storage tanks, and stationary sources handling regulated substances. A Hazardous Materials Business Plan (HMBP) is required of businesses in Tehama County and the City of Corning that handle, use, generate, or store hazardous materials. The primary purpose of this plan is to provide readily available information regarding the location, type, and health risks of hazardous materials to emergency response personnel, authorized government officials, and the public. Large cases of hazardous materials contamination or violations are referred to the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) and the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC).

The proposed Project, due to its nature and size would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, storage, or disposal of hazardous materials. The existing retail sales and storage operation does not use, store, or sell any types of hazardous materials subject to the regulations adopted by the State and County.

- b) No hazardous materials will be stored at the site.
- c) The proposed Project would not emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste. The Project is not located within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school. No impacts would occur.
- d) The Project is not located on a site that is included on a list of hazardous materials sites and would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment. Furthermore, the Project Site is not included on the list of hazardous materials sites compiled by the California Department of Toxic Substances Control. Therefore, no impacts would occur.
- e) The Project is not located within an airport land use plan or within two miles of a public airport or public use airport. The nearest airport to the project site is the Corning Airport, located approximately three miles to the northeast. No impacts would occur.
- f) The proposed Project due to its nature, would not impair the implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan.
- g) The outbreak and spread of wildland fires around the Revised Project Area is a potential danger, particularly during the hot, dry summer and fall months. Various factors contribute to the intensity and spread of wildland fires: humidity, wind speed and direction, vegetation (fuel) type, and topography. The topography of the site is flat, and there are no trees in the area to produce fuels that would enhance the spread of a wildfire. The City of Corning requires that undeveloped sites with grasslands be mowed annually to reduce the fuels and make it much easier to fight wildland fire. The Project will place road base and gravel materials over the directly affected Project area, reducing the existing fuels in and around the site. The proposed Project will not have an impact on wildland fires.

Findings: In the course of the above evaluation, impacts associated with *Hazards and Hazardous Materials* were ***not significant***.

X. <u>HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY:</u> Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-Than-Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?				X
b) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?				X
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or offsite?				X
d) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or offsite?				X
e) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?			X	
f) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?				X
g) Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?				X
h) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures which would impede or redirect flood flows?				X
i) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?				X
j) Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?				X

Discussion: Based on the related documents listed in the Sources of Documentation for Initial Study Checklist, review of the proposed Project, and evaluations of the Project Site and the vicinity, the following determinations can be made:

a,e,f) Under Section 402 of the Clean Water Act, the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) issues National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits to regulate waste discharges to Waters of the U.S. Waters of the U.S. include rivers, lakes, tributary streams, and wetlands. Waste discharges include discharges of stormwater and construction project discharges. A construction project resulting in the disturbance of one or more acres requires a NPDES permit. A Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) will be required to be prepared prior to construction since the area of disturbance is greater than one acre.

Adherence to the Best Management Practices (BMPs) advanced as required in the SWPPP and the permitting, operational, and reporting requirements imposed by the State and City ensure that the Project will not violate water quality or discharge standards or otherwise substantially degrade water quality. Any potential impacts associated with water quality will be reduced to a less than significant level.

b) The proposed Project will not extract groundwater via wells or any other form. There is no impact.

c-e) Implementation of the proposed Project would not substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff, or contribute runoff water that would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems. Therefore, substantial erosion or siltation on- or offsite and the potential for substantial additional sources of polluted runoff would not result. This is due to the Revised Project Site being relatively level and there are no physically defined onsite drainage patterns. Rainfall is either absorbed directly into the ground or sheet flows to the drainage ditch adjacent to Hwy 99W, which will be improved as part of the Project. Modifications to the drainage ditch will be required to be submitted on the improvement plans for review and approval by the City. Existing areas that have been identified as wetland pools will be fenced and left in their natural state to absorb rainfall and associated flows. Furthermore, road base and gravel will provide for rainfall to be absorbed into the ground. In contrast, the use of impervious surface materials such as asphalt or concrete would not allow for absorption thereby resulting in significant increased drainage runoff. Potential impacts are less than significant due to existing natural features, the proposed type of surface materials to be used, and the improvement of the drainage ditch along Hwy 99W.

g-i) The September 29, 2011, Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) for Tehama County, Panel 1465 of 1775, Map Number 06103C1465H that contains the City of Corning Number 060398, was reviewed to determine potential flooding impacts. The approximate 2.37 acres of the Project Site that lies within Special Flood Hazard Area Zone AO (Depth 1') is inundated by a 100-year flood where flood depths range to one foot (usually sheet flow on sloping terrain). Given that the underlying terrain is not sloping, it is highly unlikely that the Revised Project Site will experience flooding. However, if flooding were to occur, there would not be any housing, structures, or people that would be adversely impacted given the type of Project proposed. Potential impacts would be less than significant.

j) The Project Site is in no danger from a tsunami, being some distance from the Pacific Ocean. Shasta Lake and Black Butte Lake are also too far away to impact the Project Site by seiche. The lack of any slopes on the Project Site makes potential mudflow unlikely. Impacts due to these hazardous conditions are less than significant.

Findings: Adherence to the Best Management Practices (BMPs) advanced as required in the SWPPP and the permitting, operational, and reporting requirements imposed by the State and City ensure that the Project will not violate water quality or discharge standards or otherwise substantially degrade water quality. Potential impacts associated with *Hydrology and Water Quality* will be reduced to a **less than significant** level. Potential flooding impacts are also **less than significant** due to the nature of the proposed Project and associated topography and minimal site alterations. Furthermore, there will be **no impacts** on groundwater since no groundwater extraction is proposed.

XI. LAND USE AND PLANNING: Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-Than-Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Physically divide an established community?				X
b) Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?				X
c) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?				X

Discussion: Based on the related documents listed in the Sources of Documentation for Initial Study Checklist, review of the proposed Project, and evaluations of the Project Site and the vicinity, the following determinations can be made:

- a) The proposed Project provides additional materials and equipment storage for an existing business in an area established and designated for commercial and light industrial uses. There are no impacts associated with the proposed Project potentially physically dividing the established community since the Project is compatible with existing and proposed land uses.
- b) The Project would not conflict with the Hwy 99W Corridor Specific Plan that permits commercial and light industrial uses. However, the CH-CBDZ Zoning District language specifically states that permitted uses must be "Freeway Oriented Businesses," thereby creating an inconsistency between the language in the Specific Plan and Zoning Code. The inconsistency has created issues with a previous approved project and also this Project. The City is in the process of amending the language in the CH and CBDZ sections of the Zoning Code to allow commercial and light industrial uses as permitted uses. Once the language in the Zoning Code has been modified, the Project will be consistent with the Specific Plan and Zoning Code, resulting in no impacts.
- c) The proposed Project will not conflict with any applicable habitat conservation or natural community conservation plans since no such plans have been adopted affecting the Project Site or general area.

Findings: The proposed Project will have *no impacts* on *Land Use and Planning*.

XII. MINERAL RESOURCES: Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-Than-Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the State?				X
b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local General Plan, specific plan or other land use plan?				X

Discussion: Based on the related documents listed in the Sources of Documentation for Initial Study Checklist, review of the proposed Project, and evaluations of the Project Site and the vicinity, the following determinations can be made:

- a) The Project Site and surrounding area are not in an area designated MRZ-2 by the State. There are no known mineral resources that are of value in the region; therefore, there is no impact.
- b) Review of California Geological Survey Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975 (SMARA) mineral classification maps does not identify mineral resource deposits that could be impacted. There are no impacts to mineral resources.

Findings: The proposed Project will result in *no impacts* on *Mineral Resources*.

XIII. NOISE: Would the project result in:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-Than-Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?		X		
b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels				X
c) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?				X
d) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?		X		
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?				X
f) For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?				X

Discussion: Based on the related documents listed in the Sources of Documentation for Initial Study Checklist, review of the proposed Project, and evaluations of the Project Site and the vicinity, the following determinations can be made:

a-d)The proposed Project would not introduce new noise sources into the area. The proposed Project, similar to other vehicular, heavy truck, and loading and unloading material operations associated with other commercial and light industrial uses in the area, will not expose persons to noise levels above established City standards except during the short-term construction period involving grading and the addition of road base and gravel. The only source of groundborne vibration is from I-5.

For employees working in the storage yard and who operate heavy equipment, OSHA requires employers such as Ag Laurel to implement a hearing conservation program when noise exposure is at or above 85 decibels averaged over eight working hours, or an 8-hour time-weighted average (TWA). Hearing conservation programs strive to prevent initial occupational hearing loss, preserve, and protect remaining hearing, and equip workers with the knowledge and hearing protection devices necessary to safeguard themselves. The construction of the proposed Project requires the removal of some existing fencing and the installation of new fencing. Heavy equipment such as bulldozers, heavy trucks, and backhoes will be used during construction. These types of equipment can exceed 85 decibels and will require hearing protection devices to adhere to OSHA requirements. Whereas these noise levels will exceed, albeit, on a short-term basis, implementation of *Mitigation Measure N-1* will reduce this impact to a level of less than significant to within levels specified in Table G-16 and Table G-16A of 29 CFR 1910.95(b)(1).

The construction of the proposed Project entails the removal of some existing fencing and the installation of new fencing. As previously identified, heavy equipment such as bulldozers, heavy trucks, and backhoes will be used. These types of equipment can exceed 85 decibels and will require hearing protection devices to adhere to OSHA requirements. Whereas these noise levels will exceed,

albeit on a short-term basis, implementation of *Mitigation Measure N-1* will reduce this impact to a level of less than significant.

N-1 *Construction activities shall be limited to the hours of 7:00 AM to 8:00 PM on the weekdays and from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM on weekends and holidays unless an exemption is received from the City to cover special circumstances. In addition, all equipment shall be fitted with factory-equipped mufflers and in good working order.*

e,f) The proposed Project is not located in the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or within two miles of a public airport or public use airport. The nearest airport to the project site is the Corning Airport, approximately three miles northeast of the Project Site. No impacts would occur.

Findings: The proposed Project is an expansion of an existing storage area on an adjacent parcel. The proposed Project will result in short-term construction noise impacting construction workers and could be potentially significant, but *Mitigation Measure N-1* is provided to reduce this impact to a *less than significant* level. Existing employees who operate heavy equipment associated with the storage yard operations will be protected by the continued adherence by Laurel Ag & Water to mandatory OSHA hearing protection standards. Therefore, *Noise* impacts will be *less than significant*.

XIV. POPULATION AND HOUSING: Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-Than-Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?				X
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?				X
c) Displace substantial numbers of existing people necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?				X

Discussion: Based on the related documents listed in the Sources of Documentation for Initial Study Checklist, review of the proposed Project, and evaluations of the Project Site and the vicinity, the following determinations can be made:

a) The proposed Project requires the construction of fencing and grading with the placement and compaction of road base and gravel. Given the scale of construction that will occur, there will not be a need to construct housing to accommodate new workers. Local contractors will likely construct the Project, and no new employees will need to be hired. Therefore, the Project will not induce unplanned or substantial growth in the area. No impacts would occur in this regard.

b,c) The Project would not displace people or existing housing. The proposed Project does not include the demolition of any existing housing. Therefore, no impacts would occur in this regard.

Findings: There are *no impacts* due to the Project associated with *Population and Housing* issues.

XV. PUBLIC SERVICES: 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:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-Than-Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
Fire Protection?			X	
Police Protection?			X	
Schools?				X
Parks?				X
Other public facilities?				X

Discussion: Based on the related documents listed in the Sources of Documentation for Initial Study Checklist, review of the proposed Project, and evaluations of the Project Site and the vicinity, the following determinations can be made:

The Project would not result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of 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, as applicable for:

Fire Protection

The City currently provides fire protection services for the proposed Project Area. Implementation of the proposed Project is not anticipated to significantly increase response times to the Project or result in an increase in the demand for these protection services or require any additional fire facilities. Potential impacts are considered less than significant.

Police Protection

Police protection services to the proposed Project are currently provided by the City. The material and equipment storage area expansion is not expected to significantly increase response times to the Project Site or result in an increase in the demand for police protection services or require any additional law enforcement facilities. The proposed Project does not involve housing or any other infrastructure that would increase the local population and therefore is not considered significant enough to warrant any additional sworn or non-sworn peace officers. Potential impacts are anticipated to be less than significant.

Schools

The Project will not result in an increase in housing or population in the City, which would require additional educational facilities. Therefore, the proposed Project would have no impact.

Parks

As previously discussed, there is no increase in housing and population that would require additional parks. Therefore, there is no need to hire additional employees. No impacts would occur.

Findings: Impacts associated with *Public Services less than significant* due to the type and scale of the Project being proposed.

XVI. RECREATION:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-Than-Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?				X
b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?				X

Discussion: Based on the related documents listed in the Sources of Documentation for Initial Study Checklist, review of the proposed Project, and evaluations of the Project Site and the vicinity, the following determinations can be made:

a,b) Due to the limited scale and type of the proposed Project, there will not be a need for additional recreation facilities, nor would existing facilities be impacted.

Findings: Due to the type and scale of the proposed Project there will be *no impact* on *Recreation* facilities.

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

Discussion: Based on the related documents listed in the Sources of Documentation for Initial Study Checklist, review of the proposed Project, and evaluations of the Project Site and the vicinity, the following determinations can be made:

a,b,f) As previously discussed, the principal reason for the proposed Project is that Laurel Ag & Water needs more storage land area for irrigation pipes and associated materials for retail sales and installation services. To understand the vehicular traffic, which includes trucks that Laurel Ag & Water generates, the number of employees, customers at the operation, service technicians, construction operations, and material deliveries need to be determined that could potentially impact the traffic circulation system.

Several major roadways serve the Project Site. Regional access is provided by Hwy 99W to the north and south, Interstate 5 (I-5) to the north and south, Hwy 99W to the south to access South Avenue to go east, and Hwy 99W to the north, then via Corning Road to proceed to the west or Solano Avenue to go east to Central Corning. Primary access to and from the Project Site is via Hwy 99W.

The following information regarding Hwy 99W, I-5, South Avenue, and the I-5 and South Avenue Interchange, I-5 and South Avenue on- and off-ramps, and the South Avenue/Hwy 99 W Intersection is derived from the January 25, 2019, *Traffic Impact Analysis for Diamond Plaza* prepared by KD Anderson & Associates.⁶

Existing Roadway System

“Hwy 99W is a north-south street that runs parallel to and east of Interstate 5 through Tehama County. Hwy 99W extends from the Glenn County city of Orland northly through Corning to its terminus on Moran Road. Hwy 99W is generally a two-lane roadway, but the road has been widened to four-lanes in the vicinity of the South Avenue intersection. The estimated daily traffic volume on Hwy 99W is 6,000 vehicles per day south of South Avenue, and trucks comprised 19% of the observed peak hour volume. The speed limit on Hwy 99W is 55 in the rural areas between cities but 35 mph in the area of South Avenue.

Interstate 5 (I-5) is a north-south four-lane freeway that adjoins western Corning. Interstate 5 is the primary route through California and begins at the US-Mexico border in southern California and extends northerly to the California-Oregon border. Access to Interstate 5 is controlled and in the area of the project, interchanges at South Avenue and at Corning Road provide access to Corning. The most recent traffic volume counts published by Caltrans indicate that in 2017 I-5 carried an Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) volume of 30,500 to 32,000 vehicles per day (vpd) through the City of Corning. Trucks comprise 21% to 22% of the daily volume according to Caltrans data. The speed limit on I-5 is 70 mph.

South Avenue is an east-west route that connects with I-5 in Corning with SR 99 in Vina. In the area immediately west of the I-5 interchange South Avenue is a two-lane rural road. East of I-5 South Avenue widens to a four-lane arterial with left-turn lanes at intersections and typical urban improvements (i.e., curb, gutter and sidewalk). Daily traffic volume counts for South Avenue are not available, but based on the peak hour count data the estimated volume is 500 vpd west of the I-5 interchange, 7,000 vpd between the interchange and Hwy 99W and 7,500 vehicles per day east of the Hwy 99W intersection. Trucks comprised 32% of the p.m. peak hour traffic on South Avenue between I-5 and Hwy 99W. The speed limit on South Avenue west of I-5 is 55 mph (prima facie) and is 35 miles per hour (mph) east of I-5.

The *Interstate 5/South Avenue Interchange* is a modified diamond configuration, with the northbound ramps in close proximity to the mainline and the southbound ramps separated to the west. The single lane northbound and southbound off-ramps are about 1,250 feet long measured gore to limit line and terminate at an intersection controlled by traffic signals. The northbound and southbound on-ramps

⁶ On file with the City of Corning Planning Department.

are 1,400 and 1,175 feet long, respectively, measured from the intersection to the gore point. South Avenue has a two-lane crossing over I-5 with little shoulder and narrow sidewalks.

The *South Avenue / I-5 SB Ramps Intersection* is controlled by a traffic signal. No auxiliary lanes are provided on South Avenue, but the southbound off-ramp approach has a short right turn lane. This intersection operates with split east-west phases. There are no crosswalks at the intersection.

The *South Avenue / I-5 NB Ramps Intersection* is controlled by a traffic signal. The eastbound South Avenue approach is a single lane. The eastern half of the intersection was widened when improvements to the Hwy 99W intersection were made, and a separate westbound to northbound right turn lane exists outside of the signal's control. The northbound off-ramp has three approach lanes. One lane is designed for left turns and through traffic, while the other two lanes are designated for right turns. The inside right turn lane is signed for North Hwy 99W, while the # 2 right turn lane is signed for the South Hwy 99W leg. The #2 right turn lane is not controlled by the traffic signal and continues as an auxiliary lane to the Hwy 99W intersection. The traffic signal itself operates with three distinct phases that separate EB, WB, and NB traffic. There are no crosswalks at the intersection.

The *South Avenue/Hwy 99W Intersection* has been widened to accommodate the ultimate plan for the 1-5 / South Avenue interchange, although some lanes that will eventually be available do not exist today. The intersection is controlled by a traffic signal which has conventional 8 phase operation (i.e., protected left turns). The two-lane northbound approach has a left turn lane and a through right turn lane. The southbound Hwy 99W approach has three lanes that are designed for right turns, through traffic and left turns, respectively. The left turn lane is combined with a northbound left turn lane that provides access to a business just north of the intersection, and together these back-to-back lanes are 175 feet long. The four-lane eastbound and westbound South Avenue approaches are each configured as a left turn lane, two through lanes and a separate right turn lane. Crosswalks are striped on the north, south and east legs of the intersection.”

Existing & Projected Traffic Generation Conditions

The following identifies existing traffic being generated by the existing Laurel Ag & Water operations. The vehicular, which includes trucks, trips currently generated, is considered the traffic trip baseline for the proposed Project. The existing trips generated are not used to determine potentially significant Project-related impacts.

Facility Employees. Laurel Ag & Water currently employs 25 persons at the Corning facility. Eight persons are at the facility, five in the office and three in the storage yard, who, on average, also make material deliveries three to five times per week. The balance of the 17 employees basically work offsite most of the time over six days. The construction operation has two – five-person crews. The construction crews may be at the facility once or twice per week. There are two service technicians, two irrigation pump technicians, and three automation service employees. They usually are also not at the facility on a daily basis. The number of employees may increase by an additional pump technician and an automation service employee due to the proposed Project. However, the number of office and storage/warehouse area employees will not increase.

Vehicle Fleet. Laurel Ag & Water has a 14-vehicle fleet that includes: three vehicles for the construction crews, one for a supervisor and two for the crews; five for the service and automation service personnel; three for the pump technicians; and three for the storage/warehouse employees. The number of fleet vehicles will not increase due to the proposed Project.

Retail Sales. The existing Laurel Ag & Water operation is open to the public Monday through Friday. It is estimated that approximately 15 to 20 customers per day come to obtain supplies, equating to 30

to 40 round trips per day coming to the facility. The proposed Project will not likely see a significant increase in retail sales customers. This is due to the facility having more product available at any one time. This reduces the number of trips a retail sales customer may have had to make when there was an insufficient supply of materials on-site.

Irrigation Material Deliveries. On average, Laurel Ag & Water has 10 to 15 irrigation material weekly deliveries, or about a maximum of two to three per day, to the Corning Area, Tehama County in general, and outside the County. This equates to 20 to 30 vehicle round trips per day from the facility. The proposed Project will not likely significantly increase the number of material deliveries since there will be more inventory available that can be delivered in a timelier fashion. Furthermore, “full” orders could be delivered in one trip, whereas now the lack of inventory may require multiple delivery of material over several days, or weeks.

Material Shipments Received. On average, material shipments are received from various vendors two to three times per day during the weekdays, which is equivalent to four to six vehicle roundtrips per day. Due to the storage/warehouse area increase, vendor deliveries may initially increase daily; however, once the existing and expanded yard is at capacity, daily deliveries may slightly decrease since inventory will not need to be restocked as frequently.

Vehicle Miles Travelled & Intersection Levels of Service Impacts

“In 2013, Senate Bill (SB) 743 was signed into law by California Governor Jerry Brown with a goal of reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, which promotes urban infill projects supporting diverse land uses and multimodal transportation networks. One significant outcome resulting from this statute is the removal of automobile delay and congestion, commonly known as level of service (LOS), as a basis for determining significant transportation impacts under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The Governor’s Office of Planning and Research (OPR) selected Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) as the principal measure to replace LOS for determining significant transportation impacts. VMT is a measure of total vehicular travel that accounts for the number of vehicle trips and the length of those trips.”⁷

According to the 2019 *Tehama County Regional Transportation Plan*, the County and incorporated cities such as Corning do not track VMT. “Although the daily vehicle mileages for the Cities of Red Bluff, Corning, and Tehama have decreased between 5% - 25% between 2010 and 2016, the county-wide daily vehicle mileage has increased by 7.5% during the same time period (see Table 2.16). This indicates that in-town driving has decreased but commuting has increased between communities within and outside of Tehama County.”⁸ Of the 25 Laurel Water & Ag employees, 14 of the 25 employees live in the City of Corning, four in Red Bluff (a distance of approximately 20 miles), three in Chico (about 29 miles), and four in Colusa County. Therefore, it could be said that 18 or 48% of the employees could be considered commuting between the Laurel Ag & Water facility and between communities within and outside Tehama County. However, the use of VMT to determine significant transportation impacts under CEQA for the proposed Project is not required since the Project is classified as a “Small Project.”

“Many local agencies have developed screening thresholds to indicate when detailed analysis is needed. Absent substantial evidence indicating that a project would generate a potentially significant level of VMT, or inconsistency with a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) or general plan, projects that generate or attract fewer than 110 trips per day generally may be assumed to cause a less-than-significant transportation impact” and are therefore considered a Small Project and not

⁷ Analyzing Vehicle Miles Traveled for CEQA Compliance SB 743 Implementation Guidelines For The County Of Santa Cruz, Implemented July 2020, Updated May 202

⁸ 2019 Tehama County Regional Transportation Plan Adopted May 2019 – Amended April 2020

subject to VMT analysis.⁹ The primary focus of the OPR's Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA is on single occupancy vehicles generated from residential and office/R&D development. Since the proposed Project does not propose additional onsite facility employees who are normally single-occupant commuters, no VMT analysis is required. Regardless, the proposed Project is expected to generate fewer than 110 trips per day which would be equivalent to an additional combination of 110 employees, retail customers, material deliveries or material shipments received. Based on the discussion of **Existing & Projected Traffic Generation Conditions**, the 110 trips per day will not occur. It is concluded that potential impacts using the VMT evaluation is less than significant. Therefore, a Level of Service (LOS) is utilized to determine potential significant impacts.

To quantitatively evaluate traffic conditions and to provide a basis for comparison of operating conditions with and without traffic generated by the proposed project, LOS was determined at several intersections and at freeway ramp terminals by the January 25, 2019, *Traffic Impact Analysis for Diamond Plaza* which are currently being impacted by the existing Laurel Ag & Water traffic generated and future traffic from the proposed Project.

The following discussion is also from the *Traffic Impact Analysis for Diamond Plaza*. Level of Service is a quantitative measure of traffic operating conditions using letter grades "A" through "F" to characterize operating conditions at an intersection, on highways, and at freeway ramp terminals. LOS A through F represents progressively worsening traffic conditions.

Caltrans is responsible for maintaining and operating I-5. Caltrans strives to maintain a target LOS at the transition between LOS 'C' and LOS 'D' on State highway facilities. The City of Corning General Plan Circulation Element Policy C-a identifies the minimum standard adopted by the City to 'Monitor, maintain and improve, as necessary, the operation, safety and performance of the street system, including roadway surfaces, capacity, and traffic signals. For capacity and operational purposes, strive to attain a Level of Service (LOS) "C," to the maximum degree feasible so that potential traffic congestion on streets and at intersections is minimized. LOS "D" is permissible based on a case-by-case review.

The *Traffic Impact Analysis for Diamond Plaza* concludes:

“Based on existing conditions, the main intersection at Hwy 99W and South Avenue and South Avenue and I-5 Northbound and Southbound ramp intersections currently operate with peak hour Level of Service that meets the City's minimum LOS C standard and the Caltrans LOS C goal.” No improvements at these intersections are needed.

Current Levels of Service at freeway ramp junctions on I-5 all operate at LOS B during the a.m. and p.m. peak hour.”

Regarding potential cumulative impacts, the 2001 Caltrans District 2 *Project Study Report (PSR) for the South Avenue Reconstruction Project* identifies long-term plans for the I-5/South Avenue interchange that includes modifications to widen the overpass structure and construct sidewalks. This improvement would mitigate future vehicle trips expected to be generated by development primarily on the west side of I-5.

Based on the discussion of **Existing & Projected Traffic Generation Conditions** and the minimal trips that the proposed Project will generate, potential impacts that would significantly impact the main intersection at Hwy 99W and South Avenue and South Avenue and I-5 Northbound and

⁹ Governor's Office of Planning and Research Technical Advisory on Evaluation Transportation Impacts in CEQA. Screening Thresholds for Land Use Projects. December 2018.

Southbound ramp intersections to exceed the current LOS C standard for the City and Caltrans will not occur for existing and proposed Project conditions or for cumulative plus proposed Project impacts. Therefore, potential impacts are less than significant.

Presently there are no formally designated bicycle lanes or bicycle facilities in the City of Corning or Tehama County along Hwy 99W, or South Avenue which are within the Project Area. However, street widths in the area east of I-5 can accommodate bicycle traffic in some areas. There is no impact.

Due to the proposed Project location and type, the Project does not 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. Nor does Project conflict with any applicable congestion management program resulting in no impacts.

- c) The proposed Project's does not result in a change in air traffic pattern; therefore, there is no impact.
- d) Due to the location of the Project, there are no safety hazards associated with geometric design features or conflicts with incompatible vehicles or equipment. There are long term plans for the I-5/South Avenue interchange that includes modifications to widen the overpass structure, and construct sidewalks to address potential safety hazards. Potential impacts are less than significant.
- e) Due to the location and type of proposed Project proposed, the Project will not result in inadequate emergency access and there is no impact.

Findings: In the course of the above evaluation, impacts associated with increased traffic from a combination of the number of future employees, retail customers, material deliveries or material shipments were found to be relatively insignificant. Whereas there may be a slight increase in material deliveries since there will be more storage space, but as identified, the increased storage space may decrease the number of deliveries since materials will not have to be delivered more often than currently exists. There may also be a small increase in customers since material products will be more readily available. Overall potential *Transportation* and particularly traffic-related impacts could be considered ***less than significant***.

XVIII. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES: Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-Than-Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k), or ii) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe. 			X	

Discussion: Based on the related documents listed in the Sources of Documentation for Initial Study Checklist, review of the proposed Project, and evaluations of the Project Site and the vicinity, the following determinations can be made:

- a) Pursuant to the Assembly Bill (AB) 52 Tribal consultation process, CEQA lead agencies consult with tribes that are traditionally and culturally affiliated with the project area and that have requested consultation pursuant to Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 21080.3.1. The purpose of the consultation is to determine whether a proposed project may result in a significant impact to tribal cultural resources that may be undocumented or known only to the tribe and its members. As set forth in PRC Section 21080.3.1(b), the law requires:

Prior to the release of a negative declaration, mitigated negative declaration, or environmental impact report for a project, the lead agency shall begin consultation with a California Native American tribe that is traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of the proposed project if: (1) the California Native American tribe requested to the lead agency, in writing, to be informed by the lead agency through formal notification of proposed projects in the geographic area that is traditionally and culturally affiliated with the tribe, and (2) the California Native American tribe responds, in writing, within 30 days of receipt of the formal notification, and requests the consultation.

The ensuing discussion is from ENPLAN's July 12, 2022, *Cultural Resources Screening for Laurel Ag & Water Storage Yard Expansion Project* letter report (**Appendix B**).

"Comment solicitation letters were sent by ENPLAN on June 2, 2022, to Glenda Nelson, Chairperson, Estom Yumeka Maidu Tribe of the Enterprise Rancheria; Kyle Self, Chairperson, Greenville Rancheria of Maidu Indians; Ron Kirk, Chairperson, Grindstone Rancheria of Wintun-Wailaki Indians of California; Andrew Alejandro, Chairperson, Paskenta Band of Nomlaki Indians; Lillie Lucero, Cultural Resources Coordinator, Redding Rancheria; and Michelle Radcliff-Garcia, Cultural Resources Director, Wintu Tribe of Northern California."

A response was received by e-mail on June 6, 2022, from Creig Marcus, Tribal Administrator of the Enterprise Rancheria Estom Yumeka Maidu. He stated that the project site is outside the Estom Yumeka Maidu territory, and therefore the tribe had no comments.

Follow-up correspondence was conducted on July 5 and 7, 2022, and the original Request for Comment letter was sent by e-mail to all of the original recipients except the Enterprise Rancheria Estom Yumeka Maidu who had previously responded. One response was received from Arthur Garcia of the Wintu Tribe of Northern California. He did not identify any cultural resources on or near the site but noted that a tribal monitor would be available if needed. No additional responses were received. Copies of all correspondence are provided in Appendix A of the Cultural Resources Screening letter report (APPENDIX B).

A field review of the proposed Project Site did not identify any signs of previously unidentified subsurface tribal cultural resources within or adjacent to the proposed Project Area.

Findings: In the course of the above evaluation, impacts associated with *Tribal Cultural Resources* were found to be *less than significant*.

<u>XIX. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS:</u> Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-Than-Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?				X
b) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?				X
c) Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause environmental effects?			X	
d) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?				X
e) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?				X
f) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid disposal needs?				X
g) Comply with Federal, State, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?				X

Discussion: Based on the related documents listed in the Sources of Documentation for Initial Study Checklist, review of the proposed Project, and evaluations of the Project Site and the vicinity, the following determinations can be made:

a-e) The proposed Project would not require or result in the relocation, construction, or provision of new or expanded water or wastewater treatment facilities since there is no need for potable water in the expansion area, and no new employees are proposed as part of the Project. No wastewater or water supply impacts would occur.

There will be an improvement of the existing stormwater drainage ditch along Hwy 99W abutting the eastern property line of the Project Site to improve stormwater capacity. The placement of aggregate base rock will increase the imperviousness of portions of the Project Site. A stormwater analysis will be required by the City that identifies measure for controlling potential increased stormwater runoff from the Project Site.

The Project Site is relatively flat with a drainage ditch that runs along the eastern boundary of the Project Site that fronts Hwy 99W. The ditch will be improved to increase storm water capacity from existing development and Hwy 99W. No impervious surfaces such as concrete or asphalt will be used in the materials and equipment storage area. A scattering of existing low areas identified as wetland pools collects some rainfall. To protect the wetland pools, they will remain in a natural state and fenced to create a 10 - 15 foot buffer from the wetland pools. This will allow also allow the pools to remain in their natural state and provide for some stormwater detention. The maintenance of the existing wetland pools will provide a form of stormwater detention. This detention, plus the fact that no impervious surfaces will be used, allows for stormwater to be absorbed into the ground, thereby reducing the amount of stormwater sheet flow into the existing drainage ditch along Hwy 99W, which will be improved. Potential stormwater drainage impacts are considered less than significant.

f,g) The proposed Project would not generate solid waste due to the nature of the Project, which is an expansion of an existing storage facility for agricultural piping and associated equipment. Therefore no impacts would occur, and additional discussion is not necessary.

Findings: In the course of the above evaluation, impacts associated with *Utilities and Service Systems* were found to be *less than significant*.

XX. WILDFIRE: If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-Than-Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?				X
b) Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to, pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?				X
c) Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?				X
d) Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?			X	

Discussion: Based on the related documents listed in the Sources of Documentation for Initial Study Checklist, review of the proposed Project, and evaluations of the Project Site and the vicinity, the following determinations can be made:

- a) The proposed Project does not impact any adopted emergency response or evacuation plans. There is no impact.
- b) The proposed Project Site and surrounding area, including the City of Corning, is located in a Non-Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone and subject to local responsibility, the City of Corning Fire Department. However, lands to the southwest and west, approximately one to two miles, respectively, are located in a Moderate Fire Severity Zone subject to CalFire jurisdiction. Due to the level topography and the Project Site location, the availability of fire hydrants, and relatively quick response times from the City of Corning Fire Department, wildfire risks are not intensified.
- c) Due to the location, type, and scale of the proposed Project, there would be no requirement for the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines, or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment. No impacts would occur.
- d) Due to the location, topography, type, and scale of the proposed Project, there would not be an exposure of people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes. Whereas the eastern 2.37 acres of the proposed Project is located in the FEMA Flood Zone AO, there would not be any significant risks to structures or improvements due to the nature of the Project, which proposes fencing, piping, and associated equipment storage to be located on a base rock and gravel surface. In addition, there would

not be any exposure to significant risks from flooding or landslides as a result of post-fire stormwater runoff. Potential impacts are considered to be less than significant.

Findings: Potential impacts associated with *Wildfire* were found to be *less than significant* due to the location, topography, type, and scale of the proposed Project.

XXI. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-Than-Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below the self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?			X	
b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?			X	
c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?		X		

Discussion: Based on the related documents listed in the Sources of Documentation for Initial Study Checklist, review of the Project, observations on the Project Site and in the vicinity, the following determinations can be made:

a) Based on the discussion and findings in Section IV. *Biological Resources*, there is evidence to support a finding that the proposed Project would have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment if the proposed Project was designed to fill potential wetland pools. However, it is recommended that the Project Site be expanded from the original 2.5 acres to include an additional 1.97 acres resulting in a Revised Project Site of 4.47 acres. This allows the Project Applicant to avoid all the wetland pools and to provide a fenced buffer area around each pool to create a usable storage area. This action would substantially eliminate potential impacts on wetland resources to a *less than significant* level.

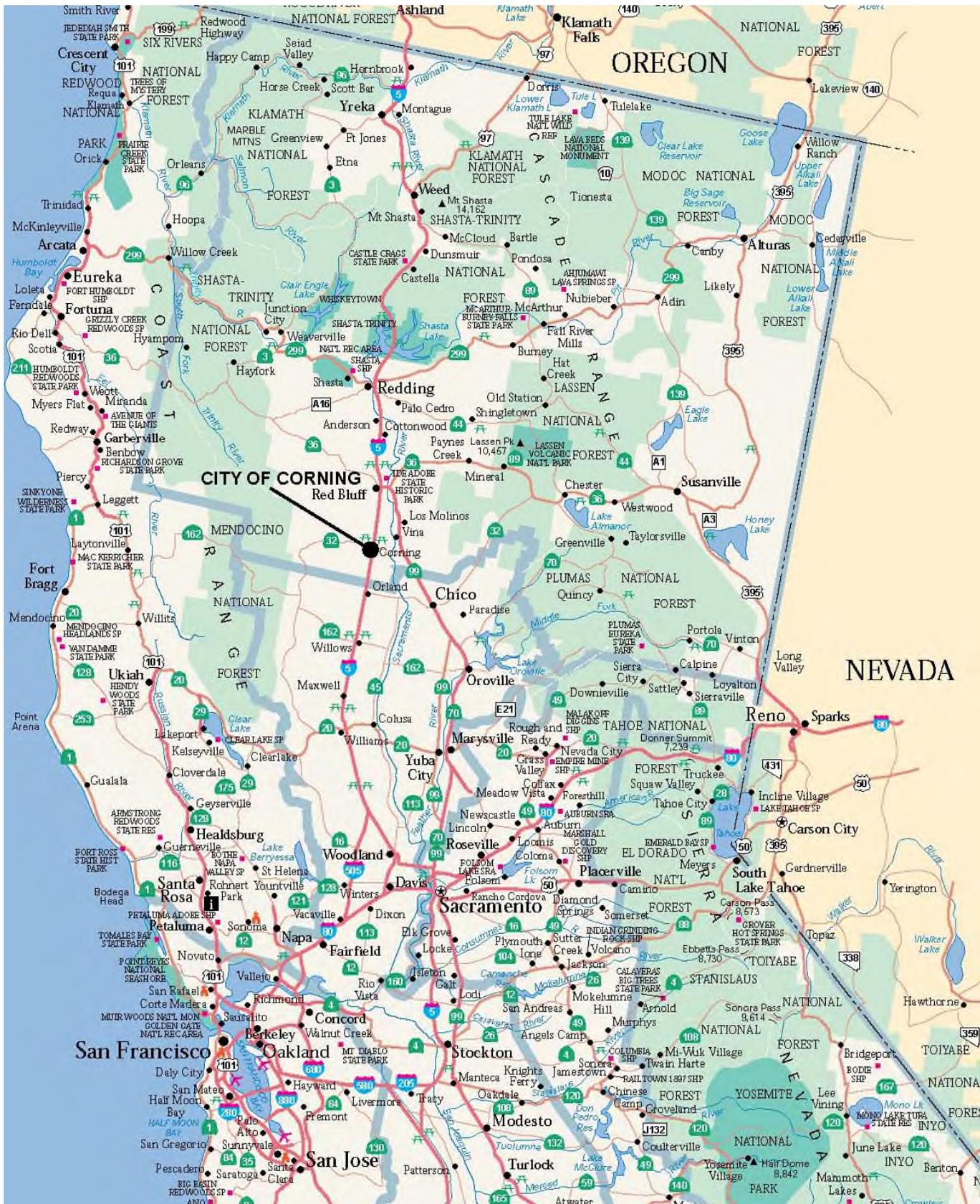
Based on the discussion and findings in Section V. *Cultural Resources*, there is evidence to support a finding that during the construction of the proposed Project, previously unknown cultural resources are encountered during earth-moving activities. Therefore, two stipulations are identified to be included as Conditions of Use Permit Project Approval. Potential impacts would be *less than significant*.

b) Based on the discussion and findings in all environmental factors, there is evidence to suggest that the proposed Project would have cumulatively *less than significant impacts* concerning air quality and greenhouse gas emissions. This determination was made based on the small scale and type of the proposed Project, which is an expansion of an existing irrigation materials and equipment storage yard. Implementation of the Project will not result in a significant increase in vehicular traffic from retail customers since the size of the sales office is not being increased, and no additional employees will be hired. Existing delivery of materials may increase slightly, but not significantly. In addition, there will be no increase in the number of service and construction personnel and associated equipment.

- c) Based on the discussion and findings in all Sections above, there is evidence to support a finding that the proposed Project has potential environmental impacts that may cause short-term adverse effects on construction workers. The construction of the proposed Project entails the removal of some existing fencing and the installation of new fencing. Heavy equipment such as bulldozers, heavy trucks, and backhoes will be used. These types of equipment can exceed 85 decibels and will require hearing protection devices to adhere to OSHA requirements. Whereas these noise levels may be exceeded, albeit on a short-term basis, implementing a mitigation measure will reduce this impact to a *less significant level*.

Storage area employees will continue to be protected as necessary from heavy equipment noise since the Laurel Ag & Water operation is currently required to adhere to OSHA requirements to implement a hearing conservation program when noise exposure is at or above 85 decibels averaged over eight working hours, or an 8-hour time-weighted average (TWA). This action is not a mitigation measure but a State regulation that serves to reduce this potential impact to a *less than significant level*.

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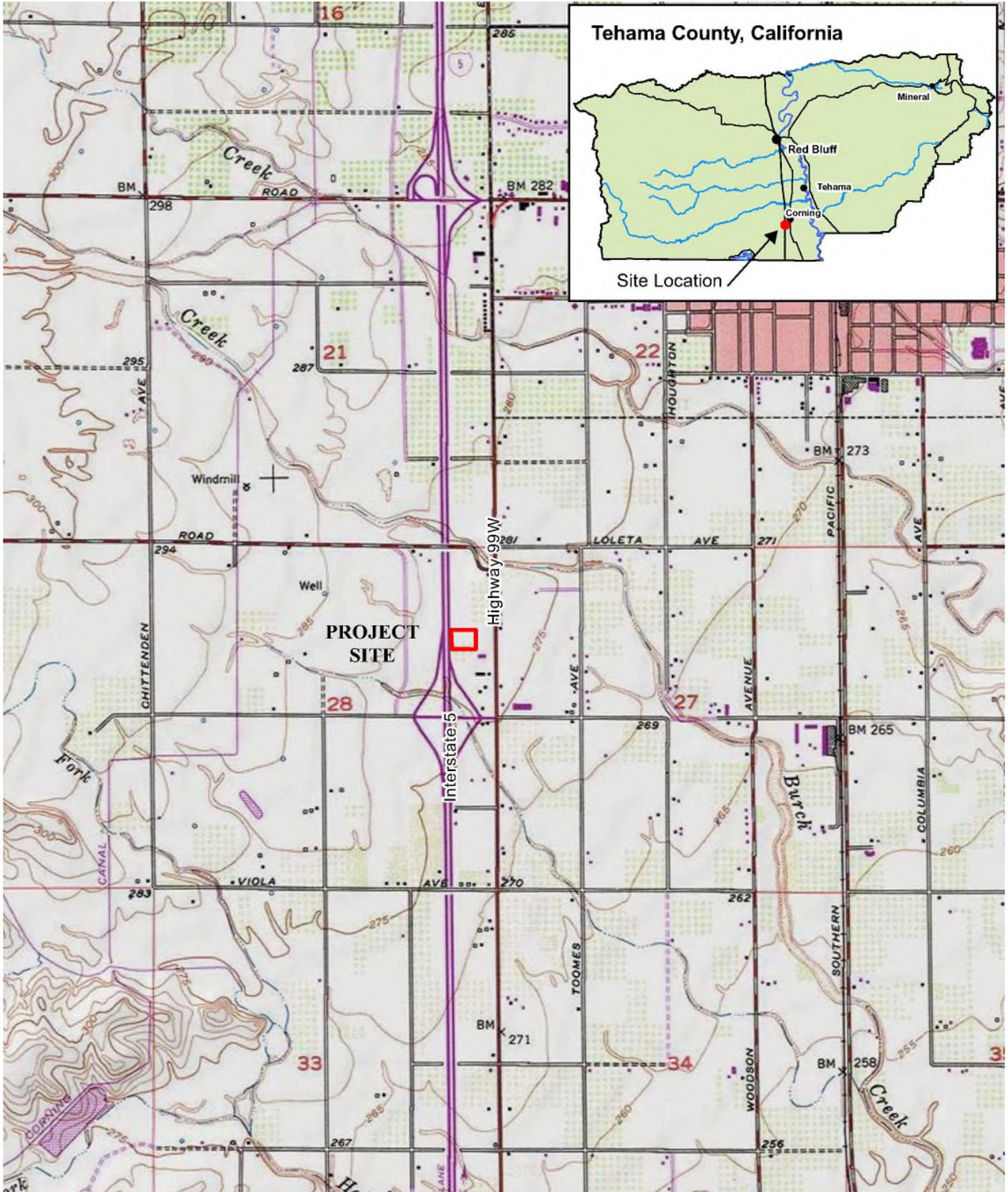


Base Map By Eureka Cartography for the California Division of Tourism



FIGURE 1 – LOCATION MAP

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Base Map By ENPLAN – Feature and boundary locations depicted are approximate only.



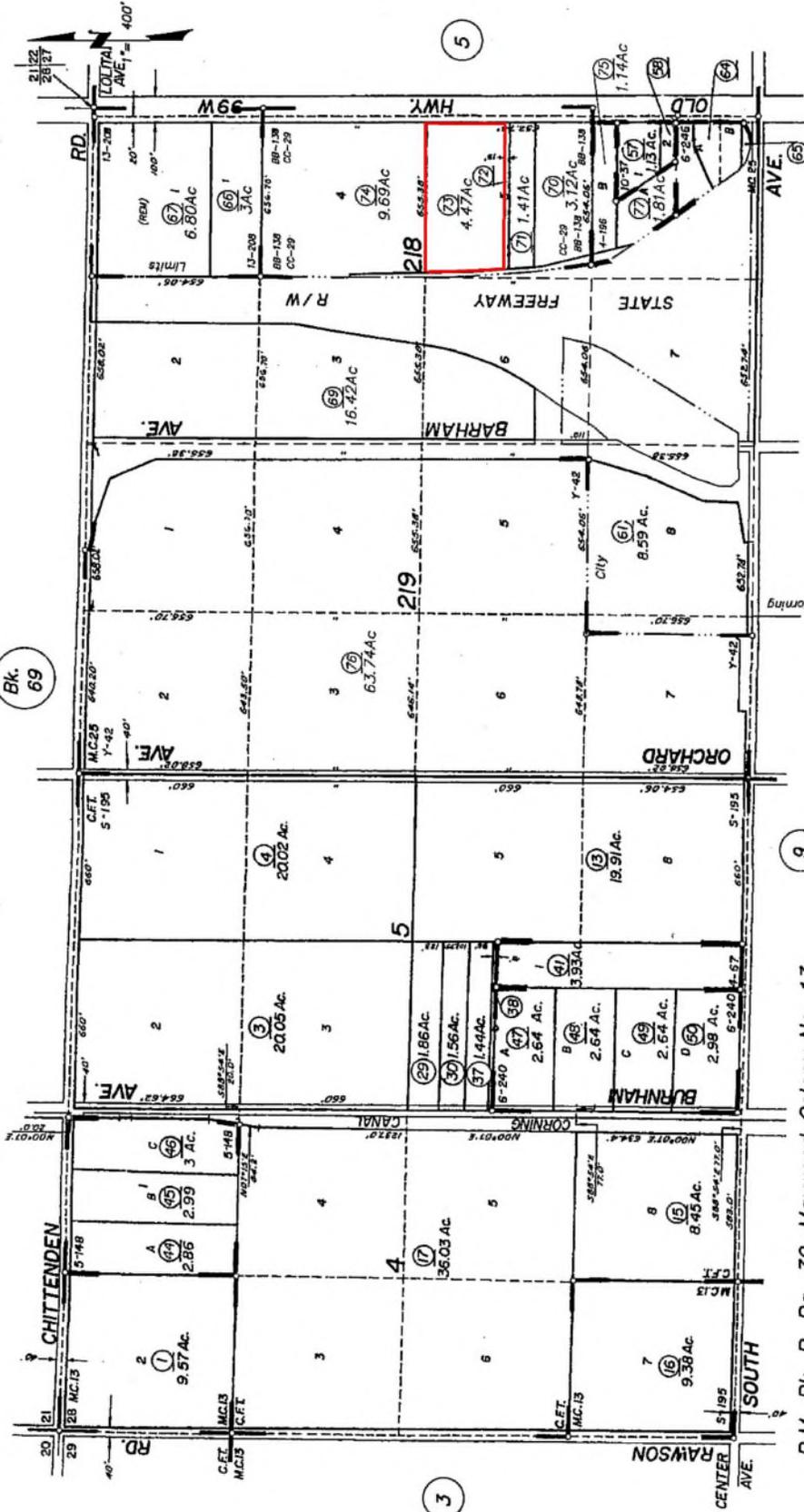
FIGURE 2 – VICINITY MAP

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SUBDIVIDED LAND IN N1/2 SEC. 28, T.24N., R.3W., M.D.B.&M.

87-04



- R.M. Bk. B, Pg. 32-Maywood Colony No. 13
- R.M. Bk. B, Pg. 33-Chittenden Fruit Tract
- R.S. Bk. S, Pg. 195
- R.S. Bk. Y, Pg. 42
- R.S. Bk. CC, Pg. 29
- P.M. Bk. 4, Pg. 67-P.M. No. 77-11
- P.M. Bk. 4, Pg. 196-P.M. No. 77-286
- P.M. Bk. 5, Pg. 148-P.M. No. 78-81

- P.M. Bk. 6, Pg. 240-P.M. No. 80-10
- P.M. Bk. 6, Pg. 246-P.M. No. 79-78
- P.M. Bk. 10, Pg. 37-P.M. No. 91-08
- P.M. Bk. 13, Pg. 208-P.M. No. 06-29
- R.S. Bk. BB, Pg. 138
- R.S. Bk. CC, Pg. 19-Interstate-5 Monumentation

Assessor's Map Bk. 87 -Pg. 04

NOTE-Assessor's Block Numbers Shown in Ellipses
Assessor's Parcel Numbers Shown in Circles

FIGURE 3 - ASSESSOR'S PARCEL MAP

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Base Map By Google Earth – Feature and boundary locations depicted are approximate only.



FIGURE 4 – ORIGINAL & REVISED PROJECT SITE

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Base Map By ENPLAN – Feature and boundary locations depicted are approximate only.



FIGURE 5 – ORIGINAL PROJECT SITE

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Base Map By ENPLAN – Feature and boundary locations depicted are approximate only.



FIGURE 6 – WETLAND SCREENING RESULTS

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Base Map By ENPLAN – Feature and boundary locations depicted are approximate only.



FIGURE 7 – REVISED PROJECT SITE

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LIST OF PREPARERS

Diaz Associates

Eihnard F. Diaz – Principal Planner
Susan Diaz – Administrative Assistant

John Stoufer – Planning Consultant

City of Corning

Kristina Miller – City Manager
Christina Meeds – Planner I
Robin Kampmann – City Engineer

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

SOURCES OF DOCUMENTATION FOR INITIAL STUDY CHECKLIST

All headings of this source document correspond to the headings of the Initial Study Checklist. In addition to the resources listed below, the Initial Study analysis may also be based on field observations by the persons responsible for completing the Initial Study. Most resource materials are on file at the City of Corning Planning Department, 794 Third Street, Corning, CA 96021, (530) 824-7036.

GENERAL PLAN AND ZONING

- June 23, 2015, City of Corning 2014 – 2034 General Plan Update and Land Use Classification Map.
- City of Corning Hwy. 99W Corridor Specific Plan
- Tehama County General Plan and Land Use Classification Map.
- City of Corning December 2001 Zoning Ordinance (updated March 22, 2022) and Zone District Map – CH-CBDZ, Highway Service Commercial District, Corning Business Development Zone.
- City of Corning Zoning Code Chapter 17.53 - Highway 99w Corridor Specific Plan Visual Design Guidelines

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

I. AESTHETICS

- City of Corning General Plan Section, II.D Natural Resources Group – Conservation & Open Space, Open Space & Scenic Resources.
- City of Corning 2014-2034 General Plan EIR.
- City of Corning Zoning Code Chapter 17.53 - Highway 99w Corridor Specific Plan Visual Design Guidelines.
- Google Earth, April 28, 2021.

II. AGRICULTURAL AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

- California Department of Conservation California Important Farmland Finder 2016 Map.
- United States Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service. August 1974. Soil Survey of Tehama County, California.

III. AIR QUALITY

- City of Corning General Plan Section, II.F Community Development Group, Air Quality.
- City of Corning 2014-2034 General Plan EIR.
- Northern Sacramento Valley Planning Area 2021 Triennial Air Quality Attainment Plan.
- Tehama County Air Pollution Control District. April 2015. Air Quality Permitting Handbook Guidelines for Assessing Air Quality Impacts.

IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

- ENPLAN May 12, 2022, Biological / Wetland Screening for Laurel AG & Water Storage Yard Expansion.
- City of Corning General Plan Section, II.D. Natural Resources Group – Conservation & Open Space, Biological Resources.

V. CULTURAL RESOURCES

- ENPLAN July 12, 2022, Cultural Resources Screening for Laurel AG & Water Storage Yard Expansion.
- City of Corning General Plan Section, II.D. Natural Resources Group – Conservation & Open Space, Cultural Resources.

VI. ENERGY

- City of Corning General Plan Section, II.F Community Development Group, Energy.
- City of Corning 2014-2034 General Plan EIR.

VII. GEOLOGY AND SOILS

- City of Corning General Plan Section, II.E Health & Safety Group, Seismic & Geologic Hazards.
- City of Corning 2014-2034 General Plan EIR.
- Soil Survey of Tehama County Area, California, published by U.S. Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service and Forest Service, August 1974.
- Alquist - Priolo, Earthquake Fault Zoning Maps.

VIII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

- City of Corning General Plan Section, II.F Community Development Group, Air Quality. Included Climate Change.
- 2019 Tehama County Regional Transportation Plan Adopted May 2019 – Amended April 2020.
- California Air Pollution Control Officers Association, January 2008. CEQA & Climate Change, Evaluating and Addressing Greenhouse Gas Emissions from Projects Subject to the California Environmental Quality Act.

IX. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

- City of Corning General Plan Section, II.E Health & Safety Group, Hazardous Materials.
- City of Corning 2014-2034 General Plan EIR.
- California Department of Toxic Substances Control EnviroStor which provides Hazardous Waste and Substances Site List – Site Cleanup (Cortese List)
- Tehama County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan 2015

X. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

- City of Corning General Plan Section, II.E Health & Safety Group, Flood Protection.
- City of Corning 2014-2034 General Plan EIR.
- Federal Emergency Management Agency. September 29, 2011. Flood Insurance Rate Map, City of Corning Panel 1465 of 1775 Map Number 06103C1465H.
- State of California Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board)
- Clean Water Act section 402, State Water Board National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES).

XI. LAND USE AND PLANNING

- City of Corning General Plan Section, II.F Community Development Group, Land Use and Land Use Classification Map.
- City of Corning 2014-2034 General Plan EIR.
- City of Corning Hwy. 99W Corridor Specific Plan

- City of Corning December 2001 Zoning Ordinance (updated March 22, 2022) and Zone District Map – CH-CBDZ, Highway Service Commercial District, Corning Business Development Zone.

XII. MINERAL RESOURCES

- City of Corning General Plan Section, II.D. Natural Resources Group – Conservation & Open Space, Mineral Resources.
- City of Corning 2014-2034 General Plan EIR.

XIII. NOISE

- City of Corning General Plan Section, II.E Health & Safety Group, Noise.
- City of Corning 2014-2034 General Plan EIR.

XIV. POPULATION AND HOUSING

- City of Corning 2019-2024 Housing Element Update

XV. PUBLIC SERVICES

- City of Corning General Plan Section, II.F Community Development Group, Public Services & Facilities.
- City of Corning General Plan Section, II.E Health & Safety Group, Flood Protection.
- City of Corning 2014-2034 General Plan EIR.

XVI. RECREATION

- City of Corning General Plan Section, II.D. Natural Resources Group – Conservation & Open Space, Park & Recreation Facilities & Resources.
- City of Corning 2014-2034 General Plan EIR.

XVII. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC

- City of Corning General Plan Section, II.F Community Development Group, Circulation.
- City of Corning 2014-2034 General Plan EIR.
- January 25, 2019, Traffic Impact Analysis for Diamond Plaza prepared by KD Anderson & Associates
- 2001 Caltrans District 2 Project Study Report (PSR) for the South Avenue Reconstruction Project
- Analyzing Vehicle Miles Traveled for CEQA Compliance SB 743 Implementation Guidelines For The County Of Santa Cruz, Implemented July 2020, Updated May 202
- 2019 Tehama County Regional Transportation Plan Adopted May 2019 – Amended April 2020
- Governor’s Office of Planning and Research Technical Advisory on Evaluation Transportation Impacts in CEQA. Screening Thresholds for Land Use Projects. December 2018.

XVIII. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

- ENPLAN July 12, 2022, Cultural Resources Screening for Laurel AG & Water Storage Yard Expansion.
- Tribal Consultation in accordance with Public Resources Code section 21080.3.1

XIX. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

- City of Corning General Plan Section, II.F Community Development Group, Public Services & Facilities.
- City of Corning 2014-2034 General Plan EIR.

XX. WILDFIRE

- Office of the State Fire Marshall-CALFIRE Fire Hazard Severity Zone Maps

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MITIGATION MONITORING & REPORTING PROGRAM

The *Mitigation Monitoring Program (MMRP)* for the *Laurel Ag & Water Storage Yard Expansion Project* includes a brief discussion of the legal basis for and the purpose of the program, discussion, and direction regarding complaints about noncompliance, a key to understanding the monitoring table, and the monitoring table itself. The *MMRP* approved on June 30, 2019, by the City Council for the *RPSTF Project IS/MND*, State Clearinghouse No. 2017022006, is incorporated herein by reference.

Legal Basis of and Purpose for the Mitigation Monitoring Program

California Public Resources Code Section 21081.6 requires public agencies to adopt mitigation monitoring or reporting programs whenever certifying an environmental impact report (EIR) or a mitigated negative declaration (MND). This requirement facilitates implementation of all mitigation measures adopted through the CEQA process.

The *MMRP* contained herein is intended to satisfy the requirements of CEQA as they relate to the Initial Study Addendum for the *RPSTF Project*. It is intended to be used by the City, participating agencies, project contractors, and mitigation monitoring personnel during implementation of the Project.

Mitigation is defined by CEQA Guidelines Section 15370 as a measure that does any of the following:

- Avoids impacts altogether by not taking a certain action or parts of an action.
- Minimizes impacts by limiting the degree or magnitude of the action and its implementation.
- Rectifies impacts by repairing, rehabilitating, or restoring the impacted environment.
- Reduces or eliminates impacts over time by preservation and maintenance operations during the life of the project.
- Compensates for impacts by replacing or providing substitute resources or environments.

The intent of the *MMRP* is to ensure the effective implementation and enforcement of adopted mitigation measures and permit conditions. The *MMRP* will provide for monitoring of construction activities as necessary, on-site identification and resolution of environmental problems, and proper reporting to Agency staff.

Mitigation Monitoring Table MMRP-1 identifies the mitigation measures proposed for the *RPSTF Project*. The table has the following columns:

- **Mitigation Measure:** Lists the mitigation measure along with its number as identified in the Initial Study/MND for each specific impact.
- **Timing:** Identifies at what point in time, review process, or phase the mitigation measure will be completed.
- **Agency Monitoring/Consultation:** References Tehama County or any other public agency with which coordination is required to satisfy the identified mitigation measure.
- **Verification:** Spaces to be initialed and dated by the individual designated to verify adherence to a specific mitigation measure.

Noncompliance Complaints

Any person or agency may file a complaint asserting noncompliance with the mitigation measures associated with the project. The complaint shall be directed to the City in written form, providing specific information on the asserted violation. The City shall investigate and determine the validity of the complaint. If noncompliance with a mitigation measure has occurred, the City shall take appropriate action to remedy any violation. The complainant shall receive written confirmation indicating the results of the investigation or the final action corresponding to the particular noncompliance issue.

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TABLE MMRP			
MITIGATION MONITORING TABLE			
MITIGATION	TIMING/ IMPLEMENTATION	AGENCY MONITORING/ CONSULTATION	VERIFICATION (DATE & INITIALS)
V. CULTURAL RESOURCES			
<i>CR-1 – If any human remains are encountered during any phase of construction, all earth-disturbing work shall stop within 50 feet of the find. The county coroner shall be contacted to determine whether an investigation of the cause of death is required, as well as to determine whether the remains may be Native American in origin. Should Native American remains be discovered, the county coroner must contact the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC). The NAHC will then determine those persons it believes to be most likely descended from the deceased Native American(s). Together with representatives of the people of most likely descent, a qualified archaeologist can make an assessment of the discovery and recommend/implement mitigation measures as necessary.</i>	Prior to and during construction	City or Designee, Qualified Archaeologist Native American Tribal Resource, Contractor	
<i>CR-2 – If any previously unevaluated cultural resources (i.e., burnt animal bone, midden soils, projectile points, or other humanly modified lithics, historical artifacts, etc.) are encountered, all earth-disturbing work shall stop within 50 feet of the find until a qualified archaeologist can make an assessment of the discovery and recommend/implement mitigation measures as necessary. Depending on the type and significance of the find, subsequent monitoring by an archaeologist or Native American may be warranted."</i>	Prior to and during construction	City or Designee, Qualified Archaeologist Native American Tribal Resource, Contractor	
IX. NOISE			
<i>N-1 – Construction activities shall be limited to the hours of 7:00 AM to 8:00 PM on the weekdays and from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM on weekends and holidays unless an exemption is received from the City to cover special circumstances. In addition, all equipment shall be fitted with factory-equipped mufflers and in good working order.</i>	During construction	City or Designee, Contractor	
XVIII. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES			
<i>Refer to V. Cultural Resources Mitigation Measure CR-1</i>	During construction	City or Designee, Qualified Archaeologist Native American Tribal Resource, City of Corning Museum, Contractor	

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APPENDIX A

Biological / Wetland Screening for Laurel AG & Water Storage Yard Expansion

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674-01
May 12, 2022

Jessie Lopez, Branch Manager
Laurel Ag & Water
2920 Highway 99W
Corning, CA 96021

SUBJECT: Biological/Wetland Screening for Laurel Ag & Water Storage Yard Expansion Project

This is to confirm that ENPLAN has conducted a biological and wetland screening for a ±2.5-acre site on the north side of the Laurel Ag & Water facility at 2920 Highway 99W, Corning. The site is a portion of Tehama County Assessor's Parcel 087-040-073. As shown in Figure 1, the site is located in Section 28, Township 24 North, Range 3 West, as depicted on the U.S. Geological Survey's Corning, California, 7.5-minute quadrangle. The site is nearly level, at an elevation of approximately 280 feet above sea level. An aerial photograph of the site is shown in Figure 2.

The proposed project would entail expansion of an outdoor storage yard into the subject area. The objective of this environmental screening is to identify potential constraints to development, which will then be considered during the site planning process.

Biological Evaluation

Records Review

Various records were reviewed to obtain information on reported occurrences of special-status species in the project vicinity. Records reviewed for this evaluation consisted of species lists and critical habitat data maintained by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, California Natural Diversity Data Base (CNDDDB) records, and California Native Plant Society (CNPS) records of rare plant occurrences (Appendix A). National Marine Fisheries Service records for anadromous fish were not considered because no streams are present on or adjacent to the site.

Field Survey

ENPLAN conducted a field evaluation of the study area on April 30, 2022. Many of the special-status species potentially occurring in the area would have been evident at the time the fieldwork was conducted. The potential presence of species not readily identifiable during the field studies was determined on the basis of observed habitat characteristics.

Plant Communities/Wildlife Habitats

The sole plant community/wildlife habitat on the site is an annual grassland with seasonal wetland inclusions. The herbaceous groundcover consists of primarily of introduced grasses mixed with introduced and native forbs; common species include slender wild oats, soft chess, ripgut brome, foxtail barley, rigid fiddleneck, bindweed, and other species. Introduced species are much more common than native species, in terms of both number of species (species richness) and abundance (percent cover). Small seasonal wetlands are present, and support primarily Mediterranean barley, annual ryegrass, saltgrass, and hyssop loosestrife. Native vernal pool plant species are almost completely absent from the wetlands. Representative photographs present are provided in Appendix B.

Special-Status Species

Special-Status Plant Species

U.S. Fish and Wildlife records for the Corning quadrangle do not identify any federally listed plant species or plant species proposed for federal listing. California Natural Diversity Data Base records show that the following special-status plant species are known to occur within a 5-mile radius of the study area: Ahart's paronychia, dwarf downingia, Red Bluff dwarf rush, and Stoney Creek spurge. CNPS records for the Corning quadrangle identify two additional special-status species, Boggs Lake hedge hyssop and silky cryptantha; in addition, three non-status species were identified: depauperate milk-vetch, Henderson's bentgrass, and Tehama navarretia.

As documented in Table 1, no special-status plant species were observed during the botanical survey nor are any expected to be present. A checklist of vascular plant species observed is provided in Appendix C.

Special-Status Animal Species

CNDDDB records show that four special-status animal species are known to occur within a 5-mile radius of the study area: burrowing owl, Swainson's hawk, vernal pool fairy shrimp, and western spadefoot; two non-status species are also identified in the area: California linderiella and, North American porcupine. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service records indicate the following special-status species could potentially be affected by the proposed project: yellow-billed cuckoo, giant garter snake, delta smelt, monarch butterfly, valley elderberry longhorn beetle, conservancy fairy shrimp, vernal pool fairy shrimp, and vernal pool tadpole shrimp.

As documented in Table 1, no special-status animal species were observed during the botanical survey nor are any expected to be present. Further, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has not designated any critical habitat for federally listed species in or adjacent to the study area.

Wetlands and Other Waters of the United States

Reconnaissance-level screening of the study area identified several seasonal wetlands that appear to be subject to the jurisdiction of the U.S. Department of the Army and/or State Water Board. As currently defined, wetlands must possess hydric soils, wetland hydrology, and a predominance of hydrophytic plant species. Indicators of hydric soils were observed in the form of abundant, distinct mottles in the upper soil layers. Wetland hydrology was evidenced by the presence of algal mats. The dominant plant species in the wetlands are Mediterranean barley and annual ryegrass, both of which are hydrophytic species; other common associates in the wetlands, e.g., saltgrass and hyssop loosestrife, are also hydrophytic species.

Because wetlands were observed on the study site, the screening evaluation was extended to the east, to Highway 99W, to allow consideration of possible development alternatives that would avoid the wetlands. Figure 1 shows the approximate sizes and boundaries of the onsite wetlands as well as wetlands to the east of the subject site.

Conclusions and Recommendations

In summary, we find that the study area supports several small seasonal wetlands, does not support any special-status plant species, and is not expected to support special-status animals. We recommend that wetlands and other waters of the State/United States be avoided to the

fullest extent feasible; if work must occur within these features, additional study and issuance of regulatory agency permits would be required.

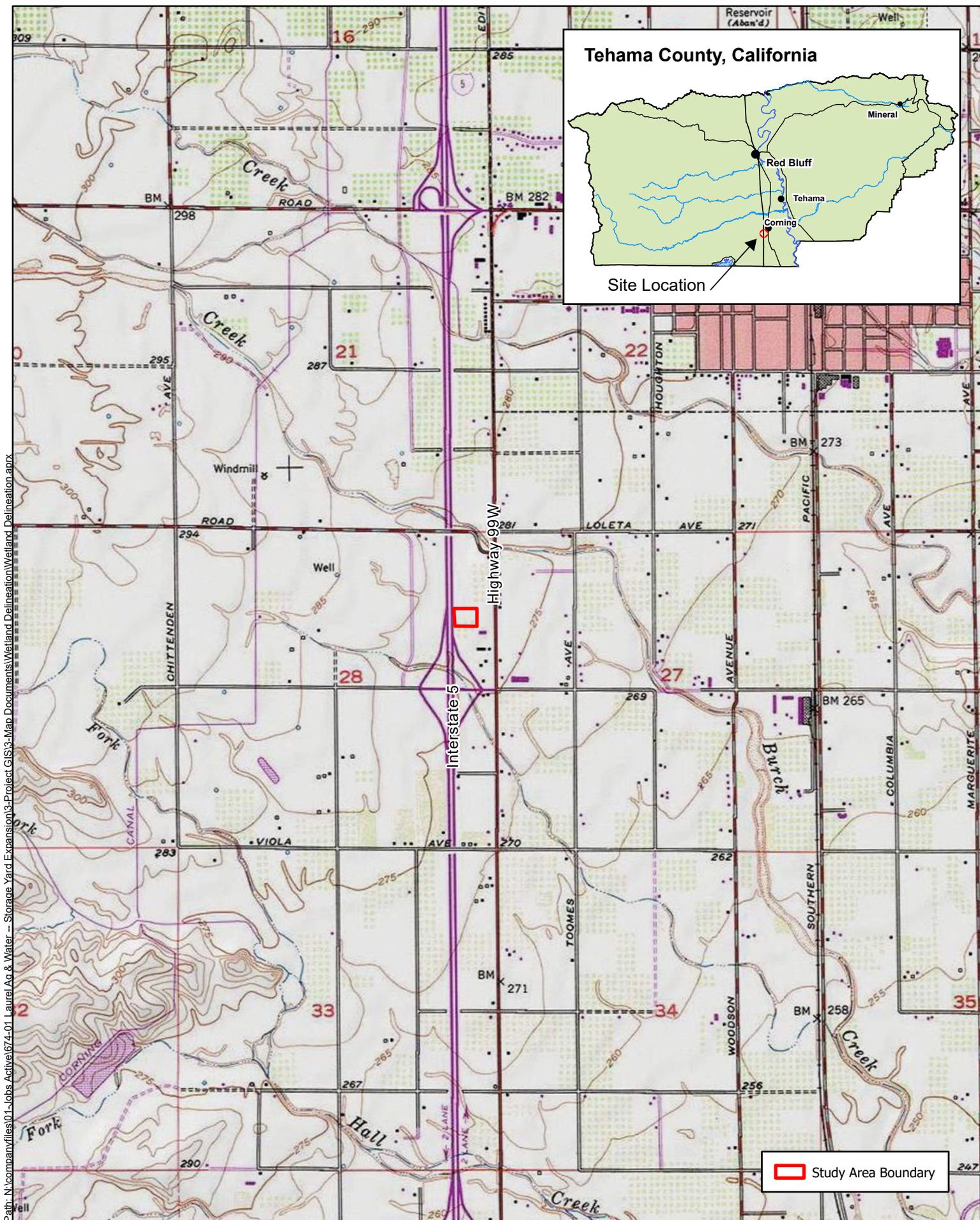
Please contact me if you have any questions regarding our findings or recommendations.

Sincerely,



Donald Burk
Environmental Services Manager

- encl. Figure 1. Project Location
- Figure 2. Wetland Screening Results
- Table 1. Potential for Special-Status Species Identified by the USFWS, CNDDDB, and
CNPS to Occur on the Project Site
- Appendix A. Records Search Results
- Appendix B. Representative Photographs
- Appendix C. Checklist of Vascular Plant Species Observed



Path: N:\companyfiles\01-Jobs Active\674-01-Laurel Ag & Water - Storage Yard Expansion\3-Project GIS\3-Map Documents\Wetland Delineation\Wetland Delineation.aprx

Figure 1

All depictions are approximate. Not a survey product.

05.11.22



Project Location and Vicinity





All depictions are approximate. Not a survey product. 05.11.22



Figure 2
Wetland Screening Results

TABLE 1
Potential for Special-Status Species Identified by the USFWS, CNDDDB,
and CNPS to Occur on the Project Site
May 12, 2022

COMMON NAME/ SCIENTIFIC NAME	STATUS ¹	GENERAL HABITAT DESCRIPTION	HABITAT PRESENT (Y/N)	CRITICAL HABITAT PRESENT (Y/N)	SPECIES PRESENT (Y/N/POT.)	RATIONALE/COMMENTS
PLANTS						
Ahart's dwarf rush <i>Juncus leiospermus</i> var. <i>ahartii</i>	1B.1	Ahart's dwarf rush inhabits vernal pools and shallow swales from sea level to approximately 300 feet in elevation in California's Central Valley. The flowering period is March through May.	No	No	No	No vernal pools or other potentially suitable habitats for Ahart's dwarf rush are present on the project site. The species was not observed during the botanical field evaluation and is not expected to be present.
Boggs Lake hedge-hyssop <i>Gratiola heterosepala</i>	1B.2	Boggs Lake hedge-hyssop occurs in marshes, swamps, and vernal pools. The species is reported from sea level to 7,800 feet in elevation. The flowering period is April through August.	No	No	No	No vernal pools or other potentially suitable habitats for Boggs Lake hedge-hyssop are present on the project site. The species was not observed during the botanical field evaluation and is not expected to be present.
Dwarf downingia <i>Downingia pusilla</i>	2B.2	Dwarf downingia inhabits vernal pools within valley foothill grasslands. The species is reported from sea level to 1,500 feet in elevation. The flowering period is March through May.	No	No	No	No vernal pools or other potentially suitable habitats for dwarf downingia are present on the project site. The species was not observed during the botanical field evaluation and is not expected to be present.
Red Bluff dwarf rush <i>Juncus leiospermus</i> var. <i>leiospermus</i>	1B.1	Red Bluff dwarf rush is an annual herb that typically occurs along the edges of vernal pools and vernal drainages, or on clay-rich terrace soils. The species is found between 100 and 3,400 feet in elevation. The flowering period is March through May.	No	No	No	No vernal pools or other potentially suitable habitats for Red Bluff dwarf rush are present on the project site. The species was not observed during the botanical field evaluation and is not expected to be present.

TABLE 1
Potential for Special-Status Species Identified by the USFWS, CNDDDB,
and CNPS to Occur on the Project Site
May 12, 2022

COMMON NAME/ SCIENTIFIC NAME	STATUS ¹	GENERAL HABITAT DESCRIPTION	HABITAT PRESENT (Y/N)	CRITICAL HABITAT PRESENT (Y/N)	SPECIES PRESENT (Y/N/POT.)	RATIONALE/COMMENTS
Silky cryptantha <i>Cryptantha crinita</i>	1B.2	Silky cryptantha is an annual herb that occurs along low-gradient seasonal streams with broad floodplains, usually on the valley floor, where it is found on gravelly or cobbly substrates. The species also occurs in vernal moist uplands. Less frequently, it occurs along perennial streams, including the Sacramento River. The species is found between 200 and 4,000 feet in elevation. The flowering period is April and May.	No	No	No	No streams, floodplains, or other suitable habitats for silky cryptantha are present on the project site. The species was not observed during the botanical field evaluation and is not expected to be present.
Stony Creek spurge <i>Euphorbia ocellata</i> ssp. <i>rattanii</i>	1B.2	Stony Creek spurge often occurs in dry streambeds and can also be found in vernal pools, on outcrops, and on sandy or rocky soils in valley and foothill grasslands. The species is found between 200 and 2,700 feet in elevation. The flowering period is May through October.	Pot.	No	No	Marginally suitable habitat is present on the project site. Although Stony Creek spurge may not have been in flower at the time of the field evaluation, non-flowering individuals would have been apparent, if present. No spurges were observed; Stony Creek spurge is not expected to be present on the site.

TABLE 1
Potential for Special-Status Species Identified by the USFWS, CNDDDB,
and CNPS to Occur on the Project Site
May 12, 2022

COMMON NAME/ SCIENTIFIC NAME	STATUS ¹	GENERAL HABITAT DESCRIPTION	HABITAT PRESENT (Y/N)	CRITICAL HABITAT PRESENT (Y/N)	SPECIES PRESENT (Y/N/POT.)	RATIONALE/COMMENTS
BIRDS						
Burrowing owl <i>Athene cunicularia</i>	SSSC	The burrowing owl is a ground-dwelling bird species adapted to open, relatively flat expanses. In California, preferred habitat generally consists of short, sparse vegetation with few shrubs, level to gentle topography and well-drained soils. Grassland, shrub steppe, and desert are naturally occurring habitat types used by the species. Burrowing owls may also inhabit some agricultural areas, ruderal grassy fields, vacant lots, and pastures if the vegetation structure is suitable and there are useable burrows and foraging habitat in proximity. Burrowing owls nest in mammal burrows (e.g., ground squirrels, coyotes, badgers, and foxes) or they may excavate their own burrow.	No	No	No	The project site supports primarily a tall grassland with poorly drained soils. No suitable nesting habitat for the burrowing owl is present on the project site; no burrows or owls were observed during the field evaluation. Thus, burrowing owls would not nest on the project site.
Swainson's hawk <i>Buteo swainsoni</i>	ST	Swainson's hawks nest in riparian areas or in oak savannah on the valley floor or in the foothills of the Central Valley, as far north as southern Tehama County. The species also nests in northeastern California in similar communities as well as juniper-sage flats.	No	No	No	No suitable nesting habitat for the Swainson's hawk is present on or adjacent to the project site and the species was not observed during the field evaluation. Swainson's hawks would not nest on the project site.
Western yellow-billed cuckoo <i>Coccyzus americanus occidentalis</i>	FT, SE	Western yellow-billed cuckoos inhabit and nest in extensive deciduous riparian thickets or forests with dense, low-level or understory foliage, and which abut slow-moving watercourses, backwaters, or seeps. Willows are almost always a dominant component of the vegetation. In the Sacramento Valley, the western yellow-billed cuckoo also utilizes adjacent orchards, especially of walnut, for nesting.	No	No	No	No suitable nesting habitat for western yellow-billed cuckoos is present on or adjacent to the project site and the species was not observed during the field evaluation. Western yellow-billed cuckoos would not nest on the project site.

TABLE 1
Potential for Special-Status Species Identified by the USFWS, CNDDDB,
and CNPS to Occur on the Project Site
May 12, 2022

COMMON NAME/ SCIENTIFIC NAME	STATUS ¹	GENERAL HABITAT DESCRIPTION	HABITAT PRESENT (Y/N)	CRITICAL HABITAT PRESENT (Y/N)	SPECIES PRESENT (Y/N/POT.)	RATIONALE/COMMENTS
AMPHIBIANS						
Western spadefoot <i>Spea hammondi</i>	SSSC	Western spadefoots breed from January through May in shallow, temporary pools that persist for at least three weeks. Breeding pools are generally absent of bullfrogs, fish, and crayfish. After breeding, adults seek shelter underground either by excavating a subterranean burrow or retreating into a small mammal burrow nearby. Tadpoles transform within three weeks. Following transformation, juveniles leave breeding pools and seek shelter underground. Western spadefoots remain underground until breeding pools form the following spring.	Pot.	No	No	Although marginally suitable habitat for western spadefoots is present in the form of seasonal wetlands, the project site is relatively isolated from other suitable habitats due to Interstate 5, Highway 99W, and urban developments. The nearest known populations of western spadefoot are over 3.5 miles to the south and over 7.5 miles to the west and northwest. Western spadefoot is not expected to be present on the project site.
INSECTS						
Monarch – California overwintering population <i>Danaus plexippus</i> Pop. 1	FC	The western population of monarch butterflies overwinters on the California Coast, Baja California, and to some extent the central Mexico mountains. The butterflies begin migration in February and March and reach the northern limits of their range in California, Oregon, Washington, Idaho, and Nevada, in early to mid-June. Eggs are laid on milkweed plants within their breeding range. Once hatched, larva reach the adult stage in 20 to 35 days; adults generally live 2 to 5 weeks. Several generations are produced within one season, with the last generation beginning migration back to their overwintering sites in August and September.	Pot.	No	Pot.	No milkweeds were observed in the study area, nor does the site support an abundance of flowering plants that would provide nectar for the butterfly. Project implementation would not result in the loss of foraging or breeding habitat for the monarch butterfly.

TABLE 1
Potential for Special-Status Species Identified by the USFWS, CNDDDB,
and CNPS to Occur on the Project Site
May 12, 2022

COMMON NAME/ SCIENTIFIC NAME	STATUS ¹	GENERAL HABITAT DESCRIPTION	HABITAT PRESENT (Y/N)	CRITICAL HABITAT PRESENT (Y/N)	SPECIES PRESENT (Y/N/POT.)	RATIONALE/COMMENTS
Valley elderberry longhorn beetle <i>Desmocerus californicus dimorphus</i>	FT	The valley elderberry longhorn beetle (VELB) is found only in association with elderberry shrubs (<i>Sambucus</i> spp.). Most populations are found below 500 feet in elevation. The species is known to occur in the Central Valley and adjoining foothills.	No	No	No	No elderberries are present on or adjacent to the project site. The valley elderberry longhorn beetle would thus not be present.
REPTILES						
Giant garter snake <i>Thamnophis gigas</i>	FT, ST	Giant garter snake habitat requirements consist of (1) adequate water during the snake's active season (early-spring through mid-fall) to provide food and cover; (2) emergent, herbaceous wetland vegetation for escape cover and foraging habitat during the active season; (3) grassy banks and openings in waterside vegetation for basking; and (4) higher elevation uplands for cover and refuge from flood waters during the snake's inactive season. The snake inhabits small mammal burrows and other soil crevices above prevailing flood elevations throughout its winter inactive period. Giant garter snakes typically select burrows with sunny exposure along south and west facing slopes. The breeding season extends through March and April, and females give birth to live young from late July through early September.	No	No	No	No suitable habitat for the giant water snake is present on the project site. Thus, giant garter snake would not be present on the project site.

TABLE 1
Potential for Special-Status Species Identified by the USFWS, CNDDDB,
and CNPS to Occur on the Project Site
May 12, 2022

COMMON NAME/ SCIENTIFIC NAME	STATUS ¹	GENERAL HABITAT DESCRIPTION	HABITAT PRESENT (Y/N)	CRITICAL HABITAT PRESENT (Y/N)	SPECIES PRESENT (Y/N/POT.)	RATIONALE/COMMENTS
CRUSTACEANS						
Conservancy fairy shrimp <i>Branchinecta conservatio</i>	FE	Conservancy fairy shrimp inhabit large, cool-water vernal pools with moderately turbid water.	No	No	No	No large vernal pools or other potentially suitable habitats for Conservancy fairy shrimp are present in the project site. Conservancy fairy shrimp would thus not be present.
Vernal pool fairy shrimp <i>Branchinecta lynchi</i>	FT	Vernal pool fairy shrimp inhabit small, clear-water sandstone-depression pools and grassed swale, earth slump or basalt-flow depression pools.	Pot.	No	No	Potentially suitable habitat for vernal pool fairy shrimp is provided by the on-site seasonal wetlands. However, the nearest known occurrences of vernal pool fairy shrimp are over 3.5 miles from the subject site. Vernal pool fairy shrimp are not expected to be present on the subject site.
Vernal pool tadpole shrimp <i>Lepidurus packardii</i>	FE	Vernal pool tadpole shrimp occur in vernal pools in California's Central Valley and in the surrounding foothills.	No	No	No	No vernal pools or other potentially suitable habitats for vernal pool tadpole shrimp are present in the project site. Vernal pool tadpole shrimp would thus not be present.
FISH						
Delta smelt <i>Hypomesus transpacificus</i>	FT, SE	Delta smelt primarily inhabit the brackish waters of Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta. Most spawning occurs in backwater sloughs and channel edgewaters.	No	No	No	No suitable habitat for delta smelt is present on or near the project site. The delta smelt would thus not be present.

¹ Status Codes

Federal:

FE Federally Listed – Endangered
FT Federally Listed – Threatened
FC Federal Candidate Species
FP Federal Proposed Species
FD Federal Delisted

State:

SFP State Fully Protected
SR State Rare
SE State Listed - Endangered
ST State Listed - Threatened
SC State Candidate Species
SSSC State Species of Special Concern
WL Watch List

Rare Plant Rank

1A Plants Presumed Extinct in California
1B Plants Rare, Threatened or Endangered in California and Elsewhere
2A Presumed extirpated in California, but more common elsewhere
2B Rare or Endangered in California, but more common elsewhere

Rare Plant Threat Rank

0.1 Seriously Threatened in California
0.2 Fairly Threatened in California
0.3 Not Very Threatened in California

Appendix A

Records Search Results

IPaC resource list

This report is an automatically generated list of species and other resources such as critical habitat (collectively referred to as *trust resources*) under the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (USFWS) jurisdiction that are known or expected to be on or near the project area referenced below. The list may also include trust resources that occur outside of the project area, but that could potentially be directly or indirectly affected by activities in the project area. However, determining the likelihood and extent of effects a project may have on trust resources typically requires gathering additional site-specific (e.g., vegetation/species surveys) and project-specific (e.g., magnitude and timing of proposed activities) information.

Below is a summary of the project information you provided and contact information for the USFWS office(s) with jurisdiction in the defined project area. Please read the introduction to each section that follows (Endangered Species, Migratory Birds, USFWS Facilities, and NWI Wetlands) for additional information applicable to the trust resources addressed in that section.

Location

Tehama County, California



Local office

Sacramento Fish And Wildlife Office

☎ (916) 414-6600

📠 (916) 414-6713

Federal Building
2800 Cottage Way, Room W-2605
Sacramento, CA 95825-1846

NOT FOR CONSULTATION

Endangered species

This resource list is for informational purposes only and does not constitute an analysis of project level impacts.

The primary information used to generate this list is the known or expected range of each species. Additional areas of influence (AOI) for species are also considered. An AOI includes areas outside of the species range if the species could be indirectly affected by activities in that area (e.g., placing a dam upstream of a fish population even if that fish does not occur at the dam site, may indirectly impact the species by reducing or eliminating water flow downstream). Because species can move, and site conditions can change, the species on this list are not guaranteed to be found on or near the project area. To fully determine any potential effects to species, additional site-specific and project-specific information is often required.

Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act **requires** Federal agencies to "request of the Secretary information whether any species which is listed or proposed to be listed may be present in the area of such proposed action" for any project that is conducted, permitted, funded, or licensed by any Federal agency. A letter from the local office and a species list which fulfills this requirement can **only** be obtained by requesting an official species list from either the Regulatory Review section in IPaC (see directions below) or from the local field office directly.

For project evaluations that require USFWS concurrence/review, please return to the IPaC website and request an official species list by doing the following:

1. Draw the project location and click CONTINUE.
2. Click DEFINE PROJECT.
3. Log in (if directed to do so).
4. Provide a name and description for your project.
5. Click REQUEST SPECIES LIST.

Listed species¹ and their critical habitats are managed by the [Ecological Services Program](#) of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the fisheries division of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA Fisheries²).

Species and critical habitats under the sole responsibility of NOAA Fisheries are **not** shown on this list. Please contact [NOAA Fisheries](#) for [species under their jurisdiction](#).

-
1. Species listed under the [Endangered Species Act](#) are threatened or endangered; IPaC also shows species that are candidates, or proposed, for listing. See the [listing status page](#) for more information. IPaC only shows species that are regulated by USFWS (see FAQ).

2. [NOAA Fisheries](#), also known as the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), is an office of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration within the Department of Commerce.

The following species are potentially affected by activities in this location:

Birds

NAME	STATUS
Yellow-billed Cuckoo <i>Coccyzus americanus</i> There is final critical habitat for this species. The location of the critical habitat is not available. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/3911	Threatened

Reptiles

NAME	STATUS
Giant Garter Snake <i>Thamnophis gigas</i> Wherever found No critical habitat has been designated for this species. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/4482	Threatened

Fishes

NAME	STATUS
Delta Smelt <i>Hypomesus transpacificus</i> Wherever found There is final critical habitat for this species. The location of the critical habitat is not available. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/321	Threatened

Insects

NAME	STATUS
Monarch Butterfly <i>Danaus plexippus</i> Wherever found No critical habitat has been designated for this species. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9743	Candidate

Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle *Desmocerus californicus dimorphus* Threatened
 dimorphus
 Wherever found
 There is **final** critical habitat for this species. The location of the critical habitat is not available.
<https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/7850>

Crustaceans

NAME	STATUS
Conservancy Fairy Shrimp <i>Branchinecta conservatio</i> Wherever found There is final critical habitat for this species. The location of the critical habitat is not available. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/8246	Endangered
Vernal Pool Fairy Shrimp <i>Branchinecta lynchi</i> Wherever found There is final critical habitat for this species. The location of the critical habitat is not available. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/498	Threatened
Vernal Pool Tadpole Shrimp <i>Lepidurus packardii</i> Wherever found There is final critical habitat for this species. The location of the critical habitat is not available. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/2246	Endangered

Critical habitats

Potential effects to critical habitat(s) in this location must be analyzed along with the endangered species themselves.

THERE ARE NO CRITICAL HABITATS AT THIS LOCATION.

Migratory birds

Certain birds are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act¹ and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act².

Rarefind (CNDDDB) Report Summary
Laurel Agriculture & Water Project; Five-Mile Radius of Project Area
 April 2022

Listed Element	Quadrangle ¹				Status ²
	CO	FI	HV	KR	
ANIMALS					
Burrowing owl			•		SSSC
California linderiella	•			•	None
North American porcupine	•				None
Swainson's hawk	•		•		ST
Vernal pool fairy shrimp	•		•	•	FT
Western spadefoot				•	SSSC
PLANTS					
Ahart's paronychia			•		1B.1
Dwarf downingia			•	•	2B.2
Red Bluff dwarf rush			•		1B.1
Stony Creek spurge	•		•		1B.2
COMMUNITIES					
Great Valley Valley Oak Riparian Forest		•			G1, S1.1
Northern Hardpan Vernal Pool			•		G3, S3.1

Highlighting denotes the quadrangle in which the project site is located

¹QUADRANGLE CODE

CO	Corning	HV	Henleyville
FI	Foster Island	KR	Kirkwood

²STATUS CODES

Federal

FE Federally Listed – Endangered
 FT Federally Listed – Threatened
 FC Federal Candidate Species
 FP Federal Proposed Species
 FD Federally Delisted
 FSC Federal Species of Concern
 FBCC Federal Bird of Conservation Concern

State

SFP State Fully Protected
 SR State Rare
 SE State Listed – Endangered
 ST State Listed – Threatened
 SC State Candidate Species
 SD State Delisted
 SSSC State Species of Special Concern
 WL Watch List

Rare Plant Rank

1A Plants Presumed Extinct in California
 1B Plants Rare, Threatened or Endangered in California and Elsewhere
 2 Plants Rare, Threatened, or Endangered in California, but More Common Elsewhere
 3 Plants About Which We Need More Information (*A Review List*)
 (generally not considered special-status, unless unusual circumstances warrant)
 4 Plants of Limited Distribution (*A Watch List*)
 (generally not considered special-status, unless unusual circumstances warrant)

Rare Plant Threat Ranks

0.1 Seriously Threatened in California
 0.2 Fairly Threatened in California
 0.3 Not Very Threatened in California

Natural Community Rank

Global Ranking

G1 Critically Imperiled	Critically imperiled in the state because of extreme rarity (often five or fewer occurrences) or because of some factor(s) such as very steep declines making it especially vulnerable to extirpation.
G2 Imperiled	Imperiled in the state because of rarity due to very restricted range, very few populations (often 20 or fewer), steep declines, or other factors making it very vulnerable to extirpation.
G3 Vulnerable	Vulnerable in the state due to a restricted range, relatively few populations (often 80 or fewer), recent and widespread declines, or other factors making it vulnerable to extirpation.
G4 Apparently Secure	Uncommon but not rare; some cause for long-term concern due to declines or other factors.
G5 Secure	Common, widespread, and abundant in the state.

State Ranking

S1 Critically Imperiled	Critically imperiled in the state because of extreme rarity (often 5 or fewer populations) or because of factor(s) such as very steep declines making it especially vulnerable to extirpation from the state.
S2 Imperiled	Imperiled in the state because of rarity due to very restricted range, very few populations (often 20 or fewer), steep declines, or other factors making it very vulnerable to extirpation from the state.
S3 Vulnerable	Vulnerable in the state due to a restricted range, relatively few populations (often 80 or fewer), recent and widespread declines, or other factors making it vulnerable to extirpation from the state.
S4 Apparently Secure	Uncommon but not rare in the state; some cause for long-term concern due to declines or other factors.
S5 Secure	Common, widespread, and abundant in the state.

California Native Plant Society
Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants
 U.S. Geological Survey's Corning 7.5-minute Quadrangle

Common Name	Scientific Name	CA Rare Plant Rank	Blooming Period	State Listing Status	Federal Listing Status
Ahart's paronychia	<i>Paronychia ahartii</i>	1B.1	February-June	None	None
Boggs Lake hedge-hyssop	<i>Gratiola heterosepala</i>	1B.2	April-August	CE	None
Depauperate milk-vetch	<i>Astragalus pauperculus</i>	4.3	March-June	None	None
Dwarf downingia	<i>Downingia pusilla</i>	2B.2	March-May	None	None
Henderson's bent grass	<i>Agrostis hendersonii</i>	3.2	April-June	None	None
Silky cryptantha	<i>Cryptantha crinita</i>	1B.2	April-May	None	None
Stony Creek spurge	<i>Euphorbia ocellata</i> ssp. <i>rattanii</i>	1B.2	May-October	None	None
Tehama navarretia	<i>Navarretia heterandra</i>	4.3	April-June	None	None

Rare Plant Rank	
1A	Plants Presumed Extinct in California
1B	Plants Rare, Threatened or Endangered in California and Elsewhere
2	Plants Rare, Threatened, or Endangered in California, but More Common Elsewhere
3	Plants About Which We Need More Information – A Review List (generally not considered special-status, unless unusual circumstances warrant)
4	Plants of Limited Distribution – A Watch List (generally not considered special-status, unless unusual circumstances warrant)
Rare Plant Threat Rank	
0.1	Seriously threatened in California
0.2	Fairly threatened in California
0.3	Not very threatened in California

Source: California Native Plant Society, Rare Plant Program. 2022. Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants of California (online edition, v9-0 1.5). <http://www.rareplants.cnps.org>. Accessed April29, 2022.

Appendix B
Representative Photographs



View to northwest from southeastern corner of site.



View to east from southwestern corner of site.



View to north from southwestern corner of site.



Algal matting (a wetland hydrology indicator) and Mediterranean barley (a hydrophytic plant species) in an on-site wetland



Hydric soil from an on-site wetland, with abundant orange mottles.



Non-hydric soil from an adjacent upland location.

Appendix C
Checklist of Vascular Plant Species Observed

CHECKLIST OF VASCULAR PLANT SPECIES OBSERVED

Laurel Ag & Water

April 30, 2022

Amaranthaceae

Amaranthus sp.

Apiaceae

Anthriscus caucalis

Areaceae

Washingtonia sp.

Asteraceae

Ambrosia sp.

Carduus pycnocephalus

Centaurea solstitialis

Cirsium sp.

Erigeron canadensis

Lactuca serriola

Leontodon saxatilis

Matricaria discoidea

Senecio vulgaris

Sonchus oleraceus

Boraginaceae

Amsinckia retrorsa

Plagiobothrys sp.

Brassicaceae

Capsella bursa-pastoris

Hirschfeldia incana

Raphanus raphanistrum

Caryophyllaceae

Polycarpon tetraphyllum

Spergularia rubra

Convolvulaceae

Convolvulus arvensis

Euphorbiaceae

Croton setigerus

Fabaceae

Acmispon americanus

Lupinus bicolor

Trifolium glomeratum

Trifolium hirtum

Vicia villosa

Geraniaceae

Erodium botrys

Erodium moschatum

Amaranth Family

Amaranth

Carrot Family

Bur-chervil

Palm Family

Fan palm

Sunflower Family

Ragweed

Italian thistle

Yellow star thistle

Thistle

Canadian horseweed

Prickly lettuce

Hawkbit

Pineapple weed

Old-man-in-the-Spring

Common sow thistle

Borage Family

Rigid fiddleneck

Popcorn-flower

Mustard Family

Shepherd's purse

Shortpod mustard

Jointed charlock

Pink Family

Four-leaved allseed

Ruby sand spurry

Morning Glory Family

Bindweed

Spurge Family

Dove weed

Legume Family

Spanish lotus

Bicolored lupine

Sessile-headed clover

Rose clover

Winter vetch

Geranium Family

Long-beaked filaree

White-stemmed filaree

CHECKLIST OF VASCULAR PLANT SPECIES OBSERVED

Laurel Ag & Water

Lythraceae

Lythrum hyssopifolia

Moraceae

Ficus carica

Oleaceae

Olea europaea

Plantaginaceae

Kickxia elatine

Plantago lanceolata

Poaceae

Avena barbata

Bromus diandrus

Bromus hordeaceus

Bromus rubens

Cynodon dactylon

Distichlis spicata

Elymus caput-medusae

Festuca myuros

Festuca perennis

Hordeum marinum subsp. *gussoneanum*

Hordeum murinum

Polygonaceae

Polygonum aviculare

Rosaceae

Rubus armeniacus

Salicaceae

Populus fremontii subsp. *fremontii*

Scrophulariaceae

Verbascum blattaria

Themidaceae

Brodiaea elegans subsp. *elegans*

Dichelostemma multiflorum

Loosestrife Family

Hyssop loosestrife

Mulberry Family

Common fig

Olive Family

Olive

Plantain Family

Sharp-leaved fluellin

English plantain

Grass Family

Slender wild oats

Ripgut grass

Soft chess

Red brome

Bermuda grass

Saltgrass

Medusahead

Foxtail fescue

Annual ryegrass

Mediterranean barley

Foxtail barley

Buckwheat Family

Common knotweed

Rose Family

Himalayan blackberry

Willow Family

Fremont cottonwood

Snapdragon Family

Moth mullein

Brodiaea Family

Elegant brodiaea

Round-toothed ookow

APPENDIX B

Cultural Resources Screening for Laurel Ag & Water Storage Yard Expansion Project

APPENDIX B

Cultural Resources Screening for Laurel Ag & Water Storage Yard Expansion Project

674-01
July 12, 2022

Jessie Lopez, Branch Manager
Laurel Ag & Water
2920 Highway 99W
Corning, CA 96021

SUBJECT: Cultural Resources Screening for Laurel Ag & Water Storage Yard Expansion Project

This is to confirm that ENPLAN has conducted a cultural resources screening for a ±2.5-acre site on the north side of the Laurel Ag & Water facility at 2920 Highway 99W, Corning. The site is a portion of Tehama County Assessor's Parcel 087-040-073. As shown in Figure 1, the site is located in Section 28, Township 24 North, Range 3 West, as depicted on the U.S. Geological Survey's Corning, California, 7.5-minute quadrangle. The site is nearly level, at an elevation of approximately 280 feet above sea level. An aerial photograph of the site is shown in Figure 2.

The proposed project would entail expansion of an outdoor storage yard into the subject area. The objective of this environmental screening is to identify potential constraints to development, which will then be considered during the site planning process.

The objective of this cultural resources screening is to determine if the subject site has a potential to adversely affect prehistoric or historic resources. Due to on-going delays at the Northeast Information Center of the California Historical Resources Information System at California State University, Chico (NEIC), a cultural resources records search was not undertaken. Instead, the cultural resources screening evaluation consisted of Native American outreach, a field survey, and supplemental background research.

Native American Outreach

Comment solicitation letters were sent by ENPLAN on June 2, 2022, to Glenda Nelson, Chairperson, Estom Yumeka Maidu Tribe of the Enterprise Rancheria; Kyle Self, Chairperson, Greenville Rancheria of Maidu Indians; Ron Kirk, Chairperson, Grindstone Rancheria of Wintun-Wailaki Indians of California; Andrew Alejandre, Chairperson, Paskenta Band of Nomlaki Indians; Lillie Lucero, Cultural Resources Coordinator, Redding Rancheria; and Michelle Radcliff-Garcia, Cultural Resources Director, Wintu Tribe of Northern California.

A response was received by email on June 6, 2022, from Creig Marcus, Tribal Administrator of the Enterprise Rancheria Estom Yumeka Maidu. He stated that the project site is outside the Estom Yumeka Maidu territory, and therefore the tribe had no comments. Follow-up correspondence was conducted on July 5 and 7, 2022, and the original Request for Comment letter was sent by email to all of the original recipients except the Enterprise Rancheria Estom Yumeka Maidu who had previously responded. One response was received, from Arthur Garcia of the Wintu Tribe of Northern California. He did not identify any cultural resources on or near the site, but noted that a tribal monitor would be available if needed. No additional responses were received. Copies of all correspondence are provided in Appendix A.

Field Survey

Field reconnaissance was conducted on July 2, 2022, by ENPLAN archaeologist Evan Wiant (B.S. Anthropology, 10 plus years of experience in California and Great Basin archaeology).

The entire APE was surveyed with transects spaced approximately 50 feet apart. Ground visibility averaged approximately 50 percent, with grasses covering a significant portion of the APE. All bare earth and ground disturbances, such as rodent burrows, were examined for potential cultural resources. No cultural resources were identified as a result of the survey.

Supplemental Data

Soils in the study area are Arbuckle gravelly loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes and Tehama silt loam, 0 to 3 percent slopes, gravelly substratum. Respectively, these soils date to the Early and Middle Holocene, placing them as being between 11,500 and 4,000 years of age (Meyer 2013). Native American occupation of the project area may have begun around 10,000 years ago. As such, the potential for buried sites exists within the project area.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the results of the Native American consultation and the field evaluation, no cultural resources were identified, and the site is very unlikely to contain such resources. However, there is always some potential for previously unknown cultural resources to be encountered during earth-moving activities. Therefore, we recommend that the following stipulations be included as conditions of project approval, and that these stipulations be included on all project construction/design plans:

- A. *If any human remains are encountered during any phase of construction, all earth-disturbing work shall stop within 50 feet of the find. The county coroner shall be contacted to determine whether investigation of the cause of death is required as well as to determine whether the remains may be Native American in origin. Should Native American remains be discovered, the county coroner must contact the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC). The NAHC will then determine those persons it believes to be most likely descended from the deceased Native American(s). Together with representatives of the people of most likely descent, a qualified archaeologist can make an assessment of the discovery and recommend/implement mitigation measures as necessary.*
- B. *If any previously unevaluated cultural resources (i.e., burnt animal bone, midden soils, projectile points or other humanly modified lithics, historic artifacts, etc.) are encountered, all earth-disturbing work shall stop within 50 feet of the find until a qualified archaeologist can make an assessment of the discovery and recommend/implement mitigation measures as necessary. Depending on the type and significance of the find, subsequent monitoring by an archaeologist or Native American may be warranted.*

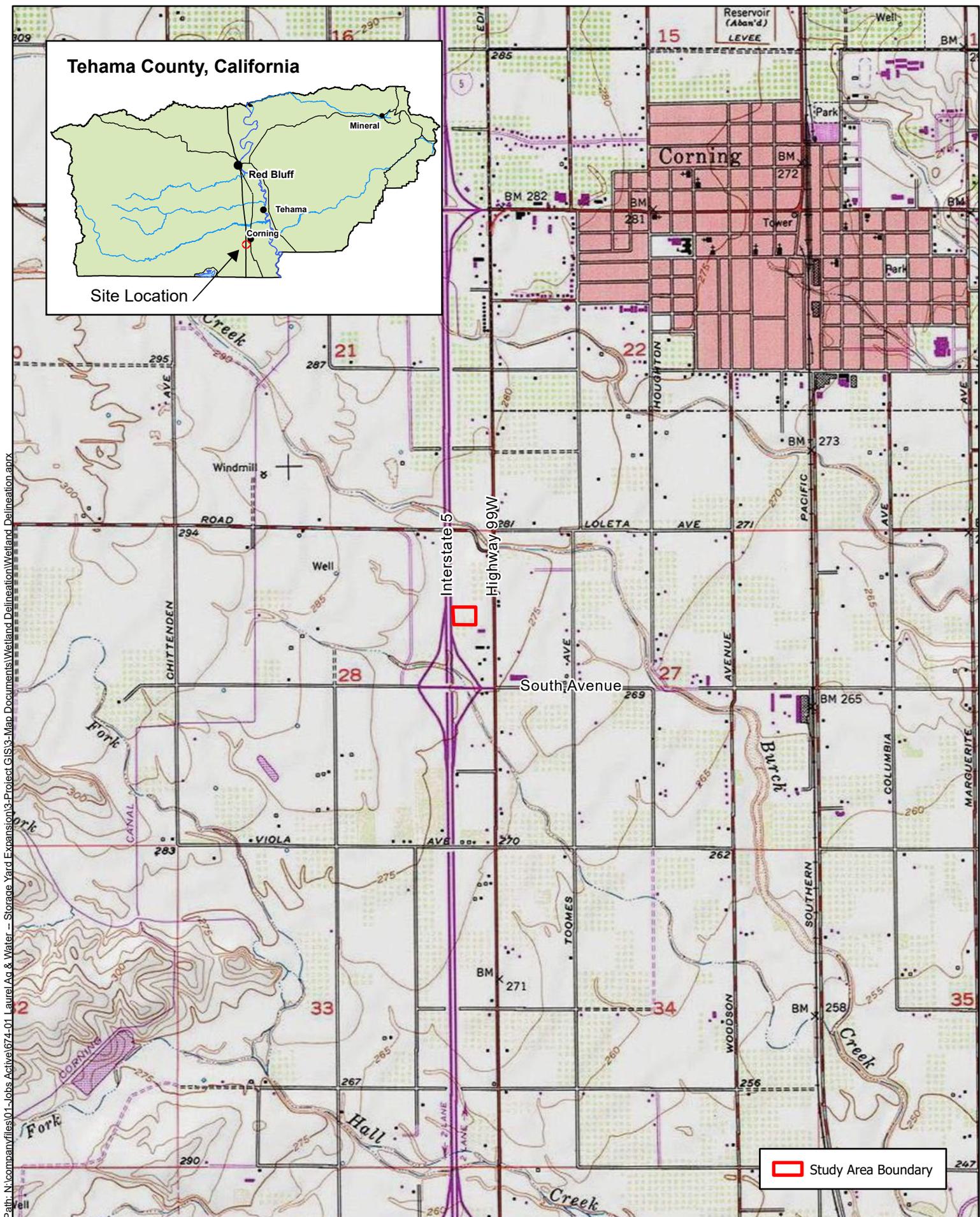
Please contact me if you have any questions regarding our findings or recommendations.

Sincerely,



Donald Burk
Environmental Services Manager

encl. Figure 1. Project Location
Appendix A. Native American Outreach



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Study Area Boundary



Figure 1

All depictions are approximate. Not a survey product. 05.11.22

Project Location and Vicinity





Interstate 5

Highway 99W

South Avenue

 Study Area Boundary

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0 150 Feet

Figure 2
Project Site

All depictions are approximate. Not a survey product. 06.02.22



Appendix A

Native American Outreach

674-01
June 2, 2022

REQUEST FOR COMMENT LETTER

TO: Glenda Nelson, Chairperson, Estom Yumeka Maidu Tribe of the Enterprise Rancheria
Ron Kirk, Chairperson, Grindstone Indian Rancheria of Wintun-Wailaki Indians of California
Kyle Self, Chairperson, Greenville Rancheria of Maidu Indians
Andrew Alejandro, Chairperson, Paskenta Band of Nomlaki Indians
Lillie Lucero, Cultural Resources Coordinator, Redding Rancheria
Michelle Radcliff-Garcia, Cultural Resources Director, Wintu Tribe of Northern California

FROM: Evan Wiant, Archaeologist, ENPLAN
(530) 221-0440 ext. 7115
ewiant@enplan.com

PROPOSED

PROJECT: Laurel Ag & Water Storage Yard Expansion Project, Tehama County, California

LOCATION: USGS Corning 7.5-minute quad; T24N, R3W, Section 28

ENPLAN is conducting the necessary records search and comment solicitation to identify potential constraints to development of the Laurel Ag & Water Storage Yard Expansion Project (project), which will then be considered during the site planning process. The proposed project includes expansion of an outdoor storage yard into the subject area as depicted on the enclosed Figures 1 and 2.

We would appreciate any information you could provide regarding known cultural resources in the project vicinity. If we have not received a response within 30 days from the date of this letter, we will assume you have no concerns or information to provide.

Enclosure:

Figure 1 - Project Location and Vicinity

Figure 2 - Project Site

Laurel Ag & Water Storage Yard Expansion Project, Tehama County



Creig Marcus <creigm@enterpriserancheria.org>

To  Evan Wiant



 Reply

 Reply All

 Forward



Mon 6/6/2022 11:45 AM

Hi Evan,

Thank you for the notification about this project, it is outside our territory, therefore we have no comment.

Thanks,

Creig Marcus
Tribal Administrator
Enterprise Rancheria Estom Yumeka Maidu
2133 Monte Vista Ave
Oroville, CA 95966
(530) 532-9214

(no subject)



Arthur Garcia <artgarciawintu@gmail.com>

To ○ Evan Wiant



↩ Reply

↩ Reply All

→ Forward



Wed 7/6/2022 9:42 AM

Good morning Evan my name is Arthur Garcia I am the cultural resource manager for the w i n t u tribe of Northern California contacting you in regard s of the project you got going on in Corning my phone number is 530-605-9526 the tribe has monitors on hand