Santa Margarita 58 CAPM

Near Santa Margarita from I Street to State Route 229/Webster Road in the County of San Luis Obispo

05-SLO-58-PM 1.8-6.9

Project ID Number 0518000095

State Clearinghouse Number 2023020025

Initial Study with Mitigated Negative Declaration

Volume 1 of 2

Prepared by the

State of California Department of Transportation

March 2023

Caltrans

General Information About This Document

[The following text has been added since the draft environmental document was circulated.] Document prepared by: Hannah Butler, Environmental Scientist.

[The following text has been added since the draft environmental document was circulated.] The Initial Study circulated to the public for 35 days between January 30, 2023, and March 6, 2023. Comments received during this period are included in Appendix D. Elsewhere, language has been added throughout the document to indicate where a change has been made since the circulation of the draft environmental document. Minor editorial changes and clarifications have not been so indicated.

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Pavement rehabilitation near Santa Margarita from I Street to State Route 229/Webster Road in the County of San Luis Obispo

INITIAL STUDY
with Mitigated Negative Declaration

Submitted Pursuant to: (State) Division 13, California Public Resources Code

THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
Department of Transportation

Jason Wilkinson

Jason Wilkinson
Deputy District Director, Environmental Analysis, District 5
California Department of Transportation
CEQA Lead Agency

4/2/23

Date

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Mitigated Negative Declaration

Pursuant to: Division 13, Public Resources Code

State Clearinghouse Number: 2023020025

District-County-Route-Post Mile: 05-SLO-58-PM 1.8-6.9

EA/Project Number: EA 05-1J970 and Project ID Number 0518000095

Project Description

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) proposes to extend the service life and improve the ride quality of State Route 58 in San Luis Obispo County near the town and census-designated place of Santa Margarita. Caltrans proposes a 0.15-foot Rubberized Hot Mix Asphalt overlay within the project limits (from post mile 1.8 to post mile 6.9). Shoulder backing will be placed along pavement edges. The existing roadway has 11-foot-wide travel lanes with 1-to-2-foot shoulders. The project proposes to widen the roadway with 12-foot lanes near the north side of I Street (post mile 1.8) to West Pozo Road (post mile 3.15). Six-foot shoulders, sidewalks, and curb ramps are proposed from I Street (post mile 1.8) to West Pozo Road (post mile 3.15). Existing asphalt concrete dikes will be upgraded to meet existing standards. Additionally, 10 drainages and 36 roadside sign panels will be replaced, one count station will be installed, and the existing metal beam guardrail will be replaced with the current standard.

Determination

[The following text has been updated since the draft environmental document was circulated.]

The project will have no effect on agriculture and forest resources, cultural resources, energy, geology and soils, hydrology and water quality, land use and planning, mineral resources, population and housing, public services, recreation, and tribal cultural resources.

The project will have less than significant effects to aesthetics, air quality, greenhouse gas emissions, hazards and hazardous materials, noise, transportation, utilities and service systems, and wildfire.

With the following mitigation measures incorporated, the project will have less than significant effects to biology.

- **AQUA-1:** Caltrans will restore temporary impacts to riparian vegetation at a 1-to-1 ratio (acreage). If any riparian trees are removed, they will be

replaced at a minimum 3-to-1 ratio. Because all riparian impacts and impacts to the Fremont cottonwood forest and woodland will occur in the Calf Canyon drainage system, onsite mitigation for this project will involve planting native riparian species in the Calf Canyon riparian zone. Replacement plantings will include appropriate native tree and understory species. To ensure success, monitoring will be conducted for three years, which will include annual inspections and weeding.

- **OAK-4:** Caltrans will replace native oak trees at a minimum replacement ratio of 3-to-1. Oak trees will be replanted within or next to existing oak woodlands/savannahs in Caltrans' right-of-way within the project area. Caltrans Landscape Architect Division will develop planting plans and specifications that include oak tree plantings during the project design phase.

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3/30/23

Date

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Chapter 1 Proposed Project

1.1 Introduction

State Route 58 is a major east-west highway route within San Luis Obispo County. The existing highway is a conventional two-lane highway, with shoulder widths ranging from 0 to 2 feet. Caltrans proposes to preserve the pavement of State Route 58 in San Luis Obispo County near Santa Margarita from I Street to State Route 229/Webster Road. The project will extend the service life of the highway, widen shoulders, improve multimodal transportation, protect the embankments and roadway from slope failure, maintain an efficient Intelligent Transportation System, improve the visibility of sign panels, and replace existing guardrails to meet current standards. Figures 1-1 and 1-2 show the project's vicinity and location maps, respectively.

The San Luis Obispo Council of Governments is the regional planning agency for San Luis Obispo County. It develops a Regional Transportation Plan that allocates state and federal transportation funds within the county over a long-range time frame. The Santa Margarita Design Plan identified deficiencies with State Route 58 beginning at Estrada Avenue. These deficiencies are due to the lack of pavement width for pedestrians, shoulders for bicyclists, and safe street crossings. The project includes project features that are consistent with the local plans.

The project is programmed under the 2020 State Highway Operation and Protection Program with funding from the Minor Damage (Pavement Preservation) Program (code 201.121). Project construction will start in 2025 and is expected to be completed in 2026. A Build Alternative and a No-Build Alternative are being evaluated. [The following cost estimate has been updated since the draft environmental document was circulated.] The current estimated construction cost for the Build Alternative is $7,312,000, and the escalated cost is $7,817,000.

For the project, Caltrans is the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (known as CEQA). This document contains information regarding compliance with CEQA and other state laws and regulations. Separate environmental documentation, supporting a Categorical Exclusion determination, has been prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act. When needed for clarity, or as required by CEQA, this document may contain references to federal laws and/or regulations (CEQA, for example, requires consideration of adverse effects on species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species by the U.S. National Marine Fisheries Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service—that is, species protected by the Federal Endangered Species Act).

1.2 Purpose and Need

1.2.1 Purpose

The purpose of this project is to improve the ride quality of State Route 58 in San Luis Obispo County near Santa Margarita, extend the service life of the existing pavement, protect embankments and roadway from potential slope failure, maintain an efficient Intelligent Transportation System, improve the visibility of sign panels, improve multimodal access, and upgrade guardrails to meet current standards.

1.2.2 Need

The existing pavement within the project limits is showing distress and unacceptable ride quality. If left uncorrected, it will continue to deteriorate. Culverts that will be replaced were found to have deficiencies, such as corroded inverts and shape loss, during field investigations and drainage inspections. Slope failure could result if these issues are not addressed. There is limited multimodal access and no existing sidewalk within the project limits. Cyclists currently share the travel lanes with motorized traffic due to limited shoulder widths. There are no traffic count stations within the project limits, which are necessary to collect reliable traffic flow information. The existing sign panels within the project limits do not meet current retro-reflectivity standards from the California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices. In addition, the existing metal beam guardrails do not meet the current standards of the Manual for Assessing Safety Hardware.

1.3 Project Description

Caltrans proposes a 0.15-foot Rubberized Hot Mix Asphalt overlay within the project limits. Shoulder backing will be placed along pavement edges. The existing roadway has 11-foot-wide travel lanes with 1-to-2-foot shoulders. The project proposes to widen the roadway with 12-foot lanes near the north side of I Street (post mile 1.8) to West Pozo Road (post mile 3.15). Six-foot shoulders are proposed from I Street (post mile 1.8) to West Pozo Road (post mile 3.15). In this segment, sidewalks and curb ramps that meet accessibility requirements will be installed, and shoulders will be widened to provide more space for bicyclists. Existing asphalt concrete dikes will be upgraded to meet existing standards.

Culvert inspections have identified seven culverts that need to be repaired or replaced. Two residential culverts and one private driveway culvert will be replaced to accommodate roadside flow affected by the shoulder widening. One traffic count station will be installed. All existing metal beam guardrails will be replaced with the Midwest Guardrail System, the current standard.

Right-of-way acquisition is expected for shoulder widening and associated utility relocations.

Figure 1-1 Project Vicinity Map

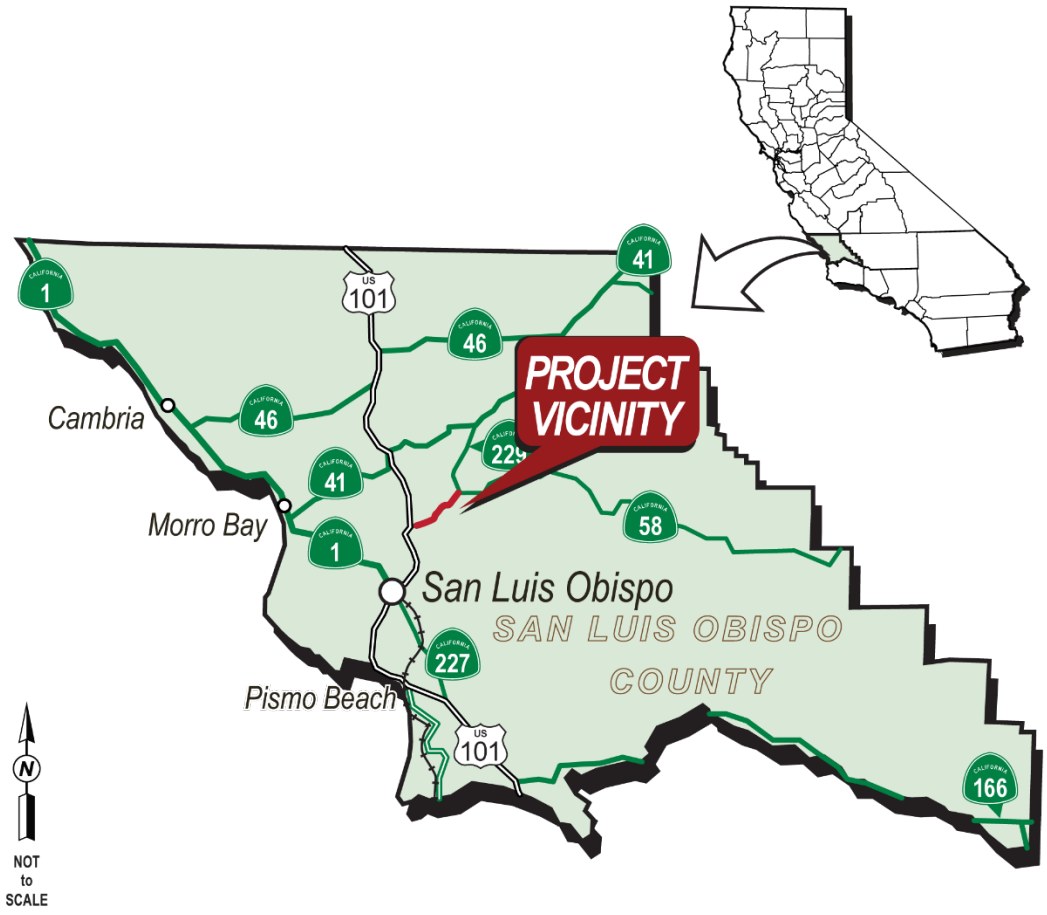
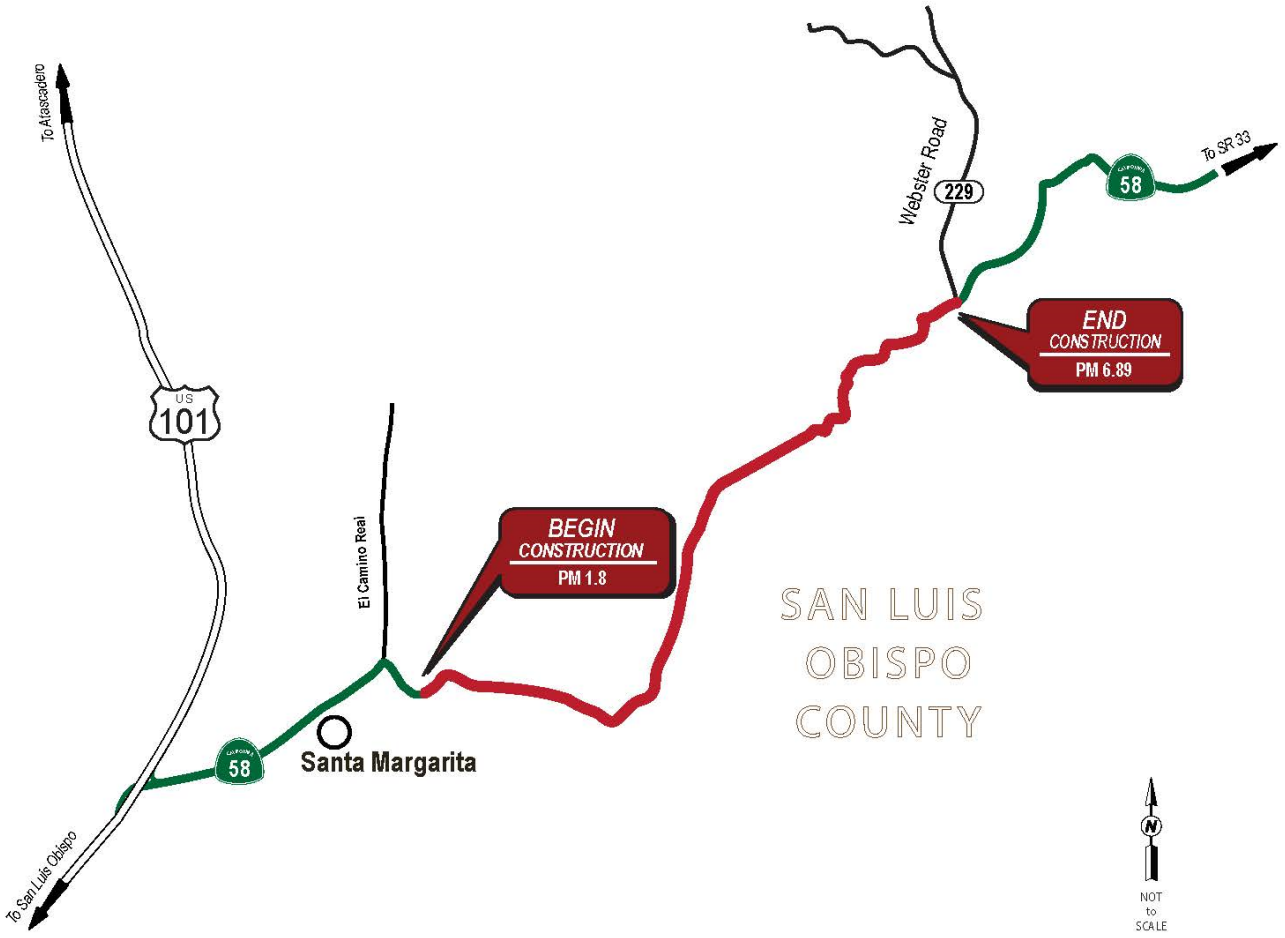


Figure 1-2 Project Location Map



1.4 Project Alternatives

Two alternatives are currently under consideration: a Build Alternative and a No-Build Alternative.

This project contains a number of standardized project measures that are used on most, if not all, Caltrans projects and were not developed in response to any specific environmental impact resulting from the proposed project. These measures are listed later in this chapter under “Standard Measures and Best Management Practices Included in All Build Alternatives.”

1.4.1 Build Alternatives

The Build Alternative will rehabilitate 11.67 lane miles with a 0.15-foot Rubberized Hot Mix Asphalt overlay, improve 10 drainages (see Table 1), widen shoulders, install sidewalk and curb ramps, maintain an efficient Intelligent Transportation System by installing a traffic count station, improve visibility of sign panels, and replace all existing metal beam guardrails within the project limits with the Midwest Guardrail System to meet current standards.

Elements of the project are outlined below.

Shoulder Widening/Sidewalks

Six-foot shoulders are proposed from I Street (post mile 1.8) to West Pozo Road (post mile 3.15). This will include some horizontal realignments for curve corrections both for safety and to preserve existing vegetation; however, several trees will need to be removed near West Pozo Road to accommodate this work. These improvements will also provide a better facility for bicyclists.

New sidewalks and curb ramps are proposed between I street and J street to meet accessibility standards. The sidewalks will be about 6.5 feet wide, including the curb and gutter. Utility relocation and new right-of-way will be needed to accommodate shoulder widening and improve the safety of the roadside environment.

Culvert Improvements

All culverts will be installed with the cut-and-cover method, which involves excavating a trench, removing the old culvert, preparing the appropriate bedding for the new culvert, filling the culvert with a flowable material, and returning the soil to its original condition. All driveway culverts will be replaced in kind.

Table 1 Drainage Locations/Improvements

Outlet Post Mile	Location	Proposed Improvement
1.80 (labeled as 1.77 in Appendix B)	Between H Street and I Street	Remove the existing 42-inch by 46-foot corrugated steel pipe and install a 42-inch by 66-foot corrugated steel pipe. Install headwalls at the inlet and outlet.
1.82	Driveway south of I Street	Replace the 42-inch corrugated steel pipe. Install headwalls at the inlet and outlet.
1.84	Driveway between I Street and J Street	Replace the 42-inch corrugated steel pipe. Install headwalls at the inlet and outlet.
1.88	Near J Street	Replace the 30-inch by 64-foot corrugated steel pipe up to 5 feet northeast.
2.13	South of the Salinas River, south of the State Route 58 and State Route 229 intersection.	Remove the 18-inch by 44-foot corrugated steel pipe and install a 24-inch by 60.7-foot reinforced concrete pipe. Install headwalls at the inlet and outlet.
2.32	South of the Salinas River, south of the State Route 58 and State Route 229 intersection.	Remove the 12-inch by 44-foot corrugated steel pipe and install a 24-inch by 80-foot reinforced concrete pipe. Install headwalls at the inlet and outlet.
2.60	Santa Margarita Cemetery driveway	Replace the 30-inch by 42-foot corrugated steel pipe. Install a headwall at the inlet and outlet.
2.74	South of the Salinas River, south of the State Route 58 and State Route 229 intersection.	Remove the 24-inch by 57-foot corrugated steel pipe and install two 24-inch by 84-foot corrugated steel pipes. Install a headwall at the outlet and add rock slope protection at the inlet.
6.26	South of the Salinas River, south of the State Route 58 and State Route 229 intersection.	Remove the 18-inch by 49-foot corrugated steel pipe and install a 24-inch by 50-foot reinforced concrete pipe. Install rock slope protection at the outlet.

Outlet Post Mile	Location	Proposed Improvement
6.86	South of the Salinas River, north of the State Route 58 and State Route 229 intersection.	Remove the 12-inch by 39-foot corrugated steel pipe and install a 24-inch by 80-foot reinforced concrete pipe. Install a headwall at the outlet.

Property Acquisition

Right-of-way acquisition is expected from some residential properties between I Street and West Pozo Road for shoulder widening, sidewalk installation, and associated utility relocations (Table 2). Assessor's Parcel Numbers are labeled on the mapping in Appendix B.

Table 2 Proposed Right-of-Way Acquisition

Assessor's Parcel Numbers	Acres
069-133-022	0.041
069-133-023	0.045
070-091-043	1.278
070-094-003	0.532

Temporary construction easements are expected for the construction of drainage improvements (Table 3).

Table 3 Temporary Construction Easements

Assessor's Parcel Numbers	Acres
069-131-016	0.007
070-094-003	0.046

Count Stations

An existing count station at post mile 1.92 will be replaced. One count station will be installed near State Route 229/Webster Road (post mile 6.92). The count station will be about 2 feet wide and 4 feet tall. The count station will be located off the highway, and a sensor under the road will collect data.

Sign Panels

Thirty-six sign panels will be replaced in their current location throughout the project limits. The panels will be upgraded to meet current reflective

standards for improved visibility. The posts the panels are on will also be replaced. Existing wood posts will be replaced with steel.

Guardrail

All existing metal beam guardrails in the project limits will be upgraded to the Midwest Guardrail System. The Midwest Guardrail System has a rail height of 31 inches, which replaced the previous standard metal beam guardrail of either 27.75 or 29 inches.

1.4.2 No-Build (No-Action) Alternative

The No-Build Alternative will leave this section of State Route 58 in its current condition, without any improvements, and will not meet the project's purpose or need. The pavement will continue to deteriorate, embankments and roadway could lead to slope failure, traffic flow information will not be collected, and facilities will not meet current standards.

1.5 Identification of a Preferred Alternative

[Section 1.5 Identification of a Preferred Alternative has been added since the draft environmental document was circulated.] A Build Alternative and a No-Build Alternative were considered for the project. After public circulation of the draft Initial Study with Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration, a Caltrans Project Development Team reviewed both alternatives and identified the Build Alternative as the preferred alternative. Identification of the preferred alternative was based on consideration of the project's purpose and need, its effects on the environmental resources and off-site properties, and schedule and construction methods. The Build Alternative was determined as the preferred approach to address the project's purpose and need by rehabilitating and improving pavement, drainage, traffic census equipment, and meeting facility standards within the project portion of the State Route 58 corridor. Although the Build Alternative will result in minimal permanent impacts to habitats for sensitive biological resources and temporary disturbances to environmental resources during construction, with the implementation of prescribed mitigation measures and avoidance and minimization measures, the project is not expected to cause significant permanent impacts on environmental resources.

1.6 Standard Measures and Best Management Practices Included in All Build Alternatives

The following measures are standard measures that are used in all Caltrans projects. The measures listed below are mentioned because they apply to this specific project, though there may be other applicable measures that are not mentioned.

- 7-1.02A General: The contractor will comply with laws, regulations, orders, and decrees applicable to the project.
- 7-1.02C Emissions Reduction: The contractor will submit a certification acknowledging compliance with emissions reduction regulations managed by the California Air Resources Board.
- 7-1.02M (2) Fire Protection: Includes the development of a fire prevention plan, which will minimize the risk of starting a wildfire during construction.
- 13-2 Water Pollution Control Program: This section provides specifications for the development and implementation of a Water Pollution Control Program.
- 13-4 Job Site Management: This section includes specifications for performing job site management work, such as spill prevention and control, material management, waste management, non-stormwater management, and dewatering activities.
- 13-5 Temporary Soil Stabilization: This section includes specifications for placing temporary soil stabilization materials on stockpiles or in disturbed soil areas.
- 13-6 Temporary Sediment Control: This section covers specifications for installing temporary sediment controls, such as check dams and drainage inlet protections.
- 13-10 Temporary Linear Sediment Barriers: This section covers specifications for installing temporary linear barriers to control sediment, like high-visibility fencing, fiber rolls, and temporary large sediment barriers.
- 14-1.02 Environmentally Sensitive Area: Caltrans will mark environmentally sensitive areas. These areas cannot be entered unless authorized. If an environmentally sensitive area is breached, work near the area will stop immediately, and the resident engineer will be notified.
- 14-2.03 Archaeological Resources: If archaeological resources are discovered within or near the construction limits, the resources will not be further disturbed, and all work near the discovery will stop immediately. The area will be secured, and the resident engineer will be notified.
- 14-6.03 Species Protection: This specification includes instructions to protect regulated species and their associated habitat, including migratory and nongame birds. If a protected species is discovered, work will stop near the discovery, and the resident engineer will be notified so that Caltrans biologists could investigate the discovery and take appropriate action.

- 14-7.03 Discovery of Unanticipated Paleontological Resources: If unanticipated paleontological resources are discovered, the resources will not be further disturbed, and all work near the discovery will stop immediately. The area will be secured, and the resident engineer will be notified.

- 14-8.02 Noise Control: Noise from work activities will be controlled and monitored. Noise will not exceed 86 decibels at 50 feet from the job site from 9:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m.

- 14-9.02 Air Pollution Control: The project will comply with applicable air pollution control rules, regulations, ordinances, and statutes.

- 14-10.02: Solid Waste Disposal and Recycling Report: The types and amounts of solid waste taken to or diverted from landfills or reused on the project will be tracked and reported on each calendar year.

- 14-11.03 Hazardous Waste Management: This specification outlines the procedures for the handling, storage, transport, and disposal of hazardous waste, which will comply with 22 California Code of Regulations Division 4.5.

- 14-11.04 Dust Control: Excavation, transportation, and handling of material containing hazardous waste or contamination must result in no visible dust migration. When clearing, grubbing, and performing earthwork operations in areas containing hazardous waste or contamination, a water truck or tank will be provided on the job site.

- 14-11-06: Contractor-Generated Hazardous Waste: This specification provides instructions to the contractor for the management of hazardous wastes that may be generated during construction, such as petroleum materials, paints, stains, and wood preservatives. Instructions for the management of contaminated soils that may be created due to accidental leaks or spills are also included.

- 14-11.08: For Regulated Material Containing Aerially Deposited Lead.

- 14-11.09: For Minimal Disturbance of Regulated Material Containing Aerially Deposited Lead.

- 14-11.12 Removal of Yellow Traffic Stripe and Pavement Marking with Hazardous Waste Residue: Includes specifications for removing, handling, and disposing of yellow thermoplastic and yellow painted traffic stripe and pavement marking. The residue from the removal of this material is a generated hazardous waste (lead chromate). Removal of existing yellow thermoplastic and yellow painted traffic stripe and pavement marking exposes workers to health hazards that must be addressed in a lead compliance plan.

- 14-11.13C Safety and Health Protection Measures: Applies to worker protective measures for potential lead exposure.
- 14-11.14 Treated Wood Waste: Required to assess handling and disposal of any potential wood waste generated during the project.
- 84-9.03C Remove Traffic Stripes and Pavement Markings Containing Lead: This specification includes instructions to remove yellow traffic stripes if the stripes are removed using a cold-plane or grinding operation.
- Standard Special Provision 7-1.02K(6)(j)(ii): Lead Compliance Plan.
- Standard Special Provision 7-1.02K(6)(j)(iii): Earth Material Containing Lead.
- Standard Special Provision 36-4: For work involving residue from grinding and cold planing that contains lead from paint and thermoplastic.
- Transportation Management Plan

1.7 Discussion of the NEPA Categorical Exclusion

This document contains information regarding compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and other state laws and regulations. Separate environmental documentation, supporting a Categorical Exclusion determination, has been prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act. When needed for clarity, or as required by CEQA, this document may contain references to federal laws and/or regulations (CEQA, for example, requires consideration of adverse effects on species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species by the U.S. National Marine Fisheries Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service—that is, species protected by the Federal Endangered Species Act).

1.8 Permits and Approvals Needed

The following permits, licenses, agreements, and certifications are required for project construction:

Agency	Permit/Approval	Status
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	Clean Water Act Section 404	An application will be submitted upon completion of the environmental review process.
Regional Water Quality Control Board	Clean Water Act Section 401	An application will be submitted upon completion of the environmental review process.
California Department of Fish and Wildlife	Section 1602 Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement	An application will be submitted upon completion of the environmental review process.
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Section 7 Biological Opinion for California red-legged frog and critical habitat	Formal consultation has been completed.

Chapter 2 CEQA Evaluation

2.1 CEQA Environmental Checklist

This checklist identifies physical, biological, social, and economic factors that might be affected by the proposed project. Potential impact determinations include Significant and Unavoidable Impact, Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated, Less Than Significant Impact, and No Impact. In many cases, background studies performed in connection with a project will indicate that there are no impacts to a particular resource. A "No Impact" answer reflects this determination. The questions in this checklist are intended to encourage the thoughtful assessment of impacts and do not represent thresholds of significance.

Project features, which can include both design elements of the project and standardized measures that are applied to all or most Caltrans projects, such as Best Management Practices and measures included in the Standard Plans and Specifications or as Standard Special Provisions, are considered to be an integral part of the project and have been considered prior to any significance determinations documented below.

"No Impact" determinations in each section are based on the scope, description, and location of the project as well as the appropriate technical report (bound separately in Volume 2), and no further discussion is included in this document.

2.1.1 Aesthetics

Considering the information in the Visual Assessment Memorandum dated April 7, 2022, the following significance determinations have been made:

Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099:

Question—Will the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Aesthetics
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	**Less Than Significant Impact**
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	**No Impact**

Question—Will the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Aesthetics
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, will the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?	**Less Than Significant Impact**
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which will adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	**No Impact**

Affected Environment

State Route 58, east of Santa Margarita, is a rural, two-lane highway. The western end of the project is within a residential area of Santa Margarita. As the highway transitions out of town northeast, it traverses oak grassland and chaparral. The highway crosses over Trout Creek and the Salinas River and contains increasingly tighter curves as it approaches the State Route 229 intersection. The surrounding landscape in the rural eastern section of the project limits is mostly scattered oak woodland on the slopes with riparian corridors along drainages. State Route 58 is classified as an eligible State Scenic Highway.

The overall visual quality of the area is high and predominately natural and rural in character. Ranch houses and farm buildings can occasionally be seen throughout the surrounding landscape. The undulating topography creates a mostly curving roadway alignment. Weathered cut slopes and small rock walls can be seen along State Route 58 east of the project site.

The dominant vegetation throughout the project area is oak woodland and savannah, with sycamore and willow in the drainages and creeks. Valley oak and gray pine are also seen throughout the project area. Non-native grasslands, including wild oats, brome, and barley, are scattered throughout the region. Ruderal vegetation is seen along the edges of the highway, accompanied by weeds such as soft chess, wild oat, and yellow star-thistle.

Environmental Consequences

The project will result in moderate changes to the visual setting and loss of rural character based on the removal of existing roadside trees, shoulder widening, and visibility of other project features.

Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

VIS-1: Revegetation will occur at a minimum ratio of 10 new trees for each tree removed. The replanting area will generally be along the State Route 58 corridor and will be visible from the roadway. Revegetation will include native tree species determined by a Caltrans biologist and Caltrans landscape architect. Planting will include a 3-year plant establishment period.

VIS-2: All visible concrete headwalls and other drainage features will be colored and/or textured to visually blend in with the surrounding natural environment.

VIS-3: New and replaced guardrail and metal posts will be darkened to visually recede and reduce noticeability. Darkening will be determined by Caltrans landscape architects in conjunction with a Caltrans project engineer.

VIS-4: Preserve vegetation. Preserve as much existing vegetation as possible. Use prescriptive clearing and grubbing and grading techniques that save the most existing vegetation possible.

VIS-5: Disturbed areas. All disturbed construction access roads, staging areas, and other temporary uses will be restored to a natural-looking condition after construction.

2.1.2 Agriculture and Forest 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 Department 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 the forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board.

The project will not require the permanent acquisition of farmland and is not located in or near forest resources. The following significance determinations have been made:

Question—Will the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Agriculture and Forest Resources
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to nonagricultural use?	**No Impact**
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	**No Impact**
c) Conflict with existing zoning, 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))?	**No Impact**
d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	**No Impact**
e) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of farmland to nonagricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	**No Impact**

2.1.3 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.

Considering the information in the Air Quality, Greenhouse Gas, Noise, and Water Quality Assessment dated October 2020, the following significance determinations have been made:

Question—Will the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Air Quality
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	**No Impact**

Question—Will the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Air Quality
b) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?	**No Impact**
c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	**Less Than Significant Impact**
d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?	**No Impact**

Affected Environment

The project is in the South Central Coast Air Basin. The South Central Coast Air Basin consists of San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Ventura Counties. The San Luis Obispo County Air Pollution Control District regulates air quality in San Luis Obispo County. The county is in attainment of the State PM2.5 standards and the Federal PM10 and PM2.5 standards. The county is non-attainment of the State Ambient Air Quality Standards for Ozone and Particulate Matter (PM10). Additionally, the eastern portion of the county is non-attainment of the Federal Ozone standard. However, this project is in western San Luis Obispo County, which is in attainment of all federal air quality standards.

Environmental Consequences

The project will not increase the highway's capacity; therefore, there will be no change in long-term air quality associated with the project. Temporary increases in air emissions and fugitive dust are expected due to construction activities but will be minimized through standard construction dust and emission minimization practices and procedures.

The Rubberized Hot Mix Asphalt overlay has the potential to subject surrounding sensitive receptors to inhalable construction emissions because it will require transportation and application of asphalt as well as minor excavation and earthwork activities. However, with the use of standard construction dust and emission minimization practices and procedures included in Chapter 1, it is expected that project emissions of particulate matter (dust) and equipment emissions will be minimal.

Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

No avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures are required, but standard Caltrans construction practices will be implemented to minimize dust and emissions.

2.1.4 Biological Resources

Considering the information in the Natural Environment Study dated April 2022, the following significance determinations have been made:

Question—Will the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Biological Resources
a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, or National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration Fisheries?	**Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated**
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	**Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated**
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?	**No Impact**
d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?	**No Impact**
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	**No Impact**
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?	**No Impact**

Affected Environment

The Biological Study Area is defined as the area that may be directly, indirectly, temporarily, or permanently impacted by construction and construction-related activities.

The western segment of the Biological Study Area (from post mile 1.8 to post mile 2.1) consists of urban development within Santa Margarita. This includes residential properties and open lots with annual grassland and some native trees. Continuing east, the project area transitions into a rural environment of undeveloped land with open oak savannah habitat. There are three creek corridors, including Trout Creek, Salinas River, and Moreno Creek. The project transitions between chaparral and oak woodlands toward the easternmost project limits.

The Biological Study Area supports a variety of habitat types, such as ruderal, chaparral, coast live oak woodlands, mixed oak woodland, and riparian.

The biological resources that have the potential to be affected by the project are discussed in more detail below.

Oak Woodlands

Oak woodland habitat within and surrounding the Biological Study Area includes mixed oak and coast live oak woodlands. Mixed oak woodlands occur in the middle of the project, comprised mostly of low densities of valley oak, coast live oak, blue oak, and gray pine. Coast live oak woodlands are found on north- and west-facing slopes or associated drainage systems at the eastern end of the project.

Jurisdictional Wetlands, Other Waters, and Riparian Habitats

Jurisdictional wetlands, other waters, and riparian habitats are regulated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Regional Water Quality Control Board, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and the California Coastal Commission. Wetlands function to improve water quality, detain stormwater runoff, recharge groundwater, and provide wildlife habitat. Riparian habitats along streams provide wildlife habitat, insects for food for aquatic species, and shade and cover for aquatic species, which helps regulate stream temperature.

Within the Biological Study Area, there are three locations—a stormwater ditch and two culverts—where work will occur within a jurisdictional area. No wetlands were identified in the Biological Study Area. The jurisdictional stormwater ditch is between I Street and J Street. The first four drainage improvements in Table 1 cross this jurisdictional location. The jurisdictional stormwater ditch is a human-made ditch that captures runoff from nearby properties and drains into Yerba Buena Creek. The ditch is considered a stormwater feature under the Regional Water Quality Control Board but does not convey a stream, contain wetland habitat and is lined with landscaped sycamore trees.

Both culverts are in the eastern portion of the project limits. The first culvert (post mile 6.26) drains primarily surface runoff from the highway into an intermittent stream, Calf Canyon. Calf Canyon is a tributary that eventually

flows into the Salinas River downstream. The riparian corridor surrounding the stream is classified as the Fremont cottonwood forest and woodland and is considered a sensitive natural community. The culvert outlet is not visible because it is covered with rock slope protection. This intermittent stream is used for groundwater recharge, freshwater replenishment, and wildlife habitat.

The second culvert (post mile 6.86) drains primarily surface runoff from the highway on the floodplain of Calf Canyon. The riparian zone for Calf Canyon does not extend to the highway at this location. The riparian corridor surrounding the stream is classified as the Fremont cottonwood forest and woodland and is considered a sensitive natural community.

The other drainages within the project area do not convey jurisdictional aquatic features.

Special-Status Plant and Animal Species

The term “special-status species” refers to plants or animals that are federally or state listed as endangered, threatened, or rare, species that are candidates or proposed for federal or state listing, and species considered special concern species by federal or state agencies.

There is potential for 12 special-status plant species and 17 special-status animal species to occur within the Biological Study Area and surrounding area. None of the special-status plant species were seen during surveys. Because of the highway and the urban and agricultural landscape in the Biological Study Area, these species are not expected to occur or be impacted. The species discussed below have the potential to be impacted.

California Red-Legged Frog

The California red-legged frog is a federally threatened species and a California Species of Special Concern. California red-legged frogs use a variety of areas, including aquatic, riparian, and upland habitats. They prefer aquatic habitats with waters that have little or no flow.

Most of the project area is highly disturbed and will not provide suitable habitat. Additionally, there are no records of California red-legged frogs within the Biological Study Area. However, riparian areas are within the vicinity of the Biological Study Area and could potentially support dispersal or sheltering habitat. The project overlaps California red-legged frog critical habitat and is within U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service designated critical habitat unit San Luis Obispo-3, which consists of about 116,517 acres of land near the coast in central San Luis Obispo County.

Steelhead Trout

Steelhead trout are the oceangoing form of rainbow trout. Adults spawn in freshwater, while juveniles migrate to the ocean to mature and return to

freshwater to reproduce. Steelhead trout historically ranged from Alaska southward to the California-Mexico border; however, their numbers have steeply declined due to the rise of the human population in Southern California and the associated land and water development. The South-Central California Coast steelhead is federally listed as threatened. The species may be found in perennial or intermittent streams that do not completely dry in the summer if there are pools with cool water where fish may hold until higher flows allow for spawning and hydration. The Biological Study Area crosses over two streams that support South-Central California Coast steelhead, Trout Creek, and the Salinas River, the latter of which is also designated critical habitat.

Western Pond Turtle

Western pond turtles were historically present in most Pacific slope drainages between the Oregon and Mexican borders, but populations are declining throughout their range. Western pond turtles live where water persists year-round in ponds along foothill streams or in broad washes near the coast. The western pond turtle is mostly aquatic, leaving its aquatic site to reproduce. In warmer areas along the Central Coast and Southern California Coast, western pond turtles may be active all year. Upland nesting sites are required near the aquatic site (typically less than 330 feet from aquatic areas) and are typically located in open grassland habitats. Western pond turtles have been reported next to the Biological Study Area in Trout Creek, Yerba Buena Creek, and Calf Canyon Creek. Suitable nesting habitat is mostly absent from the Biological Study Area due to development, resulting in limited access between aquatic areas and the Biological Study Area and frequent disturbances to roadside areas in the Biological Study Area.

Special-Status and Other Migratory Birds

Nesting bird species are expected to use a variety of habitats within and near the Biological Study Area. The oak woodlands, riparian, scrub, and farm habitats could provide nesting habitats.

Environmental Consequences

Most project activities will occur on paved roadways and road shoulders, though there will be ground disturbance where shoulder widening occurs. Permanent impacts will result from shoulder widening, culvert replacement, and installation of count stations and guardrails. Project construction activities are not expected to permanently impact sensitive natural communities or jurisdictional areas. Temporary impacts will include construction disturbances where habitat is expected to be restored. Most of the project area is already highly disturbed and will not provide suitable habitat for special-status species. Table 4 below details the potential impacts.

Table 4 Potential Impacts to Natural Communities and Jurisdictional Features

Regulatory Authority/Habitat Type	Acres of Temporary Impact	Acres of Permanent Impact
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Total)	0.002	0.00
Stream Habitat (Other Waters)	0.002	0.00
Clean Water Act Wetland	0.00	0.00
Regional Water Quality Control Board (Total)	0.021	0.00
Stream Habitat	0.002	0.00
Vegetated Riparian Habitat	0.010	0.00
Clean Water Act Wetland	0.00	0.00
Stormwater Ditch	0.009	0.00
California Department of Fish and Wildlife (Total)	0.012	0.00
Stream Habitat	0.002	0.00
Riparian Habitat	0.010	0.00
Wetland (In-Stream)	0.00	0.00

Replacing the existing culverts and moving the roadside drainage ditch between post miles 1.80 and 1.88, mentioned in Table 1, will result in temporary impacts to about 0.009 acre of stormwater ditch habitat regulated by the Regional Water Quality Control Board. The ditch will be moved up to 5 feet away from the existing road. The new culverts will be slightly longer, but the changes will not result in permanent impacts to jurisdictional resources because there will be no change in the total amount of this stormwater management system.

Temporary impacts to the culvert replacement at post mile 6.26 will be due to replacing the existing culvert and rock slope protection. This will be 0.002 acre of stream and riparian habitats each.

The existing culvert will be extended 40 feet at post mile 6.86, resulting in 0.008 acre of temporary disturbance of riparian habitat. The culvert extension and headwall will not extend into the riparian zone.

Native Oak Trees

The project may impact oak trees, primarily associated with tree removal where shoulder widening will occur. These impacts are associated with the removal of up to 25 trees. These trees include coast live oak, valley oak, gray pine, and blue oak. The locations with impacts will mostly be individual trees with understory habitat at the edges of existing roadsides, so the project will not result in significant losses of oak woodland habitat.

California Red-Legged Frog

No protocol surveys were conducted, and the species was not seen during general wildlife surveys. There is low potential for the take of California red-legged frogs during construction. Potential impacts will be associated with ground disturbance for shoulder widening. Due to heavy traffic and poor habitat conditions, the chances are low that California red-legged frogs will be present. However, since there is a chance that dispersing or sheltering frogs may be impacted during construction, the Section 7 effects determination is that the project may affect, and is likely to adversely affect, California red-legged frogs. Measures will be implemented to minimize the risk of harm to frogs during construction.

Based on the disturbance footprint of the project, estimated permanent impacts to critical habitat are 1.16 acres, and temporary impacts are 3.46 acres. Impacts within California red-legged frog habitat will occur solely in upland areas immediately next to the existing highway. There will not be any disturbance or loss of aquatic or riparian habitat within California red-legged frog critical habitat. Areas of temporary impacts to uplands will be restored with native plants and seeds. Caltrans expects the physical or biological features within California red-legged frog critical habitat that are essential to the conservation of the species to continue to provide the life history functions essential to its conservation.

Western Pond Turtle

Focused surveys for special-status reptiles were not performed, but suitable habitats for western pond turtles were found in and near the Biological Study Area. No turtles were seen. Due to development resulting in limited access between aquatic areas and the Biological Study Area, frequent disturbances, and higher quality nesting outside the Biological Study Area, suitable habitat is mostly absent. The project has the potential to impact western pond turtles if found, but the chances are low. The project is not expected to reduce suitable habitats for western pond turtles. Measures applicable to California red-legged frogs also apply to western pond turtles.

Steelhead Trout

The Biological Study Area crosses over suitable habitats for steelhead trout at two locations that are designated critical habitats; however, the project will not involve work in any areas of critical or suitable habitat. The project is not

expected to impact federally listed South-Central California Coast steelhead or associated critical habitat.

Special-Status and Other Migratory Birds

No state or federally listed birds are known or expected to occur in or next to the Biological Study Area. Critical habitat for listed bird species does not occur within or near the Biological Study Area. Tree and vegetation removal could directly impact active bird nests. Noise and construction disturbance could also cause indirect impacts. Temporary loss of vegetation supporting potential nesting habitat will be offset by replanting/revegetation.

Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

The following measures are applicable from the Programmatic Biological Opinion for California red-legged frogs and California red-legged frog critical habitat:

CRLF-1: Only U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service-approved biologists will participate in activities associated with capturing, handling, and monitoring California red-legged frogs.

CRLF-2: Ground disturbance will not begin until the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service receives written approval that the biologist is qualified to conduct the work.

CRLF-3: A U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service-approved biologist will survey the project area no more than 48 hours before construction starts. If any life stage of California red-legged frogs are found, and these individuals are likely to be killed or injured by construction activities, the approved biologist will be allowed sufficient time to move them from the site before work begins. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service-approved biologist will relocate the California red-legged frogs to the shortest distance possible to a location that contains suitable habitat and will not be affected by construction activities. The relocation site will be in the same drainage where the frogs were found to the extent practicable. Caltrans will coordinate with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on the relocation site before the capture of any California red-legged frogs.

CRLF-4: Before work begins on the project, a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service-approved biologist will conduct a training session for all construction personnel. At a minimum, the training will include a description of the California red-legged frog and its habitat, other special-status wildlife that may be in the area, specific measures that are being implemented to conserve the California red-legged frog for the current project, and the boundaries within which the project may be completed.

CRLF-5: A U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service-approved biologist will be present at the worksite until all California red-legged frogs have been removed,

workers have been instructed, and the disturbance of habitat has been completed. After this time, Caltrans will designate a person to monitor onsite compliance with all minimization measures. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service-approved biologist will ensure the individual receives the training outlined in measure four above and in the identification of California red-legged frogs. If the individual or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service-approved biologist recommends that work be stopped because California red-legged frogs will be affected in a manner not expected by Caltrans and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service during a review of the proposed action, they will notify the resident engineer immediately. The resident engineer will resolve the situation by requiring that all actions causing these effects to be stopped. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will be notified as soon as work stops.

CRLF-6: During project activities, all trash that may attract predators will be properly contained, removed from the worksite, and disposed of regularly. Following construction, all trash and construction debris will be removed from work areas.

CRLF-7: All refueling, maintenance, and staging of equipment and vehicles will occur at least 60 feet from riparian habitat or water bodies and not in a location where a spill will drain directly toward aquatic habitat unless otherwise preapproved by the necessary agencies. The Caltrans-designated monitor will ensure that habitats are not contaminated during operations. Before construction starts, Caltrans will ensure that a plan is in place for prompt and effective response to any accidental spills. All workers will be informed of the importance of preventing spills and the appropriate measures to implement should a spill occur.

CRLF-8: Habitat contours will be returned to a natural configuration at the end of project activities. This measure will be implemented in all areas disturbed by construction activities unless the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Caltrans determine that it is not feasible or that modifying the original contours will benefit the California red-legged frog.

CRLF-9: The number of access routes, the size of staging areas, and the total area of activity will be limited to the minimum necessary to complete the project. Environmentally Sensitive Areas will be established to confine access routes and construction areas to the minimum area necessary to complete construction and minimize the impact on California red-legged frog habitat. This goal includes locating access routes and construction areas outside of wetlands and riparian areas to the maximum extent practicable.

CRLF-10: Caltrans will attempt to schedule work for times of the year when impacts to the California red-legged frog will be minimal. For example, work that will affect large pools that may support breeding will be avoided, to the maximum degree practicable, during the breeding season (November through May). Isolated pools that are important in maintaining California red-legged

frogs through the driest portions of the year will be avoided, to the maximum degree practicable, during the late summer and early fall. Habitat assessments, surveys, and technical assistance between Caltrans and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service during project planning will be used to assist in scheduling work activities to avoid sensitive habitats during key times of the year.

CRLF-11: To control sedimentation during and after project completion, Caltrans will implement the Best Management Practices outlined in any authorizations or permits received for the project issued under the authority of the Clean Water Act. If Best Management Practices are ineffective, Caltrans will attempt to remedy the situation immediately in coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

CRLF-12: If a worksite is temporarily dewatered by pumping, intakes will be screened with wire mesh not larger than 0.2 inch to prevent California red-legged frogs from entering the pump system. Water will be released or pumped downstream at an appropriate rate to maintain downstream flows during construction. Upon completion of construction activities, any diversions or barriers to flow will be removed in a manner that will allow flow to resume with the least disturbance to the substrate. Alteration of the streambed will be minimized to the maximum extent possible; any imported material will be removed from the streambed upon project completion.

CRLF-13: Unless approved by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, water will not be impounded in a manner that may attract California red-legged frogs.

CRLF-14: A U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service-approved biologist will permanently remove any individuals of exotic species, such as American bullfrogs (*Rana catesbeiana*), signal and red swamp crayfish (*Pacifastacus leniusculus; Procambarus clarkii*), and centrarchid fishes from the project area to the maximum extent possible. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service-approved biologist will be responsible for ensuring that such activities comply with the California Fish and Game Code.

CRLF-15: To ensure that diseases are not transported between worksites by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service-approved biologist, the fieldwork code of practice, developed by the Declining Amphibian Populations Task Force, will be followed at all times.

CRLF-16: Project sites will be revegetated with an assemblage of native riparian, wetland, and upland vegetation suitable for the area. Locally collected plant materials will be used to the extent practicable. Invasive, exotic plants will be controlled to the maximum extent practicable. This measure will be implemented in all areas disturbed by construction activities unless the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Caltrans determine that it is not feasible or practical.

CRLF-17: Caltrans will not use herbicides as the primary method used to control invasive, exotic plants. However, if Caltrans determines the use of herbicides is the only feasible method for controlling invasive, exotic plants at a specific project site, it will implement the following additional protective measures for the California red-legged frog:

a. Caltrans will not use herbicides during the breeding season for the California red-legged frog.

b. Caltrans will conduct surveys for the California red-legged frog immediately before the start of any herbicide use. If found, California red-legged frogs will be relocated to suitable habitat far enough from the project area that no direct contact with herbicides will occur.

c. Giant reed and other invasive plants will be cut and hauled out by hand and painted with glyphosate or glyphosate-based products, such as AquaMaster® or Rodeo®.

d. Licensed and experienced Caltrans staff or a licensed and experienced contractor will use a handheld sprayer for foliar application of AquaMaster® or Rodeo® where large monoculture stands occur at an individual project site.

e. All precautions will be taken to ensure that no herbicide is used on native vegetation.

f. Herbicides will not be used on or near open water surfaces (no closer than 60 feet from open water).

g. Foliar applications of herbicide will not occur when wind speeds are more than 3 miles per hour.

h. No herbicides will be used within 24 hours of forecasted rain.

i. Application of all herbicides will be done by qualified Caltrans staff or contractors to ensure that overspray is minimized and that all application is made in accordance with label recommendations and with the implementation of all required and reasonable safety measures. A safe dye will be added to the mixture to visually denote treated sites. Application of herbicides will be consistent with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Pesticide Programs, Endangered Species Protection Program County bulletins; and

j. All herbicides, fuels, lubricants, and equipment will be stored, poured, or refilled at least 60 feet from riparian habitat or water bodies in a location where a spill will not drain directly toward aquatic habitat. Caltrans will ensure that habitat is not contaminated during such operations. Before construction starts, Caltrans will ensure that a plan is in place for a prompt

and effective response to accidental spills. All workers will be informed of the importance of preventing spills and the appropriate measures to take should a spill occur.

The following avoidance and minimization measures will be implemented for potential jurisdictional areas in the project:

JD-11: Work in jurisdictional areas will occur in the dry season, between May 1 and October 31, or as stipulated in regulatory agency permits.

JD-12: Before construction starts, Caltrans will obtain permits and agreements from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Regional Water Quality Control Board, and California Department of Fish and Wildlife, as applicable to project impacts.

JD-13: Before construction starts, Caltrans will prepare a Mitigation and Monitoring Plan to offset impacts to vegetation and natural habitats. The plan will be consistent with federal and state regulatory requirements and amended with any regulatory permit conditions, as required. Caltrans will implement the Mitigation and Monitoring Plan as necessary during construction and immediately following project completion.

JD-14: Before starting any ground-disturbing activities, Environmentally Sensitive Area boundary markers or fencing will be installed around jurisdictional resources. Caltrans-defined Environmentally Sensitive Areas will be noted on design plans and delineated in the field before the start of construction activities.

JD-15: Minimize impacts to native trees wherever feasible by minimizing native tree removal, limiting temporary impact areas, and replanting trees that must be removed.

JD-16: Before construction starts, the contractor will prepare and sign a Water Pollution Control Plan or a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan that complies with the Caltrans Storm Water Quality Handbook. Provisions of this plan will be implemented during and after construction, as necessary, to avoid and minimize erosion and stormwater pollution in and near the work area.

JD-17: During construction, all project-related hazardous materials spills within the project site will be cleaned up immediately. The contractor will keep spill prevention and cleanup materials readily accessible onsite during construction.

JD-18: Pollution and erosion control measures will be implemented during construction. Silt fencing or fiber rolls will be installed, as needed, between the project construction features and any stream, water body, or riparian habitat to prevent the discharge of sediment or pollutants into any stream or water body.

JD-19: Staging areas for equipment and vehicle fueling and storage will be located at least 100 feet away from the top of the bank of any stream or aquatic area and in a location where fluids or accidental discharges cannot flow into the stream or aquatic area.

JD-20: After construction has been completed, natural contours and vegetation will be restored as close as possible to their original condition in accordance with landscaping plans.

The following mitigation measure will be implemented to prevent a net loss of aquatic resource acreage, functions, and values:

AQUA-1: Caltrans will restore temporary impacts to riparian vegetation at a 1-to-1 ratio (acreage). If any riparian trees are removed, they will be replaced at a minimum ratio of 3-to-1. Because all riparian impacts and impacts to the Fremont cottonwood forest and woodland will occur in the Calf Canyon drainage system, onsite mitigation for this project will involve planting native riparian species in the Calf Canyon riparian zone. Replacement plantings will include appropriate native tree and understory species. To ensure success, monitoring will be conducted for three years, which will include annual inspections and weeding.

The following avoidance and minimization measures will be implemented to protect native oak trees:

OAK-1: Minimize impacts to native oak trees wherever feasible by minimizing native oak tree removal, limiting temporary impact areas, and replanting trees that must be removed within the Caltrans right-of-way.

OAK-2: Before starting any ground-disturbing activities, Environmentally Sensitive Area fencing will be installed around the dripline of trees designated to be protected within the project limits. Caltrans-defined Environmentally Sensitive Areas will be noted on design plans and delineated in the field before the start of construction activities.

OAK-3: During construction, avoid spreading invasive species and pathogens by requiring that weeds designated for removal be removed before disturbing surface soils and disposed of the same day they are removed, all nursery stock be certified free of weeds, Phytophthora, or other plant diseases, and that imported soil is certified weed-free and from a Caltrans-approved source with protocols in place for minimizing the spread of Phytophthora and other plant diseases.

The following mitigation measure will be implemented to protect native oak trees:

OAK-4: Caltrans will replace native oak trees at a minimum replacement ratio of 3-to-1. Oak trees will be replanted within or next to existing oak woodlands/savannahs on Caltrans' right-of-way within the project area. The

Caltrans Landscape Architect Division will develop planting plans and specifications that include oak tree plantings during the project design phase.

The following avoidance and minimization measures apply to all birds protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act; the California Fish and Game Code will be implemented for potential impacts:

NB-1: Schedule vegetation removal between September 1 and January 31, outside of the typical nesting bird season. If construction activities are proposed to occur within 100 feet of potential habitat during the nesting season (February 1 to August 31), a qualified biologist will conduct a nesting bird survey no more than two weeks (14 days) before construction. If an active nest is found, the biologist will determine an appropriate buffer based on the habits and needs of the species. The buffer area will be avoided until the qualified biologist has determined that juveniles have fledged and are no longer dependent on the nest.

NB-2: Active bird nests should not be disturbed, and eggs or young birds covered by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and California Fish and Game Code should not be killed, destroyed, injured, or harassed at any time.

The following measures will help reduce the potential to introduce or spread invasive species and noxious weeds from or into the project area:

INV-1: All soils temporarily disturbed by construction will be treated with permanent erosion control with a seed mix comprised of local native grasses and forbs.

INV-2: Erosion control measures should specify the use of sterile or certified weed-free mulches and straw applications and/or hydroseed with a regionally appropriate seed mix.

2.1.5 Cultural Resources

Considering the information in the Cultural Resources Screened Undertaking Memorandum dated October 2021, the following significance determinations have been made:

Question—Will the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Cultural Resources
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?	**No Impact**
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?	**No Impact**

Question—Will the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Cultural Resources
c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?	**No Impact**

2.1.6 Energy

Caltrans incorporates energy efficiency, conservation, and climate change measures into transportation planning, project development, design, operations, and maintenance of transportation facilities, fleets, buildings, and equipment to minimize the use of fuel supplies and energy sources and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Because the project is not a capacity-increasing project, the operation will not increase energy usage. Energy usage will be required during construction but minimized whenever possible by recycling materials and implementing greenhouse gas reduction strategies. The following significance determinations have been made:

Question—Will the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Energy
a) Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources during project construction or operation?	**No Impact**
b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?	**No Impact**

2.1.7 Geology and Soils

Considering the information in the Paleontological Identification Report dated November 2021, the following significance determinations have been made:

Question—Will the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Geology and Soils
a) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving: i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.	**No Impact**

Question—Will the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Geology and Soils
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	**No Impact**
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	**No Impact**
iv) Landslides?	**No Impact**
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	**No Impact**
c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that will become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in onsite or offsite landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?	**No Impact**
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?	**No Impact**
e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?	**No Impact**
f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	**No Impact**

2.1.8 Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Considering the information in the Air Quality, Greenhouse Gas, Noise, and Water Quality Assessment dated October 2020 and the Climate Change Report completed in December 2021, the following significance determinations have been made:

Question—Will the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Greenhouse Gas Emissions
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	**Less Than Significant Impact**
b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	**No Impact**

Affected Environment

Regulatory agencies take greenhouse gas emissions inventory estimates to track the amount of greenhouse gasses discharged into the atmosphere by specific sources over a period, such as a calendar year. Tracking annual greenhouse gas emissions allows countries, states, and smaller jurisdictions to understand how emissions are changing and what actions may be needed to attain emission reduction goals. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is responsible for documenting greenhouse gas emissions nationwide, and the California Air Resources Board does so for the state.

The California Air Resources Board sets regional targets for California's 18 Metropolitan Planning Organizations to use in their Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy to plan future projects that will cumulatively achieve greenhouse gas reduction goals. Targets are set at a percent reduction of passenger vehicle greenhouse gas emissions per person from 2005 levels. The project is in San Luis Obispo County; therefore, the Metropolitan Planning Organization is the San Luis Obispo Council of Governments. The San Luis Obispo Council of Governments' Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy for the project area is the 2019 Regional Transportation Plan: Connecting Communities. Its regional reduction targets are 3 percent by 2020 and 11 percent by 2035.

Environmental Consequences

Construction emissions cannot be avoided with any construction process, and construction activities will generate some level of emissions. For example, the estimated average carbon dioxide emissions are 124 tons per year over a period of about 120 working days. Additionally, the estimated average carbon dioxide equivalent emissions are about 66 tons generated over the construction period of 120 working days. This estimate is based on assumptions made during the environmental planning phase of the project and is considered a "ballpark" estimate of carbon dioxide equivalent emissions based on limited data inputs and default modeling values for a stormwater and drainage project.

However, because this is not a capacity-increasing project, increased long-term operational greenhouse gas emissions are not expected. Additionally, Best Management Practices and standard measures included in Chapter 1 will be implemented in addition to the greenhouse gas reduction strategies. Overall, the project is expected to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions by reducing the frequency and duration of maintenance vehicles and equipment used to maintain roadside facilities.

Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

No avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures are required; however, the project will implement the following measures to further minimize the effects of the project:

GHG-1: Truck trips will be scheduled outside of peak morning and evening commute hours.

GHG-2: Longer duration lane closures will be scheduled to reduce the amount of equipment mobilization efforts.

GHG-3: To improve fuel efficiency in construction equipment, equipment will be maintained in proper tune and working condition, and the right sized equipment and equipment with new technologies will be used.

GHG-4: Transporting earthen materials will be reduced by balancing cut and fill quantities.

GHG-5: Using recycled materials (such as tire rubber) will be maximized.

GHG-6: Recycled water will be used to reduce the consumption of potable water during construction.

GHG-7: Pavement materials that lower the rolling resistance of highway surfaces will be used as much as possible while still maintaining design and safety standards.

GHG-8: Hot mix asphalt will be produced with warm mix asphalt technology.

GHG-9: An ultimate net loss of tree canopy within the project limits will be avoided through a combination of preservation and new planting.

GHG-10: Intelligent transportation systems will be implemented to smooth traffic flow and increase system efficiency.

2.1.9 Hazards and Hazardous Materials

As outlined in the Hazardous Waste Memorandum dated November 2021, the following significance determinations have been made:

Question—Will the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Hazards and Hazardous Materials
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	**Less Than Significant Impact**
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?	**No Impact**

Question—Will the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Hazards and Hazardous Materials
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within 0.25 mile of an existing or proposed school?	**No Impact**
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, will it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	**No Impact**
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport, will the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?	**No Impact**
f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	**No Impact**
g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?	**No Impact**

Affected Environment

There are no known hazardous waste issues or hazardous material sites pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 within the project limits. Potential routine hazardous waste issues commonly associated with highway construction that may be encountered during project construction include treated wood waste from the disposal of guardrails or signposts, lead-containing yellow thermoplastic or traffic stripes, aerially deposited lead in soil, and lead paint and asbestos-containing materials in structures.

Environmental Consequences

Hazardous materials, if encountered, will be appropriately handled, transported, and disposed of through Caltrans' Best Management Practices and Standard Specifications and will not create a substantial hazard to the public or environment.

Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

No significant impacts and no avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures are required. However, Caltrans standard measures will be implemented.

2.1.10 Hydrology and Water Quality

The receiving water bodies within the project limits include the Salinas River, Yerba Buena Creek, Santa Margarita Creek, and Trout Creek. The project has the potential to directly discharge stormwater within these four identified water bodies but will not cause or exacerbate existing turbidity conditions. Stormwater Best Management Practices will be used during construction for anticipated minimal, short-term water quality impacts that are inevitable with any construction project. No significant long-term water quality impacts are expected.

Considering the information in the Location Hydraulic Study dated February 24, 2022, and the Air Quality, Greenhouse Gas, Noise, and Water Quality Assessment dated October 2020, the following significance determinations have been made:

Question—Will the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Hydrology and Water Quality
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface water or groundwater quality?	**No Impact**
b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?	**No Impact**
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which will: (i) result in substantial erosion or siltation onsite or offsite;	**No Impact**
(ii) substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which will result in flooding onsite or offsite;	**No Impact**
(iii) create or contribute runoff water which will exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or	**No Impact**
(iv) impede or redirect flood flows?	**No Impact**

Question—Will the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Hydrology and Water Quality
d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?	**No Impact**
e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?	**No Impact**

2.1.11 Land Use and Planning

The project will not change the location, function, or capacity of State Route 58 and will not physically divide an established community. The project falls under the San Luis Obispo County General Plan. Avoidance and mitigation measures will also be consistent with local land use plans and policies. Considering this information, the following significance determinations have been made:

Question—Will the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Land Use and Planning
a) Physically divide an established community?	**No Impact**
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?	**No Impact**

2.1.12 Mineral Resources

According to the California Geological Survey 2011 Mineral Land Classification Map for the San Luis Obispo-Santa Barbara Region, the project is in an area with the potential for concrete aggregate resources. This mineral classification is widespread in San Luis Obispo County.

Considering the proposed work will include upgrading existing facilities on previously disturbed land, the following significance determinations have been made:

Question—Will the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Mineral Resources
a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that will be of value to the region and the residents of the state?	**No Impact**

Question—Will the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Mineral Resources
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?	**No Impact**

2.1.13 Noise

The project will not add additional lanes or capacity to the highway and, therefore, will not change long-term local noise levels generated by motorists. As outlined in the Air Quality, Greenhouse Gas, Noise, and Water Quality Assessment dated October 2020, short-term, temporary noise levels near the project will increase due to construction activities, but impacts will be minimized with the implementation of Caltrans' Best Management Practices pertaining to noise and Caltrans Standard Specifications Section 14-8.02.

The following significance determinations have been made:

Question—Will the project result in:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Noise
a) Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	**Less Than Significant Impact**
b) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	**No Impact**
c) For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport, will the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	**No Impact**

Affected Environment

The project is in a primarily rural section of San Luis Obispo County. There are scattered residences near the highway within the project limits. The western end of the project is within a residential area of Santa Margarita.

Environmental Consequences

Because the project is not a capacity-increasing project, local noise levels are expected to be the same after project completion as they were before. No long-term impacts are expected. Because of construction, local noise levels will experience a short-term increase. The amount of noise will vary based on the activity at each location and the equipment used. Construction activities are not expected to generate excessive noise that will expose residents in the area. No night work is expected during construction.

Construction activities have the potential to generate some vibration from the expected cut-and-cover and trenchless construction methods. The contractor will determine the specific types of equipment to be used for each culvert construction location, factoring in the subsurface soil types, the topography of the location, and hydrologic conditions, among other criteria. Construction activities will be temporary at the individual culvert repair/replacement locations and are not expected to generate substantial amounts of groundborne vibration that will otherwise adversely affect any residents or other sensitive receptors.

Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Noise Abatement Measures

There are no significant noise impacts associated with the project, and no avoidance, minimization, and/or noise abatement measures will be required. Based on the Air Quality, Greenhouse Gas, Noise, and Water Quality Assessment dated October 2020, the following standards will be included in the resident engineer's binder and implemented during project construction:

NOI-1: The Caltrans District 5 Public Information Office, as advised by the project's resident engineer, will notify the public two weeks in advance of the construction schedule when construction noise and upcoming construction activities likely to produce an adverse noise environment are expected. A notice will be published in local news media of the dates and duration of proposed construction activities.

NOI-2: The construction contractor will shield loud pieces of stationary construction equipment if complaints are received from the public.

NOI-3: The construction contractor will locate portable generators, air compressors, etc., away from sensitive noise receptors as feasible.

NOI-4: The construction contractor will limit grouping major pieces of equipment operating in one area to the greatest extent feasible.

NOI-5: The construction contractor will use newer equipment that is quieter and ensure that all equipment items have the manufacturers' recommended noise abatement measures, such as mufflers, engine covers, and engine vibration isolators, intact and operational. Internal combustion engines used

for any purpose on or related to the job should be equipped with a muffler or baffle of a type recommended by the manufacturer.

NOI-6: The construction contractor and resident engineer will consult the Caltrans District 5 noise staff if complaints are received during the construction process.

2.1.14 Population and Housing

This is not a capacity-increasing project and will not lead to population growth. No people or housing will be displaced. The following significance determinations have been made:

Question—Will the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Population and Housing
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)?	**No Impact**
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	**No Impact**

2.1.15 Public Services

Considering the project will not trigger the need for new or modified public services, the following significance determinations have been made:

Question:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Public Services
a) Will the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services: Fire protection?	**No Impact**
Police protection?	**No Impact**

Question:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Public Services
Schools?	**No Impact**
Parks?	**No Impact**
Other public facilities?	**No Impact**

2.1.16 Recreation

No recreational facilities are present within the project limits. Santa Margarita Community Park is located northwest of the project on H Street. Because the project will not change the function or capacity of the highway, it will not influence the use of local recreational facilities. Considering this information, the following significance determinations have been made:

Question—Will the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Recreation
a) Will the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility will occur or be accelerated?	**No Impact**
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?	**No Impact**

2.1.17 Transportation

The following significance determinations have been made:

Question—Will the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Transportation
a) Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?	**No Impact**
b) Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?	**No Impact**

Question—Will the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Transportation
c) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	**No Impact**
d) Result in inadequate emergency access?	**Less Than Significant Impact**

Affected Environment

State Route 58 is a conventional two-lane highway. Within the project limits, U.S. Route 101 is predominately a four-lane facility with auxiliary lanes in the southern portion.

Environmental Consequences

The project will not alter the existing alignment or capacity of State Route 58 and is not expected to permanently impact any existing or planned transportation-related programs or facilities in the region. Because the project will not alter existing vehicle miles traveled, existing traffic and emergency access on the highway will not be altered.

Construction activities may delay emergency access on State Route 58. Even though no freeway closures are expected, there will be temporary daily reversible lane closures, which could affect traffic. During project construction, traffic and emergency access on State Route 58 will be maintained. A Transportation Management Plan will be implemented during construction to maintain traffic flow during this period. The public will be notified of planned construction traffic management strategies through various methods, such as NOI-1, as part of a public awareness campaign and motorist information on the project route.

Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

No avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures are required; however, standard measures, including a Traffic Management Plan and public awareness campaign, will be implemented during construction.

2.1.18 Tribal Cultural Resources

Considering the information in the Cultural Resources Screened Undertaking Memorandum dated October 2021, the following significance determinations have been made:

Will 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:

Question:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Tribal Cultural Resources
a) 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	**No Impact**
b) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.	**No Impact**

2.1.19 Utilities and Service Systems

The following significance determinations have been made:

Question—Will the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Utilities and Service Systems
a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or stormwater drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?	**Less Than Significant Impact**
b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?	**No Impact**
c) 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?	**No Impact**

Question—Will the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Utilities and Service Systems
d) Generate solid waste in excess of state or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?	**No Impact**
e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	**No Impact**

Affected Environment

Utility involvement and/or relocation will be required for the project. There are utility poles that are within the proposed work area. Known utility owners include San Luis Obispo County for water, the Pacific Gas and Electric Company (known as PG&E) for electricity, and American Telephone and Telegraph (known as AT&T) for communications.

Environmental Consequences

The project is expected to require the relocation of 15 utility poles within the project limits. These poles will need to be relocated to a minimum of 20 feet away from the edge of the shoulder to maintain the standard Clear Recovery Zone, or open area beyond the edge of the road, to allow drivers room to pull off the road or regain control of their vehicle.

Locations of existing utilities will be confirmed during the Plans, Specifications, and Estimates phase of the project. With that information, Caltrans will confirm whether any additional relocations will be necessary. The remaining unaffected, buried, and aerial utility facilities will be avoided and protected. Caltrans will continue communication with the utility owners throughout the Plans, Specifications, and Estimates phase and the construction phase of the project to ensure the protection and relocation of these existing utilities. Environmental clearance and necessary freeway agreements will be required before any relocations.

Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

No further measures.

2.1.20 Wildfire

If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones:

Question—Will the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Wildfire
a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	**Less Than Significant Impact**
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?	**No Impact**
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?	**No Impact**
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?	**No Impact**

Affected Environment

Based on the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection's (known as Cal Fire) California Fire Hazard Severity Zone map, the project is in a "high" and "very high" fire zone. The western portion of the project is in a "high" zone, and the eastern portion is in a "very high" zone.

Environmental Consequences

The project will not change any planned or existing emergency response plans or emergency evacuation plans for the region because it will not permanently alter access to State Route 58. The project will ensure that the highway remains accessible for emergency response vehicles and emergency evacuation plans during project construction. Temporary lane closures will occur, as mentioned in Section 2.1.17, but these closures will be accounted for in the Transportation Management Plan.

The project will not exacerbate wildfire risk because it is not expected to permanently alter existing wildfire conditions in the region. The project will not involve infrastructure work that will change the existing fire risk in the region.

During construction, some vegetation removal will be required to allow access to construction equipment and supplies at work locations. Although the risk of unintended fires is greater during the vegetation removal process, once the work locations are clear of vegetation, the risk is expected to be reduced. However, the project will incorporate precautions to prevent fire-related

incidents during construction as part of the code of safety practices in accordance with the California Division of Occupational Safety and Health–Fire Protection and Prevention Guidance. Any vegetation removal will be planned and conducted using techniques and strategies that will avoid and minimize unintentional fires.

The project will also include Caltrans standard measures referenced in Chapter 1, including a fire prevention plan that will be carried out during project construction.

Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

No further measures.

2.1.21 Mandatory Findings of Significance

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

Affected Environment

With the implementation of Caltrans' Best Management Practices, Standard Specifications, and other measures, the environmental resources that have

the potential to be affected by the project include visual resources, biological resources, air quality, hazards and hazardous materials, noise, greenhouse gas emissions, transportation, and wildfire.

Environmental Consequences

For biological resources, the project has been designed to avoid and minimize effects as much as feasible. The project will temporarily impact other waters and riparian areas under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Regional Water Quality Control Board, and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. Acres of temporary impacts will be restored, and permanent impacts will be offset through compensatory mitigation. The project has the potential to impact western pond turtles and nesting birds. The project will not have cumulatively considerable effects on the environment in consideration of past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects. With the implementation of avoidance and minimization measures in Section 2.1.4 and compensatory mitigation prescribed in Mitigation Measures AQUA-1 and OAK-4, impacts to biological resources will have a less than significant effect on the environment. See Section 2.1.4 for further discussion.

Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

No further measures are required.

Appendix A Title VI Policy Statement

CALIFORNIA STATE TRANSPORTATION AGENCY GAVIN NEWSOM, GOVERNOR

California Department of Transportation

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR
P.O. BOX 942873, MS–49 | SACRAMENTO, CA 94273–0001
(916) 654-6130 | FAX (916) 653-5776 TTY 711
www.dot.ca.gov

September 2022

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY STATEMENT

The California Department of Transportation, under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, ensures *"No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance."*

Caltrans will make every effort to ensure nondiscrimination in all of its services, programs and activities, whether they are federally funded or not, and that services and benefits are fairly distributed to all people, regardless of race, color, or national origin. In addition, Caltrans will facilitate meaningful participation in the transportation planning process in a non-discriminatory manner.

Related federal statutes, remedies, and state law further those protections to include sex, disability, religion, sexual orientation, and age.

For information or guidance on how to file a complaint, or obtain more information regarding Title VI, please contact the Title VI Branch Manager at (916) 639-6392 or visit the following web page: https://dot.ca.gov/programs/civil-rights/title-vi.

To obtain this information in an alternate format such as Braille or in a language other than English, please contact the California Department of Transportation, Office of Civil Rights, at PO Box 942874, MS-79, Sacramento, CA 94274-0001; (916) 879-6768 (TTY 711); or at Title.VI@dot.ca.gov.

TONY TAVARES
Director

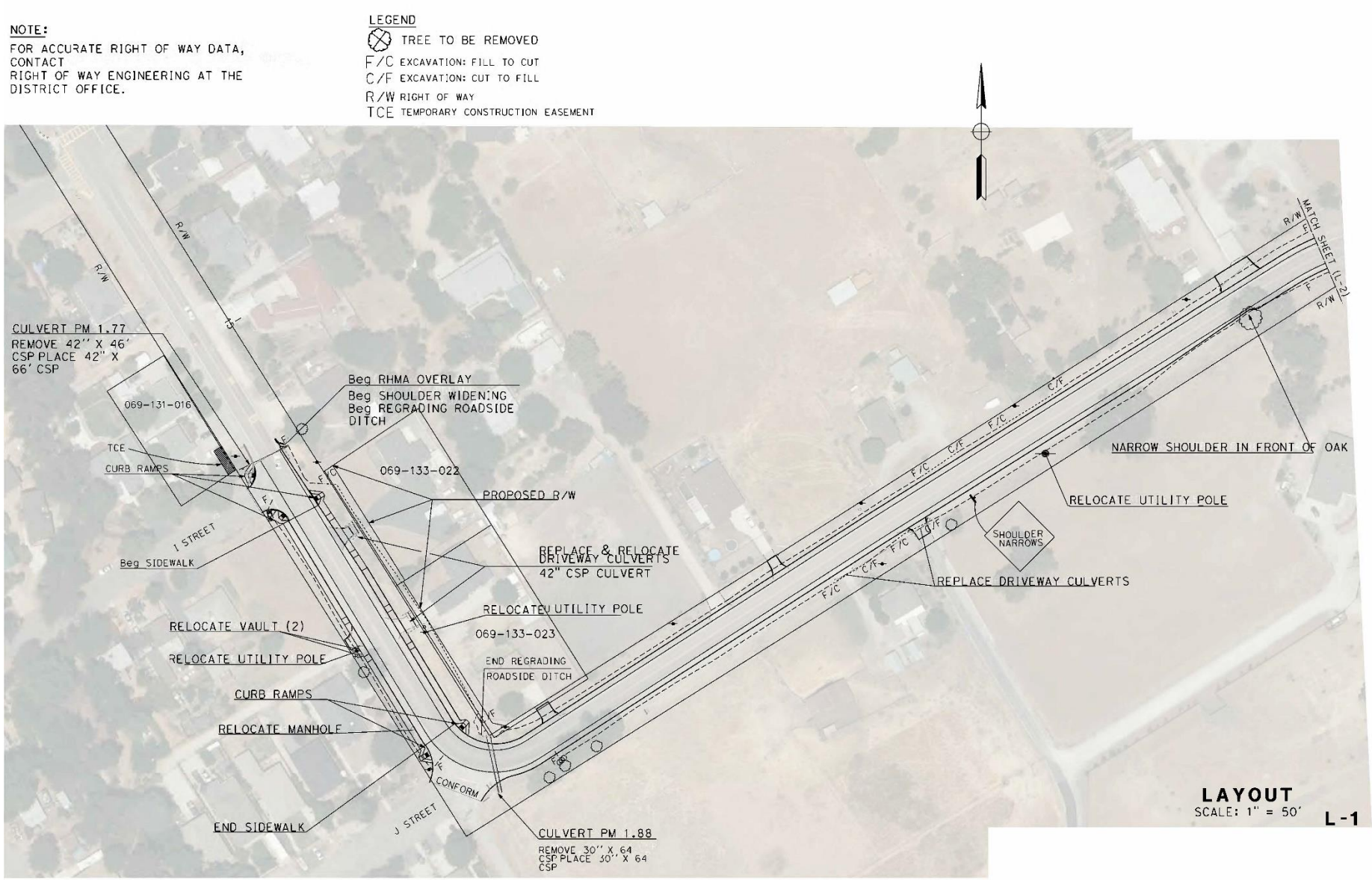
"Provide a safe and reliable transportation network that serves all people and respects the environment"

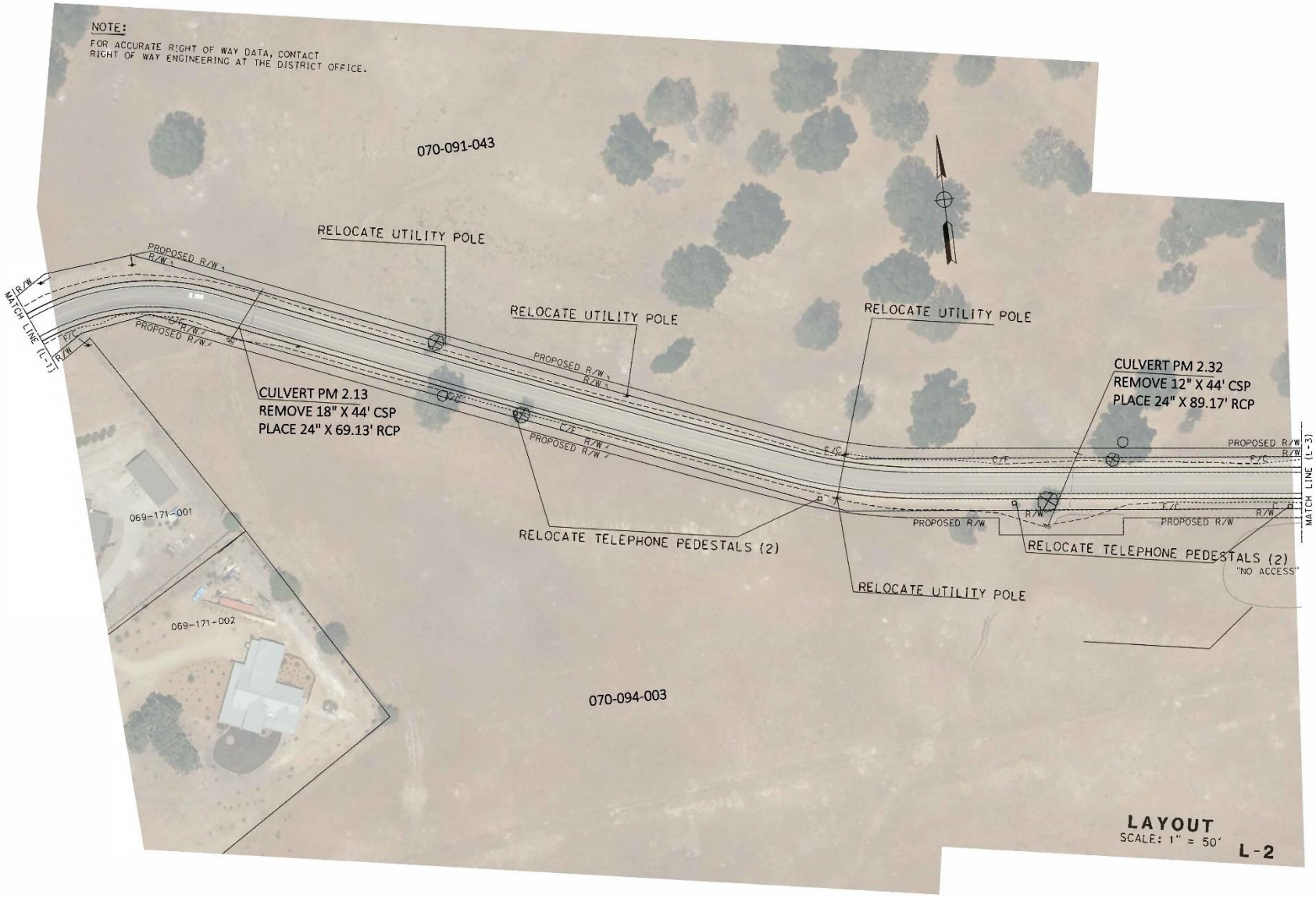
Appendix B Project Mapping

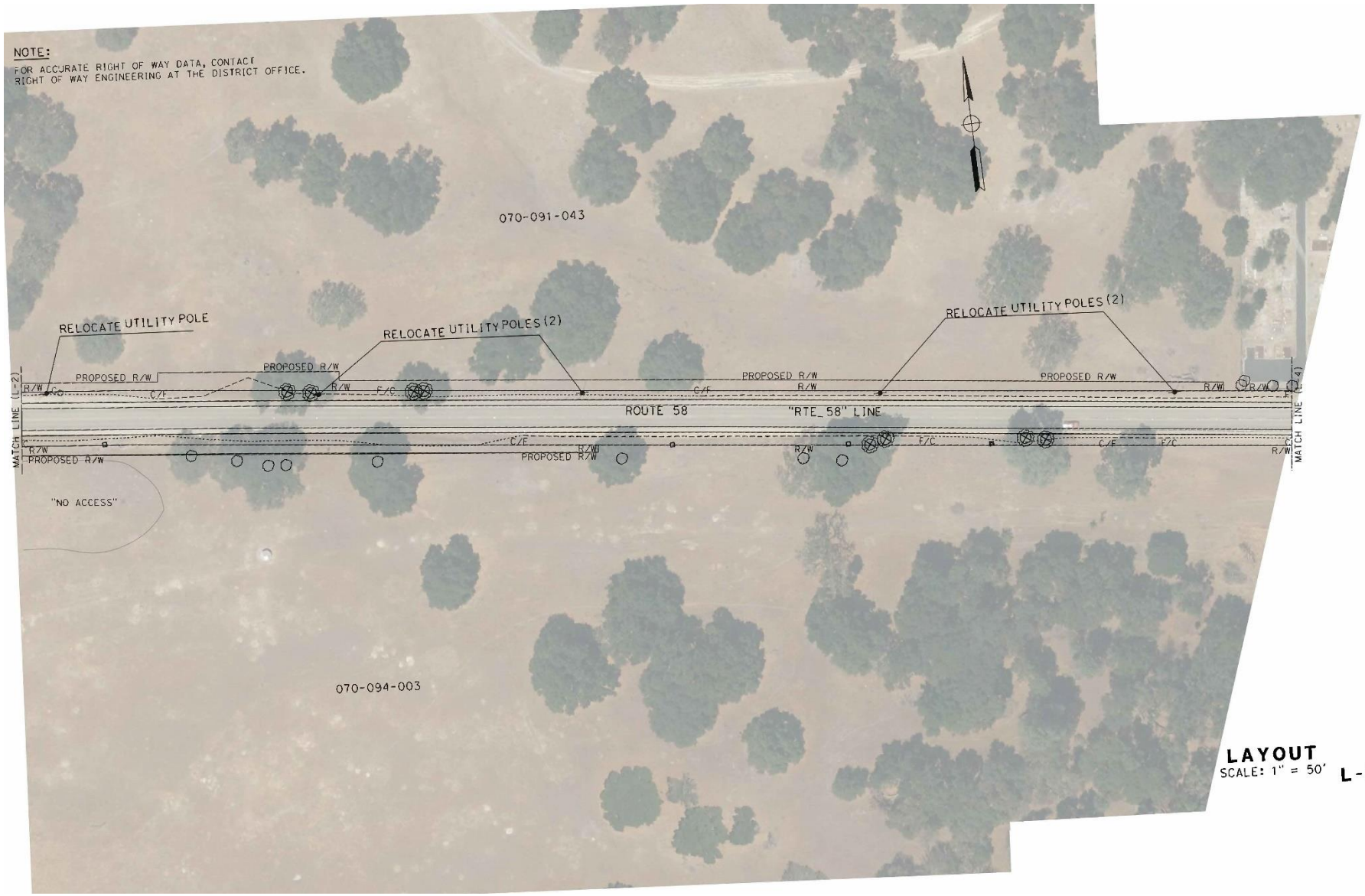
This appendix contains the preliminary project plans on aerial photography base maps.

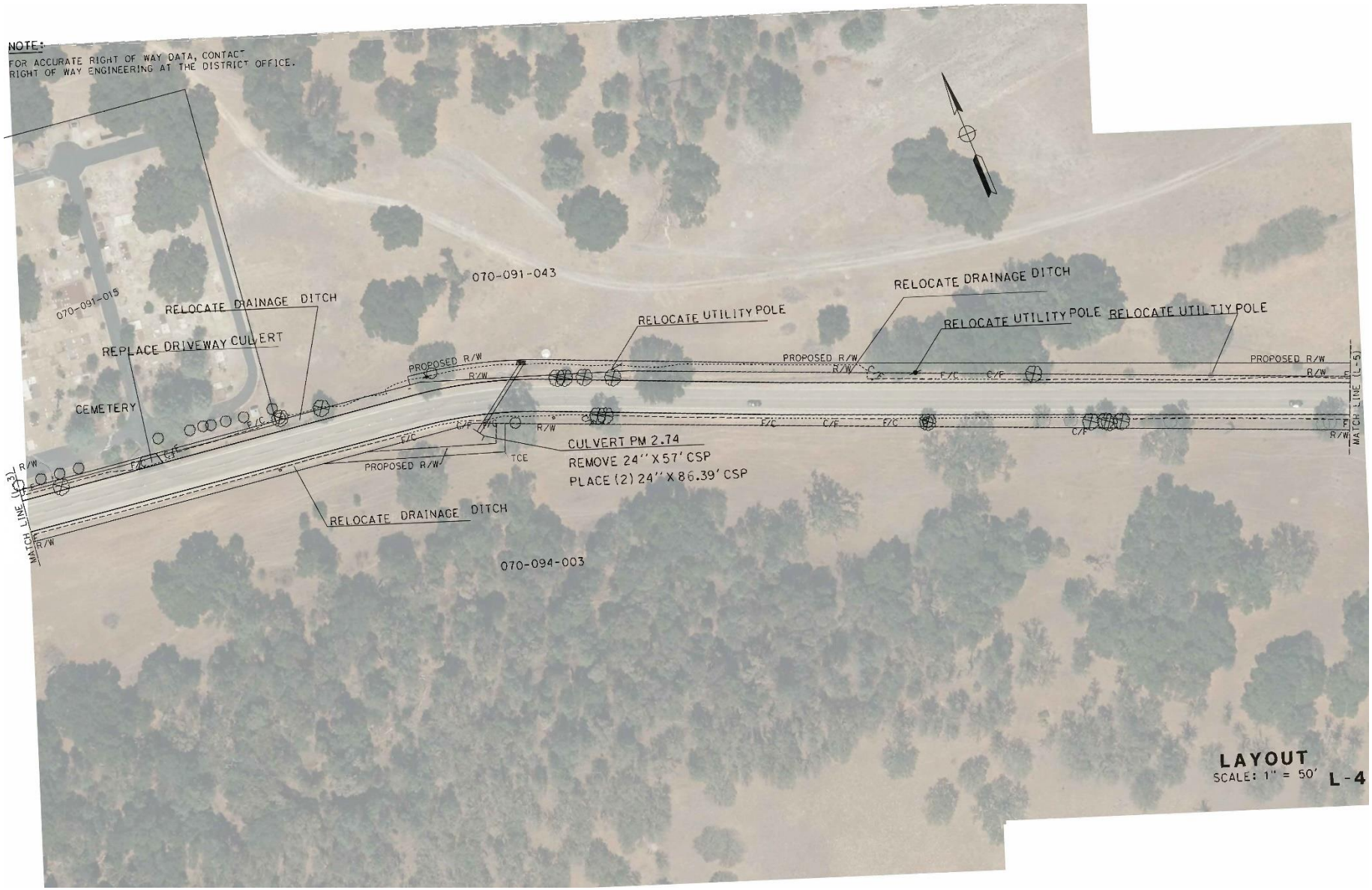
The abbreviated notations on the plans are spelled out as follows:

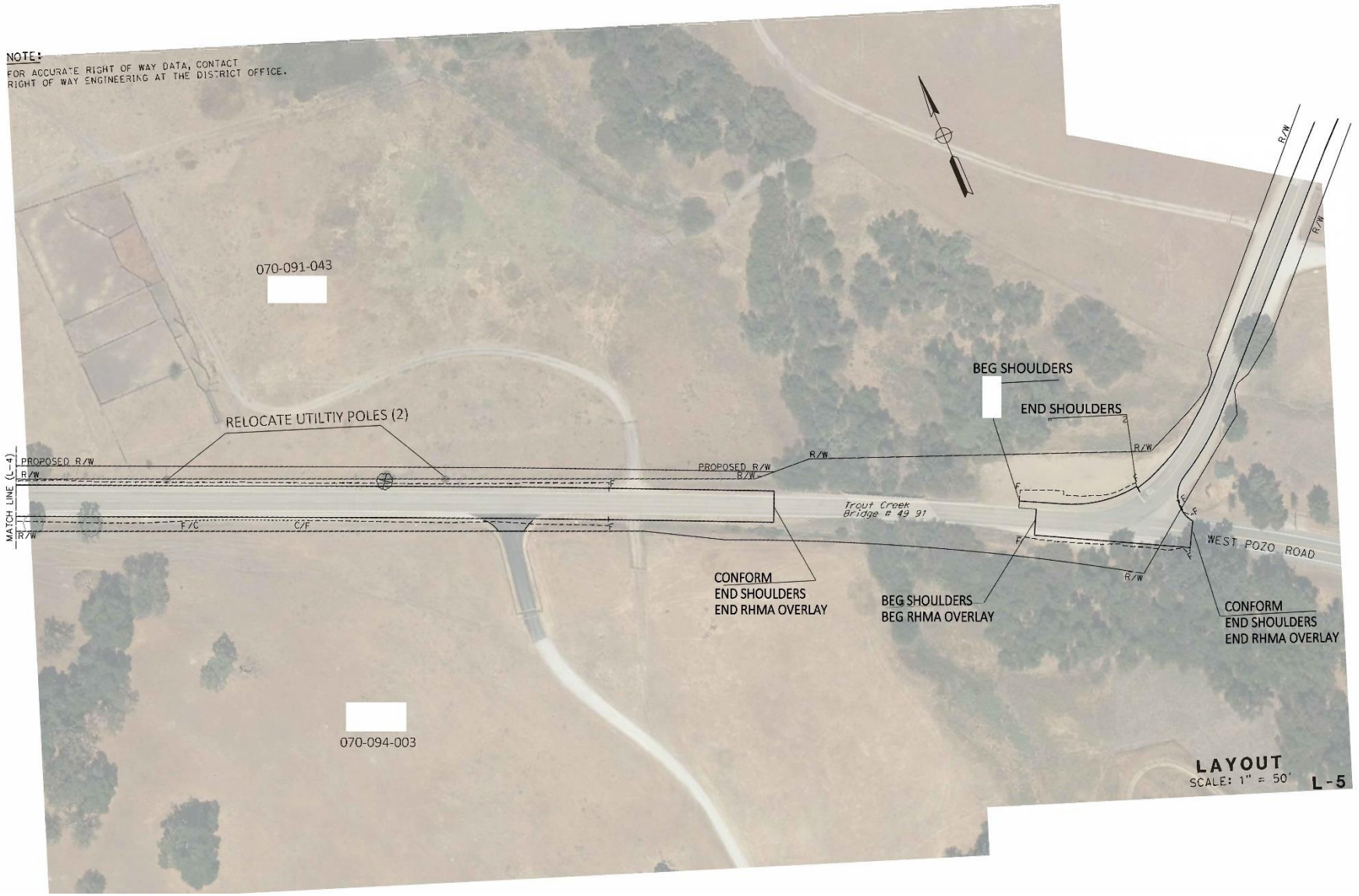
- PM: post mile
- R/W: Right of Way
- CSP: concrete steel pipe
- RCP: reinforced concrete pipe
- RHMA: rubberized hot mix asphalt
- SQFT: Square Feet

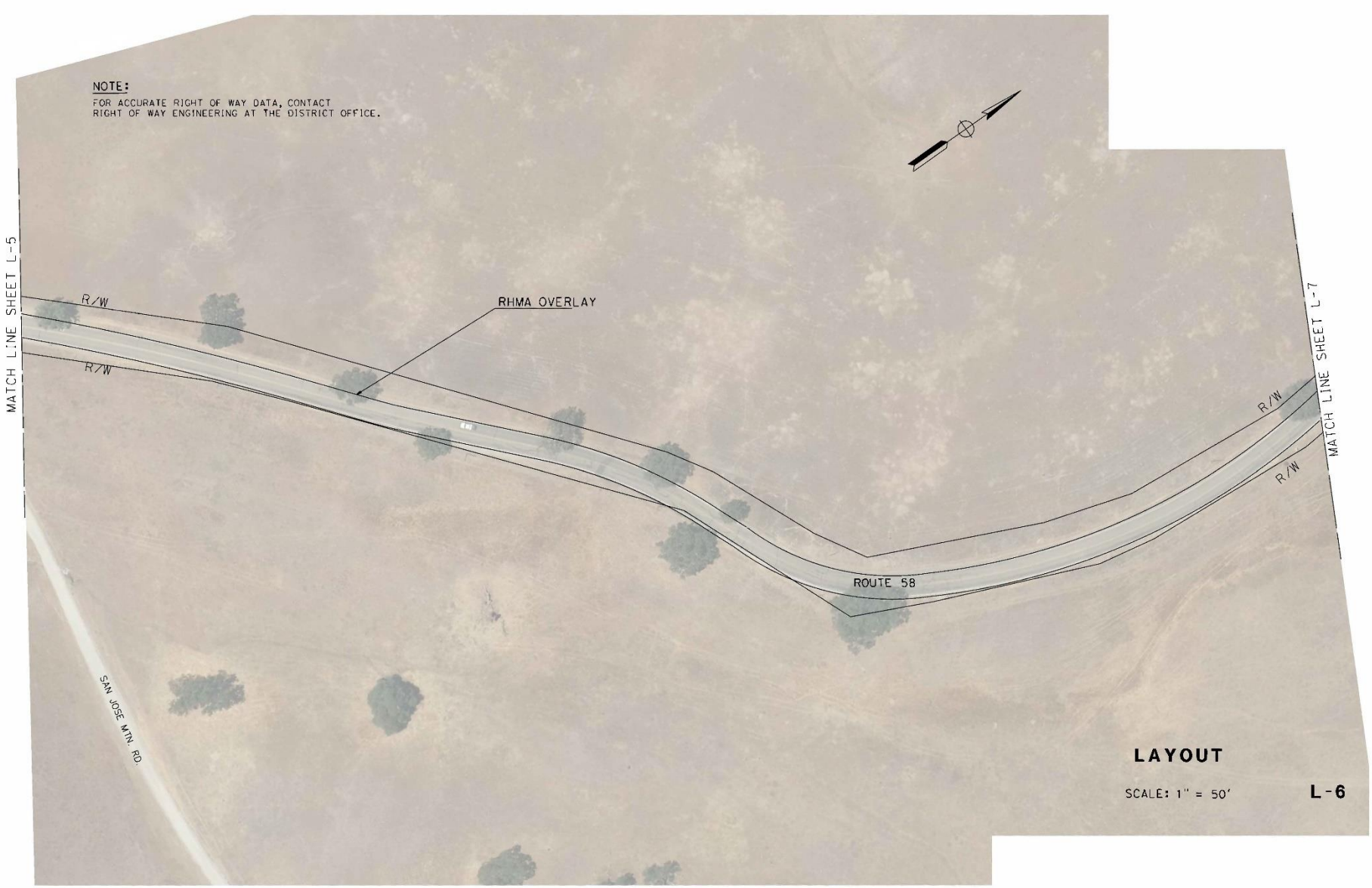

NOTE:
FOR ACCURATE RIGHT OF WAY DATA, CONTACT RIGHT OF WAY ENGINEERING AT THE DISTRICT OFFICE.
LEGEND
TREE TO BE REMOVED
F/C EXCAVATION: FILL TO CUT
C/F EXCAVATION: CUT TO FILL
R/W RIGHT OF WAY
TCE TEMPORARY CONSTRUCTION EASEMENT
CULVERT PM 1.77
REMOVE 42" X 46' CSP PLACE 42" X 66' CSP
069-131-016
TCE
CURB RAMPS
Beg RHMA OVERLAY
Beg SHOULDER WIDENING
Beg REGRADING ROADSIDE DITCH
069-133-022
PROPOSED R/W
I STREET
Beg SIDEWALK
REPLACE & RELOCATE DRIVEWAY CULVERTS 42" CSP CULVERT
RELOCATE UTILITY POLE
069-133-023
RELOCATE VAULT (2)
RELOCATE UTILITY POLE
END REGRADING ROADSIDE DITCH
CURB RAMPS
RELOCATE MANHOLE
CONFORM
END SIDEWALK
J STREET
CULVERT PM 1.88
REMOVE 30" X 64' CSP PLACE 30" X 64' CSP
NARROW SHOULDER IN FRONT OF OAK
RELOCATE UTILITY POLE
SHOULDER NARROWS
REPLACE DRIVEWAY CULVERTS
MATCH SHEET (L-2)
LAYOUT
SCALE: 1" = 50'
L-1


NOTE:
FOR ACCURATE RIGHT OF WAY DATA, CONTACT
RIGHT OF WAY ENGINEERING AT THE DISTRICT OFFICE.
070-091-043
RELOCATE UTILITY POLE
RELOCATE UTILITY POLE
RELOCATE UTILITY POLE
CULVERT PM 2.13
REMOVE 18" X 44' CSP
PLACE 24" X 69.13' RCP
CULVERT PM 2.32
REMOVE 12" X 44' CSP
PLACE 24" X 89.17' RCP
PROPOSED R/W
R/W
E/C
C/E
MATCH LINE (L-1)
MATCH LINE (L-3)
069-171-001
069-171-002
RELOCATE TELEPHONE PEDESTALS (2)
RELOCATE TELEPHONE PEDESTALS (2)
"NO ACCESS"
RELOCATE UTILITY POLE
070-094-003
LAYOUT
SCALE: 1" = 50'
L-2


NOTE:
FOR ACCURATE RIGHT OF WAY DATA, CONTACT
RIGHT OF WAY ENGINEERING AT THE DISTRICT OFFICE.
070-091-043
RELOCATE UTILITY POLE
RELOCATE UTILITY POLES (2)
RELOCATE UTILITY POLES (2)
PROPOSED R/W
R/W
C/F
F/C
ROUTE 58
"RTE_58" LINE
MATCH LINE (L-2)
MATCH LINE (L-4)
"NO ACCESS"
070-094-003
LAYOUT
SCALE: 1" = 50'
L-3


NOTE:
FOR ACCURATE RIGHT OF WAY DATA, CONTACT
RIGHT OF WAY ENGINEERING AT THE DISTRICT OFFICE.
070-091-015
070-091-043
RELOCATE DRAINAGE DITCH
REPLACE DRIVEWAY CULVERT
CEMETERY
RELOCATE UTILITY POLE
RELOCATE DRAINAGE DITCH
RELOCATE UTILITY POLE
RELOCATE UTILITY POLE
PROPOSED R/W
R/W
E/C
C/F
TCE
CULVERT PM 2.74
REMOVE 24" X 57' CSP
PLACE (2) 24" X 86.39' CSP
RELOCATE DRAINAGE DITCH
070-094-003
MATCH LINE (L-5)
LAYOUT
SCALE: 1" = 50'
L-4


NOTE:
FOR ACCURATE RIGHT OF WAY DATA, CONTACT
RIGHT OF WAY ENGINEERING AT THE DISTRICT OFFICE.
070-091-043
RELOCATE UTILTIY POLES (2)
BEG SHOULDERS
END SHOULDERS
PROPOSED R/W
R/W
MATCH LINE (L-4)
F/C
C/F
Trout Creek
Bridge # 49 91
WEST POZO ROAD
CONFORM
END SHOULDERS
END RHMA OVERLAY
BEG SHOULDERS
BEG RHMA OVERLAY
CONFORM
END SHOULDERS
END RHMA OVERLAY
070-094-003
LAYOUT
SCALE: 1" = 50'
L-5


NOTE:
FOR ACCURATE RIGHT OF WAY DATA, CONTACT
RIGHT OF WAY ENGINEERING AT THE DISTRICT OFFICE.
MATCH LINE SHEET L-5
R/W
R/W
RHMA OVERLAY
ROUTE 58
R/W
R/W
MATCH LINE SHEET L-7
SAN JOSE MTN. RD.
LAYOUT
SCALE: 1" = 50'
L-6


NOTE:
FOR ACCURATE RIGHT OF WAY DATA, CONTACT
RIGHT OF WAY ENGINEERING AT THE DISTRICT OFFICE.
RHMA OVERLAY
ROUTE 58
R/W
R/W
R/W
R/W
MATCH LINE SHEET L-6
MATCH LINE SHEET L-8
LAYOUT
SCALE: 1" = 50'
L-7


NOTE:
FOR ACCURATE RIGHT OF WAY DATA, CONTACT
RIGHT OF WAY ENGINEERING AT THE DISTRICT OFFICE.
RHMA OVERLAY
R/W
R/W
ROUTE 58
R/W
R/W
MATCH LINE SHEET L-7
MATCH LINE SHEET L-9
LAYOUT
SCALE: 1" = 50'
L-8

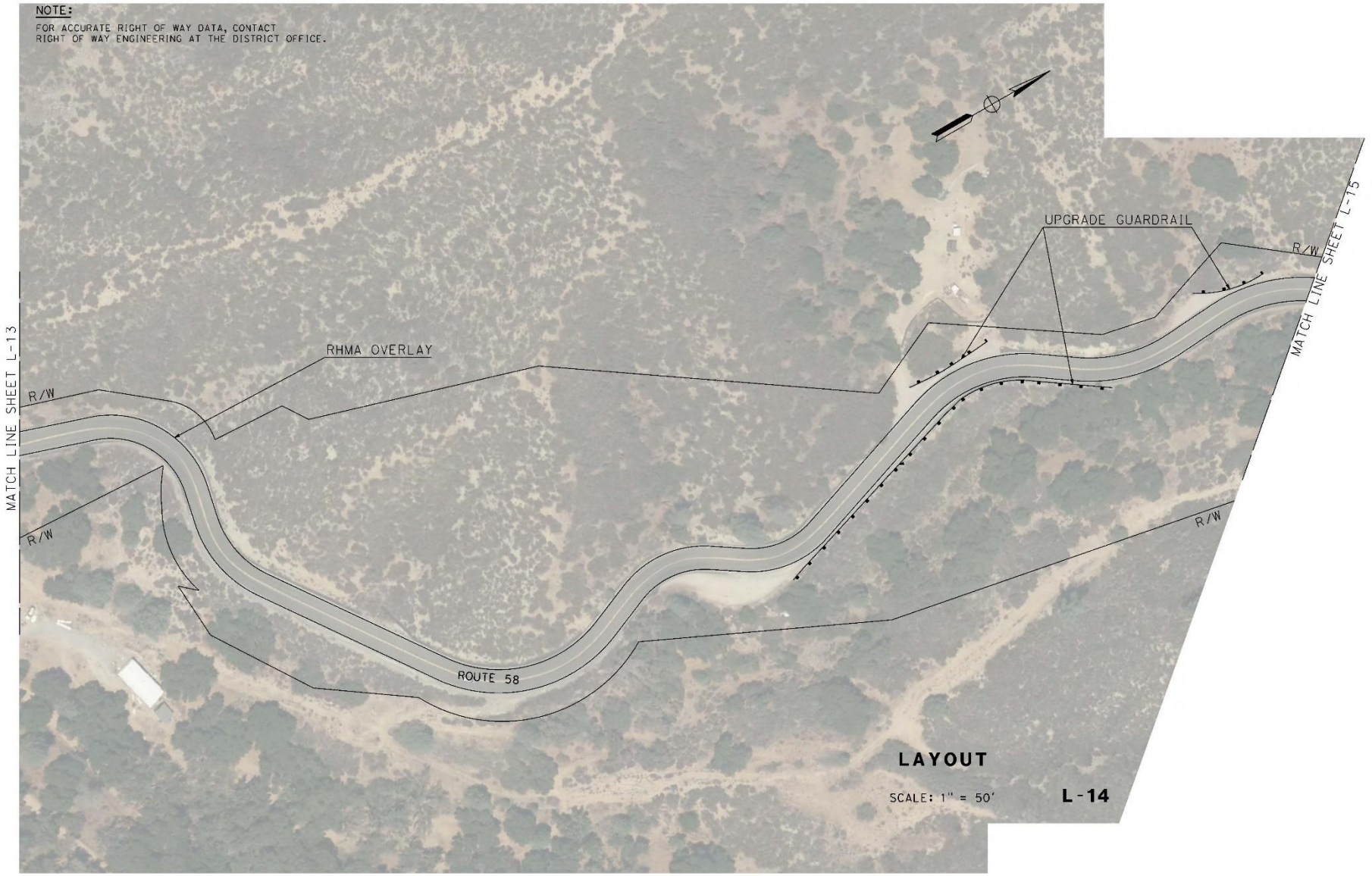

NOTE:
FOR ACCURATE RIGHT OF WAY DATA, CONTACT
RIGHT OF WAY ENGINEERING AT THE DISTRICT OFFICE.
RHMA OVERLAY
R/W
R/W
ROUTE 58
R/W
R/W
MATCH LINE SHEET L-8
MATCH LINE SHEET L-10
LAYOUT
SCALE: 1" = 50'
L-9


NOTE:
FOR ACCURATE RIGHT OF WAY DATA, CONTACT
RIGHT OF WAY ENGINEERING AT THE DISTRICT OFFICE.
MATCH LINE SHEET L-9
RHMA OVERLAY
R/W
R/W
ROUTE 58
R/W
R/W
MATCH LINE SHEET L-11
LAYOUT
SCALE: 1" = 50'
L-10


NOTE:
FOR ACCURATE RIGHT OF WAY DATA, CONTACT
RIGHT OF WAY ENGINEERING AT THE DISTRICT OFFICE.
RHMA OVERLAY
UPGRADE GUARDRAIL
ROUTE 58
R/W
R/W
R/W
R/W
SALINAS RIVER BRIDGE
BRIDGE # 49 106
MATCH LINE SHEET L-10
MATCH LINE SHEET L-12
LAYOUT
SCALE: 1" = 50'
L-11


NOTE:
FOR ACCURATE RIGHT OF WAY DATA, CONTACT
RIGHT OF WAY ENGINEERING AT THE DISTRICT OFFICE.
MATCH LINE SHEET L-11
R/W
RHMA OVERLAY
ROUTE 58
R/W
R/W
UPGRADE GUARDRAIL
R/W
MATCH LINE SHEET L-13
LAYOUT
SCALE: 1" = 50'
L-12


NOTE:
FOR ACCURATE RIGHT OF WAY DATA, CONTACT
RIGHT OF WAY ENGINEERING AT THE DISTRICT OFFICE.
MATCH LINE SHEET L-12
RHMA OVERLAY
R/W
R/W
ROUTE 58
PARKHILL ROAD
R/W
R/W
MATCH LINE SHEET L-14
LAYOUT
SCALE: 1" = 50'
L-13


NOTE:
FOR ACCURATE RIGHT OF WAY DATA, CONTACT
RIGHT OF WAY ENGINEERING AT THE DISTRICT OFFICE.
MATCH LINE SHEET L-13
RHMA OVERLAY
R/W
R/W
ROUTE 58
UPGRADE GUARDRAIL
R/W
MATCH LINE SHEET L-15
R/W
LAYOUT
SCALE: 1" = 50'
L-14


NOTE:
FOR ACCURATE RIGHT OF WAY DATA, CONTACT
RIGHT OF WAY ENGINEERING AT THE DISTRICT OFFICE.
ROUTE 58
R/W
RHMA OVERLAY
MATCH LINE SHEET L-14
MATCH LINE SHEET L-16
LAYOUT
SCALE: 1" = 50'
L-15


NOTE:
FOR ACCURATE RIGHT OF WAY DATA, CONTACT
RIGHT OF WAY ENGINEERING AT THE DISTRICT OFFICE.
DRAINAGE
EASEMENT
240 SQFT
CULVERT PM 6.26
REMOVE 18'' x 48.6' CSP
PLACE 24'' 50.4' RCP
R/W
R/W
CULVERT
PM 6.26
RHMA OVERLAY
ROUTE 58
R/W
R/W
MATCH LINE SHEET L-15
MATCH LINE SHEET L-17
LAYOUT
SCALE: 1" = 50'
L-16


NOTE:
FOR ACCURATE RIGHT OF WAY DATA, CONTACT
RIGHT OF WAY ENGINEERING AT THE DISTRICT OFFICE.
MATCH LINE SHEET L-16
R/W
ROUTE 58
CULVERT PM 6.86
REMOVE 12'' x 39.2' CSP
PLACE 24'' x 80' RCP
ROUTE 229
END CONSTRUCTION
END RHMA OVERLAY
PM 6.89
CULVERT
PM 6.86
ROUTE 58
LAYOUT
SCALE: 1" = 50'
L-17

Appendix C Avoidance, Minimization and/or Mitigation Measures

VIS-1 CEQA mitigation: Revegetation will occur at a minimum ratio of 10 new trees for each tree removed. The replanting area will generally be along the State Route 58 corridor and will be visible from the roadway. Revegetation will include native tree species determined by the Caltrans Biologist and Caltrans Landscape Architect. Planting will include a 3-year plant establishment period.

VIS-2: All visible concrete headwalls and other drainage features will be colored and/or textured to visually blend in with the surrounding natural environment.

VIS-3: New and replaced guardrail and metal posts will be darkened to visually recede and reduce noticeability. Darkening will be determined by Caltrans Landscape Architects in conjunction with the Caltrans Project Engineer.

VIS-4: Preserve vegetation. Preserve as much existing vegetation as possible. Use prescriptive clearing and grubbing and grading techniques that save the most existing vegetation possible.

VIS-5: Disturbed areas. All disturbed construction access roads, staging areas, and other temporary uses will be restored to a natural-looking condition after construction.

CRLF-1: Only U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service-approved biologists will participate in activities associated with capturing, handling, and monitoring California red-legged frogs.

CRLF-2: Ground disturbance will not begin until the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service receives written approval that the biologist is qualified to conduct the work.

CRLF-3: A U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service-approved biologist will survey the project area no more than 48 hours before construction starts. If any life stage of California red-legged frogs are found, and these individuals are likely to be killed or injured by construction activities, the approved biologist will be allowed sufficient time to move them from the site before work begins. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service-approved biologist will relocate the California red-legged frogs to the shortest distance possible to a location that contains suitable habitat and will not be affected by construction activities. The relocation site will be in the same drainage where frogs were found to the extent practicable. Caltrans will coordinate with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on the relocation site before the capture of any California red-legged frogs.

CRLF-4: Before work begins on the project, a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service-approved biologist will conduct a training session for all construction

personnel. At a minimum, the training will include a description of the California red-legged frog and its habitat, other special-status wildlife that may be in the area, specific measures that are being implemented to conserve the California red-legged frog for the current project, and the boundaries within which the project may be accomplished.

CRLF-5: A U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service-approved biologist will be present at the worksite until all California red-legged frogs have been removed, workers have been instructed, and the disturbance of habitat has been completed. After this time, Caltrans will designate a person to monitor onsite compliance with all minimization measures. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service-approved biologist will ensure the individual receives the training outlined in measure 4 above and in the identification of California red-legged frogs. If the individual or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service-approved biologist recommends that work be stopped because California red-legged frogs will be affected in a manner not expected by Caltrans and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service during a review of the proposed action, they will notify the resident engineer immediately. The resident engineer will resolve the situation by requiring that all actions causing these effects to be stopped. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will be notified as soon as work stops.

CRLF-6: During project activities, all trash that may attract predators will be properly contained, removed from the worksite, and disposed of regularly. Following construction, all trash and construction debris will be removed from work areas.

CRLF-7: All refueling, maintenance, and staging of equipment and vehicles will occur at least 60 feet from riparian habitat or water bodies and not in a location where a spill will drain directly toward aquatic habitat unless otherwise preapproved by the necessary agencies. The Caltrans-designated monitor will ensure that habitat is not contaminated during operations. Before construction starts, Caltrans will ensure that a plan is in place for prompt and effective response to any accidental spills. All workers will be informed of the importance of preventing spills and the appropriate measures to implement should a spill occur.

CRLF-8: Habitat contours will be returned to a natural configuration at the end of project activities. This measure will be implemented in all areas disturbed by construction activities unless the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Caltrans determine that it is not feasible or that modifying original contours will benefit the California red-legged frog.

CRLF-9: The number of access routes, the size of staging areas, and the total area of activity will be limited to the minimum necessary to complete the project. Environmentally Sensitive Areas will be established to confine access routes and construction areas to the minimum area necessary to complete construction and minimize the impact to California red-legged frog habitat.

This goal includes locating access routes and construction areas outside of wetlands and riparian areas to the maximum extent practicable.

CRLF-10: Caltrans will attempt to schedule work for times of the year when impacts to the California red-legged frog will be minimal. For example, work that will affect large pools that may support breeding will be avoided, to the maximum degree practicable, during the breeding season (November through May). Isolated pools that are important in maintaining California red-legged frogs through the driest portions of the year will be avoided, to the maximum degree practicable, during the late summer and early fall. Habitat assessments, surveys, and technical assistance between Caltrans and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service during project planning will be used to assist in scheduling work activities to avoid sensitive habitats during key times of the year.

CRLF-11: To control sedimentation during and after project completion, Caltrans will implement the Best Management Practices outlined in any authorizations or permits received for the project issued under the authority of the Clean Water Act. If Best Management Practices are ineffective, Caltrans will attempt to remedy the situation immediately in coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

CRLF-12: If a worksite is temporarily dewatered by pumping, intakes will be screened with wire mesh not larger than 0.2 inch to prevent California red-legged frogs from entering the pump system. Water will be released or pumped downstream at an appropriate rate to maintain downstream flows during construction. Upon completion of construction activities, any diversions or barriers to flow will be removed in a manner that will allow flow to resume with the least disturbance to the substrate. Alteration of the streambed will be minimized to the maximum extent possible; any imported material will be removed from the streambed upon project completion.

CRLF-13: Unless approved by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, water will not be impounded in a manner that may attract California red-legged frogs.

CRLF-14: A U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service-approved biologist will permanently remove any individuals of exotic species, such as American bullfrogs (*Rana catesbeiana*), signal and red swamp crayfish (*Pacifastacus leniusculus; Procambarus clarkii*), and centrarchid fishes from the project area to the maximum extent possible. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service-approved biologist will be responsible for ensuring that such activities comply with the California Fish and Game Code.

CRLF-15: To ensure that diseases are not transported between worksites by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service-approved biologist, the fieldwork code of practice developed by the Declining Amphibian Populations Task Force will be followed at all times.

CRLF-16: Project sites will be revegetated with an assemblage of native riparian, wetland, and upland vegetation suitable for the area. Locally collected plant materials will be used to the extent practicable. Invasive, exotic plants will be controlled to the maximum extent practicable. This measure will be implemented in all areas disturbed by construction activities unless the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Caltrans determine that it is not feasible or practical.

CRLF-17: Caltrans will not use herbicides as the primary method used to control invasive, exotic plants. However, if Caltrans determines the use of herbicides is the only feasible method for controlling invasive, exotic plants at a specific project site, it will implement the following additional protective measures for the California red-legged frog:

a. Caltrans will not use herbicides during the breeding season for the California red-legged frog.

b. Caltrans will conduct surveys for the California red-legged frog immediately before the start of any herbicide use. If found, California red-legged frogs will be relocated to suitable habitat far enough from the project area that no direct contact with herbicides will occur.

c. Giant reed and other invasive plants will be cut and hauled out by hand and painted with glyphosate or glyphosate-based products, such as AquaMaster® or Rodeo®.

d. Licensed and experienced Caltrans staff or a licensed and experienced contractor will use a handheld sprayer for foliar application of AquaMaster® or Rodeo® where large monoculture stands occur at an individual project site.

e. All precautions will be taken to ensure that no herbicide is used on native vegetation.

f. Herbicides will not be used on or near open water surfaces (no closer than 60 feet from open water).

g. Foliar applications of herbicide will not occur when wind speeds are more than 3 miles per hour.

h. No herbicides will be used within 24 hours of forecasted rain.

i. Application of all herbicides will be done by qualified Caltrans staff or contractors to ensure that overspray is minimized and that all application is made in accordance with label recommendations and with the implementation of all required and reasonable safety measures. A safe dye will be added to the mixture to visually denote treated sites. Application of herbicides will be consistent with the U.S. Environmental

Protection Agency's Office of Pesticide Programs, Endangered Species Protection Program County bulletins; and

j. All herbicides, fuels, lubricants, and equipment will be stored, poured, or refilled at least 60 feet from riparian habitat or water bodies in a location where a spill will not drain directly toward aquatic habitat. Caltrans will ensure that habitat is not contaminated during such operations. Before construction starts, Caltrans will ensure that a plan is in place for a prompt and effective response to accidental spills. All workers will be informed of the importance of preventing spills and the appropriate measures to take should a spill occur.

JD-11: Work in jurisdictional areas will occur in the dry season, between May 1 and October 31, or as stipulated in regulatory agency permits.

JD-12: Before construction starts, Caltrans will obtain permits and agreements from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Regional Water Quality Control Board, and California Department of Fish and Wildlife, as applicable to project impacts.

JD-13: Before construction starts, Caltrans will prepare a Mitigation and Monitoring Plan to offset impacts to vegetation and natural habitats. The plan will be consistent with federal and state regulatory requirements and amended with any regulatory permit conditions, as required. Caltrans will implement the Mitigation and Monitoring Plan as necessary during construction and immediately following project completion.

JD-14: Before starting any ground-disturbing activities, Environmentally Sensitive Area boundary markers or fencing will be installed around jurisdictional resources. Caltrans-defined Environmentally Sensitive Areas will be noted on design plans and delineated in the field before the start of construction activities.

JD-15: Minimize impacts to native trees wherever feasible by minimizing native tree removal, limiting temporary impact areas, and replanting trees that must be removed.

JD-16: Before construction starts, the contractor will prepare and sign a Water Pollution Control Plan or a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan that complies with the Caltrans Storm Water Quality Handbook. Provisions of this plan will be implemented during and after construction, as necessary, to avoid and minimize erosion and stormwater pollution in and near the work area.

JD-17: During construction, all project-related hazardous materials spills within the project site will be cleaned up immediately. The contractor will keep spill prevention and cleanup materials readily accessible onsite during construction.

JD-18: Pollution and erosion control measures will be implemented during construction. Silt fencing or fiber rolls will be installed, as needed, between the project construction features and any stream, water body, or riparian habitat to prevent the discharge of sediment or pollutants into any stream or water body.

JD-19: Staging areas for equipment and vehicle fueling and storage will be located at least 100 feet away from the top of the bank of any stream or aquatic area and in a location where fluids or accidental discharges cannot flow into the stream or aquatic area.

JD-20: After construction has been completed, natural contours and vegetation will be restored as close as possible to their original condition in accordance with landscaping plans.

The following mitigation measure will be implemented to prevent a net loss of aquatic resource acreage, functions, and values:

AQUA-1 CEQA Mitigation: Caltrans will restore temporary impacts to riparian vegetation at a 1-to-1 ratio (acreage). If any riparian trees are removed, they will be replaced at a minimum ratio of 3-to-1. Because all riparian impacts and impacts to the Fremont cottonwood forest and woodland will occur in the Calf Canyon drainage system, onsite mitigation for this project will involve planting native riparian species in the Calf Canyon riparian zone. Replacement plantings will include appropriate native tree and understory species. To ensure success, monitoring will be conducted for three years, which will include annual inspections and weeding.

OAK-1: Minimize impacts to native oak trees wherever feasible by minimizing native oak tree removal, limiting temporary impact areas, and replanting trees that must be removed within the Caltrans right-of-way.

OAK-2: Before starting any ground-disturbing activities, Environmentally Sensitive Area fencing will be installed around the dripline of trees designated to be protected within the project limits. Caltrans-defined Environmentally Sensitive Areas will be noted on design plans and delineated in the field before the start of construction activities.

OAK-3: During construction, avoid spreading invasive species and pathogens by requiring that weeds designated for removal be removed before disturbing surface soils and disposed of the same day they are removed, all nursery stock be certified free of weeds, Phytophthora, or other plant diseases, and that imported soil is certified weed-free and from a Caltrans-approved source with protocols in place for minimizing the spread of Phytophthora and other plant diseases.

OAK-4: Caltrans will replace native oak trees at a minimum replacement ratio of 3-to-1. Oak trees will be replanted within or next to existing oak woodlands/savannahs on Caltrans' right-of-way within the project area. The

Caltrans Landscape Architect Division will develop planting plans and specifications that include oak tree plantings during the project design phase.

NB-1: Schedule vegetation removal between September 1 and January 31, outside of the typical nesting bird season. If construction activities are proposed to occur within 100 feet of potential habitat during the nesting season (February 1 to August 31), a qualified biologist will conduct a nesting bird survey no more than two weeks (14 days) before construction. If an active nest is found, the biologist will determine an appropriate buffer based on the habits and needs of the species. The buffer area will be avoided until the qualified biologist has determined that juveniles have fledged and are no longer dependent on the nest.

NB-2: Active bird nests should not be disturbed, and eggs or young birds covered by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and California Fish and Game Code should not be killed, destroyed, injured, or harassed at any time.

The following measures will help reduce the potential to introduce or spread invasive species and noxious weeds from or into the project area:

INV-1: All soils temporarily disturbed by construction will be treated with permanent erosion control with a seed mix comprised of local native grasses and forbs.

INV-2: Erosion control measures should specify the use of sterile or certified weed-free mulches and straw applications and/or hydroseed with a regionally appropriate seed mix.

GHG-1: Truck trips will be scheduled outside of peak morning and evening commute hours.

GHG-2: Longer duration lane closures will be scheduled to reduce the amount of equipment mobilization efforts.

GHG-3: To improve fuel efficiency in construction equipment, equipment will be maintained in proper tune and working condition, and the right sized equipment and equipment with new technologies will be used.

GHG-4: Transporting earthen materials will be reduced by balancing cut and fill quantities.

GHG-5: Using recycled materials (such as tire rubber) will be maximized.

GHG-6: Recycled water will be used to reduce the consumption of potable water during construction.

GHG-7: Pavement materials that lower the rolling resistance of highway surfaces will be used as much as possible while still maintaining design and safety standards.

GHG-8: Hot mix asphalt will be produced with warm mix asphalt technology.

GHG-9: An ultimate net loss of tree canopy within the project limits will be avoided through a combination of preservation and new planting.

GHG-10: Intelligent transportation systems will be implemented to smooth traffic flow and increase system efficiency.

NOI-1: The Caltrans District 5 Public Information Office, as advised by the project's resident engineer, will notify the public two weeks in advance of the construction schedule when construction noise and upcoming construction activities likely to produce an adverse noise environment are expected. A notice will be published in local news media of the dates and duration of proposed construction activities.

NOI-2: The construction contractor will shield loud pieces of stationary construction equipment if complaints are received from the public.

NOI-3: The construction contractor will locate portable generators, air compressors, etc., away from sensitive noise receptors as feasible.

NOI-4: The construction contractor will limit grouping major pieces of equipment operating in one area to the greatest extent feasible.

NOI-5: The construction contractor will use newer equipment that is quieter and ensure that all equipment items have the manufacturers' recommended noise abatement measures, such as mufflers, engine covers, and engine vibration isolators, intact and operational. Internal combustion engines used for any purpose on or related to the job should be equipped with a muffler or baffle of a type recommended by the manufacturer.

NOI-6: The construction contractor and resident engineer will consult the Caltrans District 5 noise staff if complaints are received during the construction process.

Appendix D Comment Letters and Responses

[Appendix D has been added since the draft environmental document was circulated.] This appendix contains the comments received during the public circulation and comment period from January 30, 2023, to March 6, 2023, retyped for readability. The comment letters are stated verbatim as submitted, with acronyms, abbreviations, and any original grammatical or typographical errors included. A Caltrans response follows each comment presented. Copies of the original comment letters and documents can be found in Volume 2 of this document.

Comment from Andy Mutziger (verbal comments made February 14, 2023, at the San Luis Obispo County Bicycle Advisory Committee with written comments emailed March 7, 2023)

Comment 1:

Hi Sunil Gandrathi and Juergen Vespermann,

I am following up on verbal public comments I made as a resident of Santa Margarita about the proposed SR58 CAPM project during a Caltrans presentation on the project for the SLO County Bicycle Advisory Committee on 14 Feb 2023. I'm not sure if the Caltrans staff members at that meeting documented my concerns so Caltrans could provide response to comments during your environmental review process for the projects. My comments were:

1. There is already ADA compliant corners on both sides of Southern side of 58 at H Street. For the safety of children walking to and from school and for general pedestrian safety, please:

a. Extend the sidewalks beyond the project's proposed I Street terminus to H Street

2. The 2023 atmospheric rivers again demonstrated the flooding risks in Santa Margarita. Thank you for the project's work to modernize the culverts that should help with future flood events. But, please also:

a. Use permeable concrete for this project to improve groundwater recharge in Santa Margarita during rain events.

I understand the comment period may be over for this project, but since I made these public comments 14 Feb, I'm hopeful that if they were not documented during that the BAC meeting for Caltrans to respond to, that you will correct the record and add these written comments as my 14 Feb comments.

A reasonable related comment I'd also like to make for item 1 above is:

b. Add a crosswalk on the north side of 58 across H Street to connect to the sidewalk leading to the existing sidewalk that leads to the school. A reasonable related comment I'd also like to make for item 2 above is:

b. Coordinate with other projects (e.g., SLO County Public Works) to ensure work they will complete to address culvert damage during the 2023 floods mate well and will not result in "bottlenecking" with the culvert changes included in this Caltrans project.

Would you please let me know your thoughts about ensuring my 14 Feb comments are added to the public comment list for Caltrans to respond to and whether Caltrans would also consider adding the related comments I raised in this email for Caltrans to also respond to?

Response to comment 1: This project is a pavement rehabilitation project, and the project limits were determined based on pavement rehabilitation needs. This included State Route 58 from I Street to State Route 229. Pedestrian accessibility was identified to be included in this project from I Street to J Street. The segment from H Street to I Street is not within this project's limits. Extending the limits of the sidewalk and other pedestrian improvements will be investigated in the next phase of this project.

If it is not possible to add to this project, the sidewalk component would be added to future projects. Caltrans coordinates with other agencies' proposed projects, and culvert sizing is determined in consideration of the size of other culverts in the area. This includes culverts outside the project limits to ensure that they function properly as a system. This project will overlay existing pavement; the impermeable area will not be changed by the overlay. Permeable concrete has not been approved for use on state highways at this time.

Comment from Brien Vierra (email February 27, 2023)

Comment 2:

Dear Mr. Fowler,

I am writing this letter to comment on the Santa Margarita 58 CAPM, Initial Study (IS) with Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration, Volume 1 of 2 dated January 2023. The IS was very informative and the work is appreciated. The document discusses several drainage improvements along the proposed work area but is limited to just replacing the existing corrugated steel pipes with “like-and-kind” at MP 1.80, 1.82, 1.84 and 1.88. In January of this year, the area from the start of this project to just past outlet post mile 2.0 was inundated with water in which the existing drainage system was inadequate to handle the storm flow. This has occurred several times in the past as well. During normal storm events the culverts run at near capacity. My comments/questions are as follows:

1. Will Caltrans be conducting a basic Hydrology Study during the design phase to size the drainage system at MP 1.80, 1.82, 1.84 and 1.88 correctly instead of just replacing “like-and-kind”? The current drainage system within the project area is inadequate and with the additional development in the area could increase the amount of run off.

2. The IS should consider any additional impacts that might be necessary for larger box/rectangular style concrete drainage structures.

We appreciate this opportunity to comment and urge Caltrans to redesign the proposed drainage improvements to minimize potential impacts to the community of Santa Margarita. If you have any questions, I can be reached at the address shown below.

Response to comment 2: The size of the culverts was reviewed during Caltrans’ preliminary analysis. The analysis showed that the capacity of the mentioned drainage systems is controlled by drainage facilities and flood levels downstream and outside of Caltrans' right-of-way. The culverts at post miles 1.80, 1.82, and 1.84 are the same size as the private driveway downstream. Therefore, increasing the size of these culverts creates a risk of overwhelming the drainage system downstream. Caltrans will further investigate this during the next phase of the project.

Comment from George Sullivan (email March 3, 2023)

Comment 3:

March 3rd, 2023

Californian Department of Transportation

Attention: Matt Fowler, Senior Environmental Planner

Re: Santa Margarita 58 CAPM

Initial Study, Proposed Mitigation, Negative Declaration

Matt,

I'll be brief and remain focused on three concerns:

1. The provided mapping is not user friendly and does not reflect certain improvements East of Santa Margarita.

2. Under Special Accommodations, as advertised on the public notice for this project, Caltrans recognizes the "Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990" that said, Project Mapping Appendix B, Page 53 currently depicts the proposed sidewalk improvement between I Street and J Street. I propose the sidewalk improvements be changed to include H Street to J Street. This would afford a safer access to the County Park and Santa Margarita Elementary School, "for people of all ages and abilities". Also, as a part of this improvement, the road grade should be somewhat leveled to improve the sighting distance for the safety of those crossing the intersection on their way to school. This has already been a publicized issue restricting truck traffic on State Highway 58.

3. The gradient of the summit just prior to the first encroachment East of Santa Margarita needs to be lowered to improve sighting distance. This would mitigate abrupt brake lights as a result of this new circulation approved by Caltrans. Icy roads are often, and the speed averages are high on this stretch of Highway 58. See Project Mapping, Appendix B, Pages 54 & 55.

Respectfully Submitted,

George Sullivan

Response to comment 3: The mapping has been updated to reflect the project more clearly. Extending the sidewalk will be investigated in the next phase of the project. If it is not possible to extend the sidewalk in this project, it will be added to a future project.

Adjusting the road to a lower profile would impact the ability of surrounding residences to maintain driveway connections, create potential drainage issues, and increase the overall costs of the project.

Adjusting the gradient of the summit East of Santa Margarita would be similar to adjusting the road profile, which would be beyond the scope of a pavement rehabilitation project. This would require a lot of earthwork and excavation to recreate the road and surrounding slopes and would result in many impacts to natural resources.

Comment from Matt Lynge (email March 4, 2023)

Comment 4: Hi, Matt Lynge here(CAB area #5 representative).

My primary concerns for the proposed project are that the primary benefit of this project are an upcoming development along proposed area of work and bicyclist who are obviously not paying road taxes for this project. So in short I would like like to inquire where proposed funding would come from for a project that appears to be minimally beneficial to locals?

Response to comment 4: Shoulder widening provides safety benefits for drivers and bicyclists. Along with safety, enhancing multimodal transportation opportunities is another goal Caltrans prioritizes. State Highway Operation and Protection Program funds are generated from gas taxes. Maintenance projects are prioritized based on the needs of the facility and compete for this State Highway Operation and Protection Program funding. This project was initiated based on the pavement condition, which is rated as poor. There was no consideration of upcoming development in starting this project.

Comment from JoAnn Head (email March 6, 2023)

Comment 5:

Dear Mr. Fowler:

I am writing to you as a member of the Santa Margarita Area Advisory Council (SMAAC) representing the Parkhill area. This project was added to our March agenda at the last minute, based on little more than a rumor. Few of my Pozo or Parkhill neighbors are aware of this pending project, and we will likely be impacted by it more than the residents of the Town of Santa Margarita.

I left you a voice message today, hoping to get some questions answered before commenting on the project, however, I have not heard back. Following are some initial questions but, once people have had an opportunity to better understand the scope of the project and what issues it is intended to address, I'm sure there will be more:

- The addition of an ADA compliant sidewalk along the east side of Estrada Avenue is baffling. Who is this intended to serve? If the expenditure of constructing a sidewalk is warranted, it would be much more beneficial to extend the sidewalk proposed along the west side of Estrada from "J" Street to the Community Park. This would also create an improved connection to the Highway 58 pedestrian crossing which leads to the elementary school.

- The number of trees "to be removed" is concerning and impossible to determine from the provided graphic.

- Initial Study Appendix B - from Match Line (L-1) to the beginning of the RHMA overlay:

    - If the main focus of this stretch is to improve safety conditions for bicyclists, has consideration been given to acquiring additional right-of-way along only one side of Highway 58, and improving a 2-way bicycle (only) route? This could be designed to retain as many oaks as possible, and completely eliminate the extreme cost of relocating multiple power poles. Perhaps something similar to the trail that runs along the north side of Highway 41 West, out of Atascadero. This would possibly aesthetically enhance this stretch of Highway 58, as well as provide a safe bicycle route. It would also mitigate the accident-waiting-to-happen at the blind hill where there has been at least one fatal accident in recent years.

- The entire portion of Highway 58 that is slated for RHMA overlay, from the new bridge to Highway 229, is completely unsuitable for safe bicycle travel. The road is simply too narrow and too windy to accommodate

bicycles alongside vehicular traffic. The cover photo on your Initial Study does a good job of illustrating this fact. I know of no one who commutes by bicycle along this route, and I've never seen a bicyclist who appeared to be utilizing this stretch for anything other than recreation. It seems unwise to encourage bicycle recreation along such a narrow windy highway.

Because the community has not been made aware of this project in any meaningful way, please consider extending your public comment period and holding an in-person public meeting, or sending a Caltrans representative to our next SMAAC meeting – we would really appreciate it.

Response to comment 5: The segment from H Street to I Street is not within the project limits, but this section has been noted, and Caltrans will investigate this in more detail in the next phase of this project. If this area is too constrained for this project, it will be noted and addressed in a future project.

The maximum number of trees was noted to estimate the environmental impact; however, as many trees as possible will be preserved. Mitigation replacement planting is required as a result of tree removal. The decision to remove trees was discussed among the Project Development Team after considering many factors, such as safety. Removing fixed objects from the roadside improves the safety of travelers.

This project is a pavement rehabilitation project to preserve the road for all users. The added shoulders from I Street to Pozo Road, while not for exclusive bicycle use, provide room for bicycle use off the traveled way. Relocating utility poles farther from the traveled way will improve the roadside safety for the traveling public and make room for shoulder construction along the initial 1.4 miles of the project.

Earlier stages of this project did consider adding shoulders east of the Pozo Road intersection, but design studies found that this would require extensive excavation and structure work for retaining walls that would be beyond the scope of this project.

A Caltrans representative will attend the next Santa Margarita Area Advisory Council meeting.

Comment from Stacey Phillips (email March 6, 2023)

Comment 6:

Please consider this Public Comment for Santa Margarita 58 CAPM

Good Afternoon,

Thank you for reaching out to the Santa Margarita Area Advisory with this flyer. This was brought to our attention just prior to our Wednesday, March 1, 2023, monthly meeting. The council was concerned that we had very little time to respond. JoAnn Head was able to get some flyers for us that day but we were never notified of this project and have had very little time to review and respond.

Here are some of my concerns at a glance:

1. The number of trees to be removed and their locations are concerning.

2. The short distance of the proposed sidewalk seems highly inadequate for any real improvement for safety within the town area.

3. Page 65, Appendix B of your mapping diagrams the project turns and heads to the east on HWY 58. This is a very narrow road and absolutely not a safe road to encourage bike travel. This is not a highly traveled road by bicycle because of the safety factor.

4. Very concerned about the cost of this proposed project with the movement of utility poles, removal of trees, drainage culverts being changed, all seem to be an exorbitant expense.

5. I would prefer to see more work done in the residential area of Santa Margarita that is dissected by HWY 58 and not in the rural area where safety could be offered to the children and families that cross the highway everyday to attend school or play at the park.

6. Traffic slowing measures within the downtown corridor would be a far better use of the money.

Please excuse the brevity of my comments but again I will state that it has been a disservice to the process of public comment to not have notified the Area Advisory Council.

Response to comment 6: The maximum number of trees was noted to estimate the environmental impact; however, the project will preserve as many trees as possible. Mitigation replacement planting is required as a result of tree removal. The decision to remove trees was discussed among the

Project Development Team after considering many factors, such as safety. Removing fixed objects from the roadside improves the safety of travelers.

The project limits were determined based on pavement rehabilitation needs. Caltrans will investigate adding additional sidewalks in the next phase of the project. If the project is unable to address this, it will be included in a future project.

This project is a pavement rehabilitation project to preserve the road for all users. The added shoulders from I Street to Pozo Road, while not for exclusive bicycle use, provide room for bicycle use off the traveled way.

Relocating utility poles farther from the traveled way will improve the roadside safety for the traveling public and make room for shoulder construction along the initial 1.4 miles of the project. Drainage culverts are being replaced because they are showing signs that they are at the end of their service life and will need to be replaced, or there is a risk of future road failure above the culverts.

Sidewalk improvements in the residential area of Santa Margarita have been raised to the Caltrans planning team and will be considered in future projects.

Traffic slowing measures would not address the needs of this project, such as improving deteriorating pavement and drainage systems that could lead to road failure.

The Santa Margarita Area Advisory Council has been added to Caltrans' distribution list for projects in Santa Margarita.

List of Technical Studies Bound Separately (Volume 2)

Air Quality, Greenhouse Gas, Noise, and Water Quality Assessment, October 2020

Climate Change Report, April 2022

Cultural Resources Screened Undertaking Memorandum, October 2021

Hazardous Waste Initial Site Assessment, November 2021

Location Hydraulic Study, February 2022

Natural Environment Study and Jurisdictional Delineation, April 2022

Paleontological Identification Report, November 2021

Visual Assessment Memorandum, April 2022

To obtain a copy of one or more of these technical studies/reports or the Initial Study, please send your request to:

Matt Fowler
District 5 Environmental Division
California Department of Transportation
50 Higuera Street, San Luis Obispo, California 93401

Or send your request via email to: matt.c.fowler@dot.ca.gov
Or call: 805-779-0793

Please provide the following information in your request:

Project title: Santa Margarita 58 CAPM

General location information: Near Santa Margarita in San Luis Obispo County

District number-county code-route-post mile: 05-SLO-58-PM 1.8-6.9

Project ID Number: 0518000095