

Whitley Avenue Intersection Improvements

At State Routes 43 and 137 (Whitley Avenue), in Kings County

06-KIN-43/137-PM 1.3/1.7, 0.0/0.2

0600000959

Initial Study with Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration



Prepared by the
State of California Department of Transportation

February 2014



General Information About This Document

What's in this document?

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) has prepared this Initial Study, which examines the potential environmental impacts of alternatives being considered for the proposed project in Kings County, California. The document describes the project, the existing environment that could be affected by the project, potential impacts from the project, and proposed avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures.

What should you do?

- Please read this Initial Study. Additional copies of this document as well as the technical studies are available for review at the Caltrans district office at 1352 West Olive Avenue, Fresno, CA 93728 and the Corcoran Branch Library at 1001 Chittenden Avenue, Corcoran, CA 93212. The document can also be accessed electronically at the following website: <http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist6/environmental/envdocs/d6/>.
- We welcome your comments. If you have any concerns about the project, please send your written comments to Caltrans by the deadline. Submit comments via U.S. mail to Caltrans at the following address:

Kelly J. Hobbs, Senior Environmental Planner
Sierra Pacific Environmental Analysis Branch
California Department of Transportation
855 M Street, Suite 200
Fresno, CA 93721

Submit comments via email to: kelly.hobbs@dot.ca.gov

- Submit comments by the deadline: 3/3/2014

What happens next?

After comments are received from the public and reviewing agencies, Caltrans may

1) give environmental approval to the proposed project, 2) do additional environmental studies, or 3) abandon the project. If the project is given environmental approval and funding is appropriated, Caltrans could design and build all or part of the project.

Printing this document: To save paper, this document has been set up for two-sided printing (to print the front and back of a page). Blank pages occur where needed throughout the document to maintain proper layout of the sections.

For individuals with sensory disabilities, this document is available in Braille, in large print, on audiocassette, or on computer disk. To obtain a copy in one of these alternate formats, please call or write to Caltrans, Attn: Kelly J. Hobbs, Senior Environmental Planner, Sierra Pacific Environmental Analysis Branch, 855 M Street, Suite 200, Fresno, CA 93721; (559) 445-5286, or use California Relay Service 1 (800) 735-2929 (TTY), 1 (800) 735-2929 (Voice), or 711.

CEQA Environmental Checklist

PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND BACKGROUND

Project title:	Whitley Avenue Intersection Improvements
Lead agency name and address:	Department of Transportation 855 M Street, Suite 200 Fresno, CA 93721
Contact person and telephone number:	Kelly Hobbs, (559) 445-5286
Project location:	At State Routes 43 and 137 (Whitley Avenue), just east of Corcoran in Kings County, California
Project sponsor's name and address:	Department of Transportation 855 M Street, Suite 200 Fresno, CA 93721
General plan description:	The intersection is a designated as a main eastern gateway into the city of Corcoran.
Zoning:	Light Industrial, Heavy Industrial, General Agriculture
Description of project: (Describe the whole action involved, including but not limited to later phases of the project, and any secondary, support, or off-site features necessary for project implementation)	Caltrans proposes to construct a roundabout at the intersection of State Route 43 and State Route 137 (Whitley Avenue) east of the city of Corcoran. The proposed configuration is a single lane rural roundabout. The project would reconstruct the intersection, realign State Route 43 approaches to the intersection, and cul-de-sac Avenue 4 ½ north of its intersection with State Route 137.
Surrounding land uses and setting: (Briefly describe the project's surroundings)	The intersection is located outside the city limits and inside Corcoran's sphere of influence. The surrounding land is mainly agriculture, with a private airstrip on the southwest corner that parallels State Route 43.
Other public agencies whose approval is required (e.g., permits, financial approval, or participation agreements):	Biological Opinion from U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED:

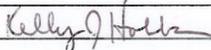
The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project. Please see the checklist beginning on page 11 for additional information. Any boxes *not* checked represent issues that were considered as part of the scoping and environmental analysis for the project, but for which no adverse impacts were identified. Regarding boxes not checked, no further discussion of these issues is in this document.

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

DETERMINATION:

On the basis of this initial evaluation,

<input type="checkbox"/>	I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I find that the proposed project MAY have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project.

Signature: 	Date: 1/20/14
Printed Name: Kelly J. Hobbs	

Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration

Pursuant to: Division 13, Public Resources Code

Project Description

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) proposes to construct a roundabout at the intersection of State Route 43 and State Route 137 (Whitley Avenue) near the city of Corcoran, in Kings County, California. The proposed configuration is a single lane rural roundabout. The project would reconstruct the intersection, realign State Route 43 approaches to the intersection, and cul-de-sac Avenue 4 ½ north of its intersection with State Route 137.

The adjacent land consists of an airport in the southwest quadrant with the remaining quadrants being agricultural land. This project may acquire less than 1.4 acres of farmland from the northeast and southeast quadrants of the intersection.

Determination

This proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration is included to give notice to interested agencies and the public that it is Caltrans' intent to adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration for this project. This does not mean that Caltrans' decision on the project is final. This Mitigated Negative Declaration is subject to change based on comments received by interested agencies and the public.

Caltrans has prepared an Initial Study for this project and, pending public review, expects to determine from this study that the proposed project would not have a significant effect on the environment for the following reasons.

The proposed project would have no effect on: aesthetics, air quality, cultural resources, greenhouse gases, hazards and hazardous materials, land use and planning, mineral resources, noise, population and housing, public services, recreation, transportation/traffic, and utilities and service systems.

In addition, the proposed project would have no significant effect on: agricultural and forest resources, and hydrology and water quality.

In addition, the proposed project would have no significantly adverse effect on biological resources because the following mitigation measures would reduce potential effects to insignificance:

- Credits from a U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and California Department of Fish & Wildlife approved mitigation bank will be purchased. The 1.1 acres of San

Joaquin kit fox foraging habitat lands that will be permanently affected within the project area will be mitigated for at a 3:1 ratio and the 0.77 acres of temporary impacts will be compensated for at a 1.1 to1 ratio.

- Standard measures to minimize or avoid impacts to the Swainson’s hawk and San Joaquin kit fox would be implemented.

Kelly J. Hobbs
Chief, Sierra Pacific Environmental Analysis Branch
Central Region
California Department of Transportation

Date

Project Vicinity Map

Whitley Avenue Intersection Improvement Project

06-KIN-43/137

Post Mile 1.3/1.7, 0.0/0.2

06-0M3700/0600000959

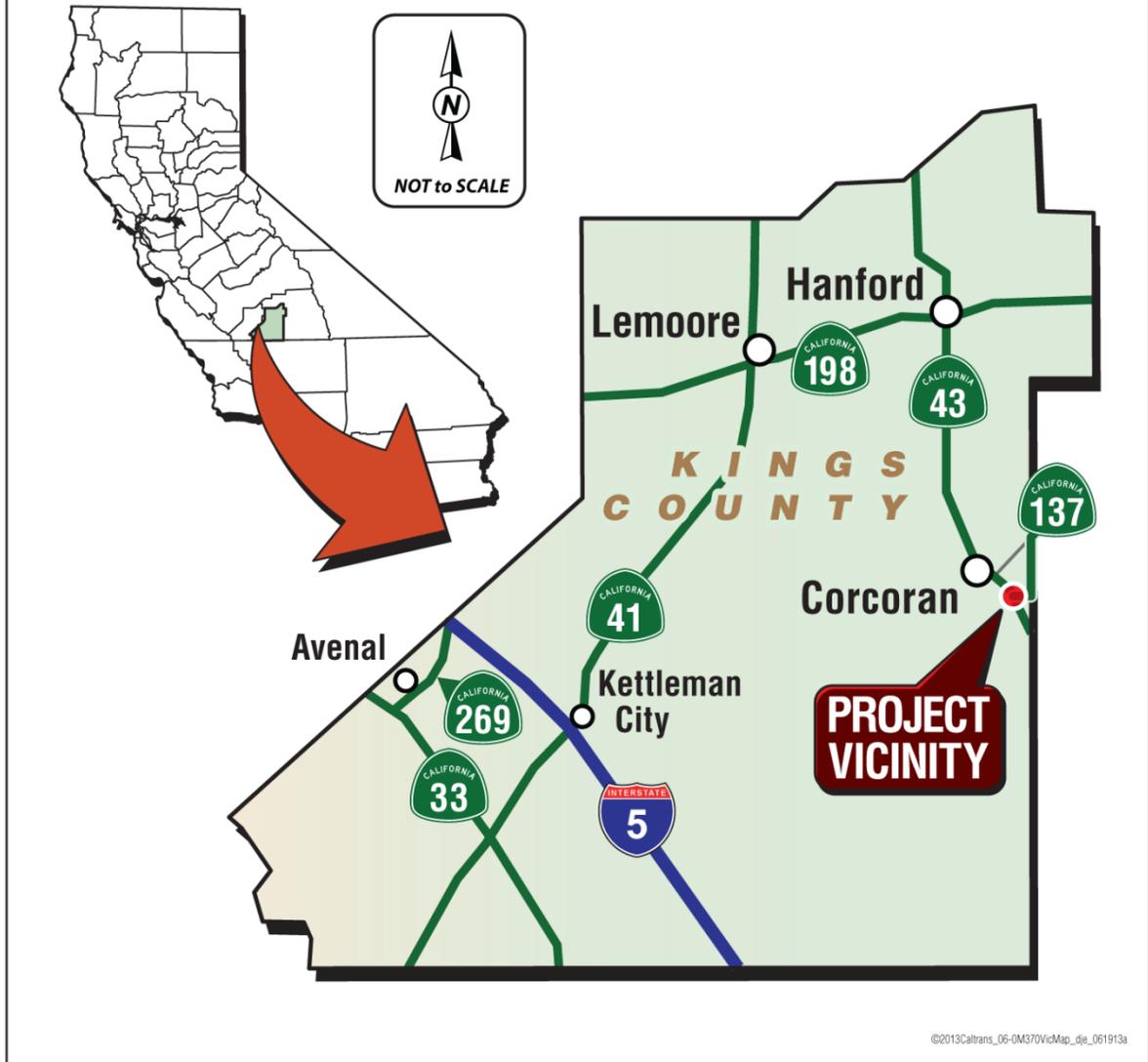


Figure 1 Project Vicinity Map

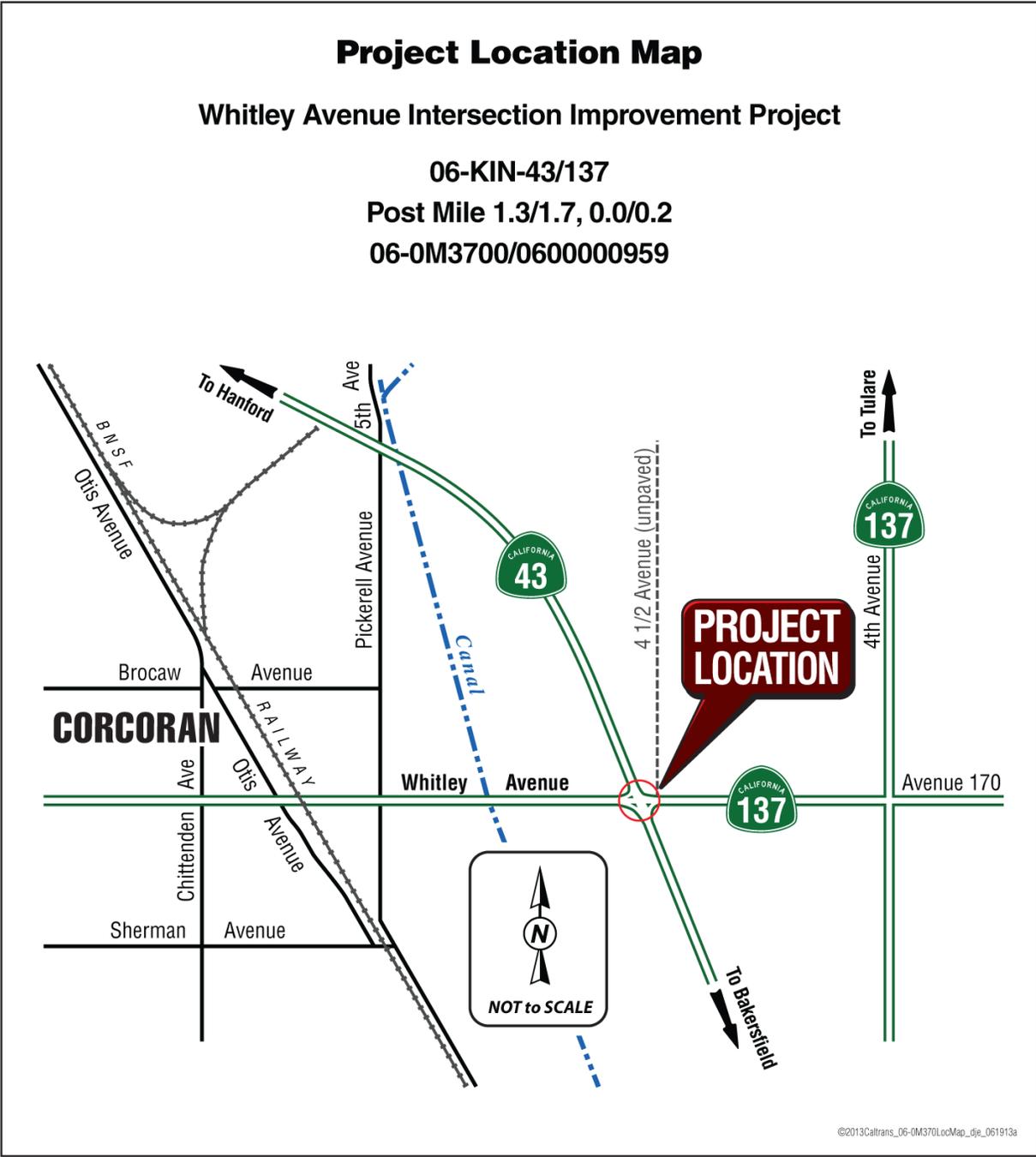


Figure 2 Project Location Map

Section 1 Impacts Checklist

CEQA Environmental Checklist

06-KIN-43/137

1.3/1.7, 0.0/0.2

06-0M3700

Dist.-Co.-Rte.

P.M/P.M.

E.A.

This checklist identifies physical, biological, social and economic factors that might be affected by the proposed project. In many cases, background studies performed in connection with the projects indicate no impacts. A NO IMPACT answer in the last column reflects this determination. Where a clarifying discussion is needed, the discussion either follows the applicable section in the checklist or is placed within the body of the environmental document itself. The words "significant" and "significance" used throughout the following checklist are related to CEQA—not NEPA—impacts. The questions in this form are intended to encourage the thoughtful assessment of impacts and do not represent thresholds of significance.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
I. AESTHETICS: Would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
II. AGRICULTURE AND FOREST RESOURCES:				
Would the project:				
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
e) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

The project would convert 1.4 acres of agricultural land to highway use. No land under Williamson Act contract would be affected. A Farmland Conversion Impact Rating form was completed by the Natural Resources Conservation Service office in Kings County. The 1.4 acres is farmland of Statewide or Local Importance, and the total site assessment score was 117 points. A score of at least 260 points is required for consideration under the Farmland Preservation Protection Act (Rating form, September 2013)

III. AIR QUALITY: Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:

a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES: Would the project:

a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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 US Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

See discussion for (a) and (d) on page xx.

V. CULTURAL RESOURCES: Would the project:

a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in §15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

VI. GEOLOGY AND SOILS: Would the project:

a) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
iv) Landslides?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

VII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS: Would the project:

Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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- a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?
- b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?

While Caltrans has included this good faith effort in order to provide the public and decision-makers as much information as possible about the project, it is Caltrans determination that in the absence of further regulatory or scientific information related to greenhouse gas emissions and CEQA significance, it is too speculative to make a significance determination regarding the project's direct and indirect impact with respect to climate change. Caltrans does remain firmly committed to implementing measures to help reduce the potential effects of the project. Additional information is located in Technical Studies Bound Separately (Volume II) of this document.

VIII. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS: Would the project:

- | | | | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 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? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| g) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| h) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

IX. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY: Would the project:

- | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|

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

The existing drainage basin on the northeast corner will be expanded and a new basin would be placed on the southeast east corner to collect runoff. This project would not substantially alter the existing drainage pattern or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff. The expansion of an existing basin and installation of a basin would prevent capacity exceedances to existing or planned drainage systems. The project would not be located in a floodplain (Project Report, xx and Floodplain Evaluation Summary, September 2013)

X. LAND USE AND PLANNING: Would the project:

a) Physically divide an established community?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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XI. MINERAL RESOURCES: Would the project:

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|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 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? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

XII. NOISE: Would the project result in:

- | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| c) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| d) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

XIII. POPULATION AND HOUSING: Would the project:

- | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

XIV. PUBLIC SERVICES:

- a) Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Fire protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Police protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Schools?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Parks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other public facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

XV. RECREATION:

a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

XVI. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC: Would the project:

a) Conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation including mass transit and non-motorized travel and relevant components of the circulation system, including but not limited to intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with an applicable congestion management program, including, but not limited to level of service standards and travel demand measures, or other standards established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Result in inadequate emergency access?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) Conflict with adopted policies, plans or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

XVII. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS: Would the project:

a) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
b) Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
g) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

XVIII. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

a) Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Additional Explanations for Questions in the Impacts Checklist

IV. Biological Resources (checklist questions a and d)

Threatened and Endangered Species

Affected Environment

A Natural Environment Study was completed in October, 2013. The project is located in a rural area. There are agricultural fields and a private air field adjacent to the project.

Environmental Consequences

Habitat for the following two special-status species was identified within the biological study area: Swainson's hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*), and San Joaquin kit fox (*Vulpes macrotis mutica*). Swainson's hawk is listed as threatened under State law. The kit fox is listed as endangered under Federal law and as threatened under state law.

Swainson's hawks were observed foraging/soaring within the biological study area. The study area does contain suitable nest trees for Swainson's hawks, however, no active nesting was observed. Therefore, no impacts to Swainson's hawks are anticipated with the implementation of the avoidance and minimization measures.

Presence for the San Joaquin kit fox was assumed, therefore no protocol level kit fox surveys were conducted within the biological study area. Kit foxes have been known to occur within and adjacent to the biological study area. During other biological surveys no San Joaquin kit foxes or any other sign of the animal (i.e., scat or tracks) was observed. However, they may occur within the project site as a potential transient forager, as the agricultural lands provide suitable corridors for the movement of this species.

Although suitable San Joaquin kit fox habitat for denning does not exist within the biological study area, the proposed construction will result in the permanent loss of potential foraging habitat within the agricultural lands. Permanent loss of 1.1 acres of foraging habitat for SJKF will be caused by construction activities in addition to temporary impacts to 0.77 acres of foraging habitat.

Consultation pursuant to Section 7 of the Federal Endangered Species Act with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will be necessary. Caltrans will seek coverage for impacts to San Joaquin kit fox by appending the Programmatic Biological Opinion on

the Effects of Minor Transportation Projects on the San Joaquin kit fox issued by the Fish & Wildlife Service. A biological assessment will be submitted to the Service for review.

Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

Swainson's Hawk

- Preconstruction surveys will be completed by qualified biologists during nesting season (February 15-September 1) prior to groundbreaking activities to ensure no nesting Swainson's hawks will be affected if construction is to occur during the nesting season.
- If nesting Swainson's hawks are observed onsite, then the nest site will be designated an environmentally sensitive area, with a buffer zone of 600 feet until it has been determined by a qualified biologist(s) that the young have fledged out of the nest.
- A qualified biologist(s) will monitor the active nest during construction activities.
- If a deceased raptor is found within the project limits, all work within 100 feet of the carcass will halt and the Resident Engineer will be contacted. Work will not be allowed to resume near the carcass until the Resident Engineer provides written authorization. No injured or dead Swainson's hawks may be handled or otherwise disturbed.
- A special provision for migratory birds will be included to ensure that no potential nesting migratory birds are affected during construction activities.
- Removal of any trees within the project impact area should be done outside of the nesting season; however, if a tree within the project impact area needs to be removed during the nesting season, a qualified biologist(s) will inspect the tree prior to removal to ensure that no nests are present.

San Joaquin Kit Fox

- Credits from a U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and California Department of Fish & Wildlife approved mitigation bank will be purchased. The 1.1 acres of foraging habitat lands that will be permanently affected within the project area will be mitigated for at a 3:1 ratio and the 0.77 acres of temporary impacts will be compensated for at a 1.1 to 1 ratio.
- A preconstruction survey will be conducted in accordance with the *Standardized Recommendations for Protection of the San Joaquin Kit Fox Prior to or during*

Ground Disturbance (USFWS 1999) and will be completed prior to the initiation of construction related activities.

- Prior to the initiation of groundbreaking a Caltrans biologist(s) will conduct an education and training session for all construction personnel. All individuals who will be involved in the site preparation or construction shall be present, including the project representative(s) responsible for reporting take to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and California Department of Fish & Wildlife. Training sessions shall be repeated for all new employees before they access the project site.
- At the end of each working day the contractor will take measures to prevent the entrapment of kit fox in all excavated, steep-walled holes, or trenches. These measures will include covering excavations with plywood or providing dirt or plank escape ramps. The contractor will also inspect all pipes and culverts before burying, capping, or other activities. If a kit fox is discovered during these inspections, the pipe or culvert will not be disturbed (other than to move it to a safe location if necessary) until after the fox has escaped.
- The contractor shall immediately notify the Resident Engineer if a dead, injured, or entrapped San Joaquin kit fox is found. All construction activity within a 150 foot radius of the kit fox shall be halted and may not resume until the Resident Engineer provides written authorization. Any entrapped kit fox shall be permitted to escape. No injured or dead kit fox may be handled or otherwise disturbed.
- If a kit fox den is discovered, all construction activities within a 150 foot radius of the den shall be halted and the Engineer shall be contacted immediately. Construction may not continue within the 150 foot radius until the Engineer provides written authorization.
- All food related trash items such as wrappers, cans, bottles, and food scraps will be disposed of in closed containers and removed at least once every day from the entire project site.
- All construction related vehicles will adhere to a 20-mile per hour speed limit while within construction limits and vehicle travel will be limited to established roadways except for new lane construction within the median.
- No pets or firearms shall be permitted on the construction site to avoid harassment, injuring, or killing San Joaquin kit fox.

Appendix A Project Layout

