

RECORD OF DECISION

**State Route 79 Realignment Project
Riverside County, California**

DISTRICT 8-RIV-79 PM R15.78-/R33.80
EA: 494000 PN: 0800000784

December 2016

California Department of Transportation

The environmental review, consultation, and any other action required in accordance with applicable Federal laws for this project is being, or has been, carried out by Caltrans under its assumption of responsibility pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 327.

A. INTRODUCTION

The Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC), in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), the County of Riverside, the City of Hemet, and the City of San Jacinto, has proposed a Project for the realignment of State Route (SR) 79 in the vicinity of the cities of Hemet and San Jacinto in Riverside County, California. The realignment is proposed as a divided limited-access expressway with four travel lanes (two lanes in each direction) on a new alignment. The Project limits begin south of Domenigoni Parkway (post mile [PM] R15.78) and end approximately 18 miles north at the intersection of SR 79 and Gilman Springs Road (PM R33.80). The proposed Project is funded by RCTC, with the use of local and federal funds, and is therefore subject to state and federal environmental review requirements. Project documentation, therefore, has been prepared in compliance with both the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Caltrans is the lead agency under CEQA. In addition, FHWA's responsibility for environmental review, consultation, and any other action required in accordance with applicable Federal laws for this Project is being, or has been, carried out by Caltrans under its assumption of responsibility pursuant to 23 U.S.C. §327.

The purpose of the SR 79 Realignment Project (Project) is to provide a transportation facility that will effectively and efficiently accommodate regional north-south movement of people and goods between Domenigoni Parkway and Gilman Springs Road. The Project will:

- Improve traffic flow for local and regional north-south traffic in the San Jacinto Valley
- Improve operational efficiency and enhance safety conditions by maintaining route continuity and upgrade the facility
- Allow regional traffic, including truck traffic, to bypass local roads
- Reduce the diversion of traffic from state routes onto local roads

Dates

As part of this ROD, on behalf of FHWA, Caltrans is advising the public of final agency actions subject to 23 U.S.C. §139. A claim seeking judicial review of the federal agency actions on this realignment Project will be barred unless the claim is filed within the time allowed per MAP-21 150-day statute of limitations. If a Statute of Limitations is not published in the Federal Register, the normal 6-year period for claims applies.

Background

Public review of the Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (Draft EIR/EIS) prepared for the Project began on February 7, 2013 and ended on March 25, 2013. The Partially Recirculated Draft EIR/ Supplemental Draft EIS (SDEIS) public review began on August 24, 2015 and ended on October 8, 2015. A Final EIR/EIS was published on the Federal Register for review on November 4, 2016 and the comment period ended on December 4, 2016.

Caltrans based its selection of the preferred alternative upon the data presented in the Draft EIR/EIS and Partially Recirculated Draft EIR/Supplemental Draft EIS, as well as comments received from agencies and individuals during the public review periods.

B. DECISION

This ROD approves the selection of the preferred alternative identified in the Final EIR/EIS as the Project for implementation. The selected alternative (Build Alternative 1br) will provide a divided, limited-access expressway with four travel lanes (two lanes in each direction) in the cities of Hemet, San Jacinto, and the County of Riverside. Build Alternative 1br will realign SR 79 from Domenigoni Parkway to Gilman Springs Road and includes Roadway Segments B, C, G, I, J, M, and N (described in further detail in Section C). Local access connections will include both at-grade intersections and grade-separated interchanges. Roadway segments will include inside and outside shoulders, a median, and two lanes traveling in each direction (henceforth referred to as the Project roadway). The total median width will be 84 feet (ft) measured from the inside edge of traveled lane on one side of the roadway to the inside edge of traveled lane on the opposing side of the roadway. The roadway section includes a median with 5 ft inside shoulders, 12 ft travel lanes, and 10 ft outside shoulders. Side slopes will be required outside the shoulders.

The ROD explains the basis for the Project decision as completely as possible, based on the information contained in the Final EIR/EIS (40 CFR 1502.2). As documented in the Final EIR/EIS (Section 2.3), after considering public comments and coordinating with federal and state regulatory agencies and local stakeholders, it was determined Build Alternative 1br – Segments B, C, G, I, J, M, and N is the Environmentally Superior Alternative and is the Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative (LEDPA). This determination was based on an evaluation process consistent with the Memorandum of Understanding for the NEPA and Clean Water Act Section 404 Integration Process for Federal Aid Surface Transportation Projects in California, May 2007 (NEPA 404 MOU). The United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) concurred in the determination that Build Alternative 1br was the preliminary LEDPA (Final EIR/EIS Section 2.3).

C. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

Various build alternatives were analyzed using the following criteria to eliminate or retain them for further consideration:

- Ability to meet the Project purpose and need
- Extent of environmental impact and community disruption
- Constructability
- Regulatory Constraints
- Fundability

During the preliminary studies for the SR 79 Realignment Project, eight transportation alternatives were developed, and identified as Alternatives A through H. Alternatives were identified based on past studies and comments received from stakeholders, including elected officials, city and resources agency staff, and

the community. Following the completion of the Realignment Study Report (1998), a study was prepared to advance the detail on the alternatives considered for the Project. The Project Study Report/Project Development Support (PSR/PDS) (2002) was undertaken to advance the concepts for the alternatives for the proposed Project. Because of this study, the initial eight design sections were improved to create a number of alternative segments for the Project. The locations of these segments in the San Jacinto Valley are shown in Exhibit H of the PSR/PDS and are included in Appendix J of the Final EIR/EIS.

Based on the results of the alternatives evaluation sixteen segments were eliminated from further analysis. Build Alternatives 1a, 1b, 1br, 2a, 2b and design options 1b1 and 2b1, along with the No Build Alternative, were identified for consideration in the Draft EIR/EIS and Draft Recirculated EIR/Supplemental DEIS as the most reasonable and feasible. Detailed discussions of these build alternatives is provided in Section 2.2 of the Final EIR/EIS.

No Build Alternative

The No Build Alternative would require no action by the Project proponent. Existing and projected capacity and operational benefits would not be realized. Existing SR 79 would not be realigned, R/W would not be acquired, and roadway construction would not occur. The assumptions used for the traffic analysis of the No Build Alternative at the 20-Year Design Horizon of the Project (2040) include:

- The Mid County Parkway (formerly Cajalco/Ramona Corridor) would be a four-lane expressway.
- Arterial streets would be built to City or County General Plan classification standards by 2040.
- Improvements planned by Caltrans and the County of Riverside for the portion of SR 79 between Hunter Road and Newport Road would be in place. There would be no further improvements on this portion of SR 79 before 2040.
- All regional facilities would be in accordance with the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).

The portion of SR 79 proposed for realignment would remain in place and unchanged. The selection of the No Build Alternative would not preclude construction of projects currently included in the General Plans of Riverside County, the City of Hemet, and the City of San Jacinto or of projects that might be proposed in the future.

Build Alternatives 1a, 1b, 1br, 2a, and 2b

The build alternatives (Build Alternatives 1a, 1b, 1br, 2a and 2b) propose to realign SR 79 from south of Domenigoni Parkway to south of Gilman Springs Road. The build alternatives are composed of different combinations of 14 roadway segments (A through N) that make up the Project. Descriptions of the roadway segments are presented below. The build alternatives consist of the following roadway segments:

- Build Alternative 1a – Roadway Segments A, E, G, I, J, L, and N
- Build Alternative 1b – Roadway Segments B, C, G, I, K, M, and N
- Build Alternative 1br - Roadway Segments B, C, G, I, J, M, and N
- Build Alternative 2a – Roadway Segments A, F, H, I, K, L, and N
- Build Alternative 2b – Roadway Segments B, D, H, I, J, M, and N

In addition, two design options were developed in response to comments from the Winchester community regarding the height of the profile as initially described for the base condition. Both design options would be on the southern end of the Project near the Winchester community. Design Option 1b1 would affect Roadway Segments B, C, and G of Build Alternative 1b. Design Option 2b1 would affect Roadway Segments B, D, and H of Build Alternative 2b. The design options would not change the roadway profile for Roadway Segments I, K, M, and N of Build Alternative 1b or Roadway Segments I, J, M, and N of Build Alternative 2b. The design options consist of the following roadway segments:

- Design Option 1b1 - Roadway Segments B, C, G, I, K, M, N
- Design Option 2b1 - Roadway Segments B, D, H, I, J, M, N

Proposed Engineering Features

The Project roadway will open to traffic as a limited-access expressway with four travel lanes (two lanes in each direction). Local access connections will include both at-grade intersections and grade-separated interchanges. Based on this, roadway segments will include inside and outside shoulders, a median, and two lanes traveling in each direction (referred to as the Project roadway). The total median width will be 84 ft measured from the inside edge of traveled lane on one side of the roadway to the inside edge of traveled lane on the other side. Within the median width, there will be inside shoulders with a width of 5 ft each. The width of the two travel lanes will be 24 ft, each 12 ft in width. The outside shoulder width will be 10 ft. Side slopes will be required outside the shoulders. Because their widths range along the roadway, a varying R/W will be required. Therefore, the actual width of the Project R/W ranges from 230 ft to 2,035 ft for the Project. The descriptions of the roadway segments are as follows:

Roadway Segment A

Roadway Segment A begins at existing SR 79 south of Newport Road. The alignment going north crosses under Newport Road then swings westerly before a long curve to the east takes the alignment over Domenigoni Parkway, Salt Creek Channel, Winchester Road, and Olive Avenue on a viaduct structure.

Roadway Segment B

Roadway Segment B begins at existing SR 79 south of Newport Road. The alignment going north crosses under Newport Road, then swings easterly and crosses over Patterson Avenue and Patton Avenue.

A design option has been considered for this segment that would include a northbound exit ramp and southbound entrance ramp from Newport Road to SR 79.

Roadway Segment C

Roadway Segment C continues from Segment B in a northeasterly direction, crossing over Domenigoni Parkway, Salt Creek Channel, and Olive Avenue on a viaduct structure. The alignment then continues north, where it crosses Simpson Road and the San Jacinto Branch Line. It then crosses over Ranchland Road, where a future full interchange is proposed, then continues farther north over Stowe Road.

A design option was considered for this Segment that would lower the vertical profile through the valley north of Domenigoni Parkway. This would include an at-grade crossing at Simpson Road. Ranchland Road

would cross over SR 79, where a future full interchange would be proposed. SR 79 would continue farther north, with the profile rising to take the alignment over Stowe Road.

Roadway Segment D

Roadway Segment D continues from Segment B in a northeasterly direction, and the alignment crosses over Domenigoni Parkway, Salt Creek Channel, and Olive Avenue on a viaduct structure. The alignment then continues north, where it crosses Simpson Road, then continues over the San Jacinto Branch Line. It then crosses over a Future Street “A” where a full interchange is proposed, then continues farther north over Stowe Road. Future Street “A” improvements are to be built by others. This is noted as the Stetson Avenue/Grand Avenue realignment in the Hemet General Plan.

A design option has been considered for this Segment that would lower the vertical profile through the valley north of Domenigoni Parkway. This would include an at-grade crossing at Simpson Road. A proposed new road near Grand Ave would cross over SR 79, where a full interchange is proposed. SR 79 would continue farther north, with the profile rising to take the alignment over Stowe Road.

Roadway Segment E

Roadway Segment E continues from Segment A in a northeasterly direction. The alignment crosses over Whittier Avenue, Patterson Avenue, and Simpson Road, and then takes a long curve to the north, where it crosses over the San Jacinto Branch Line. It then crosses over Ranchland Road, where a proposed full interchange is proposed, then continues farther north over Stowe Road.

Roadway Segment F

Roadway Segment F continues from Segment A in an easterly direction, where it crosses over Whittier Avenue and Patterson Avenue. It then crosses over the Hemet Channel and takes a long curve to the north, where it crosses Simpson Road and a Future Street where a full interchange is proposed. The alignment then continues north over the San Jacinto Branch Line, then farther north over Stowe Road.

Roadway Segment G

Roadway Segment G continues north from Segment C or Segment E, then takes a long curve around the West Hemet Hills in an easterly direction, where it crosses over California Avenue. The alignment then curves back again in a northeasterly direction and crosses over Florida Avenue, where a full interchange is proposed.

A design option was considered for this Segment in which the vertical profile was revised to tie in with the lower profile on Segment C through the valley.

Roadway Segment H

Roadway Segment H continues in a northeasterly direction from Segment D or Segment F. It cuts through the West Hemet Hills, then crosses over California Avenue and Florida Avenue, where a full interchange is proposed.

A design option was considered for this Segment in which the vertical profile is raised through the West Hemet Hills with a maximum grade of 4.58 percent. This results in less cut through the hill but still provides

enough material to balance the earthwork. Because the grade exceeds 1.6 percent, a truck climbing lane in the northbound direction would be required for 5,577 ft.

Roadway Segment H was analyzed and accepted as a value analysis (VA) build alternative. The segment was shifted farther to the west to avoid a potential impact to the vernal pools in the area. The new alignment avoids two crossings of the San Diego canal, improves the interchange at SR 74, and has one fewer street crossing. The addition of this new “Midwestern” alignment made it possible to eliminate the original Eastern alignment from consideration. The proposed Eastern alignment corridor has become so developed in recent years that constructing SR 79 in this area would not be feasible due to R/W requirements, business relocations, and social impacts.

Roadway Segment I

Roadway Segment I continues in a northerly direction from Segment G. An overcrossing is proposed at Devonshire Avenue. For the Preferred Alternative, Build Alternative 1br, Tres Cerritos Avenue is proposed to be a cul-de-sac along the west side of SR 79 with no direct access to SR 79.

Roadway Segment J

Roadway Segment J continues in a northerly direction from Segment I. A single undercrossing is proposed that spans over the San Diego Canal, west of Warren Road, and north of Esplanade Avenue. A full interchange is proposed at Esplanade Avenue. The alignment then continues northeasterly with an undercrossing at Seventh Street.

Roadway Segment K

Roadway Segment K continues in a northerly direction from Segment I. It crosses south over Esplanade Avenue, and east of Warren Road, and the San Diego Canal. It crosses the San Diego Canal south of Esplanade Avenue. A full interchange is proposed at Esplanade Avenue. The alignment then continues northeasterly and crosses over Seventh Street.

Roadway Segment L

Roadway Segment L continues in a northerly direction from Segment J or Segment K. The alignment crosses under Cottonwood Avenue and continues over the Casa Loma Canal. It then crosses over Future Street “B”, where a full interchange is proposed, and takes a long curve to the east for a short distance, then curves around again to the north, where it crosses under Sanderson Avenue, then over the Colorado River Aqueduct. Future Street “B” improvements are to be built by others. This is noted as Bridge Street in the San Jacinto General Plan.

Roadway Segment M

Roadway Segment M continues in a northeasterly direction from Segment J or Segment K. The alignment crosses under Cottonwood Avenue, then takes a long curve to the northeast and continues parallel to the Casa Loma Canal. It then crosses under Sanderson Avenue and takes a long curve to the north, where it crosses over the Colorado River Aqueduct.

Roadway Segment N

Roadway Segment N continues in a northerly direction from Segment L or Segment M. It crosses over the Ramona Expressway and a future drainage facility, where it ties into existing SR 79 just south of the San Jacinto River.

D. SECTION 4(f)

A Section 4(f) Evaluation (Appendix B of the Final EIR/EIS) was prepared to identify the Section 4(f) resources in the Project area; describe the nature and extent of the use of 4(f) resources; evaluate alternatives that would avoid the use of Section 4(f) resources; evaluate which alternative has the Least Overall Harm to the environment; and, describe measures to minimize harm to the affected resources. All practicable measures to minimize environmental harm have been incorporated into the decision to select Alternative 1br per 40 CFR 1505.2(c).

There are two identified Section 4(f) resources within approximately 0.25-mile of the preferred alternative. The Historic Property Survey Report (HPSR) (2010) and First Supplemental HPSR (2014) and Finding of Effect (2015) determined that two properties would result in use under Section 4(f) at the following historic properties:

1. The Traditional Cultural Property (TCP) consisting of *Cheexayam Pomwappivu* (Seven Sisters), and 'Anó' *Potma* (Coyote's Mouth), and the intervening valley. The use of the TCP was based on the following factors:
 - The TCP is privately owned
 - No temporary construction easements or other temporary uses of land outside the defined footprint-R/W are anticipated from the TCP
 - The TCP encompasses approximately 2,908.3 acres (ac). Approximately 141.1 ac direct use of land from within the property (4.9 percent of the overall total acres)
 - The TCP is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) under Criterion A for its association with events that have made a significant contribution to broad patterns of Native American history; Criterion B for its association with 'Anó and the *Chéexayam*, significant persons in the history of the Luiseño as well as other local Native American communities; and Criterion D for continued potential to yield information important to history
 - The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) concurred with this determination on January 20, 2015
2. The Potential Prehistoric Archaeological District (PPAD) includes 24 bedrock milling sites/components (BRMs) identified within the APE. The use of the PPAD was based on the following factors:
 - The Project would result in the direct use of 3 bedrock milling components which are contributing elements of the PPAD. BRMs were determined individually ineligible for listing on the NRHP, but are considered contributing elements of the PPAD.
 - The PPAD contains an unknown number of archaeological resources and extends beyond the limits of the APE and may extend beyond the 9-mile (mi) Study Area investigated during Phase II studies.

- 24 BRMs/components are presumed to collectively contribute to the presumed significance of the PPAD under Criterion A for their potential association with events that have made a significant contribution to broad patterns of prehistory, and Criterion D for their potential to yield important information.
- The Caltrans Cultural Studies Office approved presumption of eligibility for the PPAD on September 29, 2014, in accordance with the Section 106 Programmatic Agreement between Caltrans and the SHPO, Stipulation VIII.C.4.

There was an extensive alternative development process conducted in the preliminary design phase. Multiple alternatives were considered and previously studied but dropped from further consideration due to community and environmental impacts, including Section 4(f) impacts and inconsistencies with the Project purpose and need.

The No Build alternative is the only alternative that would completely avoid the PPAD and TCP, however, it would not be prudent and feasible because it would compromise the Project to a degree that it would be unreasonable to proceed given the Project's stated purpose and need (one of the criteria at 23 CFR 774.17). No further analysis of criteria to assess the No Build alternative was conducted. Caltrans has concluded that the No Build alternative would not be a prudent alternative to avoid use of land from the PPAD.

Due to the unknown number of prehistoric archaeological resources that may be associated with the PPAD, the limits of the PPAD cannot be entirely defined for purposes of this project. Since the limits of the PPAD cannot be entirely defined due to the unknown number of prehistoric archaeological resources, an avoidance alternative for this 4(f) resource cannot be determined at this time. As defined in 23 CFR 774, a feasible and prudent avoidance alternative "avoids using any Section 4(f) property and does not cause other severe problems of a magnitude that substantially outweighs the importance of protecting the Section 4(f) property."

For the TCP the studied Eastern Alternative (Final EIR/EIS Appendix B: Figure 4.4-1 TCP Avoidance Alternative: Eastern Alternative) would avoid the TCP. Based on the balancing factors and criteria that considers the ability of the TCP avoidance alternative to meet the criteria in 23 CFR 774.17, the feasible and prudent determination was that this avoidance alternative is not a prudent alternative to avoid the use of land from the TCP because it would result in severe social and economic impacts due to the extensive right-of-way impacts, severe disruption to established communities and severe impacts to other federally protected resources. Although there is a feasible alternative that avoids the use of land from the TCP, based on the discussion above, Caltrans concluded that the avoidance alternative is not prudent. Therefore, there is not a feasible and prudent alternative that avoids the use of all Section 4(f) properties, including the PPAD and TCP.

Build Alternative 1b with refinements (1br) was designed to be the Least Overall Harm Alternative and reduce direct impacts to the TCP by minimizing the cut through 'Anó' Potma. Build Alternative 1br proposes construction of new roadway that would result in physical damage of 99.7 ac of the 2,908.3-ac TCP, or 3.4 percent. Direct impacts would occur at contributing features 'Anó' Potma and the intervening valley. At 'Anó' Potma, the proposed cut would be limited to the northwestern slope where approximately 29.7 ac would be removed, equivalent to approximately 6.3 percent of the hill. The impact to 'Anó'

Potma caused by Build Alternative 1br would significantly change the setting, feeling, and character of the hill but would not diminish the integrity of its location or association to the point that it no longer contributes to the significance of the TCP. Cut and fill would also impact approximately 70.0 ac of the intervening valley (15.0 percent). Direct impacts to open space within the intervening valley would change the setting and feeling of the valley but would not diminish its integrity of location, feeling, or association. In addition, Build Alternative 1br would introduce visual elements, such as elevated roadway and bridges, which would diminish the integrity of the TCP's contributing features.

Measures to Minimize Harm or Avoidance, Minimization

Caltrans, SHPO, and four Native American Tribes were involved in the consultation process to identify and develop measures to resolve the adverse effect on the TCP and PPAD. RCTC also participated in the consultation regarding measures to address those Project effects. Those measures are identified in a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between Caltrans and SHPO, with RCTC, as invited Signatory to the MOA and the four Native American Tribes, City of Hemet and City of San Jacinto as Concurring Parties to the MOA. The MOA was approved and signed on March 25, 2016 and is provided in Appendix O in the Final EIR/EIS. Those measures are provided in detail in the Environmental Commitments Record (ECR) provided in Appendix E of the Final EIR/EIS. Those measures are:

- CR-1: Cultural Materials Discovered during Construction
- CR-2: Archaeological and Native American Monitoring
- CR-3: Discovery of Human Remains
- CR-4: Establishments of Environmentally Sensitive Areas
- CR-5: Preparation of a Historic Context for the PPAD
- CR-6: Spatial and Visual Analysis of Elements of the PPAD
- CR-7: Photogrammetric Documentation of Elements of the PPAD
- CR-8: Support for the NRHP Nomination of the TCP
- CR-9: Collaboration on Reports

E. MEASURES TO MINIMIZE HARM

The preferred alternative incorporates all practical measures to minimize environmental harm, which were described in the Final EIR/EIS. All measures located within Table 1, are commitments imposed under this ROD for the preferred alternative. This listing is provided to guide and facilitate Project design and construction. This list will also facilitate the monitoring and implementation of the mitigation measures. The measures described below will either be incorporated into or implemented in conjunction with the design and/or construction for the preferred alternative. A detailed description of impacts and mitigation measures can be found in the appropriate environmental resources sections in Chapters 3 of the Final EIR/EIS, as well as the Environmental Commitments Record (ECR) located within Appendix E. The ECR brings together all the relevant environmental compliance measures into one document to efficiently track all avoidance, minimization and mitigation measures put forth in the Final EIR/EIS, as well as those agreed upon later during the permitting phase of the Project with the relevant regulatory agencies.

Table 1: Summary of Primary Environmental Impacts and Related Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

Potential Impacts	Preferred Alternative 1br	Avoidance/ Minimization/ Mitigation Measures
Human Environment		
Land Use		
Existing and Future Land Use	Planned use of land converted to transportation use: Agricultural 40.1 ac Commercial/Industrial 170.8 ac Designated Open Space 39.3 ac Residential 233.0 ac Rural Residential 194.5 ac Services/Facilities 33.7 ac Mixed Use/Specific Plan 230.4 ac Total Land Required 941.8 ac	Measures titles only are listed here, with the details available in Chapter 3 of the Final EIR/EIS. LU-1. City of Hemet General Plan and Build Alternative 1a. LU-2. City of San Jacinto General Plan and Build Alternative 1a. LU-3. City of Hemet General Plan and Build Alternative 1b, 1br and Design Option 1b1. LU-4. City of Hemet General Plan and Build Alternative 2a. LU-5. City of San Jacinto General Plan and Build Alternative 2a. LU-7. General Plan Consistency
Growth	Overall level of growth and general location would not change from the No Build Alternative. Commercial and higher density residential will be most likely near planned intersections and interchanges, including East Newport Road, Domenigoni Parkway, Ranchland Road, Florida Avenue, Esplanade Avenue, Cottonwood Avenue, Future Street B, Sanderson Avenue, and Ramona Expressway.	No measures are proposed because the Project would address regional traffic and safety needs in response to growth in the Project area.

Table 1: Summary of Primary Environmental Impacts and Related Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

Potential Impacts	Preferred Alternative 1br	Avoidance/ Minimization/ Mitigation Measures
Farmlands (direct plus indirect)	Existing Farmland 577.97 ac Prime Farmland 66.27 ac Unique Farmland 5.17 ac Farmland of Statewide Importance 88.15 ac Farmland of Local Importance 602.37 ac Williamson Act Land 0 Zoned Riverside County Farmlands (per General Plan data) 40.15 ac Zoned City of Hemet Farmlands (per General Plan data) 0 Partial acquisitions of farm/agricultural operation would be minor and would not require displacement.	Measures titles only are listed here, with the details available in Chapter 3 of the Final EIR/EIS. AG-1. Maintain Access to Existing Farmlands. AG-2. Coordination with Owners.
Community Character and Cohesion	Build Alternative 1br would not impede access or mobility within the Emerging Hemet Community. It would not divide or adversely affect community cohesion. Build Alternative 1br would alter the setting along the realignment and, therefore, the character of the Emerging San Jacinto Community because of noise barriers, embankments, and a 26-ft -high bridge at Cottonwood Avenue. However, it would not affect community cohesion. Embankments, a 26-ft -high interchange at Ramona Expressway, and noise barriers would alter the setting along the realignment and, therefore, the character of the Gateway Specific Plan/River Community. The Project would effectively extend the width of existing Sanderson Avenue but would not affect the cohesion of the Gateway Specific Plan/River Community. Although the Project would divide a number of school attendance areas, the home-to-school routes would remain unchanged other than a few	Measures titles only are listed here, with the details available in Chapter 3 of the Final EIR/EIS. The measures listed in Visual/Aesthetics would address impacts to community character associated with the creation of high embankments, creation of large cut slopes, creation of large over-crossings, and noise barriers. They are not duplicated here. COM-1. Establish Pedestrian/Bike/Equestrian Paths. COM-2. School District Coordination. COM-3. Traffic Management Plan for Access. COM-4. Recycling during Operations.

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Potential Impacts	Preferred Alternative 1br	Avoidance/ Minimization/ Mitigation Measures												
	that would pass under or over SR 79. Many areas are already divided by roadways and a canal that SR 79 would parallel. Temporary inconvenience would occur during construction. High embankments would alter the character of the rural environment, dominating views from nearby areas and blocking views of more distant elements of the landscape. Major overcrossing structures would dominate the area and block views of more distant landscape features. Noise barriers could dominate views from nearby areas, block more distant views, and make communities feel less rural or more enclosed. Alternative 1br would alter the appearance and geographic setting of Rural Winchester and the Green Acres Community. The alternative would require substantial roadway cuts through a ridge, as well as through the center of the West Hemet Hills. Build Alternative 1br would divide the community of Rural Winchester and could impede social interaction and isolate residents, thereby affecting the cohesion of this rural community. Alternative 1br would alter the appearance and geographic setting of Rural Winchester, as viewed from Green Acres, thereby affecting the character of the Green Acres Community. In addition, this alternative would require noise barriers at specific locations to address noise abatement requirements. Implementation of abatement measures would address potential permanent impacts to community character. However, Alternative 1br would not divide Green Acres or affect the cohesion of this rural community.													
Relocations and Real Property Acquisition	<table><tr><td>Residential Units</td><td>26</td></tr><tr><td>Commercial Units</td><td>19</td></tr><tr><td>Total Units Displaced</td><td>45</td></tr><tr><td>Residents</td><td>115</td></tr><tr><td>Employees</td><td>105</td></tr><tr><td>Total Persons Displaced</td><td>220</td></tr></table>	Residential Units	26	Commercial Units	19	Total Units Displaced	45	Residents	115	Employees	105	Total Persons Displaced	220	Property acquisitions and relocations associated with the Project would comply with the applicable federal and state relocation regulations. Caltrans Relocation Assistance Program (RAP) is based on the Federal Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (as amended) and Title 49 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 24. The measure is listed here by title, with the details available in Chapter 3 of the Final EIR/EIS. RELOC-1. Relocation Assistance.
Residential Units	26													
Commercial Units	19													
Total Units Displaced	45													
Residents	115													
Employees	105													
Total Persons Displaced	220													

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Environmental Justice	Study Area (Riverside County) Racial minority 35.7% (39.0%) Ethnic (Hispanic) minority 38.9% (45.5%) Low income 17.2% (15.6%)	Because the minority and low-income populations within the Environmental Justice Study Area would not be adversely affected by the Project, no avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures are required.
Utilities/Emergency Services	With Build Alternative 1br, cable television, electricity, natural gas, sewer, telephone, and water utilities could experience occasional disruption during construction.	Measures titles only are listed here, with the details available in Chapter 3 of the Final EIR/EIS. UTIL-1. Coordination with Utility Companies. UTIL-3. Temporary Detour for Railroad. UTIL-4. Notification of Underground Service Alert. UTIL-5. Utility Relocation. SERV-1. Coordination with Emergency Responders Prior to Opening Year (2020). SERV-2. Coordination of Temporary Detours with Emergency Responders.

Table 1: Summary of Primary Environmental Impacts and Related Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

Potential Impacts	Preferred Alternative 1br	Avoidance/ Minimization/ Mitigation Measures
Traffic and Transportation	Five intersections are projected to operate at LOS D or worse during the a.m. and/or p.m. peak hours under the 2020 Build Alternative. The 2020 Build Alternative improves operations at four out of five deficient intersections. The intersection of San Jacinto Avenue/ Ramona Boulevard/Main Street would remain LOS F under the 2020 Build Alternative, and would cause a 4-second increase in delay. With an increase in delay less than 5 seconds, this intersection is not identified as a deficiency and does not have an adverse impact. Three intersections are projected to operate at LOS D or worse during the a.m. and/or p.m. peak hours under the 2040 Build Alternative. The LOS at two of these three intersections would improve with the Build Alternative. The intersection of San Jacinto Avenue/Ramona Boulevard/Main Street would remain LOS F under the 2040 Build Alternative, and would cause a slight increase in delay (3 seconds). With an increase in delay less than 5 seconds, this intersection is not identified as deficient. Alternative 1br would include a near-grade crossing of the San Jacinto Branch Line. This would impact rail operations because the near-grade crossing would prohibit continuous use of the tracks. Operational Performance: The access modifications to Olive Avenue and Simpson Road for 1br would permanently remove east-west access on either side of the realigned SR 79.	Measures titles only are listed here, with the details available in Chapter 3 of the Final EIR/EIS. LU-6. County of Riverside Circulation System. UTIL-3. Temporary Detour for Railroad. SERV-1: Coordination with Emergency Responders Prior to Opening Year SERV-2: Coordination of Temporary Detours with Emergency Responders
Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities	There are no bike paths or sidewalks in the study area for Build Alternative 1br, and no impacts would occur. Sidewalks are present along portions of existing SR 74 including Florida Avenue and State Street. Bike lanes are painted on the shoulder of some existing streets such as Sanderson Avenue, which also has sidewalks. Reduction of traffic volume in these areas should result in a better experience for pedestrians and bicyclists.	Temporary impacts from construction to pedestrian and bicycle transportation would be mitigated with the implementation of the Traffic Management Plan for the Project.
Visual/Aesthetics	Design refinements associated with Build Alternative 1br would result in high adverse impacts to visual resources if the design refinements would have high adverse impacts to visual character and visual quality in areas that contain viewers that have high sensitivity to changes to visual resources and long exposure to those changes. Build Alternative 1br would entail creation of significant impacts to visual resources.	Measures titles only are listed here, with the details available in Chapter 3 of the Final EIR/EIS. VIS-1. Corridor Master Plan. VIS-2. Mitigation Planting/Highway Planting.

Table 1: Summary of Primary Environmental Impacts and Related Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

Potential Impacts	Preferred Alternative 1br	Avoidance/ Minimization/ Mitigation Measures
	These impacts will be attenuated by the landscaping and careful treatment of sound walls, where feasible, that would be included as a part of the Project and by Mitigation Measures VIS-1 through VIS-29.	VIS-3. Plantings to Bring Down Apparent Scale. VIS-4. Minimize Visual Impacts with Revegetation. VIS-5. Textured Noise Barriers. VIS-6. Aesthetic Treatment to Structures. VIS-7. Planting on Structures Such as Retaining Walls and Bridges to Minimize Glare. VIS-8. Concentrations of Trees and Shrubs at Interchanges. VIS-9. Screening Treatments in Winchester. VIS-10. Noise Barrier Screening in Winchester. VIS-11. Prepare Contour Grading Plans. VIS-12. Cut Slope Design. VIS-13. Over-Excavate Slopes. VIS-14. Create Artificial Draws. VIS-15. Weathering of Exposed Rock. VIS-16. Revegetate Cut Slopes. VIS-17. Erosion Control. VIS-18. Hydroseed Fill Slopes. VIS-19. Texturize Fill Slopes. VIS-20. Revegetate Fill Slopes. VIS-21. Benched Slopes. VIS-22. Fill Slope Design. VIS-23. Earthen Basins. VIS-24. Nonreflective Materials. VIS-25. Overcrossing Design. VIS-26. Noise Barrier Design Treatments. VIS-27. Noise Barrier Landscaping. VIS-28. Noise Barrier Surfaces. Noise barrier surfaces will be textured to discourage graffiti. VIS-29. Lighting.
Cultural Resources	The study area for Build Alternative 1br contains four cultural resources determined eligible or presumed eligible for the NRHP and/or the CRHR.	Measures titles only are listed here, with the details available in Chapter 3 of the Final EIR/EIS. CR-1. Cultural Materials Discovered during Construction.

Table 1: Summary of Primary Environmental Impacts and Related Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

Potential Impacts	Preferred Alternative 1br	Avoidance/ Minimization/ Mitigation Measures
	Build Alternative 1br crosses over portions of the Colorado River Aqueduct (CRA) (CA-RIV-6726H), which is eligible for the NRHP. The portions are underground and the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) has concurred with a Finding of No Adverse Effect to this property (letter dated March 2, 2015). Build Alternative 1br would directly impact the PPAD by destroying one bedrock milling site (CA-RIV-7885), causing physical damage to part of two bedrock milling sites (CA-RIV-8141 and -8142), and changing the property's current setting, character, prehistoric/ethnographic use, and physical features. Build Alternative 1b (and Design Option 1b1 would also introduce visual elements that would indirectly impact the PPAD as demonstrated at 23 bedrock milling sites within the APE (CA-RIV-5461, -5462, -5790, -5791, -5829/H, -6907/H, -7887, -7888, -7891, -7893, -7894/H, -7907, -7908, -8140, -8141, -8142, -8143, -8146, -8147, -8148, -8156/H, -8160, and -8169). The SHPO has concurred with a Finding of Adverse Effect for the PPAD (letter dated March 2, 2015). Build Alternative 1br would cause physical damage to 99.7 ac (3.4%) of the TCP and change the property's current setting, character, prehistoric/ethnographic use, and physical features. Build Alternative 1br would also introduce visual elements that would indirectly impact the TCP. The SHPO has concurred with a Finding of Adverse Effect on the TCP (letter dated March 2, 2015). The eastern edge of the CBJ Dairy (33 15752), eligible for the CRHR only, is crossed by Build Alternative 1br. Alternative 1br would not have a direct impact on the property in a manner that would compromise its significance or integrity as a historical resource.	CR-2. Archaeological and Native American Monitoring CR-3 Discovery of Human Remains CR-4. Establishment of ESA CR-5. Preparation of a Historic Context for the PPAD CR-6 Spatial and Visual Analysis of Elements of the PPAD CR-7 Photogrammetric Documentation of Elements of the PPAD CR-8 Support for NRHP Nomination of the TCP CR-9 Collaboration on Reports
Physical Environment		
Hydrology and Floodplain	Build Alternative 1br would result in a 0.85 ft change in water surface elevation in the immediate vicinity of the Sanderson Avenue Bridge of the San Jacinto River floodplain. The impact would be localized and would be minimal compared to the overall floodplain and would also be less than the allowable 1.0 ft increase specified in Federal Emergency	Measures titles only are listed here, with the details available in Chapter 3 of the Final EIR/EIS. HYDRA-1. Construct Drainage and Flood Control Facilities. HYDRA-2. Complete a Letter of Map Revision.

Table 1: Summary of Primary Environmental Impacts and Related Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

Potential Impacts	Preferred Alternative 1br	Avoidance/ Minimization/ Mitigation Measures
	Management Agency (FEMA) guidelines. As such, the impact to the floodplain would not be significant.	HYDRA-3. Coordinate with Riverside County Flood Control and Water Conservation District
Water Quality	Build Alternative 1br would add about 232.5 ac of impervious area. It would have two drainage crossings totaling about 827 ft of roadway that would pass over Salt Creek and Hemet Channel. Seven canal crossings totaling about 1,570 ft would pass over San Diego Canal, Casa Loma Canal, and the Colorado River Aqueduct. 1br could have impacts to vernal pools and seasonal wetlands.	Although no measures have been proposed to address minimizing impervious area, the Project has been designed to add as little impervious surface as possible, thereby limiting its effects on existing drainage patterns and storm water runoff. Measures that address drainage and storm water runoff titles only are listed here, with the details available in Chapter 3 of the Final EIR/EIS. WQ-1. Construction Best Management Practices in Compliance with Project Planning and Design Guide (PPDG), Storm Water Management Plan (SWMP), Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), and Standard Special Provisions (SSP). WQ-2. Revegetation. WQ-3. Disturbed Slope Stabilization. WQ-4. Treatment BMPs. WQ-5. Dewatering Permit.
Paleontology	Direct impacts would result mostly from earth-moving activities (particularly excavation) in previously undisturbed strata, making the strata and their resources permanently unavailable for future scientific investigation. Indirect impacts could result from unauthorized fossil collecting by construction personnel, rock hounds, and amateur and commercial fossil collectors who would be afforded easier access to fresh exposures of fossiliferous strata by these earth moving activities.	Measures titles only are listed here, with the details available in Chapter 3 of the Final EIR/EIS. PALEO-1. Paleontological Mitigation Plan (PMP). PALEO-1a. Retention of Qualified Paleontologist. PALEO-1b. Museum Storage Agreement. PALEO-1c. Additional Paleontological Survey. PALEO-1d. Preconstruction Coordination with Resident Engineer. PALEO-1e. Monitoring Plan. PALEO-1f. Specimen Handling. PALEO-1g. Transfer of Fossil Collection to Museum. PALEO-1h. Reporting.
Hazardous Materials	Potential risks include: Agricultural parcels provide a low to moderate potential for pesticide residue in soil. Buildings constructed prior to the 1980s pose a low to moderate risk of lead-based paint or asbestos-containing material.	Measures titles only are listed here, with the details available in Chapter 3 of the Final EIR/EIS. HAZMAT-1. Phase II Environmental Site Assessment. HAZMAT-2. Aerially Deposited Lead Surveys.

Table 1: Summary of Primary Environmental Impacts and Related Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

Potential Impacts	Preferred Alternative 1br	Avoidance/ Minimization/ Mitigation Measures
	Parcels within the current ROW of SR 79/Winchester Road, SR 74/Florida Avenue, and Domenigoni Parkway have a low to moderate potential for aerially deposited lead in soil. Temporary demolition and construction impacts include the potential to encounter or generate LBP, ACM, and hazardous or solid wastes and debris.	HAZMAT-3. Asbestos-Containing Materials and Lead-Based Paint Surveys. HAZMAT-4. Hazardous Materials Contingency Plan. HAZMAT-5. National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit.
Air Quality	The Project is included in the SCAG 2012-2035 RTP, through Amendment #2. The FHWA and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) concurred with the air quality conformity finding on December 15, 2014. The Project is also included in the SCAG 2015 Federal Transportation Improvement Plan (FTIP) through Amendment 15-01, which was found to conform by FHWA and FTA on December 15, 2014. The Project demonstrates conformity with localized CO and particulate matter with a diameter of 10 micrometers or less (PM₁₀) and particulate matter with a diameter of 2.5 micrometers or less (PM_{2.5}) requirements. It would not cause or contribute to any new localized CO, PM₁₀ or PM_{2.5} violations, would not increase the frequency or severity of any existing violations of the CO, PM₁₀ or PM_{2.5} National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS), and would not delay timely attainment of the CO, PM₁₀ or PM_{2.5} NAAQS. Regional MSAT emissions will improve by 2040 because of EPA national control programs. At the Project level, Alternative 1br would have lower emissions than the No Build Alternative because of improvements in LOS.	Measures titles only are listed here, with the details available in Chapter 3 of the Final EIR/EIS. AQ-1. First-Stage Smog Alerts. AQ-2. Electricity. AQ-3. Construction Parking. AQ-4. Construction Truck Routes. AQ-5. Onsite Construction Traffic Control. AQ-6. Construction Vehicle Turn Lanes. AQ-7. Blasting Activities. AQ-8. Signal Boards. AQ-9. Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs). AQ-10: Construction Equipment AQ-11:Construction Areas AQ-12: Street Sweeping AQ-13: Traffic Speed Control AQ-14: Grading

Table 1: Summary of Primary Environmental Impacts and Related Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

Potential Impacts	Preferred Alternative 1br	Avoidance/ Minimization/ Mitigation Measures
Noise	Noise levels with Build Alternative 1br would approach or exceed the NAC at nearly all studied locations. Temporary construction noise impacts would occur at all noise-sensitive locations adjacent to Build Alternative 1br. Based on the studies completed to date, Caltrans intends to incorporate noise abatement in the form of six noise barriers with average heights ranging between 8 and 14 ft and a total length of 22,013 ft. Calculations indicate that these noise barriers will substantially reduce noise levels. Calculations based on preliminary design data indicate that feasible and reasonable barriers will substantially reduce noise levels for 369 to 432 residences at an estimated total cost of \$19.03 to \$22.11 million.	NO-1. Installation of Recommended Noise Barriers Shown to be Feasible and Reasonable. Recommended noise barriers that are shown to be feasible and reasonable under each Build alternative or design option should be considered further for inclusion as part of the project. While primarily an abatement measure for traffic noise, barriers will also provide abatement of construction noise if they are in place prior to construction. Alternative 1br: Six noise barriers, including 1B-G2, 1B-K3, 1B-M3, 1B-M4, 1B-N1, and 1B-N2 Measures beyond those listed in NO-1 would be the same with all Build alternatives, so the titles only are listed here, with the details available in Chapter 3. NO-2. Observation of Time Restrictions and Use of Alternative Alarms. NO-3. Use Mufflers on Equipment with Internal Combustion Engines. NO-4. Placement of Stationary Equipment. NO-5. Construction Equipment Staging.
Biological Environment		
Natural Communities and Wildlife Movement (direct and indirect)	Nine sensitive natural communities would be impacted by the Preferred Alternative. • Alkali Grassland: 17.2 ac • Alkali Playa: 0.202 ac • Cottonwood Willow Riparian Forest: 1.9 ac • Emergent Wetland: 0.2 ac • Mulefat Scrub: 0.01 ac • Riversidian Sage Scrub: 83.0 ac • Seasonal Wetland: 13.3 ac • Vernal Pool: 2.8 ac • Willow Riparian Scrub and Forest: 4.6 ac Eight wildlife corridors would be impacted by Build Alternative 1br.	Measures titles only are listed here, with the details available in Chapter 3 of the Final EIR/EIS. BIO-15. Crossing Structures and Spacing Intervals for a Variety of Species. BIO-1. Landscaping Plans. BIO-2. Avoid the Use of Invasive and Non-Native Plants. BIO-3. Barrier Fencing along ROW. BIO-4. Slope Construction within ROW. BIO-5. Equipment Storage, Fueling, and Staging Areas. BIO-6. Training about Sensitive Biological Resources. BIO-7. Fire Season Work. BIO-8. Dust Minimization. BIO-9. Designated Areas for Equipment Maintenance and Staging. BIO-10. Litter Control. BIO-11. Bridge over Salt Creek Channel. BIO-12. Avoidance of San Jacinto River.

Table 1: Summary of Primary Environmental Impacts and Related Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

Potential Impacts	Preferred Alternative 1br	Avoidance/ Minimization/ Mitigation Measures
		BIO-13. Avoidance of Existing Constrained Linkage C. BIO-14. Night Lighting. BIO-16. Openings in K-Rails for Small Animals. BIO-17. Wildlife Crossings Intended for Large Mammalian Wildlife. BIO-18. Use of Tree and Shrub Buffers Around Crossing Entrances, No Artificial Lighting. BIO-19. Wildlife Crossings Vegetated as Naturally as Possible. BIO-20. Use of Biodegradable Material in Erosion and Sediment Control Devices. BIO-21. Use of Natural Objects in the Crossing Facility. BIO-22. Installation of Vegetative Cover Near the Entrances to Culverts. BIO-23. Installation of Dirt, Rock, or Concrete Benches on at Least One Side of Large Mammal Crossings. BIO-24. Wildlife fencing. BIO-25. Installation of Jump-Outs and Escape Ramps. BIO-26. Enhancements to Wildlife Corridors.

Table 1: Summary of Primary Environmental Impacts and Related Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

Potential Impacts	Preferred Alternative 1br	Avoidance/ Minimization/ Mitigation Measures
Wetlands and Other Waters	Build Alternative 1br would cross both Salt Creek Channel (2.77 ac) and Hemet Channel (0.72 ac). Additional wetlands and other waters present are: 3 vernal pools 1.99 ac 8 seasonal wetlands 0.93 ac 5 agricultural seasonal wetlands 9.42 ac 3 constructed ponds 1.35 ac 5 riparian areas 1.58 ac 35 drainage ditches 4.43 ac 4 erosional drainages 0.09 ac There would be no indirect impacts to wetlands or other waters with the Preferred Alternative.	Measures titles only are listed here, with the details available in Chapter 3 of the Final EIR/EIS. WQ-1. Construction Best Management Practices in Compliance with Project Planning and Design Guide (PPDG), Storm Water Management Plan (SWMP), Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) and Standard Special Provisions (SSP). WQ-4. Treatment BMPs. WQ-5. Dewatering Permit. BIO-27. Environmentally Sensitive Area Fencing. BIO-28. Onsite and Offsite Drainage Facilities in the Project ROW. BIO-29. Maintenance of Constructed Storm Water Systems. BIO-30. No Erodible Materials Deposited in Watercourses. BIO-31. Ongoing Monitoring and Reporting. BIO-32. Modification of the Project Design to Construct a Gravity-Based Surface Water Diversion System. BIO-33. Mitigation of Impacts to Water Features.
Plant Species^d	Special-Status Plants: • Species observed – 9 Seven MSHCP Covered Species shown by populations (plants): • Davidson’s saltscale: 1 (6) • Smooth tarplant: 205 (531,481) • Parry’s spineflower: 17 (9,806) • Long-spined spineflower: 5 (13,917) • Vernal Barley: 15 (13,848) • Coulter’s goldfields: 3 (2,504) • Little mousetail: 2 (19,403) Two Special Status Plants not Covered by the MSHCP: • Robinson’s peppergrass: 8 (9,056) • Paniculate Tarplant: 26 (9,793) One species with long-term conservation value:	Measures titles only are listed here, with the details available in Chapter 3 of the Final EIR/EIS. BIO-1. Landscaping Plans. BIO-2. Avoid the Use of Invasive and Non-Native Plants. BIO-27. Environmentally Sensitive Area Fencing. BIO-32. Modification of the Project Design to Construct a Gravity-Based Surface Water Diversion System. BIO-34. Avoidance of Sensitive Plant Populations. BIO-35. Avoid the Spread of Invasive Plant Species. BIO-36. Mitigation for Robinson’s Peppergrass Populations. BIO-37. Coulter’s Goldfields and Smooth Tarplant Populations. BIO-38. Culvert/Drainage System for Coulter’s Goldfields and Smooth Tarplant Populations.

Table 1: Summary of Primary Environmental Impacts and Related Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

Potential Impacts	Preferred Alternative 1br	Avoidance/ Minimization/ Mitigation Measures
	Smooth tarplant Criteria Area Cells: 3683, 3584, 3291, and 2364	
Animal Species (permanent and/or temporary)	Bats: Loss of roosting habitat Burrowing owl: 5 pairs Barn owl: 2 pairs Red-tailed hawk: 7 pairs White-tailed kite: 2 pairs Los Angeles pocket mouse: 4.8 ac of occupied habitat	Measures titles only are listed here, with the details available in Chapter 3 of the Final EIR/EIS. BIO-14. Night Lighting. BIO-39. Conduct Presence/Absence Surveys Immediately Prior to Construction Each Year. BIO-40. Relocation of Burrowing Owls. BIO-41. Maintenance of Hydrology to Existing Vernal Pool/Alkali Playa Habitat. BIO-42. Conducting Vegetation Clearance to Avoid Active Breeding Season (February 15 through September 15). BIO-43. Nesting Raptor Surveys and Implementation of Nest Exclusion. BIO-44. Inspections for Roosting Bats before Demolition. BIO-45. Installation of Bat-Friendly Gate on Mine Adit Adjacent to Roadway Segments A, B, and C. BIO-46. Provision of Suitable Habitat for Vegetation-Roosting Bats.
Threatened and Endangered Species (permanent and/or temporary)	Potential impact to Stephens' kangaroo rat habitat: 491.1 ac Potential impact to Quino checkerspot butterfly habitat: 562.27 ac Potential impact to coastal California gnatcatcher habitat: 111.19 ac No impact to vernal pool branchiopods Potential impact to suitable least Bell's vireo habitat: 41.58 ac ^c Potential impact to suitable southwestern willow flycatcher habitat: 41.58 ac ^c No impact to threatened and endangered plants Spreading navarretia critical habitat: 7.44 ac	Measures titles only are listed here, with the details available in Chapter 3 of the Final EIR/EIS. BIO-27. Environmentally Sensitive Area Fencing. BIO-34. Avoidance of Sensitive Plant Populations. BIO-47. Conducting Clearance of Riparian Habitat Outside Riparian Bird Active Breeding Season (February 15 through September 15 with the peak generally from March 1 through June 30).

Land Use Consistency with State, Regional, and Local Plans and Programs

All of the build alternatives and design options would impact existing Agricultural, Commercial/Industrial, Designated Open Space, Residential, Rural Residential, Services/Facilities, and Mixed Use/Specific Plan land uses. Permanent impacts of Project alternatives on Planned Land Use by Jurisdiction are presented in the Final EIR/EIS Section 3.1.1. The Project has been closely coordinated with Riverside County and the Cities of Hemet and San Jacinto over several years. While the Project would introduce a new highway into areas that have General Plan land use designations other than a major transportation facility, the jurisdictions anticipate the need to update their General Plans and circulation elements once an alignment has been selected. The City of Hemet 2030 General Plan says: “In the event that an alternative alignment or design option is ultimately selected, the City will need to amend the General Plan to indicate the selected roadway configuration” (Hemet 2012).

Build Alternatives 1a, 2a, 1b, 1br, and Design Option 1b1 are not consistent with the Locally Preferred Alternative in the 2030 Hemet General Plan. The differences would have to be resolved before the Project moves forward. This will require a General Plan amendment as proposed in the 2030 Hemet General Plan. Furthermore, Build Alternative 1a and 2a incorporates Highway Segment L which is not consistent with the Locally Preferred Alternative in the General Plan of the City of San Jacinto. Differences between Build Alternative 1a, 2a and the General Plan of the City of San Jacinto would have to be resolved before the Project moves forward. This will require an amendment to the San Jacinto General Plan as the San Jacinto General Plan Implementation Program anticipates.

The Winchester Town Association and Winchester Municipal Advisory Council held a meeting on March 14, 2013 to identify concerns and ideas on how to improve safety for drivers and pedestrians. Positive comments about the Project were received by the community during this meeting. The Project was viewed positively due to providing access to Winchester Road, as well as providing improvements to the entrance of their community, which would increase safety and access for cars, trucks, and businesses. The community did not want traffic diverted away from the local businesses; likewise, they were supportive of providing access into their community from the new proposed expressway alignment. As a result, the Newport Road interchange was redesigned to provide access to the community of Winchester by incorporating a traffic signal at the intersection of Newport Road and SR 79.

The City of Hemet and local residents supported improvements such as the elimination of the Tres Cerritos Avenue interchange. The City’s traffic analysis performed for the City’s 2030 General Plan build-out condition did not identify the need for this interchange.

Land Use Designations

- Build Alternative 1b would require dedication of 408.3 hectares (ha) (1,009.1 acres (ac)) of land to transportation uses. Of this total, 26.1 percent is designated Rural Residential. An additional 23.7 percent is designated Residential, 22.2 percent is designated Mixed Use or Specific Plan, and 15.2 percent is designated Commercial/Industrial.
- Build Alternative 1br would require dedication of 380.0 ha (939.4 ac) of land to transportation uses, the least of any build alternative. Of the total, 24.8 percent is designated Residential. An additional 20.7 percent is designated Rural Residential, 24.3 percent is designated Mixed Use or Specific Plan, and 18.2 percent is designated Commercial/ Industrial.

- Build Alternative 2a would require dedication of 414.1 ha (1,023.5 ac) of land to transportation uses. Of this total, 28.7 percent is designated Residential. An additional 23.2 percent is designated Rural Residential and 25.3 percent is designated Mixed Use or Specific Plan.
- Build Alternative 2b would require dedication of 395.0 ha (976.0 ac) of land to transportation uses. Of this total, 26.8 percent is designated Rural Residential. An additional 21.1 percent is designated Residential and 23.4 percent is designated Mixed Use or Specific Plan. Commercial/Industrial accounts for an additional 15.9 percent.
- The land requirements of Design Option 1b1 are almost identical to those of Build Alternative 1b. An additional 0.4 ha (1.0 ac) would be required.
- The land requirements of Design Option 2b1 are almost identical to those of Build Alternative 2b. An additional 0.3 ha (0.7 ac) would be required.

Measures to Minimize Harm or Avoidance, Minimization

The mitigation measures listed below will be required to bring the Build alternatives and design options into concurrence with existing and future land use. Section 3.1.1.1, Land Use, Avoidance, Minimization, and Mitigation Measures, of the Final EIR/EIS describes these measures in detail. Build Alternative 2b and Design Option 2b1 would be consistent with the General Plans of the City of Hemet and the City of San Jacinto, so no mitigation is proposed. Riverside County includes all potential alignments in their General Plan so any Build alternative would be consistent with the General Plan, and no land use mitigations are proposed.

- LU-1: City of Hemet General Plan and Build Alternative 1a.
- LU-2: City of San Jacinto General Plan and Build Alternative 1a.
- LU-3: City of Hemet General Plan and Build Alternative 1b, 1br, and Design Option 1b1.
- LU-4: City of Hemet General Plan and Build Alternative 2a.
- LU-5: City of San Jacinto General Plan and Build Alternative 2a.
- LU-7: General Plan Consistency.

Growth

The San Jacinto Valley will continue to transition from an agriculturally based community to an area composed of residential neighborhoods with commercial and light industrial uses. Growth in the Project area has been constant and is anticipated to continue. The Project may influence the rate of growth (positive or negative) or type and patterns of land use around interchanges on undeveloped land. However, local jurisdictions have accounted for future growth within the proposed Project area, therefore Project would not result in adverse impacts to growth.

Farmland

Build Alternative 1br, the Preferred Alternative, will convert about 761.96 acres of Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, and Farmland of Local Importance to transportation uses. According to the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) requirements, Form NRCS-CPA-106 points shall be given a minimum level of consideration for protection.” Based on its score of 116 points, Build Alternative 1br should be given the “minimum level of consideration for protection,” and no further analysis was needed for farmland issues under the Farmland Protection Policy Act.

Build Alternative 1br was aligned to minimize impacts to agricultural lands. Potential indirect impacts to farmlands will be minimized through the Project's compliance with local land use regulatory authorities (County of Riverside, City of Hemet, and City of San Jacinto) policies contained in their respective General Plans. Therefore, the SR 79 Realignment Project is not expected to result in adverse impacts to farmlands or inconsistencies with these general plans. All build alternatives would have farmland impacts. Build Alternative 1br has the least amount of impacts to designated farmland overall and Prime Farmland. Build Alternative 1b and Design Option 1b1 has similar farmland related impacts, when compared to Build Alternative 2b and Design Option 2b1. Build Alternative 1a and 2a would have the most farmland related impacts. Only Roadway Segment L would directly impact Williamson Act land.

- Direct impacts to existing farmlands vary between the build alternatives (Section 3.1.3.2). The Preferred Alternative would directly affect the smallest area of existing farmlands, about 505 acres. Build Alternative 1a would affect the largest area of existing farmlands, about 680 acres. The Preferred Alternative would also have the fewest indirect impacts, at about 73 acres, and Build Alternatives 1a and 2a would have the most, at about 87 acres. All told, the Preferred Alternative would have the least total impact (about 234 ha [578 acres]), and Build Alternative 1a would have the most total impact (about 766 acres).
- The direct impacts to prime farmlands, unique farmlands, farmlands of statewide importance, and farmlands of local importance would vary modestly between the Build alternatives. Direct impacts to prime farmlands would range from about 66 acres to 86 acres. Direct impacts to unique farmlands would range from 5 to 54 acres; farmlands of statewide importance, 87 to 148 acres; and farmlands of local importance, 572 to 619 acres.
- Indirect impacts are limited to four parcels where it appears the remainders of the parcels will be inaccessible or not usable in its current agricultural use. These same parcels will be affected to varying degrees by each build alternative. Indirect impacts comprise less than 10% of important farmland impacts of each build alternative.
- The Build alternatives would impact Williamson Act land, Build Alternatives 1a and 2a would directly impact a total of 54.4 acres on five parcels. None of the other build alternatives would impact any current Williamson Act farmlands.
- Build Alternatives 1b, 2b and the Preferred Alternative would affect no Williamson Act lands because the Williamson Act contract has been terminated (non-renewals expired in 2015) for parcels along those alignments.

Measures to Minimize Harm or Avoidance, Minimization

The following measures are proposed (Refer to Section 3.1.3.4 of the Final EIR/EIS):

- AG-1 Maintain Access to Existing Farmlands.
- AG-2 Coordination with Owners.
- AG-3 Notification of Williamson Act Land Acquisition if Build Alternatives 1a or 2a be selected.

Property Acquisitions

This criterion compares property acquisitions. Build Alternative 1br has fewer residential relocations at 26 units but slightly higher residential displacements at 115 displacements, when compared to Build Alternative 2b and Design Option 2b1 at 29 units and 75 displacements. Build Alternative 1b and Design

Option 1b1 would have 37 units with 106 displacements. Build Alternative 1a would have the most acquisitions with 42 units and 134 displacements.

Business and employee displacements for Build Alternative 1br would be 26 units acquired and 105 employees displaced. Build Alternatives 2b and Design Option 2b1 would require 13 units and 86 displacements, compared to Build Alternatives 1a and 2a, which would require 14 units and 89 and 86 displacements, respectively. Build Alternatives 1b and Design Option 1b1 would each require 14 units and 90 displacements. Overall, Build Alternative 2b and Design Option 2b1 would require the fewest number of residential and commercial relocations and Build Alternative 1a would require the greatest number of relocations.

Environmental Justice

For each build alternative, there is a larger proportion of racial minorities in the Environmental Justice Study Area than in Hemet, but a smaller proportion of racial minorities in the study area than in San Jacinto, Riverside County, or California. The differences range from 6 percent more racial minorities in Build alternative 2b than in Hemet to 7 percent fewer racial minorities in Build Alternatives 1b, 1br, or 2a than in San Jacinto. These differences are small. There is a larger proportion of ethnic minorities (Hispanics) in each build alternative study area than in Hemet with the differences ranging from 6 percent with Build Alternative 1a to 10 percent with Build Alternative 2b. The differences for all build alternatives in San Jacinto, Riverside County, and California range from plus 4 percent to minus 4 percent. These differences are all small. Build Alternative 1a has 11 percent fewer ethnic minorities than San Jacinto. While this proportion is larger, because the data show ethnic minorities less likely to be in the study area than in San Jacinto, the difference is not substantial. Because the minority and low-income populations within the Environmental Justice Study Area would not be adversely affected by the Project, no avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures are required.

The study area has a lower proportion of low-income individuals than either the City of Hemet or the City of San Jacinto, but a slightly higher proportion than either Riverside County or California. The differences do not show a substantial change. Although the Project is expected to result in some impacts, these impacts would affect all demographic components of the population in the Project area equally. No disproportionately high and adverse impacts to minority or low-income populations have been identified in conjunction with the Project.

Utilities and Emergency Services

Operation of the Project will have beneficial effects on the ability of the Riverside Sheriff's Department, the Hemet Police Department the Riverside County Fire Department and the City of Hemet Fire Department to provide services to the SR 79 Realignment study area. Following construction, the realigned road would provide better circulation both along the new alignment and through Hemet and San Jacinto, where removal of excess traffic would improve traffic flow.

The California Public Utilities Commission's (CPUC) General Order (GO) 95 establishes rules and regulations for overhead power line design, construction, and maintenance, including vertical and horizontal clearance from thoroughfares and the ground. A number of transmission, distribution, and electrical facilities, owned and operated by Southern California Edison (SCE) exist within the

environmental study area. All proposed alignments and design options cross SCE existing 115 kilo-volt (kV) sub-transmission lines, potentially impacting SCE vertical and horizontal clearance requirements.

With Design Options 1b1 and 2b1, the Project would include a near-grade crossing of the San Jacinto Branch Line along Roadway Segments C and D, prohibiting its use. The SR 79 structural section would fill over the top of the existing tracks. It would not sever them, so rail activity could continue in the future if necessary. However, RCTC, the owner of the rail line, has confirmed that it has not been in operation over the past 5 years.

Design Options 1b1 and 2b1 would place cul-de-sacs on Olive Avenue and Simpson Road, on either side of realigned SR 79, discontinuing east-west through access along these local streets. This has the potential to affect emergency services if these routes are used for emergency response. RCTC will coordinate with the emergency responders listed below to ensure that, if necessary, response routes can be established or updated and additional personnel can be secured to ensure that emergency response in the Project area continues to meet applicable requirements.

Measures to Minimize Harm or Avoidance, Minimization

The following measures are proposed (Refer to Section 3.1.5.3 of the Final EIR/EIS):

- UTIL-1: Coordination with Utility Companies.
- UTIL-2. Roadway Segment G Utility Tower Relocations.
- UTIL-3. Temporary Detour for Railroad.
- UTIL-4. Notification of Underground Service Alert.
- UTIL-5. Utility Relocation.
- SERV-1: Coordination with Emergency Responders Prior to Opening Year
- SERV-2: Coordination of Temporary Detours with Emergency Responders

Traffic and Transportation/Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

The projected volumes on the realigned section of SR 79 (45,600 to 75,600 average daily trips [ADT]) are consistent with a freeway facility, and SR 79 is projected to operate at LOS C or better along the entire length of the Project, except the sections between Newport Road and Domenigoni Parkway and between Domenigoni Parkway and Grand Avenue, which are projected to operate at LOS E.

Build alternatives under 2040 traffic conditions would improve the operations on portions of several arterial streets, Winchester Road, Florida Avenue, and Sanderson Avenue, from unacceptable LOS (LOS D or worse) to acceptable LOS (LOS C or better). The maximum peak-hour one-direction volume on the mainline SR 79 is projected to be approximately 4,300, with most of the peak-hour volumes ranging from approximately 2,300 to 3,900.

The 2040 Build Alternative 1br would improve eight of these intersections to acceptable levels (LOS C or better). Three intersections are projected to operate at LOS D or worse during the a.m. and/or p.m. peak hours. The LOS at two of these three intersections would improve with Build Alternative 1br. The intersection of San Jacinto Avenue/Ramona Boulevard/Main Street would remain LOS F under the 2040 Build Alternative, and would cause a slight increase in delay (3 seconds). With an increase in delay less than 5 seconds, this intersection is not identified as deficient.

With the planned ramp configurations at each interchange, most of the SR 79 intersections are projected to operate at LOS C or better in 2040. The two exceptions are the SR 79/Domenigoni Parkway southbound ramps and SR 79/Grand Avenue southbound ramps. These intersections are projected to operate at LOS D and LOS E during the a.m. peak hour and LOS C or better during the p.m. peak hour.

The Design Options access modifications to East Newport Road would result in a positive impact by providing access from existing SR 79/Winchester Road to the northbound and southbound ramps of realigned SR 79. With the near-grade crossing over the San Jacinto Branch Line, there would be an impact to rail operations at this location because the near-grade crossing would prohibit use of the rail line at the SR 79 crossing. A ballot measure is proposed for the design options to address the near-grade crossing over the San Jacinto Branch Line.

The proposed Project would separate local and regional traffic and reduce the volumes on the existing alignment, which is expected to decrease the total number of accidents. The new alignment would reduce the volumes on the existing alignment by approximately 30 percent on average (calculation based on a comparison of the 2040 No Build Alternative and 2040 Build Alternative ADT volumes on existing SR 79 from Table 3.1-49 and Table 3.1-51 in the Final EIR/EIS). Also, keeping truck traffic and oversize vehicles off local roads would improve the safety and pavement condition of these local roads.

The Project will result in temporary impacts to traffic circulation during construction as a result of local road closures. Traffic detours would be required to maintain local traffic circulation during construction of the Project when local roadways are closed.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

In general, the Project would result in positive impacts to both pedestrian and bicycle transportation. While the new SR 79 facility (as an expressway or freeway) would not include pedestrian or bicycle facilities, it would take high volumes of vehicular traffic off existing surface streets in Hemet and San Jacinto. These streets (e.g., Florida Avenue, State Street) currently serve both pedestrian and bicycle transportation. With reduced vehicular traffic, the ease of travel and level of safety for non-vehicular users would increase. With the Project, there may be increased vehicular traffic at some existing streets where there are new interchanges (e.g., Cottonwood Avenue). However, pedestrian facilities (such as sidewalks and crosswalks) would be included at the interchange, and bicyclists can use other routes. Overall, the positive impacts associated with reduced traffic on surface streets would mean that there are no negative impacts for pedestrian and bicycle transportation, due to the reduced likelihood of traffic and pedestrian interactions.

The Project does not currently involve the construction of new bus stops, terminals, or rapid rail facilities. If this type of transportation system is considered in the future once the Project is operational, all American Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements would be met as required by the Accessibility Guidelines for Buildings and Facilities (Access Board, 2002). Compliance with the ADA requirements of a future multimodal transportation system would be documented as part of that separate Project.

Measures to Minimize Harm or Avoidance, Minimization

Per Caltrans' Project Development Procedures, a full Traffic Management Plan (TMP) is not prepared until the final design phase. The details of the TMP cannot be developed without more complete plans, and specifically detailed construction phasing and staging. Therefore, a detailed phased TMP will be prepared

during the plans, specifications, and estimate phase of the Project when stage construction and traffic handling details have been developed.

Visual

The Project will result in long-term adverse visual impacts as a result of the permanent alterations to the visual environment by the realignment and its associated bridges, interchange structures, retaining walls and soundwalls. Short term visual impacts to sensitive viewers during construction of the Project would include views of clearing of existing vegetation, grading of cut and fill slopes, and construction staging areas. Construction activities are temporary and the visual impact will cease after construction is completed.

Measures to Minimize Harm or Avoidance, Minimization

The following measures are proposed (Refer to Section 3.1.7.4 of the Final EIR/EIS):

- VIS-1: Corridor Master Plan
- VIS-2: Mitigation Planting/Highway Planting
- VIS-3: Plantings to Bring Down Apparent Scale
- VIS-4: Minimize Visual Impacts with Revegetation
- VIS-5: Textured Noise Barriers
- VIS-6: Aesthetic Treatment to Structures
- VIS-7: Planting on Structures Such as Retaining Walls and Bridges to Minimize Glare
- VIS-8: Concentrations of Trees and Shrubs at Interchanges
- VIS-9: Screening Treatments in Winchester
- VIS-10: Noise Barrier Screening in Winchester
- VIS-11: Prepare Contour Grading Plans
- VIS-12: Cut Slope Design
- VIS-13: Over-Excavate Slopes
- VIS-14: Create Artificial Draws
- VIS-15: Weathering of Exposed Rock
- VIS-16: Revegetate Cut Slopes
- VIS-17: Erosion Control
- VIS-18: Hydroseed Fill Slopes
- VIS-19: Texturize Fill Slopes
- VIS-20: Revegetate Fill Slopes
- VIS-21: Benched Slopes
- VIS-22: Fill Slope Design
- VIS-23: Earthen Basins
- VIS-24: Nonreflective Materials
- VIS-25: Overcrossing Design
- VIS-2: Noise Barrier Design Treatments
- VIS-27: Noise Barrier Landscaping
- VIS-28: Noise Barrier Surfaces. Noise barrier surfaces will be textured to discourage graffiti
- VIS-29: Lighting

Cultural Resources

This criterion compares important cultural resources among the build alternatives, which include impacts to a former Native American grave, impacts to archaeological sites eligible for listing on the NRHP, a number of archaeological sites impacted, impacts to historic built environments, and consistency with Soboba Band of Luiseño Indians and the Pechanga Tribe's Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA). All of the build alternatives will cross a section of the Colorado River Aqueduct [(CRA) (CA-RIV-6726H)] that was found eligible for the NRHP; however, the Project is not expected to have an adverse effect on this property. The Tribes expressed strong opposition to impacts to the West Hemet Hills, which are considered to have sacred significance. Therefore, they were strongly opposed to Build Alternatives 2a and 2b since both require the removal of a substantial portion of the southern peak and would leave two pyramid-shaped cut slopes in its place. Pechanga Band representatives identified a named place of cultural and religious significance to the Luiseño people. This TCP included two hills, identified as *Chéexayam Pum'wáppivu*, and '*Anó' Potma*, and the intervening valley. As previously discussed under the Section 4(f) summary, the Historic Property Survey Report (HPSR) (2010) and First Supplemental HPSR (2014) and Finding of Effect (2015) determined that two properties were found eligible for the NRHP at the following historic properties:

- The TCP consisting of *Cheexayam Pomwappivu* (Seven Sisters), and '*Anó' Potma* (Coyote's Mouth), and the intervening valley; and
- The PPAD which includes 24 BRMs.

Measures to Minimize Harm or Avoidance, Minimization

As previously described, Caltrans, SHPO, and four Native American Tribes were involved in a consultation process to identify and develop measures to minimize and mitigate the Project effects at TCP and PPAD. Those measures are CR-1 through CR-9 as described in Section 3.1.8.4 of the Final EIR/EIS.

Hydrology and Floodplain

The Project will cross four floodplains at the San Jacinto River, Sanderson Avenue, Hemet Channel, and Salt Creek Channel. The San Jacinto River floodplain is within the study area for all build alternatives and design options (specifically Roadway Segments L, M, and N). The Sanderson Avenue floodplain is present in the study area of all build alternatives (specifically Roadway Segments L, M, and N). The Hemet Channel floodplain is present in the study area of all build alternatives including the design options (specifically Roadway Segments C, D, E, and F). The Salt Creek Channel floodplain is present in the study area of all build alternatives (specifically, Roadway Segments A, C, and D). Those encroachments were determined to be low risk and do not present a significant risk to life and property.

Impacts to the floodplain would be minimal from all build alternatives and both design options and would occur within the direct footprint of the Project or would be limited to slight impacts to the floodplain perimeter. Bridges and culverts would be constructed to maintain existing flows. Additional Project features constructed in the 100-year floodplain (Utility Relocation Area 2) would not cause impacts because those features are not expected to alter the existing floodplain. Most of the basin would remain intact, and intermittent water would still flow to the San Jacinto River. Because of this, beneficial uses would be maintained for the basin. Additionally, measures would be implemented to address impacts to cold freshwater habitat and wildlife. These measures would assist in maintaining beneficial uses for the basin.

Specific avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures for wetlands/waters and wildlife are discussed in Section 3.3.2.4 (Volume 2). Although all of the build alternatives would have impacts to the San Jacinto River basin, those impacts are not expected to have a significant effect on natural and beneficial uses.

Temporary impacts would be associated with the construction of the Project. During construction, the floodplains would be maintained, and channel improvements made prior to the construction of embankments, as necessary. The overall impervious groundcover would be similar to the existing conditions during construction. Therefore, the temporary impacts during construction would have a negligible effect on the local floodplains.

Measures to Minimize Harm or Avoidance, Minimization

The following measures are proposed (Refer to Section 3.2.1.4 of the Final EIR/EIS):

- HYDRA-1: Construct Drainage and Flood Control Facilities
- HYDRA-2: Complete a Letter of Map Revision
- HYDRA-3: Coordinate with Riverside County Flood Control and Water Conservation District (RCFC&WCD)

After the drainage facilities are constructed, a major storm event would not be likely to cause substantial damage to the highway embankment or roadway improvements. Therefore, the Project would be considered a low risk.

Water Quality and Storm Water Runoff

Pollutants of Concern during construction of the Project include sediment, trash, petroleum products, and chemicals, each of which on its own or in combination with other pollutants can have a detrimental effect on water quality and aquatic habitats. Construction will disturb existing soils and there will be increased potential for soil erosion and sediment due to rainfall/runoff and wind. Chemicals, liquid products, petroleum products such as paint, solvents and fuels, and concrete related waste may be spilled or leaked during construction with the potential for that material to be transported via storm runoff into receiving waters.

Build Alternative 1br would involve about 827 feet (ft) of drainage channel crossings at two sites and about 1,570 ft. of canal crossings at seven sites. There would be about 8,088 ft. of roadway construction adjacent to canals. The Disturbed Soil Area (DSA) during construction would be 942.8 acres. Design pollution prevention and treatment best management practices (BMPs) will be incorporated into the Project to minimize impacts to water quality during Project operation. Treatment BMPs will remove pollutants from stormwater runoff prior to discharge to receiving waters. Because runoff in the area is currently untreated and the Project BMPs will treat the new impervious surface area, no adverse impacts to water quality are anticipated as a result of the operation of the Project.

Measures to Minimize Harm or Avoidance, Minimization

The following measures are proposed (Refer to Section 3.2.2.4 of the Final EIR/EIS):

- WQ-1: Construction BMPs in Compliance with Project Planning and Design Guide (PPDG), Storm Water Management Plan (SWMP), Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), and Standard Special Provisions (SSP)
- WQ-2: Revegetation
- WQ-3: Disturbed Slope Stabilization
- WQ-4: Treatment BMPs
- WQ-5: Dewatering Permit

Geology/Soils/Seismic/Topography

Grading and construction of cut and fill slopes for the Project will alter existing landforms. Construction may also temporarily disturb soil outside the facility footprint, primarily in the trample zone around work areas, heavy equipment traffic areas, and material laydown areas. Temporary impacts will include soil compaction and increased potential for soil erosion. Construction activities could be impacted by ground motion and liquefaction, and possibly ground rupture.

Measures to Minimize Harm or Avoidance, Minimization

Implementation of standard design and construction practices will reduce the risk of geologic hazards such as liquefaction, seismic issues, soil erosion, and slope instability on the Project. The following measure will further reduce those potential impacts (Refer to Section 3.2.3.4 of the Final EIR/EIS):

- GEO-1: Surface Fault Rupture
- GEO-2: Ground Shaking
- GEO-3: Liquefaction
- GEO-4: Compressible/Collapsible Soils
- GEO-5: Expansive Soils
- GEO-6: Slope Stability
- GEO-7: Groundwater
- GEO-8: Excavation Characteristics.

Paleontology

Earthmoving operations during construction of the Project will destroy fossils and fossiliferous rock units. This is because any activity that results in the loss of a fossil, an unrecorded fossil site, loss of associated fossil or site data, or loss of fossil-bearing strata would have a permanent impact.

The level and type of mitigation recommended on a particular Build alternative will reflect the paleontological importance or impact sensitivity of the rock unit underlying that part of the Project area, the corresponding potential for fossils to be encountered by earth-moving activities, the type of rock constituting the rock unit, and the types and magnitudes of the impacts that could occur in the area. For example, excavation in an area where a rock unit with high potential is at or near the surface would require intensive paleontological monitoring during construction, while excavation of an area where a rock unit of low or undetermined potential is at or near the surface would require little or no monitoring. Monitoring would not be required in an area with artificial fill (unless a rock unit with high potential would be

encountered at depth) or a rock unit of low or no paleontological potential is at or near the surface or an area where a rock unit with high potential would be buried, but not otherwise disturbed.

With a paleontological mitigation plan in place, the discovery and subsequent recovery of fossilized remains could result in a slight delay of some earth-moving activities. However, delays will be reduced as much as possible by ensuring that a paleontological construction monitor will be present when and where fossilized remains are most likely to be encountered by earth-moving activities. Such measures will allow for the rapid recovery of fossilized remains, if encountered, and associated fossil and site data. If necessary, the monitor will notify the Resident Engineer, who will divert the earth-moving activities around the newly discovered fossil site until the remains have been removed.

Measures to Minimize Harm or Avoidance, Minimization

- PALEO-1 Paleontological Mitigation Plan (PMP)

Hazardous Waste/Materials

Hazardous material/waste sites were found to be within 0.25 mile of the Project limits, through an Initial Site Assessment (ISA). As a result, hazardous waste/materials may be encountered during excavation and construction for the Project. During grading, there is also the possibility of hazardous concentrations of aerially deposited lead (ADL) being released into the environment and affecting construction workers and other persons near the area of the release.

As noted in the Final Initial Site Assessment Report of June 2008, no visual evidence of significant environmental risk indicators was identified during the site reconnaissance except for agricultural use, the former San Jacinto Mobil gasoline station at 2070 North Sanderson Avenue, and the presence of the former Hemet Sanitary Landfill (see Figure 3.2-26). Potentially significant pesticide residues may be present within the portions of the property used for agriculture. Pesticide storage or handling facilities were not observed within or adjacent to the Project area. The former San Jacinto Mobil gasoline station was acquired and demolished by RCTC after the initial observation during the site reconnaissance. RCTC completed remediation of the site after the Project baseline date of January 30, 2007.

The Updated ISA included a database search by EDR, an electronic database search company, which identified one site with a low degree of potential environmental impact to Build Alternative 1br. The site is the San Jacinto Mobil gasoline station located at 2070 N Sanderson Avenue, San Jacinto. The site is located within 0.1 mile west at the closest extent to Roadway Segment N. The station has been demolished and regulatory case closure has been granted by Riverside County on May 6, 2010 and subsequently the Regional Water Quality Control Board on May 27, 2010 with a determination of no further action as concentrations of contaminants were not widespread and do not represent a significant risk to human health or drinking water resources. Build Alternative 1br includes Roadway Segments B, C, G, I, J, M, and N. No additional underground storage tank (UST) sites were identified as having historic or active USTs containing hazardous materials or petroleum hydrocarbons that have the potential to impact SR 79.

Parcels that intersect or are adjacent to Build Alternative 1br that have historically or are currently being utilized for agricultural purposes have the potential for agricultural pesticides in the soil. Proposed

mitigation measures for these properties include conducting a limited Phase II Environmental Site Assessment, followed by remediation and soil disposal as necessary.

Aerially deposited lead (ADL) in soil has the potential to impact various parcels within the current ROW of SR 79/Winchester Road and Domenigoni Parkway of the Build Alternative 1br, Roadway Segments B and SR 74/Florida Avenue in Segment G. Proposed mitigation measures include an ADL survey to analyze for the presence of ADL in soil, and an appropriate soil management plan for the handling and disposal of any soil identified as contaminated with ADL. No state routes or freeways ROWs are included in Build Alternative 1br, Roadway Segments I, J, M, and N to warrant an ADL survey.

Temporary impacts related to lead-based paint (LBP), asbestos-containing material (ACM), and hazardous or solid wastes and debris were identified in the Updated Initial Site Assessment (January 2015). Construction of Build Alternative 1br would require removal of buildings, structures, and paving materials. Demolition activities may cause LBP and ACMs to be encountered, specifically in structures constructed prior to 1980. Proposed mitigation measures include a survey of materials prior to construction activities that would be removed during construction activities to identify and determine the presence of LBP and ACMs. Remediation measures would be completed based on these evaluations to minimize the impact of exposure from any identified materials.

Construction of Build Alternative 1br may also encounter or generate hazardous or solid wastes and debris. Construction contractors would be required to dispose of all hazardous or solid wastes and debris encountered or generated during construction and demolition activities in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations.

A limited subsurface environmental evaluation was performed near the former Hemet Sanitary Landfill. The soil samples were evaluated for concentrations of chemicals of potential concern (COPCs), which include volatile organic compounds (VOCs), metals, and total petroleum hydrocarbons carbon chain (TPHcc). No detectable concentrations of VOCs or TPHcc were identified. In June 2008, this evaluation was documented in Limited Subsurface Environmental Evaluation, Near the Former Hemet Sanitary Landfill, Intersection of Esplanade Avenue and Warren Road, Hemet, California (RCTC 2007). Based on these findings, the former Hemet Sanitary Landfill would not be considered a permanent impact as long as buried waste is not disturbed by construction.

In preparation for the site reconnaissance for the 2008 ISA, JRS Kar Korner, an automobile junkyard, was noted in the environmental databases as having had an unauthorized release of oil and hazardous substance. However, by the time the 2008 site reconnaissance was performed, the site of the junkyard had been converted to a paved lot with a manufactured homes sales center and a Penske feed store. No visual staining was noted on the property.

All of the Build alternatives and design options would traverse agricultural land, so pesticide residues, if they are present, could be a permanent impact.

Measures to Minimize Harm or Avoidance, Minimization

The following measures are proposed (Refer to Section 3.2.5.4 of the Final EIR/EIS):

- HAZMAT-1: Phase II Environmental Site Assessment.
- HAZMAT-2: Aerially Deposited Lead Surveys.
- HAZMAT-3: Asbestos-Containing Materials and Lead-Based Paint Surveys.
- HAZMAT-4: Hazardous Materials Contingency Plan.
- HAZMAT-5: National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit.

Air Quality

Project Conformity

The proposed Project is listed in the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) 2012-2035 financially constrained Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), which was found to be in conformance by SCAG on April 4, 2012. The FHWA and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) made a regional conformity determination on June 4, 2012. The Amendment #2 to the 2013-2035 RTP was approved by the SCAG in September 2014 and the conformity determination was approved by FHWA and FTA on December 15, 2014.

The Project is also included in the SCAG financially constrained 2015 Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP), and through Amendments #15-01, and is listed on page 8 of 13 of the Riverside County Project Listing, State Highway, Project ID RIV 62024. The SCAG 2015 FTIP Project Listing, State Highway, Project ID RIV 62024 was determined to conform by FHWA and FTA on December 15, 2014. The Project description in the 2012-2035 RTP and 2015 FTIP is: “On SR 79 in Southwestern Riverside County between 2.0 kilometers south of Domenigoni Parkway to Gilman Springs Road: Realign and Widen SR 79 from 2 to 4 through lanes.” The design concept and scope of the proposed Project are consistent with the Project description in the 2012-2035 RTP through Amendment #2, and the 2015 FTIP (through Amendment #15-01), and the “open to traffic” assumptions of the SCAG’s regional emissions analysis.

Carbon Monoxide, PM_{2.5} and PM₁₀

The methodology required for a carbon monoxide local analysis is summarized in Caltrans Transportation Project-Level Carbon Monoxide (CO) Protocol (University of California Davis, December 1997), Section 3 (Determination of Project Requirements) and Section 4 (Local Analysis). Based on the CO local analysis, because the background CO concentration are lower at the SR 79 Realignment than for the intersections in the attainment plan, the SR 79 Realignment Project is not expected to result in any concentrations exceeding the 1-hour or 8-hour CO standards. The proposed Project would not be expected to create a CO hot spot; therefore, the proposed Project has demonstrated Project-level conformity for CO. No mitigation is required.

Detailed particulate matter less than 2.5 microns in size (PM_{2.5}) and particulate matter less than 10 microns in size (PM₁₀) hot-spot analysis were prepared and were submitted to and reviewed by the Transportation Conformity Working Group (TCWG) on January 27, 2015. The TCWG is a forum to support interagency coordination to help improve air quality and maintain transportation conformity in Southern California. The TCWG determined that the Project is not a Project of Localized Air Quality Concern (POAQC) and further quantitative hot spot analysis is not needed to demonstrate conformity. Based on the above discussion, the Project would not be expected to be of air quality concern. Therefore, the Project would not be expected to cause or contribute to new localized PM_{2.5} and PM₁₀ violations or increase frequency or severity of existing

violations. As such, the Project would meet the requirements of *40 CFR 93.116* without explicit quantitative hot-spot analysis as this Project has been determined not to be a POAQC. No Mitigation is required.

Mobile Source Air Toxics

Mobile source air toxics (MSATs) include acrolein, benzene, 1,3-butadiene, diesel particulate matter (DPM) plus diesel exhaust organic gases (diesel PM), formaldehyde, naphthalene, and polycyclic organic matter. The Project would not alter a major intermodal freight facility that has the potential to concentrate high levels of DPM in a single location. The purpose of the Project is to improve traffic flow and operation efficiency for local and regional north-south traffic and reduce the diversion of state route traffic onto local streets in the San Jacinto Valley. It would not change the vehicle fleet mix in the region or along the Project corridor. Therefore, the Project would not result in a significant increase of diesel vehicles along the Project corridor. Although the Project would increase traffic volume along some of the roadway segments, none of the segments on the Project corridor within the Project area would have AADT in the range of 140,000 to 150,000 by the design year. Build alternatives are expected to have lower VMT in the Project area than the No Build Alternative in 2020 and 2040. In future years, MSAT emissions of the build alternatives would be lower than the No Build Alternative.

In addition, regardless of the higher VMT in the Project area in 2020 and 2040 than in 2014, total MSAT emissions from the Project area in 2020 and 2040 for the Build and No Build Alternatives are expected to be lower than the 2014 MSAT emission level of 124.7 pounds per year. This result is consistent with the USEPA Projection that overall MSAT emissions would decrease in future years regardless of the VMT growth due to implementation of more stringent regulations and emission standards, and improved emission control technologies. The Project will not contribute substantially to regional vehicle emissions. No mitigation is required.

Construction Impacts

Short-term air pollutant emissions as a result of construction activities will include fugitive dust and CO, SO₂, NO_x and volatile organic compounds from grading/site preparation, equipment exhaust, emulsified asphalt paving materials, and haul trips. Exhaust emissions of ROG, CO, NO_x, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5} would result from construction equipment and vehicle operations. Onsite equipment would include graders, dozers, tractors, signal boards, excavators, backhoes, scrapers, rollers, and pavers. Based on the maximum daily emissions presented in Final EIR/EIS, emissions of NO_x, CO, ROG, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5} would be expected to have a potential temporary effect on air quality.

Further evaluation was necessary for NO_x because the elevated NO_x emissions would have the potential for adverse air quality impacts. Construction NO_x emissions were evaluated because ozone is derived from NO_x and ROGs in the presence of sunlight and heat. Therefore, it is expected that the elevated NO_x emissions from construction would contribute to an exceedance of the ozone standard since the background ozone concentrations exceed the federal 8-hour standard. The conditions and minimization measures described below would be implemented to reduce NO_x and ROG emissions during construction. The Sacramento Roadway Emissions Model is not designed to calculate emission reductions with implementation of measures to reduce emissions. For the four construction phases evaluated, NO_x emissions ranged from approximately 46 pounds per day to the maximum of 582 pounds per day during construction, with the highest daily emissions occur during the Grading/Excavation phase. Build

Alternative 1br would have the highest NO_x emissions due to the additional vehicle emissions from importing soil to the construction site. Implementation of standard conditions and minimization measures would be expected to reduce emissions; however, elevated NO_x emissions are still anticipated to temporarily affect air quality during the Grading/Excavation phase.

Construction activities would result in temporary exhaust emissions of NO_x, CO, ROG, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5}. The following minimization measures will be implemented to address potential adverse effects to air quality during construction. Implementation of these measures is expected to reduce the potential temporary exhaust and fugitive dust emissions generated during construction of the Project. After implementation of the minimization measures below, temporary NO_x emissions resulting from construction of the Project may remain temporarily elevated due to the many activities required to construct the Project.

Measures to Minimize Harm or Avoidance, Minimization

The following measures are proposed (Refer to Section 3.2.6.4 of the Final EIR/EIS):

- AQ-1: First-Stage Smog Alerts
- AQ-2: Electricity
- AQ-3: Construction Parking
- AQ-4: Construction Truck Routes
- AQ-5: Onsite Construction Traffic Control
- AQ-6: Construction Vehicle Turn Lanes
- AQ-7: Blasting Activities
- AQ-8: Signal Boards
- AQ-9: Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs)
- AQ-10: Construction Equipment
- AQ-11: Construction Areas
- AQ-12: Street Sweeping
- AQ-13: Traffic Speed Control
- AQ-14: Grading

Noise

Operation of the Project will result in long-term traffic noise impacts where: (1) there is an increase of 12 decibels (dB) or more over their corresponding modeled existing noise levels, or (2) the predicted noise levels approach or exceed the noise abatement Criteria (NAC). A total of 58 of 1,248 receptors for the Project approach or exceed the 67 A-weighted decibels (dBA) equivalent continuous sound level (Leq) NAC for activity Categories B and C under 2040 No Build Alternative traffic noise conditions. Of the 1,248 modeled receptors under the Project traffic noise conditions, 801 receptors approach or exceed the 67 dBA Leq and 1,095 receptors will experience an increase in noise of 12 dBA or more over their corresponding modeled existing noise level for Activity Categories B and C. Some noise levels for the Project are above the NAC. Evaluation of abatement was conducted consistent with Title 23, Part 771, Code of Federal Regulation, "Procedures for Abatement of Highway Traffic Noise." Six sound barriers are proposed to benefit 105 residential units for Build Alternative 1br. In comparison, Build Alternative 2b and Design Option 2b1 would have 545 residential unit impacts. Build Alternative 1a and 2a would have 374 and 446 residential unit impacts, respectively. Build Alternative 1b and Design Option 1b1 would have the highest

number of noise impacts at 563 residential units. Build Alternatives 1a and 2a propose 5 noise barriers when compared to Build Alternatives 1b, 1b1, 1br, 2b and 2b1, propose 6 noise barriers as feasible and reasonable.

Measures to Minimize Harm or Avoidance, Minimization

The following measures are proposed (Refer to Section 3.2.7.4 of the Final EIR/EIS):

- NO-1: Installation of Recommended Noise Barriers Shown to be Feasible and Reasonable. Build Alternative 1b with Refinements (Alternative 1br): Six noise barriers, including 1B-G2, 1B-K3, 1B-M3, 1B-M4, 1B-N1, and 1B-N2
- NO-2: Observation of Time Restrictions and Use of Alternative Alarms.
- NO-3: Use Mufflers on Equipment with Internal Combustion Engines.
- NO-4: Placement of Stationary Equipment

Natural Resources

Sensitive Natural Communities and Critical Habitat

The Final EIR/EIS (Section 3.3.1.3) identified permanent direct and indirect impacts to nine sensitive natural community types—alkali grassland, alkali playa, cottonwood-willow riparian forest, emergent wetland, mulefat scrub, Riversidean sage scrub, seasonal wetland, vernal pool, and willow riparian scrub and forest. Sensitive natural plant communities are limited within the Project Impact Area (PIA).

One critical habitat designation is present in the study area for Build Alternative 1br, spreading navarretia (*Navarretia fossalis*). No other critical habitat designations are present in the study area of Build Alternative 1br.

Animal Species

No animal species that are federally or state listed as threatened or endangered were observed in the study area of Build Alternative 1br; however, suitable habitat for the following listed species was identified.¹

- Stephens' Kangaroo Rat (SKR) (FE, ST)
- San Bernardino kangaroo rat (marginal habitat) (FE)
- Quino Checkerspot Butterfly (QCB) (FE)
- Coastal California gnatcatcher (FT)
- Southwestern willow flycatcher (FE)
- Least Bell's vireo (FE, SE)

The SKR, QCB, and coastal California gnatcatcher are all considered Covered Species Adequately Conserved per the Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP). This means the conservation objectives for these species have been achieved, and these species are provided Take

¹FE – federally endangered

FT – federally threatened

SE – state endangered

ST – state threatened

Authorization through the Natural Community Conservation Plan permit and through the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) Section 10(a) permit issued in conjunction with the MSHCP Implementing Agreement (Riverside County Integrated Project [RCIP], 2003). Since the Project lies within both the SKR HCP fee area and the MSHCP boundary outside of the SKR fee area, SKR take authorization, for this Project, would be extended through formal Section 7 Consultation.

Plant Species

San Jacinto Valley Crownscale

The study area for Build Alternative 1br only includes the small population (22 plants) of San Jacinto Valley crownscale located in Additional Indirect Impact Study Area 2 (Figure 2.5-4 of the Final EIR/EIS). These San Jacinto Valley Crownscale populations are not in an MSHCP Criteria Area Cell and do not have long-term conservation value (LTCV). Additionally, in this location, the topography slopes very gently from the south to the north. There is an existing drainage along the north end of the vernal pool complex containing the San Jacinto Valley Crownscale, which diverts water to the west, towards Warren Road. As the right-of-way is located downslope of the vernal pool complex and all work will be down-gradient, the Project will not result in any alteration to the existing hydrology and no indirect impacts are expected to occur to the San Jacinto Valley Crownscale populations at this location.

Vernal Pool Branchiopods

No listed vernal pool branchiopods were observed in the study area for Build Alternative 1br, but 28 pools were identified as potential habitat. The pools include tire ruts and roadside drainages, man-made depressions, depressions in active agricultural fields, and vernal pools. All 28 pools received two surveys, either two wet season surveys or both a wet and a dry season survey. The only vernal pool branchiopod species observed in the study area for Build Alternative 1br was the non-listed versatile fairy shrimp which was observed in 16 pools (Figure 2.5-5 of the Final EIR/EIS). No vernal pool branchiopods were observed in the other 12 pools.

Least Bell's Vireo

Least Bell's vireo were not observed in the study area for Build Alternative 1br, but 41.58 acres of suitable habitat was identified.

Southwestern Willow Flycatcher

A migrant willow flycatcher was detected 422 ft. east of the PIA for Build Alternative 1br (Roadway Segment M). However, no mate was seen, and no nesting behavior was observed, so this individual was determined to be a migrant. Approximately 41.58 acres of potential habitat was identified.

Stephens' Kangaroo Rat

Approximately 491.1 acres of suitable SKR habitat is present in the study area for Build Alternative 1br (Figure 2.4-4).

Quino Checkerspot Butterfly

Approximately 578.5 acres of suitable QCB habitat is present in the study area for Build Alternative 1br.

Coastal California Gnatcatcher

Approximately 111.19 acres of suitable coastal California gnatcatcher habitat is present in the study area for Build Alternative 1br.

Natural Communities

Build Alternative 1br would have permanent direct impacts to seven sensitive natural community types and permanent indirect impacts to nine sensitive natural community types. Permanent direct impacts to the alkali grassland natural community would total 13.3 acres. Permanent indirect impacts could occur to an additional 3.9 acres of alkali grassland in the 100-ft. indirect impact area.

A total of 0.002 acres of alkali playa, 8.6 acres of seasonal wetland, and 2.0 acres of vernal pool could be permanently and directly impacted by Build Alternative 1br. Permanent indirect impacts could occur to an additional 0.2 acres of alkali playa, 1.9 ha 4.7 acres of seasonal wetlands, and 0.8 acres of vernal pool in the 100-ft. indirect impact area. Permanent indirect impacts to 0.2 acres of emergent wetland vegetation could occur in the 100-ft. indirect impact area east of Sanderson Avenue and north and south of Scott Road.

Riparian habitats would be present in the northern part of Build Alternative 1br. Permanent direct impacts to 0.5 ha (1.2 acres) of cottonwood willow riparian forest and 1.0 ha (2.4 acres) of willow riparian habitat would occur from construction. Another 0.3 ha (0.7 acres) of cottonwood willow riparian forest, 0.004 ha (0.01 acres) of mulefat scrub, and 0.9 ha (2.2 acres) of willow riparian habitat could be permanently and indirectly impacted.

Large stands of Riversidean sage scrub are present in the hills south of Domenigoni Parkway and in the West Hemet Hills. Permanent direct impacts to 52.4 acres of Riversidean sage scrub and permanent indirect impacts to 30.6 acres could occur in these areas.

Wildlife Corridors

The wildlife corridors trend east and west, and Build Alternative 1br would be aligned north and south, thus would need to cross the corridors. Build Alternative 1br would alter the corridors by placing man-made structures over them or through them, resulting in permanent impacts to the wildlife corridors. The Project crosses the following wildlife corridors:

- MSHCP Existing Constrained Linkage B (Salt Creek)
- Newport Road Hills to Patton Road
- Hemet Channel
- San Jacinto Branch Line
- Double Butte to West Hemet Hills
- West Hemet Hills to Lakeview Mountains
- Lakeview Mountains to Tres Cerritos Hills
- Colorado River Aqueduct

Blocking an existing linkage or corridor would be a permanent direct impact and could affect Large Mammalian Wildlife, Small Mammalian, Reptile, and Amphibian Wildlife, Insects, and Passive Dispersers. No permanent direct impacts to Avian Wildlife movement are expected because local species in this

category have the ability to fly over the roadway if culvert and bridge crossings are not present or are not suitable.

Permanent Direct and Indirect Impacts to Suitable Habitat and Special-Status Wildlife Species.

In general, the impacts to natural resources are not substantially different among the Build Alternatives. The environmental impacts of Build Alternative 1br are consistently less than the impacts of Build Alternatives 1a, 1b, 2a, and 2b. Build Alternative 1br has slightly less total permanent impacts to federally jurisdictional waters than the other build alternatives, and is ranked slightly higher in temporary impacts than the other build alternatives. With the removal of the Tres Cerritos interchange from the Project design, direct impacts to federally listed threatened and endangered plants will be avoided. Build Alternatives 2a, 2b, and Design Option 2b1 could result in potentially significant indirect impacts to San Jacinto Valley crownscale (*Atriplex coronata* var. *notatior*), Spreading navarretia (*Navarretia fossalis*), and California Orcutt grass (*Orcuttia californica*), whereas Build Alternatives 1a, 1b, 1br and Design Option 1b1 would avoid indirect impacts to these species. All Project alternatives would result in both direct and indirect impacts to designated critical habitat for spreading navarretia. Direct impacts to critical habitat are 3.0 acres for Build Alternatives 1a, 1b, 1br and Design Option 1b1 and 2.4 acres for Build Alternatives 2a, 2b, and Design Option 2b1.

Vernal pool fairy shrimp (*Branchinecta lynchi*), a federally listed endangered species, was found in the vernal pools north of Stowe Road east of the Hemet Hills. All build alternatives avoid direct impacts to this area, and Build Alternatives 1a and 1b (including Build Alternative 1b1 and 1br) also avoid any potential indirect impacts. Build Alternatives 2a and 2b (including Design Option 2b1) would impact a portion of the upper watershed of these vernal pools, resulting in 1.8 acres of indirect impacts to occupied vernal pool fairy shrimp habitat. Suitable habitat is present for three additional federal- and or state-listed threatened and endangered wildlife species, including Stephen's kangaroo rat (*Dipodomys stephensi*), Quino checkerspot butterfly (*Euphydryas edita*), and California gnatcatcher (*Polioptila californica*). With the design refinements to minimize impacts on the Hemet Hills, Build Alternative 1br would result in the fewest direct and potential impacts to suitable habitat for these species.

Other special-status wildlife include burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*), Los Angeles pocket mouse (*Perognathus longimembris brevinasus*), and Cooper's hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*), all of which are listed California Species of Concern by the CDFW, as well as the white-tailed kite (*Elanus leucurus*), which is a fully protected species. Impacts to these species are generally similar among all build alternatives.

Measures to Minimize Harm or Avoidance, Minimization

The following measures are proposed (Refer to Section 3.3 of the Final EIR/EIS)

- BIO-1: Landscaping Plans
- BIO-2: Avoid the Use of Invasive and Non-Native Plants
- BIO-3: Barrier Fencing along ROW
- BIO-4: Slope Construction within ROW
- BIO-5: Equipment Storage, Fueling, and Staging Areas
- BIO-6: Training about Sensitive Biological Resources

- BIO-7: Fire Season Work
- BIO-8: Dust Minimization
- BIO-9: Designated Areas for Equipment Maintenance and Staging
- BIO-10: Litter Control
- BIO-11: Bridge over Salt Creek Channel
- BIO-12: Avoidance of San Jacinto River
- BIO-13: Avoidance of Existing Constrained Linkage C
- BIO-14: Night Lighting
- BIO-15: Crossing Structures and Spacing Intervals for a Variety of Species
- BIO-16: Openings in K-Rails for Small Animals
- BIO-17: Wildlife Crossings Intended for Large Mammalian Wildlife
- BIO-18: Use of Tree and Shrub Buffers Around Crossing Entrances, No Artificial Lighting
- BIO-19: Wildlife Crossings Vegetated as Naturally as Possible
- BIO-20: Use of Biodegradable Material in Erosion and Sediment Control Devices
- BIO-21: Use of Natural Objects in the Crossing Facility
- BIO-22: Installation of Vegetative Cover Near the Entrances to Culverts
- BIO-23: Installation of Dirt, Rock, or Concrete Benches on at Least One Side of Large Mammal Crossings
- BIO-24: Fences Continue at Least 0.8 Kilometers beyond the Critical Area
- BIO-25: Installation of Jump-Outs and Escape Ramps
- BIO-26: Enhancements to Wildlife Corridors
- BIO-27: Environmentally Sensitive Area Fencing
- BIO-28: Onsite and Offsite Drainage Facilities in the Project ROW
- BIO-29: Maintenance of Constructed Storm Water Systems.
- BIO-30: No Erodible Materials Deposited in Watercourses
- BIO-31: Ongoing Monitoring and Reporting
- BIO-32: Modification of the Project Design to Construct a Gravity-Based Surface Water Diversion System
- BIO-33: Mitigation of Impacts to Water Features
- BIO-34: Avoidance of Sensitive Plant Populations
- BIO-35: Avoid the Spread of Invasive Plant Species
- BIO-36: Mitigation for Robinson's Peppergrass Populations
- BIO-37: Coulter's Goldfields and Smooth Tarplant Populations
- BIO-38: Culvert/Drainage System for Coulter's Goldfields and Smooth Tarplant Populations
- BIO-39: Conduct Presence/Absence Surveys Immediately Prior to Construction Each Year
- BIO-40: Relocation of Burrowing Owls
- BIO-41: Maintenance of Hydrology to Existing Vernal Pool/Alkali Playa Habitat
- BIO-42: Conducting Vegetation Clearance to Avoid Active Breeding Season (March 1 through June 30)
- BIO-43: Nesting Raptor Surveys and Implementation of Nest Exclusion
- BIO-44: Inspections for Roosting Bats before Demolition

- BIO-45: Installation of Bat-Friendly Gate on Mine Adit Adjacent to Roadway Segments A, B, and C
- BIO-46: Provision of Suitable Habitat for Vegetation-Roosting Bats.
- BIO-47: Los Angeles Pocket Mouse Conservation Objectives Identified in the MSHCP, Volume II-B, Species Accounts
- BIO-48: Conducting Clearance of Riparian Habitat Outside Riparian Bird Active Breeding Season (Generally March 1 through June 30)

Cumulative Impacts

It was determined that the Project will not contribute to cumulative effects or that the effects described above were already analyzed in a cumulative context related to the following: land use; consistency with state, regional, and local plans; growth-related effects; parks and recreation; environmental justice; utilities/emergency services; hydrology and floodplains; water quality; traffic and transportation; geology; soils; seismic; topography; hazardous waste and materials; climate change; noise; and energy. It was further determined that the Project could potentially contribute to or result in cumulative impacts related to: farmland; community impacts/relocations; visual/aesthetics; cultural resources; paleontological resources; air quality; biological resources (plant and animal species, threatened and endangered species, and natural communities); and wetlands and other waters. The Findings of those analyses indicating whether the Project will or will not contribute to cumulative adverse effects related to those environmental parameters are summarized in the following sections.

Farmlands

The conversion of designated farmland to non-farmland uses is occurring at a rapid rate in Riverside County. Most of the anticipated future conversion of designated farmland in the Project area would be due to land development projects. Riverside County has designated approximately 35,106 ha (86,748 acres) of prime, unique, and statewide important farmland for conversion to nonagricultural uses. The City of Hemet has planned 877 ha (2,166 acres) for conversion and San Jacinto has planned 3,246 ha (8,020 acres) for conversion. These numbers represent 33 percent, 45 percent, and 100 percent, respectively, of the existing resources in these jurisdictions. The areas of important farmlands that would be directly and indirectly affected by the Preferred Alternative (about 308 ha [778 acres] combined) were designated for conversion by these general plans prior to the Project. As such, these parcels represent nonconforming uses based on current land use designations. Therefore, the Project's impacts on important farmlands are accounted for in the EIRs for the general plans. Overall, Project impacts would constitute less than one tenth of one percent of the planned farmland conversions in the area. As a result, the Project would contribute only incrementally to the loss of farmland in the Project vicinity. While the cumulative loss of farmlands in the study area has been determined to be significant and unavoidable based on the environmental documents for the general plans prepared by Riverside County, the City of Hemet, and the City of San Jacinto (County 2008, Hemet 2012, San Jacinto 2012), the contribution of the Project to cumulative impacts on farmlands in the San Jacinto Valley, and therefore Riverside County, would be minimal.

Community Impacts: Relocations

The Project will result in the acquisition of nonresidential (agriculture, manufacturing, industrial and retail) and residential (mobile homes, single family and multi-family) properties. Other public and private projects

in the study area would also require the acquisition of property and displacement of residents, businesses and employees. All property acquisition and relocation required for the Project will be handled in accordance with applicable federal and state laws, including the Uniform Act. Compliance with these laws will offset any impacts to communities due to relocations. Temporary Construction Easements (TCEs) will affect properties in the Cities of San Jacinto, Hemet and Riverside County during construction of the Project.

Visual/Aesthetics

The Project will result in long-term adverse visual impacts as a result of the permanent alteration of the visual environment by the new highway and its associated bridges, interchange structures, retaining walls and soundwalls. The Project will contribute to cumulative adverse visual impacts and changes of visual character in the study area. Western Riverside County is changing from vacant land and agricultural uses to a more urbanized visual character. Combined with the MCP Project, anticipated cumulative impacts to the visual environment include the conversion of vacant land, and rural and agricultural areas to urban residential and nonresidential uses and increased light and glare.

Short term visual impacts to sensitive viewers during construction of the Project would include views of demolition of existing structures, clearing of existing vegetation, grading of cut and fill slopes, construction of the roadway and structures, and construction staging areas. The construction activities are temporary and the adverse visual impacts related to construction activities will cease after completion of construction. The effects of vegetation clearing will gradually decrease over time as landscaping for the Project matures.

Mitigation measures will reduce adverse impacts that may result from construction and operation of the Project. However, there will still be a residual visual impact due to the introduction of a major new highway and its associated structures into the visual landscape in the Project study area.

Cultural Resources/ Section 4(f) Property

Evaluation of all cultural resources within the APE resulted in the identification of six resources eligible or presumed eligible, for the purposes of the Project, for inclusion in the NRHP and/or CRHR. These six resources consist of the CRA [CA-RIV-6726H], a TCP, a PPAD, the CBJ Dairy (33-15752), and archaeological sites CA-RIV-6907/H and CA-RIV-8156/H (prehistoric component). The Project will not impact the CRA. The Project has the potential to significantly impact the CBJ Dairy (33-15752), the TCP, and PPAD. Together, these three historical resources would be directly or indirectly impacted by the Project and are discussed in terms of their potential for contributing to cumulative impacts.

The TCP encompasses 2,908.3 acres of land that includes, among other things, the 470.8 acres (*'Anó' Potma hill*) and 1,000 acres of intervening valley that contains approximately 465 acres of open space. The Project will directly impact 141.1 acres of land from within the property (equivalent to 4.9 percent) of the TCP. The PPAD contains an unknown number of archaeological resources and extends beyond the limits of the APE and may extend beyond the 9-mile Study Area investigated during Phase II studies. The character-defining feature that contributes to the significance of the PPAD that may be adversely affected consists of a collection of 24 prehistoric bedrock milling components. Caltrans previously determined the 24 bedrock milling components were not individually eligible for listing in the NRHP. The PPAD for Build Alternative 1br will result in the direct use of 3 bedrock milling components which are contributing elements of the

PPAD. Although the bedrock milling components have been determined individually ineligible for listing on the NRHP, the Project could result in a cumulative impact due to the unknown number of archaeological resources that may extend beyond the limits of the PPAD where additional bedrock milling components and other prehistoric sites may exist.

Archaeological sites CA RIV-6907/H and CA-RIV-8156/H (PPAD component) can be protected in place during Project construction through the establishment of an Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA).

The Project would also have an indirect impact/effect to the setting of the property at *Chéexayam Pum'wáppivu* resulting from the introduction of visible elements. The Project in this location requires construction of new elevated roadway and bridges, and mitigation for visual impacts is proposed that would reduce the indirect impact; nonetheless, impacts cannot be reduced to a level that is less than significant. Therefore, it has been determined that the Project would have a significant impact/effect on this resource. The cumulative contribution of the direct and indirect Project impact/effect to the TCP is considered in the context of a broader study area that includes San Jacinto Valley in the north and Pleasant Valley in the Winchester area.

The CBJ Dairy

The cumulative contribution of the indirect Project impact to the CBJ Dairy is considered in the context of a broader study area that includes San Jacinto Valley in the north and Pleasant Valley in the Winchester area. This corridor has seen a general pattern of historical transformation from vacant land to historical farmsteads to commercial agricultural pursuits and now to residential and commercial centers. The impacts of past and foreseeable projects in the San Jacinto Valley and Pleasant Valley are combined with the potential Project impacts to the CBJ Dairy to assess the Project's contribution to significant cumulative impacts. Only within the last decade has this rural area been transformed from small commercial agricultural properties and homesteads to mid- to high-density housing developments and retail commercial facilities. The area has been dominated by agricultural pursuits since the 1890s, when it was characterized by individual farmsteads that supported a variety of agricultural operations, including dry farming, small orchards, beekeeping, poultry raising, dairying, and cattle grazing. This agricultural region was characterized by structures typical of family and small commercial ranches—vernacular, generally simple and functional residences, surrounded by a variety of barns, corrals, coops, storage and processing buildings, dams, ponds, fences, and shelters. Such structures and landscape features are considered to be cultural resources, which through time (generally 50 years) and distinction or importance, may qualify for listing on the NRHP or CRHR. Many of these farms and ranches in the cumulative impacts study area, which represent an important component of America's cultural heritage, have been impacted or destroyed by ground-disturbing activities associated with development, as well as by changes in the visual character of the historic setting and other indirect effects. While there are no known agricultural structures in the study area that have been found eligible for the NRHP, there is no easily obtainable record of the number of structures in this broader study area that may qualify as historic properties or historical resources or how many of those have already been destroyed.

Two future projects could contribute incrementally to impacts to the CBJ Dairy and thus would contribute to cumulative impacts in the study area, the MCP Project and San Jacinto Gateway Specific Plan. Construction of the proposed MCP, which would intersect the Project at its northern end, would impact

open-space portions in the northern and eastern end of the resource (but not elements such as buildings that contribute to the resource's CRHR eligibility) with all proposed build alternatives. Only one build alternative, the San Jacinto North Design Variation, which would impact the majority of the resource and its structures, would have a direct impact to this historical resource.

TCP

There are nine cumulative projects that would incrementally contribute to impacts/effects on the TCP. Two projects are currently under construction and include Vesting Tentative Tract Map (VTTM) 28286 and Tract Map (TR) 30351. Seven future projects are proposed in the study area and include General Plan Amendment (GPA) 06-01; GPA 05-02; Tentative Parcel Map (TPM) 32516; Conditional Use Permit (CUP) 03479; Parcel Map (PM) 33564; TR 33117; and TR 33958. Each of these projects is described below and is assessed for its potential to contribute incrementally to cumulative impacts on the TCP.

VTTM 28286, known as Heartland Village, is currently constructing 1,368 residential lots, a commercial site, and golf club northwest of Florida Avenue and California Avenue. The Project impacts open space, developed residential tracts, and partially developed tract portions of the TCP. TR 30351, located north of Stetson Avenue, east of Green Avenue, and west of Patterson Avenue, is currently constructing 260 residential units and impacting an approximate 73-acre portion of the approximate 1,000 acres intervening valley, a contributing element to the resource's CRHR/NRHP eligibility.

Future development of GPA 06-01, located southeast of Devonshire Avenue and Los Rancherias Road, would impact open-space portions of the TCP, including a small boulder-laden area in the West Hemet Hills. GPA 05-02, known as Emerald Acres, proposes construction on approximately 320 acres of land that includes approximately 235 acres of the approximate 470.8-acres '*Anó' Potma*, a contributing element to the resource's CRHR/NRHP eligibility. This would destroy approximately 46 percent of '*Anó' Potma* and would introduce visual elements that would have an indirect impact/effect to the setting of the property. TPM 32516, located along McCarron Way, proposes construction of three new single-family residences that would impact a partially developed residential tract along the northern boundary of the TCP. Construction of CUP 03479, located southeast of Florida Avenue and Patterson Avenue, would impact a partially developed tract within the TCP. Construction of PM 33564, located southwest of Asbury Street and Longfellow Avenue, would impact a partially developed tract of land with open space within the TCP. TR 33117, known as the Villages of Winchester, proposes construction of 469 single-family lots in approximately 135 acres of open space and 30 acres of partially developed land within the intervening valley, a contributing element to the resource's CRHR/NRHP eligibility. This would reduce the open space within the intervening valley to 330 acres or by approximately 29 percent and would introduce visual elements that would have an indirect impact/effect to the setting of the property. TM 33598, located north of Grand Avenue and north of Adams Road, proposes construction of 36 residential units that would impact undeveloped open space in the southwestern portion of the TCP. When considered together, all nine projects discussed above would contribute to a cumulative impact on the TCP. Therefore, those projects would contribute to a decline in the overall health of cultural resources. Considering the proposed impacts/effects to the TCP proposed by the various build alternatives and design options considered for the Project, the incremental impact/effect of the Project is considered cumulatively considerable.

In addition to previous documentation of the affected historical resources/historic properties, additional efforts to avoid, mitigate, and minimize impacts to historical resources, measures CR-1 through CR-4 are presented in Section 3.1.8.4 (and the ECR from the Final EIR/EIS Appendix E and is provided as Attachment 1 to this ROD). Caltrans is continuing to consult to resolve adverse effects pursuant to Section 106 PA Stipulation XI, and 35 CFR 800.6 through preparation of a MOA in consultation with consulting parties.

The Project would incorporate mitigation and minimization measures to lessen the effect of the Project on historical resources/historic properties. However, these measures would not reduce Project impacts/effects to the TCP and PPAD to a level less than significant; therefore, the Project would contribute to the cumulative effect of the declining health of cultural resources.

Paleontological Resources

Earthmoving operations during construction of the Project will destroy fossils and fossiliferous rock units. The following direct impacts to paleontology resources as a result of construction of the Project will be permanent: Destruction of paleontological resources; damage to paleontological resources during grading; destruction of rock units that may contain paleontological resources; loss of contextual data associated with paleontological resources; and, loss of association between paleontological resources.

Air Quality

The Project is located in a federal nonattainment area for O₃, and PM_{2.5}, and a federal maintenance area for CO and PM₁₀. Therefore the Project is required to demonstrate regional conformity for these pollutants. The Project is included in the state highways Project list of the conforming 2015 SCAG FTIP through Amendment #15-01 and SCAG 2012-2015 RTP through Amendment #2. The 2012-2035 RTP through Amendment #2 and the 2015 FTIP through Amendment #15-01 were approved by FHWA and FTA on December 15, 2014. The design concept and scope of the proposed Project are consistent with the Project description in the 2012- 2035 RTP through Amendment #2, and the and the 2015 FTIP (through Amendment #15-01), and the “open to traffic” assumptions of the SCAG’s regional emissions analysis.

Based on the CO hot spot analysis performed for the Project and the conclusion of TCWG that the Project is not a project of air quality concern under the PM_{2.5}/PM₁₀ hot spot analysis. Therefore, the Project is not expected to cause or contribute to any new localized CO, PM₁₀ or PM_{2.5} violations, and would not increase the frequency or severity of any existing violations of the CO, PM₁₀ or PM_{2.5} National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS), and would not delay timely attainment of the CO, PM₁₀ or PM_{2.5} NAAQS. Regional MSAT emissions will improve by 2035 because of USEPA national control programs.

Construction of the Project would result in elevated NO_x emissions exceeding SCAQMD’s level of concern, even with minimization measures. Construction emissions of NO_x would contribute to a cumulative adverse effect on air quality. Therefore, construction of the Project is expected to contribute to existing violations of the ozone standards. This impact would be temporary because it would only occur during construction. However, when considering the other large infrastructure projects, based on the anticipated schedule, only the MCP Project may overlap in construction schedules in the vicinity of the proposed Project. If these circumstances were to occur, the NO_x emission impacts of all these projects when combined would result in an adverse cumulative impact to air quality. The proposed construction schedule

of the Project is expected to require several years. The Project would incorporate both standard practices and mitigation measures during construction to lessen the impact on air quality. However, NO_x emissions during construction with implementation of the minimization measures would exceed the SCAQMD level of concern of 100 pounds per day. NO_x emissions would be expected to contribute to a temporary adverse cumulative effect on air quality during the Project construction phase.

Biological Resources

The Project cumulative impact analysis for the biological environment recognizes and incorporates the results of the MSHCP. The MSHCP is a Habitat Conservation Plan and Natural Communities Conservation Plan for western Riverside County that mitigates for the direct, indirect, and cumulative impact to 146 Covered Species and their associated habitats (RCIP 2003).

Implementation of the MSHCP supports the land use changes and projects adopted in the Riverside County General Plan and the Cities of Hemet and San Jacinto General Plans. Those changes or projects included in these general plans are considered Covered projects, which includes the proposed Project, with conditions. Future projects are also shown in in Section 3.3 of the Final EIR/EIS and Appendix H of the Final EIR/EIS. Covered Projects in the MSHCP Criteria Area are shown in the Final EIR/EIS Section 3.3. These are circulation element roads, which include a composite of County and City General Plan Circulation Elements. As such, the analysis provided below recognizes and incorporates, by reference, the analysis and agreements completed for the MSHCP. These previous actions benefit the proposed Project because cumulative impacts for Covered Species that would be impacted by the Project have already been analyzed and addressed. Because of this, the following analysis is divided into two sections, MSCHP Covered Species/Resources and Other Species Not Covered by the MSCHP. This latter section includes impacts to species not included in the analysis completed for the MSHCP.

The MSHCP includes a cumulative impact analysis of biological resources covered in the plan, including species, vegetation communities, wildlife movement, and habitat conservation plans and natural community conservation plans. That analysis was designed to cover, and is applicable to, projects such as the proposed Project.

The result of the cumulative impacts analysis completed for the MSHCP determined that Covered Projects would not result in a cumulative adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any of the 146 Covered Species.

All areas that support sensitive natural plant communities and special-status plants in the PIA were considered in this analysis to be directly and permanently lost as a result of construction and operation of the roadway. Permanent indirect impacts could occur within the 30.5 m (100 ft.) indirect impact area adjacent to each build alternative or in Additional Indirect Impact Study Area 1.

Permanent direct and indirect impacts are expected to paniculate tarplant (CNPS List 4) and Robinson's peppergrass (CNPS List 1B). Neither is an MSHCP Covered Species.

Paniculate Tarplant

Depending on the Build alternative, between 14 to and 20 populations of paniculate tarplant would be permanently and directly impacted, and an additional 14 to 19 populations would be permanently and indirectly impacted. More than 100 populations of paniculate tarplant were identified within the study area. This species is a CNPS List 4 plant (California Native Plant Society watch list species), and although several populations occur in the Project study area, it is not expected that permanent impacts to paniculate tarplant would be substantial. Therefore, the Project is not expected to contribute to cumulative impacts to paniculate tarplant. Although the Project is not expected to substantially contribute to a cumulative impact to paniculate tarplant, one could occur if the other Projects in the San Jacinto Valley are implemented.

Robinson's peppergrass

Surveys identified between 6 and 16 populations of Robinson's peppergrass that could be permanently and directly impacted within the R/W and another two or three populations that could be permanently and indirectly impacted, depending on the alternative selected. The largest concentration of Robinson's peppergrass known in western Riverside County is located within the R/W for Roadway Segment G, which is a component of Build Alternatives 1a, 1b, and the Preferred Alternative. However, permanent impacts to Robinson's peppergrass due to construction of Build Alternative 2a or 2b would also be substantial. It is important to note that the footprint of Roadway Segment G within the Preferred Alternative is smaller than Build Alternatives 1a and 1b. Therefore, permanent and direct impacts as well as cumulative impacts to Robinson's peppergrass due to the Preferred Alternative are considerably smaller than Build Alternatives 1a, 1b, or any of the other build alternatives and would not be significant. The populations in the West Hemet Hills are the largest population complex currently known in western Riverside County, and this location represents the easternmost known distribution of the species. However, this species is taxonomically difficult, and the geographic distribution of this species may be incomplete.

Because the populations in the PIA are of regional significance (largest population complex currently known and representing its easternmost distribution), the contribution of the Project-related impacts in combination with the potential impacts from other projects planned in the area (although the presence of populations is not known) could be cumulatively considerable with Build Alternatives 1a or 1b. However, the footprint of Roadway Segment G within the Preferred Alternative is smaller than Build Alternatives 1a and 1b and therefore, cumulative impacts to Robinson's peppergrass from the Preferred Alternative would not be significant. In the West Hemet Hills, other development projects (primarily residential) are proposed. The distribution of this important population is shown in reference to the Project and the proposed development Projects.

Bats

Removal of rock outcrops would permanently reduce available roosting habitat for bat species dependent on this limited resource in the Project vicinity. Additional permanent impacts to roosting habitat could also include removal of mature trees that may offer roosts for sensitive bat species (e.g., trees that contain cavities, exfoliating bark, suitable foliage, or well-developed frond skirts). Additionally, established building roosts may be permanently lost with demolition of building structures.

Temporary impacts to bats as a result of construction may include disturbance to roost sites and disruptions of foraging areas due to increased vehicular traffic, night illumination, pile driving for bridges, tree cutting,

building demolition, grubbing, and other construction-related noise in all build alternatives, as well as blasting, drilling, rock hammering, and grading in roadway segments containing rock outcrops or hills. Bats may abandon roost sites as a result of local disturbances and would alter their foraging behavior near lights, which could benefit them by attracting insects or repel them from an area as a result of predator avoidance.

Wetlands and Other Waters

The Project could result in direct loss of 4.73 ha (11.69 acres) to 5.15 ha (12.73 acres) of wetlands and 3.09 ha (7.64 acres) to 3.25 ha (8.03 acres) of other waters, depending on the selected build alternative. Additional impacts would occur from bridge piles in Salt Creek Channel, which is not considered a wetland. However, these impacts would be offset through replacement, creation, enhancement, and preservation of wetlands or other areas deemed suitable by the permitting agencies, as required by state and federal laws and regulations.

Furthermore, under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (USACE), Section 401 of the Clean Water Act (RWQCB), and CDFG 1602 permit programs, mitigation for impacts to other waters of the United States/State would offset Project impacts. Therefore, with mitigation, the Department's impacts to other waters (non-federal wetlands) are not considered a considerable contribution to any cumulative impact that may occur.

F. Mitigation and Monitoring or Enforcement Program

The Environmental Commitments Record (ECR) for the SR 79 Realignment Project has been prepared for the Preferred Alternative. The ECR is provided in Appendix E in the Final EIR/EIS. The ECR will be continually updated by Caltrans and RCTC (the agency responsible for administering the design and construction of the Project.) The ECR will also include any permit measures required by the regulatory agencies permitting the Project. Caltrans and RCTC will be responsible for implementing and reporting the status of the mitigation measures in the ECR. Caltrans will also be responsible for construction management and oversight, and assuring that mitigation measures are fully implemented by designated and qualified personnel, which may include specialty contractors during the appropriate stages of the Project.

G. Response to Comments on the Final EIR/EIS

The Notice of availability of the Final EIR/EIS was published in the Federal Register on November 4, 2016, and was circulated for review by other governmental agencies, organizations, and the public. The 30-day review period for the Final EIR/EIS closed on December 4, 2016. Letters commenting only on the CEQA Final EIR are not included. Caltrans Received comments on the Final EIS from the following:

- United States Environmental Protection Agency
- California Department of Fish and Wildlife
- Cal Fire- Riverside Unit/Riverside County Fire Department
- Private Individuals

Comments received, as well as Caltrans' responses to the comments are provided within Attachment 2.

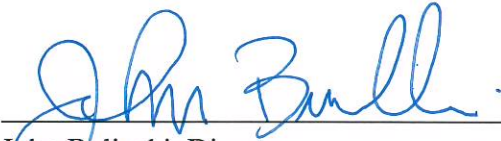
Other Comments

In addition to the written comments above, Caltrans and RCTC received emails and verbal comments by phone from the general public. These comments did not raise specific substantive environmental issues or ask specific questions regarding the analysis or conclusions in the Final EIR/EIS. The comments generally relate to the following topics: potential project impacts on individual properties (full or partial acquisition or temporary construction easements, access during construction); the property acquisition process and schedule, update on where the final noise walls will be located and other questions related to project features. RCTC and Caltrans have responded to these comments by either phone or email.

In response to comments pertaining to the project schedule and when construction will begin, all practical measures to minimize harm have been adopted and were incorporated into the decision to select Preferred Alternative 1br. Upon approval of the Final Environmental Impact Report/Statement by issuing this Record of Decision, final design of the project can begin. Construction will follow when funding becomes available.

H. Record of Decision of Approval

Build Alternative 1br, the realign of State Route 79 from Domenigoni Parkway to Gilman Springs Road, a distance of approximately 18 miles, in the cities of Hemet and San Jacinto and unincorporated Riverside County. The realigned highway would be a limited-access, four-lane expressway, with two travel lanes in each direction separated by a median, has been determined to best provide a safe and efficient transportation facility and to be the environmentally superior alternative. This selection was based on minimizing R/W environmental impacts, engineering and operational advantages, and public and agency comments received during the environmental process. All practical measures to minimize harm have been adopted and will be incorporated into this decision. The Record of Decision for the Build Alternative 1br is hereby approved.



John Bulinski, Director
District Director
California Department of Transportation, District 8



Date

Attachment 1

Environmental Commitments Record for the SR 79 Realignment Project

Environmental Commitments Record

The purpose of the Environmental Commitments Record (ECR) provided in this appendix is to assign responsibility for the implementation, monitoring, and timing of each avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measure that has been identified to address impacts of the proposed Project.

The ECR lists each of the environmental topics evaluated and the avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures. Two columns in the table list the timing/phase of the measures and the party responsible for ensuring that each measure is implemented. The next two columns are blank to allow the Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC) or the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) to add the actions taken to implement the measures and the verification date of each measure. These columns will be used as a reference for verifying that each measure is implemented and that ongoing measures are regularly checked.

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Date: December 2016
Environmental Coordinator:
Phone No: 000-000-0000

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITMENTS RECORD (ECR)

08-RIV-79
KP R25.4/R54.4
PM R15.78/R33.80
EA 494000/PN 0800000784
Construct Highway

Task and Brief Description		Responsible Branch/ Staff	Timing/Phase	NSSP Req.	Action Taken to Comply with Task	Task Completed		Remarks	Environmental Compliance		
						Initial	Date		Initial	Date	
ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE REVIEW											
Land Use											
Existing and Future Land Use											
<u>LU-1. City of Hemet General Plan and Build Alternative 1a.</u> South of Florida Avenue in the Hemet Planning Area, Build Alternative 1a is not consistent with the Locally Preferred Alternative identified in the Hemet General Plan. Differences between Build Alternative 1a and the General Plan of the City of Hemet would have to be resolved before the Project moves forward. This will require a General Plan amendment as proposed in the 2030 Hemet General Plan.		RCTC Project Manager	Preconstruction								
<u>LU-2. City of San Jacinto General Plan and Build Alternative 1a.</u> Build Alternative 1a incorporates Highway Segment “L” which is not consistent with the Locally Preferred Alternative in the General Plan of the City of San Jacinto. Differences between Build Alternative 1a and the General Plan of the City of San Jacinto would have to be resolved before the Project moves forward. This will require an amendment to the San Jacinto General Plan as the San Jacinto General Plan Implementation Program anticipates.		RCTC Project Manager	Preconstruction								
<u>LU-3. City of Hemet General Plan and Build Alternative 1b and Design Option 1b1.</u> South of Florida Avenue, Build Alternative 1b, 1br, and Design Option 1b1 are not consistent with the Locally Preferred Alternative in to 2030 Hemet General Plan. The differences would have to be resolved before the Project moves forward. This will require a General Plan amendment as proposed in the 2030 Hemet General Plan and discussed in more detail above.		RCTC Project Manager	Preconstruction								
<u>LU-4. City of Hemet General Plan and Build Alternative 2a.</u> South of Florida Avenue and north of Hidden Springs Road, Build Alternative 2a is not consistent with the Locally Preferred Alternative in the 2030 Hemet General Plan. The differences would have to be resolved before the Project moves forward. This will require a General Plan amendment, which was proposed in the 2030 Hemet General Plan and which is discussed in detail above.		RCTC Project Manager	Preconstruction								

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						Initial	Date		Initial	Date
<u>LU-5. City of San Jacinto General Plan and Build Alternative 2a.</u> Build Alternative 2a incorporates Roadway Segment "L" which is not consistent with the Locally Preferred Alternative in the General Plan of the City of San Jacinto. Differences between Build Alternative 2a and the General Plan of the City of San Jacinto would have to be resolved before the Project moves forward. This will require a General Plan amendment as was proposed in the San Jacinto General Plan.		RCTC Project Manager	Preconstruction							
<u>LU-6. County of Riverside Circulation System.</u> After the ROD is issued for the Project, and as part of final design of <u>Design Option 1b1 or 2b1</u> , RCTC will coordinate the planned access restrictions on Olive Avenue and Simpson Road with the County of Riverside so that the County can determine appropriate actions to accommodate a change to the approved Circulation Element of the Riverside County General Plan.		RCTC Project Manager	Preconstruction							
<u>LU-7 General Plan Consistency.</u> Upon the selection of a Preferred Alternative and approval of the SR 79 Realignment Project for implementation, the SR 79 Realignment Project Manager will request that the County of Riverside, the City of San Jacinto, and community of Hemet amend their respective General Plans to reflect the final SR 79 Realignment, interchange locations, and modification of land use designations for property that will be acquired for the project.		RCTC Project Manager	Preconstruction							
<u>Consistent with Local Plans and Programs</u>										
<u>LU-1. City of Hemet General Plan and Build Alternative 1a.</u>		RCTC Project Manager	Preconstruction							
<u>LU-2. City of San Jacinto General Plan and Build Alternative 1a.</u>		RCTC Project Manager	Preconstruction							
<u>LU-3. City of Hemet General Plan and Build Alternative 1b and Design Option 1b1.</u>		RCTC Project Manager	Preconstruction							
<u>LU-4. City of Hemet General Plan and Build Alternative 2a</u>			Preconstruction							
<u>LU-5. City of San Jacinto General Plan and Build Alternative 2a.</u>		RCTC Project Manager	Preconstruction							
<u>LU-6. County of Riverside Circulation System.</u>		RCTC Project Manager	Preconstruction							

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						Initial	Date		Initial	Date
<u>LU-7. General Plan Consistency.</u>		RCTC Project Manager	Preconstruction							
<u>Parks and Recreational Areas</u>										
<u>NO-1. Installation of Recommended Noise Barriers Shown to be Feasible and Reasonable.</u>		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Engineer	Design, Construction							
<u>LU-8. Public Notification of Alternative San Jacinto Parks.</u>		RCTC Project Manager	Design, Preconstruction							
<u>BIO-8. Dust Mitigation.</u> The Project will minimize dust by regularly watering active construction areas.		RCTC Project Manager	Construction							
<u>Farmlands/Timberlands</u>										
<u>AG-1. Maintain Access to Existing Farmlands.</u> Access to existing farmlands, all remaining active fields, and farm units will be maintained during construction for farm-related vehicles. Long-term indirect impacts to farmlands will be minimized by modifying driveways and farm lanes in cooperation with the landowners to maintain access to parcel remnants. Modifications will be made to minimize the cost and inconvenience to the landowner. Such efforts will reduce the impacts to the farmland and the producers, as well as reducing the Project right-of-way acquisition costs.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Engineer and Resident Engineer	Design, Construction							
<u>AG-2. Coordination with Owners.</u> Coordination and implementing activities will take place with property owners to notify them of any short-term loss of services, such as water and electricity, or other requirements for maintaining farming activities. Timing of any short-term loss of service will occur during times that will not disrupt farming operations.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Engineer and Resident Engineer	Design, Construction							
<u>AG-3. Notification of Williamson Act Land Acquisition.</u> The Department and RCTC will notify the CDC of any acquired Williamson Act lands within 10 days of the acquisition.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Environmental Task Lead	Preconstruction							

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Task and Brief Description		Responsible Branch/ Staff	Timing/Phase	NSSP Req.	Action Taken to Comply with Task	Task Completed		Remarks	Environmental Compliance	
						Initial	Date		Initial	Date
<u>Community Character and Cohesion</u>										
<u>COM-1. Establish Pedestrian/Bike/Equestrian Paths.</u> The Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC) will be responsible for the design of pedestrian/bike/equestrian paths for the East Newport Road overcrossing and Olive Avenue and Stowe Road undercrossings of realigned SR 79 <u>Design Option 1b1 and 2b1 to facilitate community interaction and cohesion within the Rural Winchester Community.</u>		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Engineer	Design							
<u>COM-2. School District Coordination.</u> RCTC will be responsible for contacting the Hemet and San Jacinto Unified School Districts to confirm the school attendance areas that would be bisected by the Project. Once affected schools are identified, coordination will be conducted to avoid disruption of access.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Resident Engineer	Preconstruction, Construction							
<u>COM-3. Traffic Management Plan for Access.</u> The Traffic Management Plan prepared for the Project will identify traffic control measures (construction cones, signs, etc.) and detour routes to manage circulation during construction and maintain adequate access to community services. It will also include outreach and public communication plans.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Engineer	Design, Preconstruction							
<u>COM-4. Recycling during Operations.</u> The Department will be responsible for managing Project operation and maintenance activities to ensure that refuse, debris, and landscape trimmings will be reused or recycled at a suitable recycling facility as appropriate. This will reduce the amount of material disposed at Lamb Canyon Landfill.		The Department Project Manager in conjunction with RCTC Project Manager, Resident Engineer, and Department maintenance staff	Construction							
<u>Relocation</u>										
<u>RELOC-1. Relocation Assistance.</u> The Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC), as the agency responsible for relocations, will implement and administer, with Department oversight, the California Department of Transportation Relocation Assistance Program to provide relocation assistance or compensation to eligible persons and businesses in accordance with the federal Uniform Relocation Assistance and Property Acquisition Act of 1970, as amended (42 United States Code Sections 4601 4655)		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with RCTC Right-of-Way Staff	Preconstruction							

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						Initial	Date		Initial	Date
and the California Relocation Act (California Government Code, Section 7260 et. seq.).										
Utilities										
<u>UTIL-1. Coordination with Utility Companies.</u> During final design, RCTC will be responsible for conducting early coordination with utility companies to determine which utilities need to be relocated outside the proposed Project ROW. The Project Engineer will seek: (1) To avoid utility relocations (2) If relocation is necessary, to relocate utilities across the SR 79 right-of-way or within other existing public rights-of-way and/or easements (3) If relocation is outside existing or proposed public right of way and/or easements, to relocate in a manner that will minimize environmental impacts from construction and ongoing maintenance and repair activities		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Engineer	Design, Preconstruction							
<u>UTIL-2. Roadway Segment G Utility Tower Relocations.</u> RCTC will be responsible for the relocation of the two utility towers within Roadway Segment G. This would require a new site that would provide for the same coverage as achieved by the current towers.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Engineer and Resident Engineer	Design, Construction							
<u>UTIL-3. Temporary Detour for Railroad.</u> . <u>This measure will be required during construction of either of the design options.</u> Given the infrequency of rail operations along the San Jacinto Branch Line, at least 2 weeks prior to the time when annual train operations must cross SR 79, RCTC will contact the Department in writing with detailed operational requirements (date, time, etc.) for the train crossing. In accordance with these stated requirements, the Department will design and implement a temporary detour from SR 79 onto local streets, including appropriate road blocks and signage, for no more than 8 consecutive nighttime hours in accordance with all Department design and safety standards. Once the temporary detour is in place, the Department will remove the portions of SR 79 that obstruct the railroad ROW, so that the train may safely cross the SR 79, in accordance with all applicable safety standards. Once the train has successfully crossed SR 79, the SR 79 roadway will be returned to predisturbance conditions consistent with all applicable Department design and safety standards, prior		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Department Oversight Project Manager, Department Engineers, and Department construction staff	Postconstruction							

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to being reopened to public travel. To address the impacts to traffic, a Transportation Management Plan will be developed to identify, sign, and/or notify the general public about the closure and detour routes. In addition, emergency service providers will be notified about closure locations to allow them to identify alternate routes for emergency response.										
<u>UTIL-4. Notification of Underground Service Alert.</u> The construction contractor will notify Underground Service Alert (USA) prior to Project construction to ensure that the location of all utility lines within the Project ROW are correctly marked prior to groundbreaking. Coordination with USA also would identify the presence of previously unknown or unmarked utilities, ensuring proper relocation and avoidance of existing utilities in Utility Relocation Area 2.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Resident Engineer	Preconstruction, Construction							
<u>UTIL-5. Utility Relocation.</u> Prior to construction, RCTC and the construction contractor will coordinate with the utility providers responsible for utility relocations to avoid interruption or disruption of service and in accordance with the Traffic Management Plan prepared for the Project to avoid impacts to circulation and emergency response times.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Resident Engineer	Preconstruction, Construction							
<u>Emergency Services</u>										
<u>SERV-1. Coordination with Emergency Responders Prior to Opening Year (2020).</u> Prior to Opening Year (2020), RCTC will coordinate with the emergency responders listed below to ensure that, if necessary, response routes can be established or updated and additional personnel can be secured to ensure that emergency response in the Project area continues to meet applicable requirements. • California Highway Patrol • City of Hemet Fire Department • City of Hemet Police Department • Riverside County Fire Department (including contracted fire protection for the City of San Jacinto) • Riverside County Sheriff's Department (including contracted police protection for the City of San Jacinto)		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Engineer	Design, Preconstruction							

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						Initial	Date		Initial	Date
<u>SERV-2. Coordination of Temporary Detours with Emergency Responders.</u> Prior to and during construction, RCTC and the construction contractor will coordinate all temporary detour plans with the emergency responders listed below to ensure that, if necessary, affected response routes can be established or updated and additional personnel can be secured to ensure that emergency response in the Project area continues to meet applicable requirements. - California Highway Patrol - City of Hemet Fire Department - City of Hemet Police Department - Riverside County Fire Department (including contracted fire protection for the City of San Jacinto) - Riverside County Sheriff's Department (including contracted police protection for the City of San Jacinto)		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Engineer	Design, Preconstruction							
<u>Traffic and Transportation/Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities</u>										
<u>LU-6. County of Riverside Circulation System.</u>		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Engineer and Resident Engineer	Design, Preconstruction, Construction							
<u>UTIL-3. Temporary Detour for Railroad.</u>		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Department Oversight Project Manager, Department Engineers and Department construction staff	Postconstruction							
<u>Visual/Aesthetics</u>										
<u>VIS-1. Corridor Master Plan.</u> Early in the planning and design of the Project, a Corridor Master Plan will be developed to unify all freeway improvements, including the roadway, structures, and roadside, to result in a collaborative, distinctive, cohesive integration of the corridor into the surrounding communities and the natural environment. The Corridor Master Plan will include roadside design and maintenance, vegetation management, noise barriers, retaining walls, storm water treatments, median barriers, guard rails, bridges, light pollution, preservation of historic and cultural features to		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Engineer and Landscape Architect	Design							

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						Initial	Date		Initial	Date
ensure the visual cohesiveness of the corridor. It will include the identification of collaborative opportunities for the Department and others. The Corridor Master Plan should be specific and not only conceptual in design. Resources for development of the Corridor Master Plan will be provided from this parent project's roadway contract.										
<u>VIS-2. Mitigation Planting/Highway Planting.</u> Mitigation planting/highway planting will be provided prior to the end of construction for each phase of the Project. It is expected that the year requirements for the plant establishment period will be set in the Corridor Master Plan based on the species selected, but will not be less than a 3-year minimum. The vegetative requirements may vary. Planting and plant establishment will be funded by this parent project's roadway contract.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Engineer and Landscape Architect	Design							
<u>VIS-3. Plantings to Bring Down Apparent Scale.</u> The planting of trees, vines, and shrubs will be provided for the "softening" of structures, including walls and bridges, and to bring down their apparent scale.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Engineer, the Landscape Architect, and the Resident Engineer	Design, Construction							
<u>VIS-4. Minimize Visual Impacts with Revegetation.</u> Visual impacts will be minimized by revegetation, which will be achieved by planting trees, shrubs, and groundcover at interchanges and in more developed areas. Less developed, scenic, and rural areas will be revegetated to reproduce adjacent native cover. Slope areas adjacent to native cover will include container planting in addition to seeding to minimize visual impacts.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Engineer and Landscape Architect	Design							
<u>VIS-5. Textured Noise Barriers.</u> Noise barriers and retaining walls will be heavily textured and colored a midrange to dark color that corresponds to that of adjacent soil. Walls facing public-use areas (streets, private yards, or recreation) will be heavily textured and colored a midrange to dark neutral color to minimize light reflection. Walls higher than 8 feet (ft) and longer than 30 ft will feature a wall cap and panel with detailing or site specific designs such as local or historic references. These or other specific enhancements approved by the District Landscape Architect will minimize/mitigate		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Resident Engineer and Landscape Architect	Design, Construction							

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community impacts and restore visual scale to the surroundings.										
<u>VIS-6. Aesthetic Treatment to Structures.</u> Aesthetic treatment to structures will provide opportunities for community identification and will be developed collaboratively in the Corridor Master Plan.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Resident Engineer and Landscape Architect	Design, Construction							
<u>VIS-7. Planting on Structures Such as Retaining Walls and Bridges to Minimize Glare.</u> Landscaping will entail planting trees adjacent to concrete structures and vines on the structures themselves to minimize reflected light and glare.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Engineer and Landscape Architect	Design							
<u>VIS-8. Concentrations of Trees and Shrubs at Interchanges.</u> Landscaping will entail planting concentrations of trees and shrubs at interchanges, with less numerous plantings in the areas in between.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Resident Engineer and Landscape Architect	Design, Construction							
<u>VIS-9. Screening Treatments in Winchester.</u> Portions of the Project alignment visible from schools and parks or Roadway Segment A in the community of Winchester will receive screening treatments, including the planting of trees, shrubs, and/or vines.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Resident Engineer and Landscape Architect	Design, Construction							
<u>VIS-10. Noise Barrier Screening in Winchester.</u> Noise barriers built at locations visible from parks or schools or within Winchester will be screened with trees, shrubs, or vines to minimize their visual impact.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Landscape Architect, Project Engineer and Resident Engineer	Design, Construction							
<u>VIS-11. Prepare Contour Grading Plans.</u> Consistent with Section 304.4 of the Department's Highway Design Manual, prepare contour grading plans for all major cut slopes that provide for the rounding of the tops and ends of the cut slopes where the material is other than solid rock. Where the material is solid rock, a layer of earth or rock rubble overlying the rock will be rounded.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Landscape Architect, Project Engineer and Resident Engineer	Design, Construction							
<u>VIS-12. Cut Slope Design.</u> To ensure that the cut slopes have a more natural appearance, the design of these slopes will be analyzed further and revised. In the current design, each of the slopes consists of a series of 12-ft -wide benches intended to catch debris; these wide and regular benches create a somewhat artificial appearing slope. In the redesign, a single wide bench will be provided at the base of each cut slope to catch debris, and the regular series of wide benches on the		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Resident Engineer and Landscape Architect	Design, Construction							

Date: December 2016
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slopes will be replaced by a series of 1-ft to 2-ft -wide steps intended to create niches for the establishment of vegetation. The design of these steps will be consistent with the guidance provided by Section 304.5 of the Department's Highway Design Manual, which recommends that they be irregular, varying by 20 percent in height. In addition, at the ends of the cuts, the steps will be designed to wrap around the rounded transitions to appear more natural.										
<u>VIS-13. Over-Excavate Slopes.</u> Where feasible, over-excavate slopes cut into solid rock by 4 ft and back fill with rock rubble. This will create a more natural appearance for the texture of slopes and will provide more opportunities for vegetation to become established.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Landscape Architect, Project Engineer and Resident Engineer	Design, Construction							
<u>VIS-14. Create Artificial Draws.</u> On large cut slopes, create artificial draws (small depressions that extend up the slope and serve as drainage ways) that make visual sense in terms of their relationship to the surrounding topographic patterns. These artificial draws will be designed to break the cuts up into smaller visual units and to make the cut look less like an engineered slope.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Engineer	Design							
<u>VIS-15. Weathering of Exposed Rock.</u> On cut slopes where the color of the exposed rock contrasts substantially with the color of the rock on the nearby slope areas, use a metallic oxide spray to artificially weather the surfaces of the newly exposed rock.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Engineer and Landscape Architect	Design							
<u>VIS-16. Revegetate Cut Slopes.</u> Use hydroseeding and other planting methods, where feasible, on cut slopes to initiate the longer term process of natural slope revegetation.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Engineer and Landscape Architect	Design							
<u>VIS-17. Erosion Control.</u> Design the fill slopes to incorporate erosion control measures in a way that is effective in preventing erosion and that leaves the slopes as natural appearing as possible.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Engineer and Landscape Architect	Design							
<u>VIS-18. Hydroseed Fill Slopes.</u> Hydroseed the fill slopes to establish a vegetative cover of native plants/grasses.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Engineer and Landscape Architect	Design							

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<u>VIS-19. Texturize Fill Slopes.</u> Incorporate rock rubble onto the surfaces of the fill slopes so that they have a highly textured natural appearance.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Engineer and Landscape Architect	Design							
<u>VIS-20. Revegetate Fill Slopes.</u> Make strategic plantings of aesthetically and ecologically appropriate shrubs and trees on the fill slopes to visually break up large expanses of slope, to visually integrate the slopes into their surroundings, and to compensate for the loss of more distant views. The precise locations of these plantings will be based on detailed analyses conducted in preparing the Corridor Master Plan and will conform to Department landscape design guidelines and the standard Department budget prescription for projects of this type.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Engineer and Landscape Architect	Design							
<u>VIS-21. Benched Slopes.</u> Where slopes of 20 ft or more need to be steepened, a combination of 4:1 and 2:1 transition benches will be constructed as feasible to optimize the opportunity for vegetation to be established.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Engineer and Landscape Architect	Design							
<u>VIS-22. Fill Slope Design.</u> Available topsoil (approximately 1.0 ft) and weathered rocks and boulders within the right-of-way will be separated and stockpiled for use in the finish grading of fill slopes, where feasible, to enhance aesthetics or vegetation reestablishment.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Engineer and Landscape Architect	Design							
<u>VIS-23. Earthen Basins.</u> Earthen basins and other water quality treatment facilities will be designed with undulating outlines and sited with a variety of appropriate plant and inert material to blend with the surrounding terrain and landscape, rather than creating basins that require screening. The need for additional right-of-way to accommodate the facilities will also be considered.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Engineer and Landscape Architect	Design							
<u>VIS-24. Nonreflective Materials.</u> Every effort will be made to select permanent fencing material for the Project that has a dark and dulled finish.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Engineer and Landscape Architect	Design							
<u>VIS-25. Overcrossing Design.</u> Based on detailed analyses conducted during early planning and design, the design team, including landscape architects, will refine the design of the overcrossing structures to make them appear as light and open as feasible and incorporate design elements that will make them visually		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Engineer and Landscape Architect	Design							

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engaging and relate them to their settings. Overcrossing design elements will provide opportunities for community identification.										
VIS-26. Noise Barrier Design Treatments. Noise barriers will incorporate design treatments to make them attractive landscape elements and to integrate them into views toward the expressway and from the surrounding area.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Engineer and Landscape Architect	Design							
VIS-27. Noise Barrier Landscaping. Landscaping will be implemented in front of noise barriers, in pedestrian areas, and where feasible in other areas to visually break up and soften the expanses of barrier surfaces.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Engineer and Landscape Architect	Design							
VIS-28. Noise Barrier Surfaces. Noise barrier surfaces will be textured to avoid graffiti.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Engineer and Landscape Architect	Construction							
VIS-29. Lighting. Project operational lighting will comply with Riverside County Ordinance 655, which regulates night light pollution up to 45 miles from the Palomar Observatory.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Engineer and Landscape Architect	Design							
Cultural Resources										
CR-1. Cultural Materials Discovered during Construction. <u>Although not expected, if cultural materials are discovered during construction, all earth-moving activity within and around the immediate discovery area will be diverted until a qualified archaeologist can assess the nature and significance of the find. The Archaeological Monitoring and Post-Review Discovery Plan (Post-Review Plan) (Attachment E of the MOA), prepared by RCTC, in consultation with Caltrans, SHPO, and the Consulting Tribes, will guide the treatment of new discoveries. The Post-Review Plan details guidelines for: developing an archaeological sensitivity model for discovery of unknown archaeological sites; archaeological resource monitoring/observation in the vicinity of known sites, and areas of sensitivity; temporarily halting or redirecting work to permit identification of archaeological discoveries; and protocols for sampling, evaluation, and treatment of post-review discoveries</u>		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Resident Engineer and Caltrans Project Archaeologist	Construction							

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<u>CR-2. Archaeological and Native American Monitoring</u> <u>Known archaeological sites, portions of the TCP, and</u> <u>other culturally sensitive areas will be monitored during</u> <u>construction by professional archaeologists and Native</u> <u>American monitors, as detailed in the Archaeological</u> <u>Monitoring and Post-Review Discovery Plan (Attachment</u> <u>E of the MOA). Prior to construction, a Draft Monitoring</u> <u>Agreement will be prepared as a subsequent document</u> <u>to the MOA. The Draft Monitoring Agreement will provide</u> <u>the details regarding how the monitoring will proceed.</u> <u>Aspects of the Native American monitoring program will</u> <u>be listed and described.</u> <u>Caltrans shall implement the plan of action regarding the</u> <u>potential discovery of Native American burials, human</u> <u>remains, cremations, and associated grave goods, in</u> <u>accordance with the law and as detailed in the Post-</u> <u>Review Plan (Attachment E).</u>		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Resident Engineer and <u>Caltrans Project</u> <u>Archaeologist</u>	Construction							
<u>CR-3. Discovery of Human Remains. Although not</u> <u>expected, if human remains are discovered, State Health</u> <u>and Safety Code Section 7050.5 states that further</u> <u>disturbances and activities shall cease within 60 feet of the</u> <u>remains or nearby area suspected to overlie remains, and</u> <u>the county coroner contacted. Caltrans shall implement the</u> <u>plan of action regarding the potential discovery of Native</u> <u>American burials, human remains, cremations, and</u> <u>associated grave goods, in accordance with the law and as</u> <u>detailed in the Post Review Plan (Attachment E of the</u> <u>MOA). Pursuant to Public Resources Code Section</u> <u>5097.98, if the remains are thought to be Native American,</u> <u>the coroner will notify the NAHC, who will then notify the</u> <u>MLD. At this time, the person who discovered the remains</u> <u>will contact Caltrans so that they may work with the MLD</u> <u>on the respectful treatment and disposition of the remains.</u> <u>Further provisions of PRC 5097.98 are to be followed as</u> <u>applicable.</u>		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Resident Engineer and <u>Caltrans Project</u> <u>Archaeologist</u>	Construction							
<u>CR-4. Establishment of Environmentally Sensitive Areas.</u> <u>An ESA will be established for archaeological sites and</u> <u>other areas of cultural sensitivity identified in the,</u> <u>Environmentally Sensitive Area Action Plan (ESA Action</u> <u>Plan) (Attachment F of the MOA), prepared by RCTC, in</u> <u>consultation with Caltrans, SHPO, and the Consulting</u> <u>Tribes. The ESA Action Plan describes the Protocols to be</u>		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Resident Engineer and <u>Caltrans Project</u> <u>Archaeologist</u>	Final EIR/EIS, <u>Design,</u> <u>Construction</u>							

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<u>followed for the Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs) established to prevent inadvertent adverse effects to historic properties and cultural resources during project construction. The ESA will consist of areas within and near the limits of construction where access is prohibited or limited for the preservation of the archaeological sites. ESAs will be fenced and monitored during construction to ensure a 60 foot buffer. No work shall be conducted within the ESA. All designated ESAs and fencing limits will be shown on final design plans and appropriate fencing requirements included in the PS&E. Fencing will consist of high visibility fencing material and will be 4 feet high. The archaeological monitor who meets the Secretary of Interior Professional Standards for prehistoric and historical archaeology (i.e., meets Caltrans PQS qualifications) shall monitor the placement of the ESA fencing, inspect the fencing periodically throughout the construction period, order replacement of fencing (if needed), and monitor removal of fencing at the end of construction.</u>										
<u>CR-5 Preparation of a Historic Context for the PPAD. The RCTC, in consultation with Caltrans, SHPO, and the Consulting Tribes shall prepare a Historic Context and Archaeological Research Design for a Potential Prehistoric Archaeological District in the San Jacinto Valley Vicinity, State Route 79 Realignment Project, Riverside County, California, focused on archaeological resources in the Study Area defined for the SR 79 Project Cultural Landscape and Settlement Patterns Analysis as part of the Archaeological Evaluation Report (Eddy et al. 2014). An annotated outline of the PPAD study is provided as Attachment C to the MOA. The Consulting Tribes' participation and consultation during the development of the PPAD study will be guided by the provisions in Attachment C of the MOA. The PPAD study will be completed prior to the start of any construction activities.</u>		<u>RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with Caltrans Project Archaeologist</u>	<u>Design</u>							
<u>CR-6 Spatial and Visual Analysis of Elements of the PPAD. Prior to construction activities, the RCTC will conduct spatial and visual analysis of bedrock milling features within a sample of the 24 bedrock milling components that collectively contribute to the significance of the PPAD. The results will be analyzed for cultural patterning. An annotated outline of the bedrock milling station analysis is provided as Attachment D of the MOA.</u>		<u>RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Caltrans Project Archaeologist</u>	<u>Design</u>							

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The field observations will be completed prior to the start of any construction activities.										
CR-7 Photogrammetric Documentation of Elements of the PPAD. Prior to construction activities, the RCTC will use photogrammetry to document a sample of the 24 bedrock milling components that collectively contribute to the significance of the PPAD. Close-range photogrammetry will be used to develop 3D models of all features that will be directly impacted by construction. Spherical panoramas will also be used to create immersive virtual tours of the sample of milling components subject to visual and spatial analysis (CR-4, above). Video disks will be provided to all consulting parties to the MOA and filed with the California Historical Resources Information System, prior to the start of any construction activities.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Caltrans Project Archaeologist	Design							
CR-8 Support for NRHP Nomination of the TCP. The RCTC, in consultation with Caltrans and the SHPO, will assist the Consulting Tribes in preparing documentation that may be included as part of a formal National Register Nomination of the TCP, including <i>Chéexayam Pum'wáppivu</i> (Seven Sisters), <i>Anó' Poima</i> (Coyote's Mouth), and the intervening valley. Drawing from ethnographic information compiled in the Archaeological Evaluation Report (Eddy et al. 2014) that documents the significance of the TCP, and in consultation with the Consulting Tribes, additional ethnographic research will be conducted by a qualified ethnographer. The RCTC will document the existing condition of the TCP prior to construction. The RCTC will also compile existing information and attempt to obtain additional information from Consulting Tribes and archival repositories and will also research and gather information about the ownership of parcels within the proposed TCP. Because of the private ownership of the majority of the parcels, there is no guarantee that these efforts will result in the listing of the TCP on the National Register. RCTC will provide all documentation to the Consulting Tribes prior to the start of any construction activities.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Caltrans Project Archaeologist	Design							
CR-9 Collaboration on Reports. All documentation, reports, and publications produced as a result of the studies performed pursuant to Mitigation Measures CR-5 through CR-8 will formally credit all contributors and will be provided to all consulting parties for review and comment.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Caltrans Project Archaeologist	Design, Construction							

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<u>If information provided by a consulting tribe is included in a proposed publication or professional symposium, the consulting tribe will be notified and invited to collaborate on the article or paper, or if they prefer, prepare a separate paper for publication or presentation.</u>										
Hydrology and Floodplain										
HYDRA-1. <u>Construct Drainage and Flood Control Facilities.</u> Construct Drainage and Flood Control Facilities in accordance with Department and FEMA guidelines to convey the onsite and offsite flows along and through SR 79.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Resident Engineer	Construction							
HYDRA-2. <u>Complete a Letter of Map Revision.</u> The Design Engineer shall complete a Conditional Letter of Map Revision (CLOMR) after the design has been finalized and shall complete a Letter of Map Revision (LOMR) after construction is finished.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Resident Engineer	Construction							
<u>HYDRA-3. Coordinate with Riverside County Flood Control and Water Conservation District (RCFC&WCD). Any work that affects District facilities or storm drains will be coordinated with the RCFC&WCD during final design. An encroachment permit from the RCFC&WCD shall be obtained for any construction that impacts their facilities.</u>										
Water Quality and Storm Water Runoff										
WQ-1. <u>Construction Best Management Practices in Compliance with Project Planning and Design Guide (PPDG), Storm Water Management Plan (SWMP), Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), and Standard Special Provisions (SSP).</u> The contractor will use a combination of BMPs that are acceptable and approved by the Department and that comply with the PPDG, SWMP, the Project-specific SWPPP, and any applicable Department SSPs to minimize impacts associated with runoff and polluted water. Information about design, placement, and applicability of construction site BMPs can be found in the Construction Site BMP Manual and Section 4 of the PPDG. For fill slopes steeper than 4:1, an Erosion Control Plan prepared by or approved by a District Landscape Architect is required, <u>per Caltrans, Storm Water Quality</u>		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Engineer and Resident Engineer	Design, Construction							

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<u>Handbooks: Project Planning and Design Guide, May 2007b.</u>										
<u>WQ-2. Revegetation.</u> Where vegetation is grubbed, cleared, or severely damaged or cut back, replacement vegetation will be provided, when feasible, in accordance with applicable standards and guidelines.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Landscape Architect, Project Engineer, and Resident Engineer	Design, Construction							
<u>WQ-3. Disturbed Slope Stabilization.</u> Following construction, disturbed areas will be stabilized through permanent revegetation or other means, per the requirement of the Construction General Permit. The detailed downstream channel stability analysis will be performed during the design phase of the Project.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Engineer, Department Hydrology Staff, and the Resident Engineer	Design, Construction							
<u>WQ-4. Treatment BMPs.</u> The Project will incorporate treatment BMPs that have been approved for statewide use per the guidelines in the PPDG. The treatment BMPs listed below are to be considered for projects discharging directly or indirectly to receiving waters. These BMPs have been approved for statewide use and are to be considered for significant reconstruction projects in urban Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) areas. The PPDG provides design guidelines for the approved treatment BMPs. The treatment BMPs will clean runoff water and minimize pollutants from construction. • Biofiltration Systems: Strips/Swales • Infiltration Devices: Basins/Trenches • Detention Devices • Traction Sand Traps • Dry Weather Flow Diversion • Gross Solids Removal Devices (GSRDs) • Media Filters: Austin/Delaware Sand Filters • Multi-Chamber Treatment Trains (MCTT) • Wet Basins		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Engineer and Resident Engineer	Design, Construction							
<u>WQ-5. Dewatering Permit.</u> The Project may require localized dewatering in areas where groundwater is shallow. If dewatering is necessary, the Project will comply with the general de minimus permit that applies to general waste discharge requirements for discharges		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Engineer and Resident Engineer	Design, Construction							

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to surface waters in the Santa Ana region (NPDES CAG 998001).										
<u>Geology/Soils/Seismic/Topography</u>										
<u>GEO-1. Surface Fault Rupture.</u> To further evaluate the fault-rupture hazard along the Project alignment, a subsurface evaluation will be performed. The subsurface evaluation will include the excavation and detailed logging of exploratory trenches, test pits, and/or borings, geophysical studies such as high-resolution seismic reflection, seismic refraction, ground penetrating radar, gravity and/or magnetic profiling, or other applicable methods. The evaluation will be performed prior to final design and construction so that if a fault-rupture hazard exists, foundations for grade separations or other structures can be designed for the anticipated displacement or located away from the fault trace.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with RCTC Geotechnical Staff and the Project Engineer	Design, Preconstruction							
<u>GEO-2. Ground Shaking.</u> Minimization of the potential impacts of seismic ground shaking will be achieved through Project design, construction, and maintenance. During the final design phase, site specific geotechnical evaluations will be performed to obtain detailed subsurface soil and geologic data, including a probabilistic assessment of the ground motion expected at the site. Structural elements will then be designed to resist or accommodate site-specific ground motion. All designs will conform to the current Caltrans Bridge Design Specifications and American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) seismic design standards.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with RCTC Geotechnical Staff and the Project Engineer	Design, Preconstruction							
<u>GEO-3. Liquefaction.</u> Site-specific geotechnical evaluations will be performed during the design phase of the Project to assess the liquefaction and dynamic settlement potential of the onsite soils. Foundations for structures will be designed for liquefaction by supporting the piles in dense soil or bedrock below the liquefaction zone or by other appropriate methods to be determined during the site-specific evaluation. Additional measures for liquefaction may include densification by installing stone columns, vibroflotation, or deep dynamic compaction. To reduce vibration impacts to existing facilities during ground improvement, other methods, such as compaction grouting or deep-soil mixing cells, will be used.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with RCTC Geotechnical Staff and the Project Engineer	Design							

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<u>GEO-4. Compressible/Collapsible Soils.</u> During the design phase of the Project, a site-specific geotechnical evaluation will be performed to determine the presence of compressible/collapsible soils. The settlement potential of the soils will be evaluated where structures or fills are proposed and at existing facilities that could be impacted by the settlement. If the settlement potential exceeds acceptable tolerances for a structure (based on the California Amendments to the AASHTO [load-and-resistance factor design] LRFD Bridge Design Specifications – Fourth Edition [Department 2011]), then remedial measures will be incorporated into design and construction. Possible measures include surcharging, overexcavation and recompaction, compaction grouting, allowing for a settlement period during or after construction, and specialized foundation design. The method chosen will be determined during final design and as construction progresses.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with RCTC Geotechnical Staff and the Project Engineer	Design							
<u>GEO-5. Expansive Soils.</u> Site-specific investigations will be conducted during the design phase of the Project to determine whether expansive soils are present. If expansive soil conditions are found and are considered detrimental to proposed improvements, measures such as overexcavation and replacement with non expansive soil, chemical treatment (e.g., lime or cement), moisture control, and/or specific structural design for expansive soil conditions will be developed during design of the Project. Indirect impacts of expansive soils on existing facilities will also be considered. Measures could include limiting construction dewatering or redirecting storm water flows to reduce risk of significant seasonal soil moisture changes.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with RCTC Geotechnical Staff and the Project Engineer	Design							

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<u>GEO-6. Slope Stability.</u> Site-specific geotechnical evaluations will be performed during the design phase of the Project to assess the potential for rock-slope failures. Measures to minimize rock-slope failures will include excavating potentially unstable material to create a flatter, more stable slope configuration, constructing buttress and/or stabilization fills, installing rock bolts on the face of the slope, installing protective wire mesh on the slope face, or constructing debris impact walls at the toe of the slope to contain rock-fall debris. The method will be determined during final design and during construction.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with RCTC Geotechnical Staff and the Project Engineer	Design							

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<u>GEO-7. Groundwater.</u> Due to potentially shallow groundwater levels, wet or saturated soil could be encountered in excavations during construction. Excavations that extend below the water table might need to be dewatered. If dewatering is not adequately controlled by the contractor, it could induce consolidation of the soils under an excavation, which can cause differential settlement of nearby existing structures and improvements. The amount of consolidation due to dewatering can depend on many factors, including the areal extent and depth of dewatering, soil type, soil density, and the methods used by the dewatering contractor. Water generated during dewatering will require assessments to determine proper disposal. This disposal will be coordinated with the Regional Water Quality Board and will comply with other jurisdictional requirements. This may include pretreatment in Baker tanks and disposal into the local sanitary sewer system or minimal pretreatment and disposal into temporary holding ponds or onto the surrounding ground. Final disposition of dewatering water will be determined during final design and during construction. To reduce the potential for damage resulting from dewatering or excavation operations, the ground surface and structures around the excavation will be monitored for movement. If monitoring instruments detect ground movement that exceeds a predetermined value (based on the California Amendments to the AASHTO LRFD Bridge Design Specifications – Fourth Edition [Department 2011]), construction will stop and the contractor's methods will be reviewed. Appropriate changes will be made, if necessary. Typical monitoring methods include installing devices around the outside of the excavation to monitor settlement or placing devices on nearby structures to monitor performance of the structures. Excavations for the underground structures will need to be performed with care to reduce the potential for lateral deflection of excavation sidewalls and/or shoring, which could also cause differential movement of structures located near the excavation. Inclinoimeters can be installed along the sides of an excavation to monitor lateral deflection of the sidewalls during excavation.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with RCTC Geotechnical Staff, the Project Engineer, and the Resident Engineer	Construction							

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<u>GEO-8. Excavation Characteristics.</u> Parts of the Project would be underlain by crystalline bedrock. Deeper, unweathered portions of the bedrock may require blasting or other difficult excavation techniques such as breakers. Blasting or breakers, if required, will produce temporary noise and dust hazards, which will be appropriately monitored during construction. Measures for construction-noise abatement will include appropriate personal protective equipment and procedures (e.g., adequate ear protection, establishing a safe distance from a blasting location). Possible dust control measures include appropriate personal protective equipment and procedures (e.g., respiratory equipment, covers for truck trailers that haul excavated materials, wetting dry or dusty excavations and material). Measures for noise and ejected media will include barriers such as vertical shields and mats overlying the working surface. The final measures will be determined during construction.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with RCTC Geotechnical Staff, the Project Engineer, and the Resident Engineer	Construction							
<u>Paleontology</u>										
<u>PALEO-1. Paleontological Mitigation Plan (PMP).</u> Prior to construction, the services of a qualified professional paleontologist will be retained by RCTC to prepare a PMP consistent with Department guidelines. The PMP will include the following: <u>PALEO-1a. Retention of Qualified Paleontologist.</u> The PMP will stipulate that prior to construction, the services of a qualified professional paleontologist will be retained by RCTC to implement the PMP during earth-moving activities. <u>PALEO-1b. Museum Storage Agreement.</u> The PMP will include a formal agreement that will be developed with a recognized museum repository, such as the San Bernardino County Museum Division of Geological Sciences. <u>PALEO-1c. Additional Paleontological Survey.</u> The PMP will provide measures for additional paleontological surveys if the location of any alternative is changed or if any unrecorded fossil sites are discovered or fossilized remains are recovered. Additional surveys will include recording any associated fossil specimen and site and identifying fine grained strata suitable for containing fossilized remains.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Paleontologist and the Resident Engineer	Design, Preconstruction, Construction							

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• <u>PALEO-1d. Preconstruction Coordination with Resident Engineer.</u> The PMP will address coordination among the qualified professional paleontologist or field supervisor, the Resident Engineer, and construction contractor personnel regarding the protection of paleontological resources, including a preconstruction briefing on procedures to be implemented if a fossil site or remains are encountered by earth-moving activities, particularly when a paleontological construction monitor is not onsite. • <u>PALEO-1e. Monitoring Plan.</u> The PMP will include a plan for monitoring and periodic dry-screen testing by a qualified paleontological construction monitor. A paleontological monitoring plan may include full-time or part-time monitoring, visually inspecting freshly exposed strata and debris piles, and dry-screen testing for smaller fossils, as well as methods for the discovery of fossilized remains, the recovery of fossilized remains, and instructions about how to coordinate with the Resident Engineer to divert construction activities away from the fossil site. • <u>PALEO-1f. Specimen Handling.</u> The PMP will provide instructions for the preparation, identification, curation, and cataloging of fossil and/or sediment specimens. • <u>PALEO-1g. Transfer of Fossil Collection to Museum.</u> The PMP will provide instructions for the transfer of the entire fossil collection, along with all supporting documentation, to a museum repository, where the fossils will be permanently stored and maintained. • <u>PALEO-1h. Reporting.</u> The PMP will provide instructions for the paleontological construction monitor to report daily activities and for preparing a Paleontological Mitigation Report (PMR) that is consistent with Department guidelines. The PMR is to be prepared by a qualified professional paleontologist in accordance with Department and RCTC requirements.										
<u>Hazardous Waste/Materials</u>										
<u>HAZMAT-1. Phase II Environmental Site Assessment.</u> Conduct a limited Phase II Environmental Site Assessment (Phase II ESA) to address the possible		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the	Design							

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presence of pesticides. A Phase II investigation for agricultural properties that have a potential for pesticides will be performed during right-of-way acquisition to confirm that the soil can be classified as nonhazardous based on the residual levels of pesticides. In general, that Phase II ESA would include the following: • Work Plan • Health and Safety Plan • Access agreements • Field sampling in accordance with the work plan and health and safety plan • Analytical testing • Documentation • Recommendation may include additional sampling, preparing a soil handling plan, or a remedial action plan • Disposal of wastes		Project Hazardous Waste Lead								
<u>HAZMAT-2. Aerially Deposited Lead Surveys.</u> Conduct aerially deposited lead (ADL) surveys where proposed roadway segments intersect the current rights-of-way of SR 79/Winchester Road, SR 74/Florida Avenue, and Domenigoni Parkway. An ADL investigation for these sites will be conducted during final design to confirm that the soil can be classified as a nonhazardous material according to Title 22 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR) and that it is suitable for reuse or disposal without restriction. In general, ADL Surveys will include the following: • Workplan • Health and Safety Plan • Access agreements • Field sampling in accordance with the workplan and health and safety plan • Analytical testing • Traffic control • Documentation • Recommendations for proper disposal of the soil to be excavated during construction		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Hazardous Waste Lead	Design							

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<u>HAZMAT-3. Asbestos-Containing Materials and Lead-Based Paint Surveys.</u> Conduct asbestos containing materials (ACM) and/or lead-based paint (LBP) surveys to address the possibility of the presence of ACM and/or LBP in buildings that are scheduled for demolition and/or renovation. The ACM and/or LBP surveys will be completed during final design (before acquisition). In general, the ACM and/or LBP surveys will include the following: • Workplan • Health and Safety Plan • Access agreements • Field sampling in accordance with the workplan and health and safety plan • Analytical testing • Documentation • Recommendations for disposal and handling		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Hazardous Waste Lead	Design							
<u>HAZMAT-4. Hazardous Materials Contingency Plan.</u> The Riverside County Transportation Commission will prepare a hazardous materials contingency plan addressing the potential for discovery of previously unidentified underground storage tanks (USTs), hazardous materials, petroleum hydrocarbons, hazardous or solid wastes, or contaminated soil encountered during construction. This contingency plan will address UST decommissioning, field screening and testing of potential contaminated materials and soil, mitigation and contaminant management requirements, and health and safety requirements.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Hazardous Waste Lead	Construction							

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<u>HAZMAT-5. National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit.</u> Prior to any dewatering activities, RCTC will obtain a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit. In areas where contaminated groundwater is suspected, specific conditions will apply with regard to acquisition of the NPDES permit, including testing and monitoring, as well as discharge limitations under the NPDES permit. The discharge limitations in the NPDES permit may include, as applicable, requirements pertaining to discharge of federal and/or state regulated pollutants that may be present in the water.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with RCTC Hydrology Staff	Preconstruction							
<u>Air Quality</u>										
<u>AQ-1. First-Stage Smog Alerts.</u> Suspension of all construction equipment operations during first stage smog alerts is required.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Resident Engineer	Construction							
<u>AQ-2. Electricity.</u> To the extent feasible, use electricity from power poles rather than temporary diesel- or gasoline-powered generators.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Resident Engineer	Construction							
<u>AQ-3. Construction Parking.</u> Configure construction parking to minimize traffic interference on local streets.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Resident Engineer	Construction							
<u>AQ-4. Construction Truck Routes.</u> To the extent feasible, reroute construction trucks from congested streets or sensitive receptor areas.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Resident Engineer	Construction							
<u>AQ-5. Onsite Construction Traffic Control.</u> Provide temporary traffic controls, such as a flag man, for onsite construction vehicles during all phases of construction to maintain smooth traffic flow.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Resident Engineer	Construction							
<u>AQ-6. Construction Vehicle Turn Lanes.</u> Provide dedicated turn lanes for movement of construction vehicles if no turn lane currently exists, where feasible.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Resident Engineer	Construction							
<u>AQ-7. Blasting Activities.</u> During blasting operations, the work area shall be watered before and after the blasting activities, and blasting mats shall be used to prevent debris from escaping the blasting area.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Resident Engineer	Construction	Yes						
<u>AQ-8. Signal Boards.</u> All message/signal boards shall be solar powered.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Resident Engineer	Construction	Yes						

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AQ-9: Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs). Establish ESAs according to the following: - An ESA fence will be defined and delineated along all portions of the construction limits, 152 meters (500 feet) from adjacent developed residential areas and/or from all adjacent businesses that include health care facilities or substantial outdoor activity, such as playgrounds, prior to commencement of construction activities within those parts of the Project area. - An ESA fence will be defined and delineated along all portions of the construction limits, 304.5 meters (1,000 feet) from adjacent schools and licensed day care centers, prior to commencement of construction activities within those parts of the Project area. - No staging or storage of materials will be allowed within these ESAs; however, equipment activity necessary for construction of the portion of the Project located within the ESA areas can occur. - All construction equipment emissions within these 152-meter (500 foot) and 304.5-meter (1,000-foot) ESAs will be minimized to the maximum extent feasible by shutting down equipment not in use and not idling for more than 5 minutes, or the applicable SCAQMD best practices time limit in effect during the time of construction (reducing all criteria pollutant emissions during construction).		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Resident Engineer	Construction	Yes						
AQ-10: Construction Equipment. Meet and when practical go beyond California Resources Board requirements for in-use diesel engines and equipment, particularly for nonroad construction fleets. <u>Ensure that construction equipment meet or exceed equivalent emissions performance to that of U.S.EPA Tier 4 standards for non-road engines.</u>		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Resident Engineer	Construction							
AQ-11: Construction Areas. Apply nontoxic soil stabilizers according to manufacturers' specifications to all inactive construction areas (previously graded areas inactive for ten days or more).		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Resident Engineer	Construction							
AQ-12: Street Sweeping. Sweep streets at the end of the day if visible soil is carried onto adjacent public paved roads. Use street sweepers that comply with SCAQMD Rules 1186 and 1186.1.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Resident Engineer	Construction							

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AQ-13: Traffic Speed Control. Traffic speeds on all unpaved roads to be reduced to 15 miles per hour or less		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Resident Engineer	Construction							
AQ-14: Grading. Cease grading during periods when winds exceed (as instantaneous gusts) 25 miles per hour.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Resident Engineer	Construction							
Noise										
<u>NO-1. Installation of Recommended Noise Barriers Shown to be Feasible and Reasonable.</u> Recommended noise barriers that are shown to be feasible and reasonable under each Build alternative or design option should be considered further for inclusion as part of the Project. While primarily an abatement measure for traffic noise, barriers will also provide abatement of construction noise if they are in place prior to construction. The noise barriers per alternative are: • Build Alternative 1a: Five noise barriers, including 1A-E1, 1A-G1, 1A-J2, 1A-L2, and 1A-L3 • Build Alternative 1b (including Design Option 1b1): Six noise barriers, including 1B-G2, 1B-K3, 1B-M3, 1B-M4, 1B-N1, and 1B-N2 • Build Alternative 2a: Five noise barriers, including 2A-F1, 2A-H1, 2A-K3, 2A-L2, and 2A L3 • Build Alternative 2b (including Design Option 2b1): Six noise barriers, including 2B H1, 2B J2, 2B-M3, 2B-M4, 2B-N1, and 2B-N2 • Build Alternative 1b with Refinements: Six noise barriers, including 1B-G2, 1B-K3, 1B-M3, 1B-M4, 1B-N1, and 1B-N2		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Engineer	Design							
<u>NO-2. Observation of Time Restrictions and Use of Alternative Alarms.</u> As required by the Standard Specifications Provisions, do not exceed 86 dBA at 50 feet from the job site activities from 9:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. Use an alternative warning method instead of a sound signal unless required by safety laws.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Resident Engineer	Construction							
<u>NO-3. Use Mufflers on Equipment with Internal Combustion Engines.</u> As required by the Standard Specifications Provisions, equip internal combustion engines with manufacturer-recommended mufflers. Do		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Resident Engineer	Construction							

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not operate an internal combustion engine on the job site without the appropriate muffler.										
<u>NO-4. Placement of Stationary Equipment.</u> Stationary construction equipment will be placed such that noise is directed away from sensitive receivers nearest the activity.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Resident Engineer	Construction							
<u>NO-5. Construction Equipment Staging.</u> Construction equipment and supplies will be located in staging areas that will create the greatest distance between construction-related noise sources and noise sensitive receivers nearest the activity.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Resident Engineer	Construction							
Natural Communities and Wildlife Movement (direct and indirect)										
<u>BIO-1. Landscaping Plans.</u> Landscaping plans will include native seed for erosion control in areas near the MSHCP Conservation Area.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Landscape Architect and Project Biologist	Design							
<u>BIO-2. Avoid the Use of Invasive and Non-Native Plants.</u> The landscaping plans will avoid the use of invasive and non-native plants listed in MSHCP Table 6-2, Plants that Should be Avoided Adjacent to the MSHCP Conservation Area, where applicable.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Landscape Architect and Project Biologist	Design							
<u>BIO-3. Barrier Fencing along ROW.</u> The Project will incorporate fencing along the ROW to serve as a barrier to preclude public access to the MSHCP Conservation Area.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Engineer, Project Biologist, and Resident Engineer	Design, Construction							
<u>BIO-4. Slope Construction within ROW.</u> All slopes will be constructed within the proposed ROW and will not extend into the MSHCP Conservation Area.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with Resident Engineer and Project Biologist	Design, Construction							
<u>BIO-5. Equipment Storage, Fueling, and Staging Areas.</u> Equipment storage, fueling, and staging areas will be situated in nonsensitive upland habitats that offer minimal risk of direct discharge into riparian areas or other sensitive habitats.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with Resident Engineer and the Project Biologist	Construction							

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<u>BIO-6. Training about Sensitive Biological Resources.</u> A contractor supplied biologist who is familiar with the sensitive plant and animal species in the Project area will provide training about these sensitive biological resources to construction personnel.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Resident Engineer and Project Biologist	Preconstruction							
<u>BIO-7. Fire Season Work.</u> During the fire season (as identified by the Riverside County Fire Department), especially when work is adjacent to coastal sage scrub or chaparral vegetation, appropriate firefighting equipment (e.g., extinguishers, shovels, water tankers) will be available onsite during all phases of Project construction to minimize the chance of wildfires. Shields, protective mats, or other fire prevention methods will be used during grinding, welding, and other activities that produce sparks. Personnel trained in fire hazards, preventive action, and responses to fires will advise contractors about the fire risk from all construction-related activities.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with Resident Engineer	Construction							
<u>BIO-8. Dust Minimization.</u> The Project will minimize dust by regularly watering active construction areas.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with Resident Engineer	Construction							
<u>BIO-9. Designated Areas for Equipment Maintenance and Staging.</u> All equipment maintenance, staging, and dispensing of fuel, oil, coolant, or any other toxic substances will occur only in designated areas within the grading limits of the Project. These designated areas will be clearly marked and located in such a manner as to contain runoff.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with Resident Engineer	Construction							
<u>BIO-10. Litter Control.</u> A litter-control program will be implemented during construction.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with Resident Engineer	Construction							
<u>BIO-11. Bridge over Salt Creek Channel.</u> All Build alternatives and design options will include the construction of a bridge over MSHCP Existing Constrained Linkage B, which is also known as the Salt Creek Channel. Existing Constrained Linkage B is shown in MSHCP Section 3.2.3, Figure 3-2, Schematic Cores and Linkages Map. The planning species for the linkage are identified in a table later in that section: • Vernal pool fairy shrimp • Riverside fairy shrimp		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Engineer, Resident Engineer and Project Biologist	Design, Construction							

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- Los Angeles pocket mouse - San Jacinto Valley crownscale - Parish's brittlescale - Davidson's saltscale - Thread-leaved brodiaea - Smooth tarplant - Vernal barley - Coulter's goldfields - Little mousetail - Spreading navarretia - California Orcutt grass - Wright's trichocoronis The proposed bridge over Existing Constrained Linkage B (Salt Creek) will avoid impacts to wildlife connectivity for these planning species.										
<u>BIO-12. Avoidance of San Jacinto River.</u> The Build alternatives and design options will avoid Proposed Core 3, which will be north of the Project (MSHCP Section 3.2.3, Figure 3-2, Schematic Cores and Linkages Map). All Build alternatives and design options will avoid the San Jacinto River and lands north of that area.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Resident Engineer and Project Biologist	Construction							
<u>BIO-13. Avoidance of Existing Constrained Linkage C.</u> All Build alternatives and design options will avoid Existing Constrained Linkage C. No construction activities will occur in this linkage.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Resident Engineer and Project Biologist	Construction							
<u>BIO-14. Night Lighting.</u> Lighting used during nighttime construction activities will be directed away from the MSHCP Conservation Area. If it cannot be directed away, shielding will be used to ensure that ambient light in the MSHCP Conservation Area is not increased.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Resident Engineer and Project Biologist	Construction							
<u>BIO-15. Crossing Structures and Spacing Intervals for a Variety of Species.</u> A mixture of large crossing structures spaced at regular intervals and smaller culverts spaced at more frequent intervals will be installed throughout the Project to accommodate a variety of species.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Engineer, Resident Engineer, and Project Biologist	Design, Construction							
<u>BIO-16. Openings in K-Rails for Small Animals.</u> Openings in concrete "K-rail" barriers will be provided at regular intervals to allow small wildlife to cross or escape roadways.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Resident Engineer	Construction							

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<u>BIO-17. Wildlife Crossings Intended for Large Mammalian Wildlife.</u> The wildlife crossings intended for large mammalian wildlife will be designed to <u>incorporate adequate openness ratios</u> (opening width times height, divided by length of crossing) <u>for the large mammalian wildlife intended to use each crossing.</u>		RCTC Project manager in conjunction with the Project Engineer, Project Biologist, and Resident Engineer	Design, Construction							
<u>BIO-18. Use of Tree and Shrub Buffers around Crossing Entrances. No Artificial Lighting.</u> Wildlife crossings incorporated into the Project will not add artificial lighting to the center of the crossing structure. These devices have not been shown to be effective and could deter wildlife at night. Natural light from skylights or grating may be used in particularly long structures. Tree and shrub buffers around crossing entrances, skylights, and grating will be used for visual relief, protection, and sound attenuation.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Engineer, Project Biologist, and Resident Engineer	Design, Construction							
<u>BIO-19. Wildlife Crossings Vegetated as Naturally as Possible.</u> Wildlife crossings will be vegetated as naturally as possible to blend with the area around the crossing. In accordance with BIO-1 and BIO 2, the use of invasive and non-native plants will be avoided. Use of plants that are poisonous to wildlife, such as oleander, will be also be avoided.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Biologist, the Landscape Architect, and Resident Engineer	Design, Construction							
<u>BIO-20. Use of Biodegradable Material in Erosion and Sediment Control Devices.</u> Erosion and sediment control devices used for the proposed project, including fiber rolls and bonded fiber matrix, <u>will be made from biodegradable materials such as jute, with no plastic mesh, to avoid creating a wildlife entanglement hazard.</u>		<u>RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Engineer, Project Biologist, and Resident Engineer</u>	<u>Design, Construction</u>							
<u>BIO-21. Use of Natural Objects in the Crossing Facility.</u> Natural objects, such as stumps, rocks, and other natural debris, will be placed in wildlife crossings to create cover for wildlife and to encourage use of the crossings.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Biologist, the Landscape Architect, and Resident Engineer	Design, Construction							

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BIO-22. <u>Installation of Vegetative Cover near the Entrances to Culverts.</u> Vegetative cover will be placed near the entrances to culverts to increase their effectiveness for carnivores and smaller wildlife.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Biologist, the Landscape Architect, and Resident Engineer	Design, Construction							
BIO-23. <u>Installation of Dirt, Rock, or Concrete Benches on at Least One Side of Large Mammal Crossings.</u> Dirt, rock, or concrete benches will be installed on at least one side of large mammal crossings to allow wildlife to cross during storms.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Biologist, the Landscape Architect, Project Engineer, and Resident Engineer	Design, Construction							
BIO-24. <u>Wildlife Fencing.</u> To reduce end-runs around fences, the wildlife fencing will continue at least 0.5 mi beyond the <u>wildlife crossing</u> or to an appropriate location that is unsuitable for wildlife (e.g., structure, steep hillside, urban area). <u>Directional fencing will be installed along Salt Creek Channel/San Jacinto Branch Line to funnel wildlife away from the right-of-way and minimize impacts associated with hazards from traffic.</u>		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Engineer, Resident Engineer, and Project Biologist	Design, Construction							
BIO-25. <u>Installation of Jump-Outs and Escape Ramps.</u> <u>Wildlife fencing will include wildlife jump-outs and escape ramps to allow trapped wildlife to escape back into the MSHCP Conservation Area and to exit the road system safely. Wildlife fencing will include wildlife jump-outs and escape ramps on the roadway side of the fence, at approximately 1-km (0.62-mi) intervals; specific spacing intervals will be determined during final design and in coordination with RCA.</u>		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Engineer, Resident Engineer, and Project Biologist	Design, Construction							
BIO-26. <u>Enhancements to Wildlife Corridors.</u> To mitigate Project impacts to wildlife corridors, as part of the refinement of the Selected Alternative, enhancements will be included during final design to facilitate wildlife movement under bridges and through proposed culverts. Enhancements will be consistent with the objectives of the MSHCP and will include directional fencing and structural features to provide all-weather crossings in culverts. The design of wildlife movement features and enhancements will be determined after the Preferred Alternative is identified.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Engineer and Project Biologist	Design							

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Wetlands and Other Waters										
WQ-1. Construction Best Management Practices in Compliance with Project Planning and Design Guide (PPDG), Storm Water Management Plan (SWMP), Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), and Standard Special Provisions (SSP).		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Engineer and Resident Engineer	Design, Construction							
WQ-4. Treatment BMPs.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Engineer and Resident Engineer	Design, Construction							
WQ-5. Dewatering Permit.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Engineer and Resident Engineer	Design, Construction							
BIO-27. Environmentally Sensitive Area Fencing. An Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA) fence will be installed as shown on the contractor's plans, and per Caltrans Standard Specifications. For Build Alternatives 2a and 2b and Design Option 2b1 along the edge of the ROW for Roadway Segments D and H (if identified for construction as part of the Preferred Alternative) to avoid direct impacts to sensitive resources in the Stowe Road Vernal Pool Complex located in Additional Indirect Impact Study Area 1. These sensitive resources include a vernal pool, the federally listed vernal pool branchiopod, and federally and/or state-listed or sensitive plant populations consisting of Coulter's goldfields (Narrow Endemic), smooth tarplant (Narrow Endemic), San Jacinto Valley crownscale (Critical Area), little mousetail (Critical Area), spreading navarretia (Critical Area), and California Orcutt grass (Critical Area). A contractor-supplied biological monitor who has knowledge about wetland ecology and rare plants will demark the location of the ESA fence in the field and on construction drawings and plans and will supervise the ESA fence installation. The biological monitor will also inspect the ESA fencing regularly during construction and coordinate with the Resident Engineer if fence repairs should be required. BIO-27a. Additionally, the contractor will install temporary treatment BMPs, such as fiber rolls or straw		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Engineer, Resident Engineer, and Project Biologist	Preconstruction, Construction							

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<u>wattles, around the vernal pool for protection from possible runoff created by construction activities.</u>										
<u>BIO-28. Onsite and Offsite Drainage Facilities in the Project ROW.</u> Onsite and offsite drainage facilities will be constructed within the Project ROW to ensure that the quantity and quality of runoff discharged into the MSHCP Conservation Area will not affect existing conditions.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Resident Engineer	Constr.							
<u>BIO-29. Maintenance of Constructed Storm Water Systems.</u> Regular maintenance of constructed storm water systems will take place to ensure effective operation of these systems.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Resident Engineer	Construction							
<u>BIO-30. No Erodible Materials Deposited in Watercourses.</u> No erodible materials will be deposited into watercourses. Brush, loose soils, or other debris material will not be stockpiled within stream channels or on adjacent banks.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Environmental Task Lead	Preconstruction							
<u>BIO-31. Ongoing Monitoring and Reporting.</u> Ongoing monitoring and reporting will occur for the duration of the construction activity to ensure implementation of BMPs.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Resident Engineer	Construction							
<u>BIO-32. Modification of the Project Design to Construct a Gravity Based Surface Water Diversion System.</u> if Build Alternative 2a or Build Alternative 2b is identified as the Preferred Alternative for the Project, requires the design of the Alternative to include measures to avoid and reduce impacts to the vernal pool complex adjacent to Stowe Road that would reduce impacts to the sensitive plant populations located in Additional Indirect Impact Study Area 1, including Coulter's goldfields (Narrow Endemic), smooth tarplant (Narrow Endemic), and little mouseltail (Criteria Area). <u>BIO-32a. Engineering Design.</u> During the plans, specifications, and estimates (PS&E) phase of the Project, the proposed design modification will be implemented and refined to address the items listed below. An interceptor trench will be constructed below the modified cut slope adjacent to Roadway Segment H. The size and position of this trench will be optimized to capture runoff that could impact the Stowe Road		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Engineer, Project Hydrologist, Landscape Architect, Resident Engineer, and Project Biologist	Design, Preconstruction, Construction, Postconstruction							

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Vernal Pool Complex watershed. The exact capture area will be refined based on the surface structure of the cut slope (vegetated or exposed granite bedrock). The drainage will be designed to convey water via gravity from the interceptor trench to a small storage basin, then through piping into an existing ephemeral drainage in the upper watershed of the Stowe Road Vernal Pool Complex. Depending on the final contour of the cut slope, either one or two pipe outlets will be required. The storage basin upstream of each pipe outlet may include flow regulators/dissipaters, depending on the rate of flow from the cut slope into the interceptor trench. The design will be optimized so that flow rates into the Stowe Road Vernal Pool Complex will not result in sedimentation levels that exceed the levels present before construction. A detailed Drainage Recapture Design Plan (DRDP) will be prepared prior to the completion of PS&E to describe the water conveyance features to be constructed. This DRDP will also summarize the expected performance of the drainage system during periods of low, average, and peak precipitation. The anticipated cut slope treatment will be identified. A landscaping plan will be included if terraced or stabilized slopes can hold soil and support vegetation after construction. If applicable, the landscaping plan will include a list of the plant species to be seeded or planted, target seeding and/or planting densities, revegetation techniques to be employed, criteria used to gauge the success of revegetation, maintenance and monitoring methods to be implemented, a schedule of monitoring and reporting activities, and remedial measures. This DRDP will be submitted to the Regional Conservation Authority (RCA), the Wildlife Agencies, the RWQCB, and USACE for review to verify that the objectives of this measure have been achieved. • <u>BIO-32b. Baseline Hydrology Monitoring Plan.</u> Prior to the completion of PS&E, a detailed Baseline Hydrology Monitoring Plan (BHMP) will be prepared, reviewed, and implemented to facilitate drainage design modifications and provide a basis for later comparison to postconstruction conditions in the Stowe Road Vernal Pool Complex.										

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This BHMP will describe the data to be collected, instruments to be installed, duration of the sampling effort, and methods of data interpretation. Baseline data will be collected in average, below average, and higher than average water years prior to the completion of PS&E. Data are intended to determine the amount and frequency of surface water flows into the existing drainage in the upper watershed and the amount of sediment transported to the Stowe Road Vernal Pool Complex. The extent and depth of pool ponding throughout the filling and drying period will be collected. A weather station will be installed to measure rainfall and provide data specific to the watershed. Surface water flow (e.g., Parshall flumes, pressure transducers) and sediment-sampling devices (Isco sediment samplers or other devices), combined with manual sampling, will be used to determine surface water flows and sediment loads. The sample locations and equipment to be used will be determined by a professional hydrologist who is experienced with surface water hydrology, sediment sampling, and data interpretation in the natural landscape. Photo documentation will also be used to note site changes throughout the monitoring period. The BHMP will be submitted to the RCA, the Wildlife Agencies, the RWQCB, and USACE for review to verify that the objectives of this measure have been achieved. • <u>BIO-32c. Postconstruction Surface Water Monitoring.</u> A Postconstruction Monitoring Plan (PCMP) will be prepared, reviewed, and implemented to ensure that the gravity-based surface-water diversion system functions in average, below average, and higher than average water years and provides compensatory hydrology volume, based on the baseline conditions, with an acceptable flow rate into the upper watershed of the Stowe Road Vernal Pool Complex. The PCMP will be developed concurrently with PS&E and will be implemented after construction. The PCMP will detail the procedures to be used to calculate the water flows from the pipe outlet to the existing drainage and total sediment loads within the drainage. Sampling will occur at the instruments installed as part of the BHMP, as well as at new										

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postconstruction locations. The total water flows that occur after construction of the Project, especially storm water discharges, will be evaluated to determine if any modifications are needed to regulate total flows and velocities to the existing drainage, as determined in the BHMP, into the lower watershed. An adaptive management process will be included for evaluating and implementing procedures and/or remedial measures for sediment control, such as deepening the receptor basins or other activities, to prevent scour and release of sediments in excess of the existing condition into the lower watershed. The intent of the monitoring period is to evaluate average, below average, and higher than average water years. The ability to accomplish this will depend on the local precipitation. Monitoring will be required for each of these water years. Initially, monitoring will be conducted for 5 years, but more years could be required to obtain the necessary data. Annual monitoring reports will be prepared and submitted to the RCA, the Wildlife Agencies, the RWQCB, and USACE for review to verify that the objectives of this measure have been achieved. Potential remedial actions or modifications to the PCMP will be made based on results of annual monitoring. A final review will take place at the end of the 5-year monitoring period to determine if additional monitoring will be required.										
<u>BIO-33. Mitigation of Impacts to Water Features. Appropriate mitigation for unavoidable impacts to wetlands and other waters will be determined through the permitting process. The mitigation will lessen the impact to a level below significance and will ensure no net loss of wetlands. Mitigation may include preservation, enhancement, restoration and/or creation of wetlands as well as the following two measures.</u> • <u>BIO-33a. Drainage Ditches.</u> For impacts to roadside ditches, onsite mitigation will consist of replacement through the reconstruction of these features along the new roadway alignment. • <u>BIO-33b. Seasonal Wetlands.</u> For unavoidable permanent impacts to seasonal wetlands, including		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Resident Engineer								

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vernal pools and riparian wetlands, offsite mitigation will consist of wetland/riparian creation, enhancement, or restoration within the San Jacinto watershed and/or the purchase of wetland creation credits at a USACE-approved wetland mitigation bank. BIO-33c. Salt Creek and Hemet Channel. For temporary impacts to Salt Creek and Hemet Channel, onsite mitigation will consist of re-contouring temporarily impacted areas to pre-project conditions once construction is complete. Restoration would include grading of disturbed areas to pre-project contours and reseeding with native plant species. Detailed restoration procedures, as well as, post construction monitoring of these areas will be included in the Habitat Mitigation and Monitoring Plan that will be included with the USACE Section 404 Clean Water Act Permit Application.										
Plant Species										
<u>BIO-1. Landscaping plans</u>		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Landscape Architect and Project Biologist	Design							
<u>BIO-2. Avoid the Use of Invasive and Non-Native Plants</u>		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Landscape Architect and Project Biologist	Design							
<u>BIO-27. Environmentally Sensitive Area Fencing</u>		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Engineer, Resident Engineer, and Project Biologist	Preconstruction, Construction							
<u>BIO-32a-c. Modification of the Project Design to Construct a Gravity Based Surface Water Diversion System (only if Build Alternative 2a or Build Alternative 2b is identified as the Preferred Alternative for the Project).</u>		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Engineer, Project Hydrologist, Landscape Architect, Resident Engineer, and Project Biologist	Design, Preconstruction, Construction, Postconstruction							

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<u>BIO-34. Avoidance of Sensitive Plant Populations.</u> An ESA fence will be installed <u>as shown on the contractor's plans, and per Caltrans Standard Specifications</u>, at the outer edge of the ROW of either Roadway Segment J of the Preferred Alternative <u>during construction, within Criteria Cell 3291</u>, to avoid long-term conservation value (LTCV) little mouse-tail populations <u>(approximately 10,000 plants)</u> located in the indirect impact area. A contractor supplied biological monitor who has knowledge about and experience with local sensitive plant species will determine the location of the ESA fence in the field and identify it on construction drawings and plans and will supervise installation of the fence. The biological monitor will also inspect the ESA fencing regularly during construction and coordinate with the Resident Engineer if fence repairs should be required. An ESA fence will be installed along the edge of the Roadway Segment L ROW, for either Build Alternative 1a or 2a, to avoid impacts to Coulter's goldfields populations 49 and 52 and smooth tarplant populations 483 and 511 (Figure 3.3-<u>27</u> and Figure 3.3-<u>31</u>). The locations of these populations will be shown on construction plans and drawings. A contractor-supplied biological monitor who has knowledge about and experience with local sensitive plant species will demark the location of the ESA fence in the field and on construction drawings and plans and will supervise installation of the fence. The biological monitor will also inspect the ESA fencing regularly during construction and coordinate with the Resident Engineer if fence repairs should be required. An ESA will be established for all Build alternatives, <u>except Build Alternative 1br</u>, at the edge of the Roadway Segment I ROW adjacent to the federally listed as endangered San Jacinto Valley crownscale populations. The location of these populations will be shown on construction plans and drawings. A contractor-supplied biological monitor who has knowledge about and experience with local sensitive plant species will demark the location of the ESA fence in the field and on construction drawings and plans and will supervise installation of the fence. The biological monitor will also inspect the ESA fencing regularly during construction		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Engineer, Resident Engineer and Project Biologist	Design, Construction							

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and coordinate with the Resident Engineer if fence repairs should be required.										
<u>BIO-35. Avoid the Spread of Invasive Plant Species.</u> The Project will incorporate specifications in the landscape plans to avoid the spread of invasive plant species. • <u>BIO-35a. Cleaning of Equipment.</u> All construction equipment shall be cleaned, with a broom or other appropriate method, of potential invasive plant seeds before entering sensitive habitat areas. • <u>BIO-35b. Monitoring.</u> Periodic invasive plant species monitoring of the ROW and adjacent sensitive areas will be conducted during construction by contractor-supplied plant biologists who have knowledge about and experience with the local flora and invasive species of the region. Key monitoring objectives are to identify and eradicate any invasive weed infestations that establish or spread within the ROW during construction to prevent them from extending into adjacent sensitive areas. Monitoring will be conducted quarterly, at a minimum, and will focus on the portions of the ROW that are adjacent to Additional Indirect Impact Study Areas 1 and 2, in particular, the Stowe Road Vernal Pool Complex and the Stoney Mountain Preserve. Qualified biologists will demark the location of noxious weeds in the field, on construction and engineering drawings, and with GPS units. • <u>BIO-35c. Eradication.</u> A variety of methods, including mechanical control or herbicides, will be used to eradicate invasive plant species identified during monitoring.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Landscape Architect, Resident Engineer, and Project Biologist	Design, Construction							
<u>BIO-36. Mitigation for Robinson's Peppergrass Populations. Applicable mitigation for impacts to populations of Robinson's peppergrass that are considered to have high value will be determined during pre-construction surveys by a qualified botanist familiar with plant species in the region. Potential mitigation could include one of the measures listed below or a combination of the two measures. The conservation value of the Robinson's peppergrass populations would be based on the location, population size, habitat quality, and other variables. For example, small populations in disturbed habitats would likely be considered to have low</u>		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Resident Engineer and Project Biologist	Preconstruction, Construction							

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<u>conservation value while large populations located in the West Hemet Hills would likely rank high.</u> • <u>BIO-36a.</u> Onsite conservation of existing Robinson's peppergrass populations. • <u>BIO-36b.</u> Translocation of Robinson's peppergrass individuals or seed collection, salvage, and transfer to areas of suitable habitat, as identified by a contractor-supplied plant biologist who has knowledge about and experience with the local flora species of the region, within the Project ROW.										
<u>BIO-37. Coulter's Goldfields and Smooth Tarplant Populations.</u> Mitigation for permanent direct or indirect impacts to Coulter's goldfields and smooth tarplant populations will be implemented if Build Alternative 1a, 1br, or 2a are selected. Both 1a and 2a include Roadway Segment L. Roadway Segment L would pass through MSHCP Criteria Area Cells 2774, 2775, and 2878 and San Jacinto Area Plan Subunit 4: Vernal Pool Areas – East. <u>Build Alternative 1br includes Roadway Segments, G, I and J, which pass through Criteria Cells, 3584, 3683, and 3291</u> • <u>BIO-37a.</u> A Determination of Biological Equivalent or Superior Preservation (DBESP) <u>has been</u> prepared to evaluate and address direct impacts to Criteria Area plant species. Applicable mitigation <u>for the Preferred Alternative has been</u> determined through coordination with the resource agencies. <u>The DBESP includes the Conceptual Mitigation Plan as presented in Section 3.3.2.4, which would preserve 1.2 acres of smooth tarplant habitat. Other</u> potential mitigation measures listed below or a combination of the two measures could <u>also</u> be implemented. • <u>BIO-37b.</u> Onsite conservation of existing smooth tarplant and Coulter's goldfields populations. • <u>BIO-37c.</u> Translocation of smooth tarplant and Coulter's goldfields individuals to areas of suitable habitat outside the Project ROW.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Resident Engineer and Project Biologist	Preconstruction, Construction							
<u>BIO-38. Culvert/Drainage System for Coulter's Goldfields and Smooth Tarplant Populations.</u> If Build Alternative 1a or 2a is identified as the Preferred Alternative, a culvert/drainage system would be designed		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Landscape Architect, Project Engineer,	Design, Construction							

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to maintain the existing amount of surface water flow in the indirect impact area of Roadway Segment L. This would maintain hydrology for two populations of Narrow Endemic plant species, Coulter's goldfields and smooth tarplant, by capturing flows from the southern edge of the ROW of Roadway Segment L and conveying flow north to the alkali grassland/wetland habitat. The design of this culvert/drainage system would be completed during final design to provide flexibility in the flow discharges after construction is completed.		Project Hydrologist, Resident Engineer, and Project Biologist								
Animal Species										
<u>BIO-14. Night Lighting.</u> Lighting used during nighttime construction activities shall be directed away from the MSHCP Conservation Area. If lighting cannot be directed away from the MSHCP Conservation Area, shielding will be incorporated into the Project to ensure that ambient light in the MSHCP Conservation Area is not increased.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Resident Engineer and Project Biologist	Construction							
<u>BIO-39. Conduct Presence/Absence Surveys Immediately Prior to Construction Each Year.</u> Preconstruction presence/absence surveys will be conducted for burrowing owls in each year of construction during the spring immediately prior to ground disturbance and construction activities. Surveys will be conducted within the PIA and 246-ft buffer or additional areas based on construction and operations noise impacts, if warranted. <u>In addition, due to the transitory nature of owls and their tendency to colonize areas that may not have been colonized before, clearance surveys (also known as Take Avoidance Surveys in the 2012 CDFG guidance) will be conducted at least 30 days [and no less than 14 days per CDFG (2012)] prior to ground disturbing activities in order to identify any owls that may have colonized suitable habitat areas.</u>		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Resident Engineer and Project Biologist	Preconstruction, Construction							

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<u>BIO-40. Relocation of Burrowing Owls.</u> All burrowing owls found in the PIA will be actively relocated away from the Project to translocation sites. <u>Prior to active relocation the proposed locations, habitat suitability, future management, and conservation status of the proposed sites will be coordinated with CDFW and USFWS. A burrowing owl relocation plan will be prepared for submittal to the wildlife agencies for approval 60-90 days prior to ground-disturbing activities.</u> Burrowing owls found 246 ft or less from the PIA will be considered for relocation based on the adjacent construction activities and consultation with the wildlife agencies. Burrowing owls found more than 246 ft from the PIA will only be considered for active relocation if CDFW and USFWS deem appropriate based on construction noise impacts.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Resident Engineer and Project Biologist	Preconstruction							
<u>BIO-41. Maintenance of Hydrology to Existing Vernal Pool/Alkali Playa Habitat.</u> The planning species for Noncontiguous Habitat Blocks 6 and 7 are as follows. • Vernal pool fairy shrimp • Riverside fairy shrimp • Burrowing owl • Mountain plover • Loggerhead shrike • Davidson's saltscale • Thread-leaved brodiaea • Vernal barley • Little mouseltail • Spreading navarretia • California Orcutt grass • Munz's onion • Los Angeles pocket mouse • San Jacinto Valley crownscale • Parish's brittlescale • Coulter's goldfields • Wright's trichocoronis The Project will maintain hydrology to existing vernal pool/alkali playa habitat to provide for the conservation of the Planning Species listed above. This will be accomplished by maintaining natural hydrologic		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Hydrologist, Resident Engineer, and Project Biologist	Design, Construction							

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processes or designing and implementing an engineered solution that has the same effect.										
<u>BIO-42. Conducting Vegetation Clearance to Avoid Active Breeding Season (February 15 through September 15).</u> For each year of construction, vegetation clearing will avoid the active breeding season (<u>February 15 through September 15</u>) in designated upland habitats. If avoiding the active breeding season is not possible and ground disturbance and construction activities must occur during this period, a contractor supplied biologist who is experienced in bird identification will conduct preconstruction surveys <u>no more than three days prior to vegetation clearing or ground disturbing activities</u> to determine the presence of nesting birds protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA). If birds that are protected by the MBTA are observed nesting within 500 ft of proposed construction activities, the biologist will determine whether or not construction activities could disturb nesting birds. If necessary, the biologist will coordinate with the wildlife agencies and implement appropriate measures (e.g., onsite monitor, timing restriction, chick relocation) to adequately protect the nesting birds.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Resident Engineer and Project Biologist	Preconstruction, Construction							
<u>BIO-43. Nesting Raptor Surveys and Implementation of Nest Exclusion.</u> To ascertain the presence of nesting raptors, preconstruction surveys will be conducted by a contractor-supplied biologist who is experienced in raptor <u>ecology and</u> identification. The surveys will be conducted in the PIA and within 500 ft of the PIA between <u>February 15</u> and <u>September 15</u> for each year of construction, 1 year prior to ground disturbance and construction activities. <u>Nest exclusion (e.g., tree removal) would only be conducted following confirmation that a nest is inactive and no longer being used by a raptor.</u> If raptor nests are found in the preconstruction survey, <u>a contractor-supplied biologist experienced in raptor ecology will conduct a survey of all nest sites to ensure that nests are not actively being used by raptors prior to removal of any trees during the non-breeding season (Sept. 16 through Feb. 14).</u> All nest exclusion activities will be coordinated with the wildlife agencies.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Resident Engineer and Project Biologist	Preconstruction							

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<u>BIO-44. Inspections for Roosting Bats Prior to Project Activities.</u> Prior to site preparation or ground-disturbing activities, a qualified bat biologist shall conduct a focused bat roosting habitat suitability assessment of all structures (including, but not limited to, bridges, culverts, and buildings) and trees that may be removed, altered, or indirectly impacted by the proposed project. Any locations with potential for roosting or suitable as a maternity roost will be surveyed by the qualified bat biologist using an appropriate combination of structure inspection, exit counts, and acoustic surveys. Surveys shall be conducted during the appropriate season and time of day/night to ensure detection of bats. If bats are found using any structures or trees within the project area, the qualified bat biologist shall identify the bats to the species level, and evaluate the colony to determine its size and significance. The bat survey shall include: 1) the exact location of all roosting sites (location shall be adequately described and drawn on a map); 2) the number of bats present at the time of visit (count or estimate); 3) each species of bat present shall be named (include how the species was identified); and 4) the type of roost, i.e., a night roost (rest at night while out feeding) versus a day roost (resting during the day). A report containing the bat survey findings shall be submitted to Caltrans and to CDFW at the following address: 3602 Inland Empire Blvd., Suite C-220, Ontario, CA 91764. If a roosting site and/or maternity colony(s) is detected, and the qualified bat biologist determines that impacts (either direct or indirect, including disturbance from noise, vibration, dust, exhaust) from project-related activities may occur, Caltrans shall consult with CDFW to determine the most appropriate type of avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures to implement. Examples of avoidance and minimization strategies may include daily work timing restrictions and buffer distances. Work timing restrictions and buffer distances will be determined based on the expert opinion of the qualified bat biologist, as approved by CDFW. Mitigation measures may include replacement of impacted roosting sites with alternate roosting structures, such as those described California Bat Mitigation Techniques, Solutions, and Effectiveness (H. T. Harvey and Associates, 2004). Alternate roosting structures shall be		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Resident Engineer and Project Biologist	Preconstruction							

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						Initial	Date		Initial	Date
designed to ensure use by bats impacted by the project. For example, designs will take into consideration the thermal and crevice/structure roosting requirements of the impacted bats.										
<u>BIO-45. Installation of Bat-Friendly Gate on Mine Adit Adjacent to Roadway Segments A, B, and C.</u> To mitigate impacts to rock roosting bats, RCTC will provide funding to install a bat-friendly gate on a mine adit (entrance) located on the Southwestern Riverside County Multi-Species Reserve (Reserve) adjacent to Roadway Segments A, B, and C. The gate would deter human disturbance and restore the roost-site quality of the mine for sensitive bat species. Reserve staff will install and maintain the gate.		RCTC Project Manager	Preconstruction							
<u>BIO-46. Provision of Suitable Habitat for Vegetation-Roosting Bats.</u> During final design, areas proposed for mature plantings will be determined as part of the development of the landscaping plan for the Project. In these areas, mature specimens of native deciduous trees, such as Fremont cottonwood, black willow, and western sycamore, and ornamental fan palms, particularly the California native Washington, or Mexican, fan palm, will be considered for planting because these species would provide suitable habitat for vegetation-roosting bats.		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Landscape Architect and Project Biologist	Design							
<u>Threatened and Endangered Species</u>										
<u>BIO-27. Environmentally Sensitive Area Fencing.</u>		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Engineer, Resident Engineer, and Project Biologist	Design, Preconstruction, Construction							
<u>BIO-32a-c. Modification of the Project Design to Construct a Gravity-Based Surface Water Diversion System.</u>										
<u>BIO-47. Conducting Clearance of Riparian Habitat Outside Riparian Bird Active Breeding Season (February 15 through September 15 with the peak generally from March 1 through June 30).</u> Clearing of riparian habitat should be conducted outside the active breeding season (February 15 through September 15 with the peak generally from March 1 through June 30). For each year of construction, if vegetation removal occurs in riparian		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Biologist and Resident Engineer	Preconstruction, Construction							

Date: December 2016
Environmental Coordinator:
Phone No: 000-000-0000

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITMENTS RECORD (ECR)

08-RIV-79
KP R25.4/R54.4
PM R15.78/R33.80
EA 494000/PN 0800000784
Construct Highway

Task and Brief Description		Responsible Branch/ Staff	Timing/Phase	NSSP Req.	Action Taken to Comply with Task	Task Completed		Remarks	Environmental Compliance	
						Initial	Date		Initial	Date
habitats during the nonbreeding season for riparian birds, then preconstruction surveys are not required. However, if vegetation removal must occur in riparian habitats during the breeding season for least Bell's vireos or southwestern willow flycatchers during any construction year, then preconstruction surveys will be required to comply with the MSHCP. <u>Additionally, preconstruction surveys should be conducted no more than three days prior to vegetation clearing or ground disturbing activities to determine the presence of nesting birds.</u> If least Bell's vireos or southwestern willow flycatchers are detected, the appropriate resource manager will be contacted to determine if vegetation removal activities can proceed under specific conditions.										
<u>Invasive Species</u>										
<u>BIO-1. Landscaping Plans</u>		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Landscape Architect and Project Biologist	Design							
<u>BIO-2. Avoid the Use of Invasive and Non-Native Plants</u>		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Project Landscape Architect and Project Biologist	Design							
<u>BIO-35a-c. Avoid the Spread of Invasive Plant Species</u>		RCTC Project Manager in conjunction with the Landscape Architect, Resident Engineer, and Project Biologist	Design, Construction							

Attachment 2

Comments Received on the Final EIR/EIS and Responses

Comment Submitted Via Email

From: Scott Underwood [<mailto:sunderwood@cityofhemet.org>]
Sent: Tuesday, November 15, 2016 4:53 PM
To: Patricia Castillo <PCastillo@rctc.org>; 'Christine Macomber' <ccpm@sonic.net>
Subject: Information About the SR-79 Realignment Project
Importance: Low

Hi Patti,

Steve Latino (Hemet's Engineering Director) passed me your contact information.

The City of Hemet's primary public safety radio system site is "Platt Ridge". This is the two-way radio & cellular site on the south side of Highway 74 and Calvert Ave. In addition to the City of Hemet, other users/tenants of that radio site are California Highway Patrol, Riverside County PSEC, AT&T, etc. All parties lease space from the site owner.

The owner of the site (Christine Macomber) has some concerns on how the Highway 79 realignment may impact continued operations at Platt Ridge (Public Safety, Cellular, etc.) Can You or someone from RCTC provide answers to her questions (see below)?

From the City of Hemet's perspective, loss of the Platt Ridge radio site would have a major impact on our public safety and public works communications. If the likelihood of this radio site being impacted by the Hwy 79 realignment is high, the City would also like to know. Your time and any information You can share with the Christine Macomber and the City of Hemet are greatly appreciated.

Thank You,
-Scott

| -Scott Underwood
| IT Operations & Network Systems Supervisor
| Radio Systems Coordinator
| City of Hemet - Hemet, California
| <http://www.cityofhemet.org>
| Em: sunderwood@cityofhemet.org
| Ph: 951-765-3765
| Fx: 951-765-3768
| Cl: 951-634-3117

From: Christine Macomber [<mailto:ccpm@sonic.net>]
Sent: Wednesday, November 09, 2016 7:59 AM
To: Scott Underwood <sunderwood@cityofhemet.org>
Subject: information About the SR-79 Realignment Project

Hello Scott:

I hope you don't mind—too much—our bothering you again.

This is quite an important issue: the placement of Hwy 79. Am I right that the new highway may run right at the base of our parcels—Calvert Avenue? It's hard to tell from their map. See my father's map of the parcels, and the link to the Hwy 79 map, below.

What do you know/hear about this? Do you have the contact info for someone who can give us more specific information? Some of our lessees may be interested in attending the hearing: CHP, AT&T, etc. Is Platt Ridge in jeopardy?

Thanks, Scott.

Chris

1.1

Response to Comment 1.1

Platt Ridge is not in jeopardy. The SR 79 Realignment project design team worked diligently to ensure that the communication towers would remain in place. The alignment of the access road to the towers have been modified as part of Alternative 1br to maintain access to the towers. Also, the realignment of the access road will be staged so that access to the towers will not be impacted during construction.

Comment Submitted Via Project Website

From: mailgun=email.sr79project.info@sr79project.info on behalf of SR79 Project
<mailgun@email.sr79project.info>
Sent: Friday, November 18, 2016 12:35 PM
To: Salazar, Cindy/SCO; SWR 171146 SR79; inbox@geomail.info
Subject: SR79 Project Contact Form Submission [EXTERNAL]

SR79 Project Contact Form Submission Email Address: tlvd148@gmail.com
Comments: I am a Trustee for 2 properties that may be impacted by the realignment in West Hemet. Parcels #465040015-5 and #465020019-7. Will these be impacted? When will you start the acquisition process? Tom Van Der Linden

2.1

Response to Comment 2.1

The Preferred Alternative 1br will have an impact on the two parcels in question. All practical measures to minimize harm have been adopted and were incorporated into the decision to select Preferred Alternative 1br. Upon approval of the Final Environmental Impact Report/Statement by issuing this Record of Decision, final design of the project can begin. During the design phase the selected alternative will be developed fully and impacts to properties will clearly be defined. Once impacts to property are clearly defined, the Department will begin the acquisition process.

Property acquisition and relocation assistance and compensation are complex processes that are best discussed with a Project acquisition agent and/or relocation advisor after Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC) determines whether it needs to acquire a property. A summary of the RCTC's Relocation Assistance Program (RAP) is included in Appendix D of the Draft EIR/EIS. Additional information is available from the following websites: http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/row/pubs/residential_english.pdf
http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/real_estate/owners_and_tenants/

Comment Submitted Via Project Website

From: mailgun=email.sr79project.info@sr79project.info on behalf of SR79 Project
<mailgun@email.sr79project.info>
Sent: Friday, November 18, 2016 3:32 PM
To: Salazar, Cindy/SCO; SWR 171146 SR79; inbox@geomail.info
Subject: SR79 Project Contact Form Submission [EXTERNAL]

SR79 Project Contact Form Submission Email Address: rozann24150@gmail.com
 Comments: How is Maze stone court in Hemet effected by the SR-79 realignment project? I dont understand what I see online. Thank you

Response to Comment 3.1

Alternative 1br was selected as the Preferred Alternative. For Alternative 1br, a diamond type interchange has been developed which allows access along Esplanade Avenue, and removed the need for a realignment of Maze Stone Court. No changes to Maze Stone Court will occur with the SR 79 Realignment Project, however the three properties along the east side for Maze Stone Court have the potential to be impacted. Upon approval of the Final Environmental Impact Report/Statement by issuing this Record of Decision, final design of the project can begin. During the design phase the selected alternative will be developed fully and impacts to properties will clearly be defined. Once impacts to property are clearly defined, the Department will begin the acquisition process.

Property acquisition and relocation assistance and compensation are complex processes that are best discussed with a Project acquisition agent and/or relocation advisor after Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC) determines whether it needs to acquire a property. A summary of the RCTC's Relocation Assistance Program (RAP) is included in Appendix D of the Draft EIR/EIS. Additional information is available from the following websites: http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/row/pubs/residential_english.pdf
http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/real_estate/owners_and_tenants/

Comment Submitted Via Project Website

From: Website Submission [mailto:website-submission@rctc.org]
Sent: Tuesday, November 22, 2016 4:00 PM
To: Lupe Garibay <lgaribay@RCTC.org>; geomaillogs@gmail.com
Subject: RCTC: Contact Form

First Name: Nicholas
Last Name: Kokotas
Organization: Kennedy Jenks Consultants
Phone Number: 9513755571
Email: nicholaskokotas@kennedyjenks.com
Street Address: Three Better World Circle, Ste 200
Apt/Suite: 200
City: Temecula
CA
Zip Code: 92590
To Whom It May Concern:

I am interested in additional information regarding the SR-79 Project particularly at Warren Rd and Esplandade Ave. My interests are regarding project construction schedule and the alignment near Warren Rd and Esplanade. I understand the EIR is currently in the public review and comment period. Is there a project date for final design and/or construction? Are there any preliminary drawings available at the intersection of Esplanade and Warren?

Feel free to contact me directly.

Thank you.

4.1

Response to Comment 4.1

Upon approval of the Final Environmental Impact Report/Statement by issuing this Record of Decision, final design of the project can begin. During the design phase the selected alternative will be developed fully for construction. Construction can begin once design is complete and funding is available. Opening year for the Project is scheduled for 2020.

The newly realigned SR 79 will bridge over the intersection of Esplanade Avenue and Warren Road. Preliminary drawings of the Preferred Alternative 1br can be found within Chapter 2 of the Final EIR/EIS, specifically Figure 2.2-5h.

Comment Submitted Via Letter



CAL FIRE – RIVERSIDE UNIT
RIVERSIDE COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT

John R. Hawkins - Fire Chief
210 West San Jacinto Avenue, Perris, Ca 92570-1915
Bus: (951) 940-6900 Fax: (951) 940-6373 www.rvcfire.org

PROUDLY SERVING THE UNINCORPORATED AREAS OF RIVERSIDE COUNTY AND THE CITIES OF:

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INDIAN WELLS
INDIO
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DISTRICT 2

CHARLES WASHINGTON
DISTRICT 3

JOHN BENOIT
DISTRICT 4

MARION ASHLEY
DISTRICT 5

Date: 11/28/2016

Mr. Aaron Burton
California Department of Transportation
P.O Box 12008
Riverside, CA. 92502-2208

RE: Notice of Intent to Adopt a Final Environmental Impact Report/Final Environmental Impact Statement.

Dear Mr. Burton,

With respect to the Realignment of Highway 79, the CAL FIRE/Riverside County Fire Department offers the following comments:

Fire protection for the above referenced project will be provided by the following Riverside County Fire Stations from:

Station 34, located at 32655 Haddock Street in the Unincorporated City of Winchester, will respond with one County Fire Engine providing paramedic service. The distance from the station to the proposed development is approximately 1 mile (Domenigoni x Newport Rd.). This station is staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, with a 3-person crew, providing Paramedic Services.

Station 78, located at 2450 W. Cottonwood in the City of San Jacinto, will respond with one City Fire Engine providing paramedic service. The distance from the station to the proposed development is approximately 1.5 miles (Cottonwood x Warren Rd.). This station is staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, with a 3-person crew, providing Paramedic Services.

Station 25, located at 132 South San Jacinto in the City of San Jacinto, will respond with one City Medic Squad providing paramedic service. The distance from the station to the proposed development is approximately 3 miles (Sanderson x Ramona Expressway). This station is staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, with a 2-person crew, providing Paramedic Services.

Adverse Impacts

The proposed project will have a cumulative adverse impact on the Fire Department's ability to provide an acceptable level of service. These impacts include an increased number of emergency and public service calls due to the increased presence of traffic detours and population. The project proponents/developers will be expected to provide an easement or restricted access to Emergency Fire Department Personnel in case of an emergency. Contractual and monetary agreements are on file between the City of San Jacinto and the County of Riverside for Emergency responses. Full closure any major thoroughfares must be mutually agreed upon all parties, and any detours this project may cause during the construction phase.

5.1

Response to Comment 5.1

The only major detour will involve Devonshire Avenue since it will be bridging over the new SR 79. Most of the SR 79 Realignment Project is being built in areas of undeveloped land, not on local roads. This limits the disruption to emergency services due to detours during construction.

A detailed Traffic Management Plan (TMP) will be prepared during the design phase of the Project, which will include the involvement the stakeholders, including first responders, so the construction activities are coordinated and agreed upon. Please refer to Measures SERV-1: Coordination with Emergency Responders Prior to Opening Year and SERV-2: Coordination of Temporary Detours with Emergency Responders, which can be found in the Environmental Commitments Record, Appendix E of the Final EIR/EIS.

Comment Letter 5 Continued

Access Fire Department emergency vehicle apparatus access road locations and design shall be in accordance with the California Fire Code, Riverside County Ordinance 460, Riverside County Ordinance 787, and Riverside County Fire Department Standards. This includes full closure of major roadways in the 12-mile realignment scope.	5.2	Response to Comment 5.2 Coordination with with stakeholders, including CalFire and all first responders will take place, throughout the design of the selected Aalternative 1br. This coordination will ensure that the project meets CalFire standards and codes. Please refer to Measures SERV-1: Coordination with Emergency Responders Prior to Opening Year, which can be found in the Environmental Commitments Record, Appendix E of the Final EIR/EIS.
Water Fire Department water system(s) for fire protection shall be in accordance with the California Fire Code, Riverside County Ordinance 787 and Riverside County Fire Department Standards. Plans must be submitted to the Fire Department for review and approval prior to building permit issuance.	5.3	Response to Comment 5.3 Please see response to comment 5.2.
Tract/Parcel Map development cases Prior to Building Permit issuance, the required water system, including all fire hydrant(s), shall be installed and accepted by the appropriate water agency and the Riverside County Fire Department prior to any combustible building materials placed on an individual lot. Contact the Riverside County Fire Department to inspect the required fire flow, street signs, and the required all weather surface access roadways. Approved water plans must be at the job site.	5.4	Response to Comment 5.4 Please see response to comment 5.2.
Tract/Parcel Map development cases Prior to Building Permit issuance, the required water system, including all fire hydrant(s), shall be installed and accepted by the appropriate water agency and the Riverside County Fire Department prior to any combustible building materials placed on an individual lot. Contact the Riverside County Fire Department to inspect the required fire flow, street signs, and the required all weather surface access roadways. Approved water plans must be at the job site. Further review of the project will occur when the project time frames are submitted. Additional requirements may be necessary at that time. If I can be of further assistance, please feel free to contact me at (951) 287-4049 or email Richard.Tovar@fire.ca.gov. Sincerely, Richard Tovar Fire Captain Strategic Planning Bureau	5.5	Response to Comment 5.5 Please see response to comment 5.2.

Comment Submitted Via Email

From: LUGO, ALONZO [<mailto:AL505U@att.com>]
Sent: Tuesday, November 29, 2016 11:19 AM
To: Burton, Aaron P@DOT <aaron.burton@dot.ca.gov>
Cc: LEE, KATHLEEN <KL1796@att.com>
Subject: FW: Platt Ridge: AT&T Site C966

Mr. Aaron Burton,

Thank you for taking my call. As mentioned AT&T is a tenant on Platt Ridge. Attached is the letter from your office and map indicating the proposed SR-79 route. Can you please confirm the existing access route to the top of the mountain where AT&T has it's communication equipment will be rerouted per the dashed lines in the attached plan?

6.1

What's more; can you please share with us the timing when this project is planned to break ground?

6.2

AT&T use of this property is key to our continued wireless service in the area. As you know, many homes depend on their mobile device for all means of communication. Should the SR-79 plan move forward, rerouting access by DOT is a mandatory necessity for our continued use of the property.

Kind reply when time permits. Thank you.

Alonzo Lugo
Greater Los Angeles Market
Construction & Engineering

AT&T
m 562.412.6870 | al505u@att.com

MOBILIZING **YOUR** WORLD

Response to Comment 6.1

Platt Ridge is not in jeopardy. The SR 79 Realignment project design team worked diligently to ensure that the communication towers would remain in place. The alignment of the access road to the towers will need to be modified; however, the realignment will be staged so that access to the towers will not be impacted during construction.

Response to Comment 6.2

Upon approval of the Final Environmental Impact Report/Statement by issuing this Record of Decision, final design of the project can begin. During the design phase the selected alternative will be developed fully for construction. Construction can begin once design is complete and funding is available. Opening year for the Project is scheduled for 2020.

Comment Submitted Via Email

From: Gibson, Joanna@Wildlife [<mailto:Joanna.Gibson@wildlife.ca.gov>]
Sent: Wednesday, November 30, 2016 3:00 PM
To: Burton, Aaron P@DOT <aaron.burton@dot.ca.gov>
Cc: Pert, Heather@Wildlife <Heather.Pert@wildlife.ca.gov>
Subject: CDFW comments on FEIR for State Route 79 Realignment Project from Domenigoni Parkway to Gilman Springs Road, SCH No. 2004091040
Importance: High

Mr. Burton,

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) has reviewed the Final Environmental Impact Report for the State Route 79 Realignment Project from Domenigoni Parkway to Gilman Springs Road. CDFW requests a revision to Mitigation Measure BIO-44, which includes avoidance and minimization measures for roosting bats. CDFW appreciates that the FEIR has addressed potential impacts to bats, however we recommend that the measure be revised to increase the specificity and enforceability of BIO-44. CDFW’s recommended changes will also ensure that the project progresses in streamlined fashion, without risk of delay resulting from the potential presence of roosting bats within the project footprint area.

CDFW recommends that Caltrans condition BIO-44 to include the following additional text and edits (additional text is underlined, edited text is in ~~strikethrough~~):

BIO-44. Inspections for Roosting Bats before ~~Demolition~~ commencement of Project Activities. Prior to site preparation or ground-disturbing activities, a qualified bat biologist shall conduct a focused bat roosting habitat suitability assessment of all structures (including, but not limited to, bridges, culverts, and buildings) and trees that may be removed, altered, or indirectly impacted by the proposed project. Any locations with potential for roosting or suitable as a maternity roost will be surveyed by the qualified bat biologist using an appropriate combination of structure inspection, exit counts, and acoustic surveys. Surveys shall be conducted during the appropriate season and time of day/night to ensure detection of bats. If bats are found using any structures or trees within the project area, the qualified bat biologist shall identify the bats to the species level, and evaluate the colony to determine its size and significance. The bat survey shall include: 1) the exact location of all roosting sites (location shall be adequately described and drawn on a map); 2) the number of bats present at the time of visit (count or estimate); 3) each species of bat present shall be named (include how the species was identified); and 4) the type of roost, i.e., a night roost (rest at night while out feeding) versus a day roost (resting during the day). A report containing the bat survey findings shall be submitted to Caltrans and to CDFW at the following address: 3602 Inland Empire Blvd., Suite C-220, Ontario, CA 91764.

If a roosting site and/or maternity colony(s) is detected, and the qualified bat biologist determines that impacts (either direct or indirect, including disturbance from noise, vibration, dust, exhaust) from project-related activities may occur, Caltrans shall consult with CDFW to determine the most appropriate type of avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures to implement. Examples of avoidance and minimization strategies may include daily work timing restrictions and buffer distances. Work timing restrictions and buffer distances will be determined based on the expert opinion of the qualified bat biologist, as approved by CDFW. Mitigation measures may include replacement of

7.1

Response to Comment 7.1

The suggested revised language for mitigation measure BIO-44 has been incorporated into the Environmental Commitment Record for the Project. Coordination with CDFW will be ongoing throughout the Project design and construction phases.

Comment Letter 7 Continued

impacted roosting sites with alternate roosting structures, such as those described *California Bat Mitigation Techniques, Solutions, and Effectiveness* (H. T. Harvey and Associates, 2004). Alternate roosting structures shall be designed to ensure use by bats impacted by the project. For example, designs will take into consideration the thermal and crevice/structure roosting requirements of the impacted bats.

~~Buildings, structures, and trees identified for demolition or removal will be inspected prior to construction activities to determine if roosting bats are present or are likely to be seasonally present. Before beginning the inspections, the inspectors will be trained by a contractor-supplied biologist who is experienced in bat identification.~~

~~If roosting bats are present or are likely to be seasonally present in trees with palm fronds or other hollows suitable for bats, removal of the trees will be scheduled at an appropriate time. A contractor-supplied biologist who is experienced in bat ecology will supervise the removal.~~

~~If roosting bats are present in a building slated for demolition, bats will be removed using approved bat exclusion techniques. Such techniques may include bat exclusion devices, which are designed to allow one-way exits for bats from the structures, that are installed under the direction of a contractor-supplied biologist who is experienced in bat ecology. Installation of new exclusion devices, and the repair of failed or incomplete exclusion devices, will be conducted between September and March to avoid entrapping nonvolant (nonflying) young bats inside structures during the maternity season, as feasible.~~

CDFW strongly recommends that Caltrans retain or enter into early consultation with a bat biologist experienced in the ecology of bats using man-made structures. Based on CDFW’s experience with other project’s in southern California, such experience will prove invaluable to the project, particularly to the project timeline.

CDFW appreciates the opportunity to comment on the FEIR for the State Route 79 Realignment Project from Domenigoni Parkway to Gilman Springs Road (State Clearinghouse Number: 2004091040).

If you have any questions pertaining to CDFW’s comments on BIO-44, please feel free to contact me.

Thank you,

Joanna Gibson
Senior Environmental Scientist (Specialist)
CA Department of Fish and Wildlife
Inland Deserts Region
3602 Inland Empire Blvd., Suite C-220
Ontario, CA 91764
(909) 987-7449 (phone)
Joanna.Gibson@wildlife.ca.gov

Every Californian should conserve water. Find out how at:



SaveOurWater.com · Drought.CA.gov

Comment Received Via Letter

December 2, 2016

Aaron Burton, Senior Environmental Planner
California Department of Transportation
P.O. Box 12008
Riverside, CA 92502-2208

RE: Final Environmental Impact Report/Final Environmental Impact Statement for State Route 79 Realignment Project: Domenigoni Parkway to Gilman Springs Road

Dear Mr. Burton:

As the property owner of an 11.52-acre parcel of commercially designated land located at 5671 Esplanade Avenue (southeast corner of Warren Road and Esplanade Avenue) in the City of Hemet, we are deeply troubled that our concerns with the State Route 79 Realignment Project and its significant adverse impact to our property have not been taken seriously.

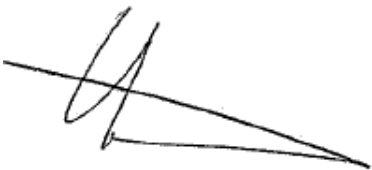
We are appalled that our request for an expanded discussion on the impacts to Assessor Parcel Number 448-060-001 was not considered to be environmental concern and no additional work was performed. The response to our March 19, 2013 comment determined further analysis was not practicable. This is unacceptable. There is a far greater impact from the mainline and ramp on aesthetics and noise from an east to west perspective at Esplanade for Segment J and not the west to east view modeled in the document. To respond that more detailed engineering will occur during the design phase of construction constitutes a deferral of environmental analysis.

Let me assure you that our parcel will be irreparably harmed as a result of the project in terms of access, aesthetics, and future noise levels. Impairment of the parcel by this project will result in us having to mitigate for the impacts created by this highway project because the baseline will be adversely altered. The response to comment from our October 6, 2015 letter clearly demonstrates that noise levels will be a concern to the residential property to our east (Stoney Mountain Ranch) yet the construction of noise barriers are not being implemented because the cost would be too high and therefore is unreasonable. Where does that leave our property that is closer to the mainline and off-ramp? Is it reasonable for us to mitigate the impact of this project at a cost that this document determines to be "too high"? Especially when the document has determined that the noise barrier are feasible.

We appreciate the opportunity to submit comments and look forward to your responses.

Sincerely,

Hemet-Warren LLC



8.1

8.2

8.3

8.4

Response to Comment 8.1

As previously stated in the response to your comment letter dated October 6, 2016, at present, there are no residences on this property, Assessor Parcel Number (APN) 448-060-001, and no activities occur that diminish the views that are impacted by the construction of the Project. In addition, the Stoney Mountain Ranch Subdivision, located to the east of the APN 448-060-001, view of the elevated freeway will be limited by the distance (a quarter mile or more) and by the residential structures in the foreground. As a consequence for much of this subdivision, the elevated freeway will have little to no effect on the views over the rooftops of the nearby homes toward the mountains to the west, which will remain essentially the same as they are today. Please refer to the Final EIR/EIS, Appendix K, comment number 2.I-36-4.

In addition, since there are no residences on APN 448-060-001, there is no activity close enough to deem the site as needing a sensitive noise receptor. Pursuant to FHWA and Caltrans guidelines, a series of noise evaluations were conducted by accredited specialists for all noise sensitive land uses within the project area. Three major evaluations were conducted to evaluate traffic noise. A Noise Study Report (NSR) was conducted to identify noise sensitive land uses and if traffic noise impacts are expected. A Noise Abatement Decision Report (NADR) was prepared to assess the reasonability and feasibility of the construction of a new sound wall for those land uses with the potential to experience a traffic noise impact. Finally, the project changes associated with Build Alternative 1br were investigated in an Updated NSR/NADR. The entire noise evaluation is summarized in Section 3.2.7 in the Final EIS/EIR. Please refer to the Final EIR/EIS, Appendix K, comment number 2.I-36-6.

Response to Comment 8.2

Under the CEQA, the baseline for environmental impact analysis consists of the existing conditions at the time of the Notice of Preparation (NOP) or at the time the environmental studies began; under the NEPA, the no-build alternative can be used as the baseline for comparing environmental impacts. At the time of the issuance of the NOP, and throughout the preparation of the environmental document, it was determined that there were no sensitive receptors to noise or aesthetics located on APN 448-060-001. Additionally, no current projects or projects in the planning phase identified for APN 448-060-001, please refer to the Final EIR/EIS Appendix H: Development Project in the Cumulative Impacts Study Area.

All avoidance, minimization and mitigation measures were identified within the Final EIR/EIS and took into account extensive technical studies, comments from stakeholders and the public, and limited impacts to sensitive vernal pools and traditional cultural properties, among other environmental resources. Caltrans will implement all mitigation measures listed in this ROD as a condition of project approval. Design drawings prepared during the preliminary engineering phase of the Project will be confirmed and refined during the final design phase for the selected Alternative 1br. These drawings will highlight the feasibility of the mitigation measures and involve stakeholder input.

Response to Comment 8.3

Adjacent to APN 448-060-001, the Opening Year (2020) configuration is a signalized intersection which will not affect the property in question and access would remain unchanged. When traffic conditions warrant the full interchange to be built, this will require full acquisition of the parcel and access would no longer be provided.

Property acquisition and relocation assistance and compensation are complex processes that are best discussed with a Project acquisition after Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC) determines whether it needs to acquire a property. A summary of the RCTC's Relocation Assistance Program (RAP) is included in Appendix D of the Draft EIR/EIS. Additional information is available from the following websites:

http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/row/pubs/residential_english.pdf
http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/real_estate/owners_and_tenants/

Response to Comment 8.4

Please see response to comment 8.1.

Comment Received Via Letter



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION IX
75 Hawthorne Street
San Francisco, CA 94105

December 5, 2016

Aaron Burton
Senior Environmental Planner
Caltrans - Environmental
P.O. Box 12008
Riverside, CA 92502-2208

Subject: EPA comments on the Final Environmental Impact Statement for the State Route 79
Realignment Project, Riverside County, California (CEQ # 20160257)

Dear Mr. Burton:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has reviewed the Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the State Route 79 Realignment Project (SR-79) in Riverside County, California. Our comments are provided pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Council on Environmental Quality's NEPA Implementing Regulations (40 CFR 1500-1508), and Section 309 of the Clean Air Act. Caltrans and the Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC) have proposed this project to address deficiencies in the existing SR-79 transportation corridor and provide a transportation facility that will safely and efficiently accommodate regional north-south movement of people and goods between Domenigoni Parkway to the south and Gilman Springs Road in the north. As described in the Final EIS, the project would be a divided limited-access expressway with two travel lanes in each direction. Several alternatives and design variations were evaluated for their ability to address the project purpose and need. The Final EIS identifies the Preferred Alternative as Alternative 1br, which the EPA, as well as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, agreed upon as the preliminary Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative.

The project has followed the National Environmental Policy Act and Clean Water Action Section 404 Integration Process for Federal Aid Surface Transportation Projects in California Memorandum of Understanding (NEPA/404 MOU). EPA participates on the SR-79 Resource Agency team which provides an interagency forum for early feedback during project development and facilitates the NEPA/404 MOU process. EPA has provided agreement on the project's Purpose and Need (December 19, 2003), agreement on the Range of Alternatives to carry forward in the Draft EIS (July 2, 2007), and agreement on the preliminary Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative (May 14, 2015), as well as providing comments on several technical documents which supported the Final EIS.

Additionally, EPA provided comments on the Draft EIS on March 22, 2013, rating the proposed project as *Environmental Concerns-Insufficient Information (EC-2)*. In our comments on the Draft EIS we expressed concerns with the project's impacts to aquatic resources, lack of information on compensatory mitigation, and provided comments regarding tribal coordination and analysis of air quality impacts. We appreciate the extensive additional analysis and coordination which have taken place to address our comments, as well as changes that have been made and mitigation measures which have been committed

to in the Final EIS. Additionally, we would like to acknowledge the magnitude of impact avoidance that Caltrans and RCTC implemented early in the project process by eliminating a more damaging alternative that would have bisected a network of significant alkali vernal pools in the project area. Notably, the SR-79 project was nominated for, and received, a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Transportation Environmental Stewardship Excellence Award for their efforts to avoid impacts to vernal pools.

Based upon the information presented in the Final EIS, and the identification of Alternative 1br as the preferred alternative, EPA’s concerns with the project have been addressed. We commend Caltrans and RCTC for working so extensively with the public and resource agencies to identify a Preferred Alternative for SR-79 that best balances community needs and concerns with protection of the environment. EPA appreciated the regular and proactive engagement with resource agencies to provide project updates, elicit agency concerns, and provide supplemental analyses and project refinements when needed. We hope that the SR-79 Resource Agency team will serve as a national example of successful interagency coordination.

We appreciate the opportunity to review this Final EIS and look forward to working with Caltrans and RCTC to finalize the project’s compensatory mitigation plan. When the Record of Decision is signed, please send one copy to the address above (mail code: ENF 4-2). If you have any questions, please contact me at 415-947-3554 or Clifton Meek, the lead reviewer for this project. Clifton can be reached at 415-972-3370 or meek.clifton@epa.gov.

Sincerely,



Foh Carolyn Mulvihill, Acting Transportation Team Supervisor
Environmental Review Section

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Gustavo Quintero, Riverside County Transportation Commission

9.1

Response to Comment 9.1

The SR 79 Realignment Project team appreciates the EPA’s comments involvement in the development of this major transportation project.