

**TULARE COUNTY  
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AGENCY**



5961 South Mooney Boulevard  
Visalia, CA 93277

Traver Community Plan GPA 14-003

Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration

September 2014

Prepared by

Tulare County Resources Management Agency  
Planning Branch  
Environmental Planning Division

## INITIAL STUDY CHECKLIST

1. **Project Title:** General Plan Amendment No.14-003 to Update the Traver Community Plan Update; a Zone Ordinance Amendment adopting a Mixed-Use Overlay Zone; Amendment to Section 16 of the Zone Code to allow additional “by-right” uses only within the Traver Urban Development Boundary Area; and Adoption of a Complete Streets Policy for the unincorporated community of Traver, Tulare County, California.
2. **Lead Agency:** County of Tulare – Resource Management Agency
3. **Contact Person:** Hector Guerra, Chief Environmental Planner
4. **Project Location:** Traver, CA in Tulare County
5. **Latitude, Longitude:** Generally, SEC. 16, T17S, R 23E MDB & M
6. **Existing General Plan Designation:** Tulare County Plan – Traver Community Plan Residential Medium Density, Commercial, Industrial, Public/Quasi Public, Residential Reserve, Industrial Reserve (See Traver General Land Use Map, Figure 14)
7. **Existing Zoning:** AE-40 (Exclusive Agricultural Zone 40-Acre Minimum), R-1 (Single Family Residential Zone), R-2 (Two Family Residential Zone), R-A (Rural Residential Zone), C-2 (General Commercial Zone), C-2 SR (General Commercial/Site Plan Review Combining Zone), C-3 (Service Commercial Zone), M-1 (Light Manufacturing Zone), (See Traver Zoning Map, Figure 13)
8. **Description of Project (Describe the whole action involved, including but not limited to later phases of the project, and any secondary, support, or off-site features necessary for its implementation. Attach additional sheets if necessary.):**

On December 10, 2013 the Tulare County Board of Supervisors (BOS) approved, the Planning Branch proposal to update the Traver Community Plan. The Traver Community Plan Update will become consistent with the recent approval of the General Plan 2030 Update, and will include the following primary goals and objectives.

1) Land Use and Environmental Planning - Promote development within planning areas next to the Regional Highway 99 Corridor in order to implement the following General Plan goals:

- a) Ensure that the text and mapping of the Community Plan Designations and Zoning Reclassifications address various development matters such as

encouraging Agricultural Adaptive Reuse activities, recognizing Non-Conforming Use activities, and facilitating Ministerial Permit approvals through an amendment of the Land Use Element to incorporate use designations contained in the proposed Traver Community Plan;

- b) Encourage infill development within Urban Development Boundaries, thereby discouraging leapfrog development within Tulare County;
- c) Reduce development pressure on agriculturally-designated lands within the Valley Floor, thereby encouraging agricultural production to flourish;
- d) Reduce vehicle miles travelled throughout the County, thereby positively affecting air quality and greenhouse gas reduction; and
- e) Help to improve the circulation, transit and railroad transportation system within this community, including, but not limited to, laying the groundwork for the construction of key projects such as Safe Routes to Schools, Complete Streets, and Bike Lanes/Pedestrian Paths through an amendment to the Transportation and Circulation Element to incorporate appropriate circulation plan designations in the proposed plan.
- f) Promote Economic Development through the reduction of entitlement requirements and flexibility of land uses from the mixed use overlay zone so that the County can more readily adapt to current market conditions.

2) Improvements for a “disadvantaged community” - It is expected that the community planning areas will be improved for the following reasons:

- a) With faster project processing resulting from an updated community plan, increased employment opportunities are more likely to be provided by the private sector as proposed project developments can be approved as expeditiously as possible;
- b) Increased housing grant awards are more likely to occur based on updated community plans that are consistent with the policies of the recently adopted (August 2013) General Plan Update and Housing Element; and
- c) With updated community plans, enhanced infrastructure grant awards are more likely, thereby providing access to funding to install or upgrade road, water, wastewater, and storm water facilities.

3) Strengthening Relationship with TCAG - An important benefit of this expedited community plan process will be the opportunity for RMA to strengthen the County’s relationship with the Tulare County Association of Governments (TCAG) in that this and other community plans will help to facilitate the funding and implementation of several key transportation programs such as Safe Routes to Schools, Complete Streets, and Bike/Pedestrian Projects.

By pursuing these transportation programs through a heightened collaborative process, the likelihood of getting actual projects in the ground will be realized faster than historically achieved. In doing so, these communities and others can become safer and healthier by providing a more efficient transportation network.

9. **Surrounding land uses and setting (Brief description):** Agricultural uses in all directions.
10. **Other public agencies whose approval is required (e.g., permits, financing approval, or participation agreement.):**

N/A

**ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED:**

**A.** The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a “Potentially Significant Impact” “unless mitigated” as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

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

**B. DETERMINATION:** On the basis of this initial evaluation:

- I find that the proposed project **COULD NOT** have a significant effect on the environment, and a **NEGATIVE DECLARATION** will be prepared.
- I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there **WILL NOT** be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made or agreed to by the project proponent. A **MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION** will be prepared.
- I find the proposed project **MAY** have a significant effect on the environment, and an **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT** is required.
- I find that a previous EIR or Negative Declaration may be utilized for this project - refer to Section E.

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Signature	Date
Hector Guerra	Chief Environmental Planner
Printed Name	Title

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Signature	Date
Michael C. Spata	Environmental Assessment Officer
Printed Name	Title

## EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS:

The following checklist contains an extensive listing of the kind of environmental effects which result from development projects. Evaluation of the effects must take into account the whole of an action involved, including off-site as well as on site, cumulative as well as project-level, indirect as well as direct, and construction as well as operational impacts, in addition to reasonably foreseeable phases or corollary actions. The system used to rate the magnitude of potential effects is described as follows:

A "Potentially Significant Impact" is appropriate if an effect is significant or potentially significant, or if the lead agency lacks information to make a finding of insignificance. If there are one or more "Potentially Significant Impact" entries when the determination is made, an EIR is required.

A "Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation" applies where the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from "Potentially Significant Impact" to a "Less Than Significant Impact."

A "Less Than Significant Impact" means that the environmental effect is present, but is minor in nature and/or not adverse, or is reduced to a level less than significant due to the application and enforcement of mandatory locally adopted standards.

"No Impact" indicates that the effect does not apply to the proposed project.

Using this rating system, evaluate the likelihood that the proposed project will have an effect in each of the environmental areas of concern listed below. At the end of each category, discuss the project-specific factors, locally adopted standards, and/or general plan elements that support your evaluation. A brief explanation is required for all answers except "No Impact" answers that are adequately supported by the information sources cited in the parentheses following each question. A "No Impact" answer is adequately supported if the referenced information sources show that the impact simply does not apply to projects like the one proposed (e.g., Zone C of the FEMA maps). A "No Impact" answer should be explained where it is based on project-specific factors as well as general standards (e.g., the project will not expose sensitive receptors to pollutants based on a project specific screening analysis). The explanation of each issue should identify:

- a) the significance criteria or threshold, if any, used to evaluate each question; and
- b) the mitigation measure identified, if any, to reduce the impact to less than significance

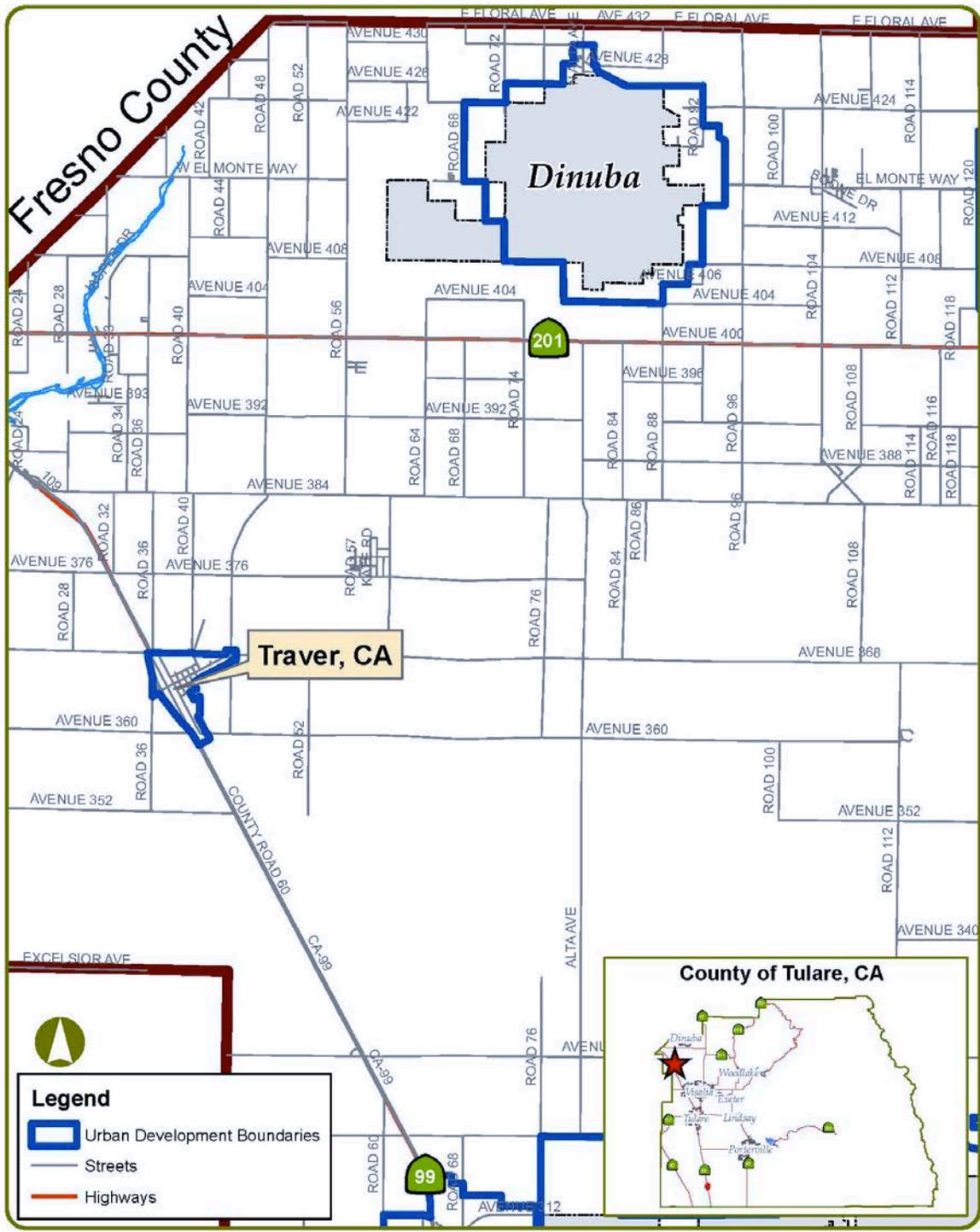
Once the lead agency has determined that a particular physical impact may occur, the checklist answers must indicate whether the impact is potentially significant, less than significant with mitigation, or less than significant. "Potentially Significant" is appropriate if there is substantial evidence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

"Negative Declaration: Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated" applies where the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from "Potentially Significant Impact" to a "Less Than Significant Impact." The mitigation measures must be described along with a brief

explanation on how they reduce the effect to a less than significant level (mitigation measures from Section E., “Earlier Analyses,” may be cross-referenced).

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

- a) Earlier Analysis Used. Identify and state where they are available for review.
- b) Impacts Adequately Addressed. Identify which effects from the above checklist were within the scope of and adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and state whether such effects were addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis.
- c) Mitigation Measures. For effects that are “Less Than Significant with Mitigation Measures Incorporated”, describe the mitigation measures which were incorporated or refined from the earlier document and the extent to which they address site- specific conditions for the project



**Traver Vicinity Map**



## Traver Aerial Map

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>1. AESTHETICS -- Would the project:</b>				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state or county designated scenic highway or county designated scenic road?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Analysis:

The proposed Project site (Project, site, or proposed amendment area) covers approximately 366 acres in area. No change is planned for the Community Plan's Urban Development Boundary (UBD). No proposed development projects are part of this proposed amendment; however, existing General Plan policies (and proposed Community Plan policies) will be implemented to avoid and/or minimize any potentially adverse impacts to scenic views (for example, *ERM-1.15 Minimize Lighting Impacts* wherein the County shall ensure that lighting associated with new development or facilities (including street lighting, recreational facilities, and parking) shall be designed to prevent artificial lighting from illuminating adjacent natural areas at a level greater than one foot candle above ambient conditions and *ERM-5.18 Night Sky Protection* wherein upon demonstrated interest by a community, mountain service center, or hamlet, the County will determine the best means by which to protect the visibility of the night sky. The Project area is not adjacent to or within a scenic corridor or vista. As with much of Tulare County, the Sierra Nevada mountains are visible when conditions such as haze, fog, or air quality do not interfere with visibility with implementation of General Plan policies (for example, *SL-1.1 Natural Landscapes* and *ERM-1.8 Open Space Buffers*). Future development design will consider potential visual impacts to the surrounding areas, and set-back and building height limitations contained in the Tulare County Zone Ordinance will also prevent any adverse impacts to a scenic vista.

a) The proposed Project will not adversely affect any scenic vista; as such, it will not include any structures which may substantially impact a scenic vista. There will be **No Impact** to this resource.

b) The proposed Project site includes a variety of uses such as residential, highway commercial, light industrial, public use (elementary school), and agriculturally productive lands. The Community is completely surrounded by agriculturally productive lands (such as vineyards, orchards, and row crops). As such, the proposed Community Plan update will not damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state or county designated scenic highway or county designated scenic road. There will be **No Impact** to this resource.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
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c) As noted earlier, the proposed Project area is developed to urban-type uses within 366 acres. Existing uses account for approximately 271 acres which are show in the table below:

Existing Land Use	Acres	Acres-Rounded
Agriculture	112.45	112
Commercial	14.27	14
Industrial	37.67	38
Public/Quasi Public	23.26	23
Railroad	23.21	23
Residential	48.9	49
Vacant	12.41	12
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>272.17</b>	<b>271</b>
Unclassified (Right-of-Way)	94.6	95
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>366.77</b>	<b>366</b>

No additions are planned to the UDB. As noted in the Analysis section for this resource, future development design will consider potential visual impacts to the surrounding areas, and set-back and building height limitations contained in the Tulare County Zone Ordinance will also prevent any adverse impacts to a scenic vista. The predominantly agricultural scenery surrounding the Community will remain unchanged. There will be **No Impact** to this resource.

d) The proposed Project will not result in the creation of a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area. Various General Plan (GP) Policies are anticipated to minimize impacts from light or glare sources. Evening hour lighting for safety and security purposes cannot be determined until specific locations and development proposals are received. However, there are several GP Policies (such as *ERM-1.15* Minimize Lighting Impacts, *LU-4.5* Commercial Building Design, *LU-7.19* Minimize Lighting Impacts, and *SL-1.2* Working Landscapes) that require new development to minimize lighting impacts. The impact to this resource is **Less Than Significant**.

<p><b>2. AGRICULTURE RESOURCES:</b> In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. Would the project:</p>				
<p>a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?				
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>Analysis:</p> <p>a - e) The proposed amendment will not result in the addition of any acreage to the existing Community Plan's Urban Development Boundary (UDB) area. The land use pattern will remain as currently defined. Existing uses include a mix of single-family residences, highway and general commercial, light industrial, public (school), and agricultural uses. There are approximately 12 acres of undeveloped vacant land identified in the UDB. The UDB site is located entirely on urban-related uses (254 acres), agriculturally productive lands (112 acres), and adjacent to SR 99 and the Union Pacific railroad. The Project will not result in any impacts to resources a. – e. as the Project does not include any immediate development proposals and it will not result in the expansion beyond its current planning area. The Project will not result in the Conversion of Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use or if the area is not designated on the Important Farmland Series Maps. The existing planning area includes Farmland of Statewide Importance. This area is proposed as medium density residential; however, it is currently agriculturally productive land and there are no development proposals for these lands. The Project will not result in the conversion of any prime agricultural land as defined in Section 51201(C) of the Govt. Code to non-agricultural use. It will not conflict with existing zoning for agriculture use, or a Williamson Act contract; it will not conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources code 12220(g) or timberland (as defined in Public Resource Code section 4526); it will not result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use, nor will it involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of forest land to non-forest use. It could result in conversion of farmland to future non-agricultural use (residential); however, no development proposals are part of this Community Plan Update. There will be <b>No Impacts</b> to these resources.</p>				
3. <b>AIR QUALITY</b> -- Where available, significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:				

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Analysis:

The proposed Project is located in the San Joaquin Valley Air Basin (SJVAB), a continuous inter-mountain air basin. The Sierra Nevada Range forms the eastern boundary; the Coast Range forms the western boundary; and the Tehachapi Mountains form the southern boundary. These topographic features restrict air movement through and beyond the SJVAB. The SJVAB is comprised of San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Merced, Madera, Fresno, Kings, and Tulare Counties and the valley portion of Kern County; it is approximately 25,000 square miles in area. Tulare County lies within the southern portion of the SJVAB. The SJVAB is managed by the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD or Air District).

Both the federal government (through the United State Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)) and the State of California (through the California Air Resources Board (ARB)) have established health-based ambient air quality standards (AAQS) for six air pollutants, commonly referred to as “criteria pollutants.” The six criteria pollutants are: carbon monoxide (CO), ozone (O3), sulfur dioxide (SO2), nitrogen dioxide (NO2), particulate matter (PM10 and PM2.5), and lead (Pb).

National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) and California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS) have been established for each criteria pollutant to protect the public health and welfare. The federal and state standards were developed independently with differing purposes and methods, although both processes are intended to avoid health-related effects. As a result, the federal and state standards differ in some cases. In general, the California state standards are more stringent.

The Federal Clean Air Act requires EPA to set NAAQS for the six criteria pollutants, noted above, that occur throughout the United States. Of the six pollutants, particle pollution and ground-level ozone are the most widespread health threats. EPA regulates the criteria pollutants by developing human health-based and/or

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
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environmentally-based criteria (science-based guidelines) for setting permissible levels. The set of limits based on human health is called primary standards. Another set of limits intended to prevent environmental and property damage is called secondary standards.

EPA is required to designate areas as meeting (attainment) or not meeting (nonattainment) the air pollutant standards. The Federal Clean Air Act (CAA) further classifies nonattainment areas based on the severity of the nonattainment problem, with marginal, moderate, serious, severe, and extreme nonattainment classifications for ozone. Nonattainment classifications for PM range from marginal to serious. The Federal CAA requires areas with air quality violating the NAAQS to prepare an air quality control plan referred to as the State Implementation Plan (SIP). The SIP contains the strategies and control measures that states will use to attain the NAAQS. The Federal CAA amendments of 1990 require states containing areas that violate the NAAQS to revise their SIP to incorporate additional control measures to reduce air pollution. The SIP is periodically modified to reflect the latest emissions inventories, planning documents, rules, and regulations of Air Basins as reported by the agencies with jurisdiction over them. The EPA reviews SIPs to determine if they conform to the mandates of the Federal CAA amendments and will achieve air quality goals when implemented. If the EPA determines a SIP to be inadequate, it may prepare a Federal Implementation Plan (FIP) for the nonattainment area and impose additional control measures.

The SJVAB is designated non-attainment of state and federal health based air quality standards for ozone and respirable particulate matter (PM). The federal classification for the SJVAB is extreme non-attainment for the 8-hour ozone standard. To meet Federal Clean Air Act requirements, the District adopted the 2007 Ozone Plan on April 30, 2007. The ARB approved the Plan on June 14, 2007, while the EPA approved the Plan effective April 30, 2012. The Plan projects that the Valley will achieve the 8-hour ozone standard for all areas of the SJVAB no later than 2023. The PM10 standard was been achieved and the US EPA re-classified the Air District as in attainment on September 25, 2008. Even after achieving the PM10 standard, the Air District is currently a PM10 Maintenance Area and all rules and regulations are still in effect. The SJVAB is designated non-attainment for the new state and federal PM2.5 (particulate matter less than 2.5 micrometers in diameter) annual standard. The District's federal PM2.5 attainment plan was adopted in December 2012. Measures contained in the 2007 PM10 Maintenance Plan will also help reduce PM2.5 levels and will provide progress toward attainment until new measures are implemented for the PM2.5 Plan, if needed. The State does not have an attainment deadline for the ozone standards; however, it does require implementation of all feasible measures to achieve attainment at the earliest date possible. State PM10 and PM2.5 standards have no attainment planning requirements, but must demonstrate that all measures feasible for the area have been adopted.

In addition to consistency with Valley Air District attainment plans, the Tulare County General Plan has a number of policies that apply to projects within County of Tulare. For example, General Plan policies that would apply to future development in the Project area include *AQ-1.1 Cooperation with Other Agencies* wherein the County shall partner with the Air District, Tulare County Association of Governments (TCAG), and the California Air Resource Board to achieve better air quality conditions locally and regionally; *AQ-1.2 Cooperation with Local Jurisdictions* wherein the County shall participate with cities, surrounding counties, and regional agencies to address cross-jurisdictional transportation and air quality issue; *AQ-1.3 Cumulative Air Quality Impacts* wherein the County shall require development to be located, designed, and constructed in a manner that would minimize cumulative air quality impacts. Applicants shall be required to proposed alternatives as part of the State CEQA process that reduce air emissions and enhance, rather than harm, the environment; *AQ-1.4 Air Quality Land Use Compatibility*

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
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wherein the County shall evaluate the compatibility of industrial or other developments which are likely to cause undesirable air pollution with regard to proximity to sensitive land uses, and wind direction and circulation in an effort to alleviate effects upon sensitive receptors; *AQ-1.5 California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Compliance* wherein the County shall ensure that air quality impacts identified during the CEQA review process are consistently and reasonable mitigated when feasible; *AQ-3.6 Mixed Land Uses* wherein the County shall encourage the clustering of land uses that generate high trip volumes, especially when such uses can be mixed with support services and where they can be served by public transportation; and *AQ-4.2 Dust Suppression Measures* wherein the County shall require developers to implement dust suppression measures during excavation, grading, and site preparation activities consistent with SJVAPCD Regulation VIII – Fugitive Dust Prohibitions. Among General Plan policies regarding land uses which benefit air quality are *LU-1.1: Smart Growth and Healthy Communities*; *LU-1.4: Compact Development*; *LU-1.8: Encourage Infill Development*; *LU-3.2: Cluster Development*; *LU-3.3: and High-Density Residential Locations*.

“The Air Quality Analysis Report - Traver Community Plan” (Air Quality Analysis Report or AQA Report) was completed by consultants First Carbon Solutions (FCS) in July 2014 to analyze potential air quality and greenhouse gas emissions (See Appendix “A”). As indicated in the AQA Report, “The following air quality analysis was prepared to evaluate the impacts of implementing the updated Traver Community Plan. The growth projected between the base year 2014 and the milestone year 2030 is the basis of this analysis. The missions generated from the development anticipated to occur during this period is compared to the thresholds of significance impact. This assessment was conducted within the context of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA, California Public Resources Code Sections 21000, et seq.). The analysis is intended to provide sufficient detail regarding potential impacts of anticipated development through the 2030 milestone year and mitigation measures to reduce impacts as needed to reduce potentially significant impacts, if needed. The methodology follows San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (District or SJVAPCD) recommendations for quantification of emissions and evaluation of potential impacts to air resources.”<sup>1</sup>

“The Traver Community Plan Update includes no new land use designations that would increase the buildout potential of the Plan area. The Community Plan has adequate land designated for development to accommodate growth through 2030; however, no specific development projects are currently proposed. Therefore, the analysis estimates the increase in emissions based on the growth rate projected for the County in the 2030 Tulare County General Plan of 1.3 percent per year. The growth rate was applied to the actual development existing in the 2014 base year to determine the amount of development that would occur by 2020 and 2030. Although other types of development may be constructed consistent with the existing General Plan and Zoning designations, the land uses selected are representative of common development types found in rural communities and provide a reasonable estimate for determining potential impacts.”<sup>2</sup>

In addition to criteria pollutants, the AQA Report also analyzed potential impacts to health risk assessment thresholds (particularly the potential exposure to toxic air contaminant (TAC) emissions) and odors. As noted in the AQA Report; “No new projects are proposed with the Traver Community Plan Update that would allow for a determination of impacts from TAC emissions. However, when projects are proposed, they will be assessed to determine if they would result in sensitive receptors being exposed to significant health risk.”<sup>3</sup> “The primary

<sup>1</sup> “The Air Quality Analysis Report - Traver Community Plan”, First Carbon Solutions (FCS) in July 2014. Page 1.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 27

<sup>3</sup> Op. Cit. 31

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
<p>existing sources of concern in Traver are State Route 99 due to its high traffic volume and large percentage of diesel trucks, and gasoline dispensing stations. The existing light industrial and warehouse uses do not currently generate truck trips to exceed screening criteria; however, this criterion should be reviewed as projects are proposed to determine if new sources have been constructed or existing sources have expanded their operations.”<sup>4</sup> In regards to odor, the AQA Report notes “No specific projects containing sensitive receptors are proposed near potential odor sources and no new projects are proposed that are considered odor generators near existing sensitive receptors. However, as the Traver Community Plan is built out, the potential exists for odor impacts to occur. To ensure potential impacts are addressed, if proposed projects were to result in sensitive receptors being located closer to an odor generator in the list in Table 8 [of the GAMAQI] than the recommended distances, a more detailed analysis including a review of District odor complaint records is recommended.”<sup>5</sup></p> <p>In section 1.3 Summary of Analysis Results, FCS concludes:</p> <p>“Impact AIR-1: The project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan. Less Than Significant Impact</p> <p>Impact AIR-2: The project would not violate air quality standards or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation. Less Than Significant Impact</p> <p>Impact AIR-3: The project would not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is nonattainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions, which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors). Less Than Significant Impact</p> <p>Impact AIR-4: The project would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations. Less Than Significant Impact</p> <p>Impact AIR-5: The project would not create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people. Less Than Significant Impact”<sup>6</sup></p> <p>The AQA Report further concludes on page 2 that “No mitigation measures were required”<sup>7</sup> as a result of the Project.</p> <p>a) Air quality plans (also known as attainment plans) and subsequent rules are used to bring the applicable air basin into attainment with federal ambient air quality standards designed to protect the health and safety of residents within that air basin. As indicated in the AQA Report, “...emissions of ROG, NO<sub>x</sub>, PM<sub>10</sub>, and PM<sub>2.5</sub> associated with the construction and operation of the project would not exceed the District’s significance</p>				

<sup>4</sup> Op. Cit. 33

<sup>5</sup> Op. Cit. 47

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Op. Cit. 2

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
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thresholds. As shown in Impact AIR-2 below [page 37 of the AQA Report], the project would not result in CO hotspots that would violate CO standards. Therefore, the project would not contribute to air quality violations.”<sup>8</sup> “The Traver Community Plan Update does not propose additional land for development beyond that already designated by the Tulare County General Plan. Therefore, the project is consistent with the assumptions of the AQPs and has a less than significant impact for this criterion.”<sup>9</sup> The AQP contains a number of control measures, which are enforceable requirements through the adoption of rules and regulations. A detailed description of rules and regulations that apply to this project is provided in Section 2.2, Regulatory Setting. The project will comply with all of the District’s applicable rules and regulations.”<sup>10</sup> Therefore, the proposed Project does not conflict with or obstruct implementation of any applicable air quality plan or rule. There will be **No Impact** to this resource.

b) As noted in item a., above, the proposed Project will not violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation. The AQA Report includes a projection of construction-related and operations-related emissions during the planning timeframe (that is, 2030) and concludes that emissions are below significance thresholds (see Tables 9 and 10 of the AQA Report). There will be **No Impact** as a result of this Project.

c) The net increase in criteria pollutant emissions from development within the proposed Project can not be estimated at this time; however, as development occurs within the Project area each will be evaluated to ensure that emission control techniques are implemented consistent with Air District rules and regulations. For example, the Air District’s threshold of significance and compliance with Air District Rule 9510 (Indirect Source Review) will ensure that cumulative growth does not result in an overall increase in emissions in the air basin and would not jeopardize attainment plan deadlines. As indicated in the AQA Report, “The criteria pollutant emissions analysis assessed whether the project would exceed SJVAPCD thresholds of significance. As shown in Table 9 and Table 10 [of the AQA Report], criteria pollutant emissions would not exceed any threshold of significance during project construction or operation. Therefore, the unmitigated project emissions would not cumulatively contribute to a significant impact according to this criterion.”<sup>11</sup> “The Traver Community Plan proposes no change to land use designations currently contained within the Tulare County General Plan. Therefore, the Community Plan remains consistent with the modeling assumptions used in preparing the applicable air quality plans for ozone and particulate matter.”<sup>12</sup> “The analysis shows that the project’s emissions would not exceed SJVAPCD quantitative project thresholds.”<sup>13</sup> Therefore, there will be **Less Than Significant Impacts** as a result of this Project.

d) The Project would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations. Consistent with the Valley Air District’s definition of “sensitive receptors”, the AQA Report contains analyses of criteria pollutants and projected potential impacts on sensitive receptors. “Those individuals who are sensitive to air pollution include children, the elderly, and persons with pre-existing respiratory or cardiovascular illness. The District considers a sensitive receptor to be a location that houses or attracts children, the elderly, people with illnesses, or others who

<sup>8</sup> Op. Cit. 37

<sup>9</sup> Op. Cit.

<sup>10</sup> Op. Cit.

<sup>11</sup> Op. Cit. 42

<sup>12</sup> Op. Cit. 43

<sup>13</sup> Op. Cit.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
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are especially sensitive to the effects of air pollutants. Examples of sensitive receptors include hospitals, residences, convalescent facilities, and schools.”<sup>14</sup>

The AQA Report analyzed and concluded the following:

*“Construction: ROG* - During architectural coatings (painting), ROG is emitted. The amount emitted is dependent on the amount of ROG (or VOC) in the paint. ROG emissions are typically an indoor air quality health hazard concern and not an outdoor air quality health hazard concern. Therefore, exposure of ROG during architectural coatings is a *less than significant* health impact. There are three types of asphalt that are typically used in paving: asphalt cements, cutback asphalts, and emulsified asphalts. However, District Rule 4641 prohibits the use of the following types of asphalt: rapid cure cutback asphalt; medium cure cutback asphalt; slow cure asphalt that contains more than one-half (0.5) percent of organic compounds that evaporate at 500 degrees Fahrenheit (°F) or lower; and emulsified asphalt containing organic compounds, in excess of 3 percent by volume, that evaporate at 500°F or lower. An exception to this is medium cure asphalt when the National Weather Service official forecast of the high temperature for the 24-hour period following application is below 50°F. The acute (short-term) health effects from worker direct exposure to asphalt fumes include irritation of the eyes, nose, and throat. Other effects include respiratory tract symptoms and pulmonary function changes. The studies were based on occupational exposure of fumes. Residents are not in the immediate vicinity of the fumes; therefore, they would not be subjected to concentrations high enough to evoke a negative response. In addition, the restrictions that are placed on asphalt in the San Joaquin Valley reduce ROG emissions from asphalt and exposure. The impact to nearby sensitive receptors from ROG during construction is less than significant.

*Operation: ROG* - During operation, ROG would be emitted primarily from motor vehicles. Direct exposure to ROG from project motor vehicles would not result in health effects, because the ROG would be distributed across miles and miles of roadway and dispersed in the air. The concentrations would not be great enough to result in direct health effects.

*Construction: NO<sub>x</sub>, PM<sub>10</sub>, PM<sub>2.5</sub>* - As discussed in Impact AIR-3 [of the AQA Report], the specific location and timing of construction projects is not known. Therefore, localized impacts from construction equipment cannot be determined and would be speculative. Tulare County will consult with the SJVAPCD on individual projects to determine if screening or modeling would be required to identify potentially significant impacts.

*Operation: PM<sub>10</sub>, PM<sub>2.5</sub>, CO, NO<sub>2</sub>* - As discussed in Impact AIR-2 [of the AQA Report], localized concentrations of PM<sub>10</sub>, PM<sub>2.5</sub>, CO, and NO<sub>2</sub> cannot be determined prior to identifying specific projects and their emissions. Therefore, localized impacts from project operations cannot be determined and would be speculative. Tulare County will consult with the SJVAPCD on individual projects to determine if screening or modeling would be required to identify potentially significant impacts.

*Construction: Toxic Air Contaminants* - The specific location and timing of construction projects is not known. Therefore, localized impacts from TAC emissions from construction equipment cannot be determined and would be speculative. Tulare County will consult with the SJVAPCD on individual projects to determine if screening or modeling would be required to identify potentially significant impacts.

<sup>14</sup> Op. Cit.

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*Operation: Toxic Air Contaminants* - No new sources of TAC emissions are specifically proposed in the Traver Community Plan and the location of projects containing sensitive receptors has not been determined. Therefore, impacts from TAC emissions on sensitive receptors would be speculative. In order to ensure that development of the Traver Community Plan area does not expose sensitive receptors to significant impacts from TAC emissions, Tulare County will review individual projects proposed within the Plan area to determine if the ARB Air Quality Land Use Handbook screening criteria presented in Table 7. Projects that exceed the screening criteria will undergo analysis using screening models or may require dispersion modeling and a health risk assessment. Tulare County will consult with the SJVAPCD for guidance on the appropriate screening tools and modeling protocols.”

Therefore, the impact to this resource item is **Less Than Significant**.

e) The Project would not create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people. Consistent with the Valley Air District’s definition of “sensitive receptors”, the AQA Report contains analyses of odor sources and projected potential impacts on sensitive receptors. “Odor impacts on residential areas and other sensitive receptors, such as hospitals, day-care centers, schools, etc., warrant the closest scrutiny, but consideration could also be given to other land uses where people may congregate, such as recreational facilities, worksites, and commercial areas. Two situations create a potential for odor impact. The first occurs when a new odor source is located near an existing sensitive receptor. The second occurs when a new sensitive receptor locates near an existing source of odor. The [Air] District has determined the common land use types that are known to produce odors in the Basin. These types are shown in Table 8 in Section 3.5.2, SJVAPCD Significant Thresholds [in the 2002 GAMAQI].

According to the SJVAPCD’s 2002 GAMAQI, analysis of potential odor impacts should be conducted for the following two situations:

**Generators:** projects that would potentially generate odorous emissions proposed to locate near existing sensitive receptors or other land uses where people may congregate, and

**Receivers:** residential or other sensitive receptor projects or other projects built for the intent of attracting people locating near existing odor sources.

No specific projects containing sensitive receptors are proposed near potential odor sources and no new projects are proposed that are considered odor generators near existing sensitive receptors. However, as the Traver Community Plan is built out, the potential exists for odor impacts to occur. To ensure potential impacts are addressed, if proposed projects were to result in sensitive receptors being located closer to an odor generator in the list in **Error! Reference source not found.** than the recommended distances, a more detailed analysis including a review of District odor complaint records is recommended. The detailed analysis would involve contacting the District’s Compliance Division for information regarding odor complaints. For a project locating near an existing source of odors, the project should be identified as having a significant odor impact if it is proposed for a site that is closer to an existing odor source than any location where there have been:

- More than one *confirmed* complaint per year averaged over a three-year period, or
- Three *unconfirmed* complaints per year averaged over a three-year period.

Agricultural operations are exempt from the District’s nuisance rule. Therefore, odors from dairies and in field

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<p>composting operations would not be subject to complaint reporting. However, the Tulare County General Plan Recirculated Environmental Impact Report (REIR) indicated that General Plan Policies AQ-3.1 through AQ-3.6, LU-1.1 through LU-1.4, and LU-1.8. SJVAPCD regulations on dairy and feedlot operations would also help to reduce this potential impact. The REIR concluded that compliance with policies and regulations would be adequate to reduce this impact to less than significant.”<sup>15</sup> Therefore, any potential odor impacts would be considered as <b>Less Than Significant</b>.</p>				
<b>4. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES</b> -- Would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or US Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological re-sources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural				

<sup>15</sup> Op. Cit. 46-47

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Analysis:

As part of the biological evaluation process to assess potential impacts which may occur as a result of the Project, the County of Tulare obtained the services of consultants Live Oak Associates, Inc. (LOA). LOA also provided recommended mitigation measures to ensure avoidance and/or minimization of potential impacts. “Live Oak Associates, Inc. (LOA) conducted an investigation of the biological resources of the Traver Community Plan Proposed Planning Study Area (PPSA) in the unincorporated community of Traver in Tulare County, California and evaluated likely impacts to such resources resulting from development of the PPSA (see Appendix “B”). The approximately 383-acre PPSA consists of three separate blocks of land both east and west of State Highway 99. In April and June 2014, LOA surveyed the PPSA for biotic habitats, the plants and animals occurring in those habitats, and significant habitat values that may be protected by state and federal law.

Habitats/land uses identified within the PPSA included orchards, agricultural fields, industrial/residential lands, ruderal areas, and a segment of Banks Ditch and the Traver Canal. A mosaic of agricultural, industrial, and residential/commercial land uses surround the PPSA, within a region dominated by similar land uses.

Impacts associated with future development of PPSA would be less than significant, as defined by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), for special status plant species, wildlife movement corridors, downstream water quality, and sensitive habitats. Loss of habitat for special status animal species would also be considered less than significant under CEQA.

Potentially significant impacts associated with future development of the PPSA include construction mortality of the valley elderberry longhorn beetle (VELB), Swainson’s hawk, San Joaquin kit fox, burrowing owl, loggerhead shrike, pallid bat, and western mastiff bat; nesting raptors and migratory birds protected under the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act and related state laws; and colonially roosting bats. Project avoidance of active nests, dens, and roost sites identified during preconstruction surveys, compensation for the removal of any blue elderberry shrubs, and implementation of minimization measures consistent with the USFWS *Standardized Recommendations for Protection of the Endangered San Joaquin Kit Fox Prior to or During Ground Disturbance* will ensure that impacts to all special status animal species are reduced to a less than significant level.

Project impacts will also potentially be significant for waters of the U.S., which in the PPSA consists of approximately 3,400 linear feet of Banks Ditch and 2,235 linear feet of Traver Canal. Impacts to Banks Ditch and the Traver Canal can be mitigated through on-site or off site preservation or creation, through payment into an in-lieu fee program (if one is available), purchase of credits from an approved Mitigation Bank in the vicinity, or some combination of one or more of these options.”<sup>16</sup>

In addition to implementing the mitigation measures identified by Live Oak Associates, the Tulare County General

<sup>16</sup> “Traver Community Plan Update Biological Evaluation Tulare County, California” Prepared by Live Oak Associates, Inc. May 7, 2014.

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<p>Plan has a number of policies that apply to projects within County of Tulare. For example, General Plan policies that would apply to future development in the Project area include <i>ERM-1.1 Protection of Rare and Endangered Species</i> wherein the County shall ensure the protection of environmentally sensitive wildlife and plant life, including those species designated as rare, threatened, and/or endangered by State and/or Federal government, through compatible land use development; <i>ERM-1.17 Conservation Plan Coordination</i> wherein the County shall coordinate with local, State, and federal habitat conservation planning efforts (including Section 10 Habitat Conservation Plan) to protect critical habitat areas that support endangered species and other special-status species; and <i>ERM-2.7 Minimize Adverse Impacts</i> wherein the County will minimize the adverse effects on environmental features such as water quality and quantity, air quality, flood plains, geophysical characteristics, biotic, archaeological, and aesthetic factors.</p>				
<p>a) According to information contained in the biological evaluation conducted by LOA, there are various species of mammals, plant/insect, and birds that could potential be impacted as future development occurs within the Project area as discussed below in an excerpt from the Biological Evaluation:</p>				
<p><b>“3.3 POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT PROJECT IMPACTS/MITIGATION</b></p>				
<p>The 383-acre PPSA is proposed for inclusion in the Traver Community Plan area. The following subsections assume that all habitats of the PPSA will be impacted by future development under a number of individual projects. Potentially significant project impacts to biological resources and mitigations are discussed below:</p>				
<p><b>3.3.1 Project Impacts to the Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle (Prior to Delisting)</b></p>				
<p><b>Potential Impacts.</b> As discussed in Section 2.5.1 of this document, three elderberry shrubs are located on ruderal land associated with the Foster Farms industrial complex (see Figure 3 [of the Biological Evaluation]), and additional shrubs could theoretically be present in those portions of the orchards and industrial complex that were not accessible/visible at the time of the April 2014 and June 2014 field surveys. Shrubs of the PPSA are unlikely to be inhabited by VELB due to their location within a mosaic of highly disturbed lands and their isolation from riparian areas and other elderberry shrubs. For the same reasons, project-related removal of these shrubs would not constitute significant loss of habitat under CEQA. However, because the USFWS considers the removal of elderberry shrubs below 3,000 feet in elevation with stems greater than one inch in diameter tantamount to “take” of VELB, USFWS incidental take authorization would be required before the shrubs could be removed by project activities.</p>				
<p>Although highly unlikely, project-related mortality of individual beetles is a significant impact of future development of the PPSA under CEQA. In the absence of USFWS incidental take authorization, any project-related mortality of VELB would violate the federal Endangered Species Act.</p>				
<p><b>Mitigation.</b> The following measures adapted from the <i>Conservation Guidelines for the Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle</i> (USFWS 1999) (Appendix D [in the Biological Evaluation]) will be implemented, as applicable, for all project activities occurring in the vicinity of elderberry shrubs. Measures 3.3.1a through 3.3.1c are intended to avoid and minimize the potential of project-related mortality of VELB. Although project-related loss of VELB habitat is a less-than-significant impact under CEQA, any project in the PPSA that removes elderberry shrubs will need to provide compensatory mitigation under the provisions of the USFWS incidental take authorization issued</p>				

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for the project(s). Measure 3.3.1d presents the compensatory mitigation scheme used by the USFWS.

**Mitigation Measure 3.3.1a (Avoidance).** Prior to initiation of a given project within the PPSA, a survey for elderberry shrubs will be conducted by a qualified biologist, unless the entire project area is completely devoid of shrubby vegetation, in which case a elderberry survey is not necessary. If elderberry shrubs are identified during the survey, then they will be avoided. Typically, the USFWS considers a 100-foot disturbance-free buffer around elderberry shrubs complete avoidance. However, a buffer of as little as 20 feet may be arranged in consultation with the USFWS. The buffer will be clearly delineated with orange construction fencing with the appropriate signage posted. This elderberry avoidance area will be clearly marked with signs, fencing, and/or flagging, and maintained for the duration of work in that area. No construction personnel or equipment shall enter the elderberry avoidance area, except for as provided under *Mitigation Measure 3.3.3b* below.

**Mitigation Measure 3.3.1b (Construction Monitoring).** If project activities necessitate temporary entry into the elderberry avoidance area, approval will first be obtained from the USFWS and a qualified biologist will be on-site to monitor such activities for their duration within the avoidance area.

**Mitigation Measure 3.3.1c (Employee Education Program).** Prior to implementation of projects with elderberry shrubs on site, construction personnel will receive worker environmental awareness training in the identification of the VELB and its host plant.

**Mitigation Measure 3.3.1d (Compensation).** If it is not feasible to completely avoid all elderberry shrubs, then impacts to the shrubs will be mitigated in accordance with the *Conservation Guidelines for the Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle* (USFWS 1999). This generally involves 1) conducting a protocol-level elderberry survey to assess the degree of “take” that will occur, 2) transplanting the shrubs to on-site or off-site lands protected in perpetuity under conservation easement (“conservation area”), or to a VELB mitigation bank, and 3) replacing each impacted stem with new elderberry plantings at a ratio of 1:1 to 1:8 (depending on stem diameter, presence of beetle exit holes, and habitat type) *or* purchasing an equivalent number of credits at a VELB mitigation bank.

Implementation of the above measures, as applicable, will reduce potential project impacts to the valley elderberry longhorn beetle to a less than significant level, and will ensure that future development activities within the PPSA remain in compliance with federal laws protecting this species.

### 3.3.2 Project-Related Mortality of San Joaquin Kit Fox

**Potential Impacts.** As discussed in Section 2.5.3, the San Joaquin kit fox is unlikely to occur within the PPSA. However, based on past occurrences of kit fox in the 10-mile vicinity of the PPSA, it is remotely possible that individual foxes may pass through and possibly forage on the site from time to time during dispersal movements. If a kit fox were present at the time of future construction activities in the PPSA, then it would be at risk of project-related injury or mortality. Kit fox mortality as a result of future development of the PPSA would violate the state and federal Endangered Species Acts, and is considered a potentially significant impact under CEQA.

**Mitigation.** Prior to the construction of any projects within the PPSA, the following measures adapted from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 2011 *Standardized Recommendations for Protection of the San Joaquin Kit Fox Prior to or During Ground Disturbance* (Appendix E [in the Biological Evaluation]) will be implemented.

**Mitigation Measure 3.3.2a (Pre-construction Surveys).** Pre-construction surveys shall be conducted no less than 14 days and no more than 30 days prior to the beginning of ground disturbance, construction activities,

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<p>and/or any project activity likely to impact the San Joaquin kit fox. These surveys will be conducted in accordance with the USFWS <i>Standard Recommendations</i>. The primary objective is to identify kit fox habitat features (e.g. potential dens and refugia) on the project site and evaluate their use by kit foxes through use of remote monitoring techniques such as motion-triggered cameras and tracking medium. If an active kit fox den is detected within or immediately adjacent to the area of work, the USFWS and CDFW shall be contacted immediately to determine the best course of action.</p> <p><b>Mitigation Measure 3.3.2b (Avoidance).</b> Should a kit fox be found using any of the sites during preconstruction surveys, the project will avoid the habitat occupied by the kit fox and the Sacramento Field Office of the USFWS and the Fresno Field Office of CDFW will be notified.</p> <p><b>Mitigation Measure 3.3.2c (Minimization).</b> Construction activities shall be carried out in a manner that minimizes disturbance to kit foxes. Minimization measures include, but are not limited to: restriction of project-related vehicle traffic to established roads, construction areas, and other designated areas; inspection and covering of structures (e.g., pipes), as well as installation of escape structures, to prevent the inadvertent entrapment of kit foxes; restriction of rodenticide and herbicide use; and proper disposal of food items and trash.</p> <p><b>Mitigation Measure 3.3.2d (Employee Education Program).</b> Prior to the start of construction the applicant will retain a qualified biologist to conduct a tailgate meeting to train all construction staff that will be involved with the project on the San Joaquin kit fox. This training will include a description of the kit fox and its habitat needs; a report of the occurrence of kit fox in the project area; an explanation of the status of the species and its protection under the Endangered Species Act; and a list of the measures being taken to reduce impacts to the species during project construction and implementation.</p> <p><b>Mitigation Measure 3.3.2e (Mortality Reporting).</b> The Sacramento Field Office of the USFWS and the Fresno Field Office of CDFW will be notified in writing within three working days in case of the accidental death or injury of a San Joaquin kit fox during project-related activities. Notification must include the date, time, location of the incident or of the finding of a dead or injured animal, and any other pertinent information.</p> <p>Implementation of these measures will reduce potential impacts to the San Joaquin kit fox to a less than significant level and ensure that future development activities within the PPSA remain in compliance with state and federal laws protecting this species.</p> <p><b>3.3.3 Project-Related Mortality of Burrowing Owl</b></p> <p><b>Potential Impacts.</b> As discussed in Section 2.5.4, burrowing owls have the potential to nest or roost in the dry-farmed wheat field and along the margins of Banks Ditch and Road 44 adjacent to that field and the corn field to the north. Although highly unlikely due to lack of nearby foraging habitat and high levels of human disturbance, burrowing owls could also conceivably use small mammal burrows located in and around the industrial complex and along road margins elsewhere in the PPSA. If one or more owls were present in these areas at the time of construction, then construction activities would have the potential to injure or kill these individuals. Mortality of individual burrowing owls would violate California Fish and Game Code and the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act, and is considered a significant impact of the project under CEQA.</p> <p><b>Mitigation.</b> Prior to the initiation of project-related activities involving ground disturbance or heavy equipment use on those portions of the PPSA that contain suitable burrowing owl habitat, the following measures will be implemented, adapted from the <i>Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation</i> (CDFG 1995 and 2012).</p>				

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**Mitigation Measure 3.3.3a (Pre-construction Surveys).** A pre-construction survey for burrowing owls will be conducted by a qualified biologist within 30 days of the onset of project-related activities involving ground disturbance or heavy equipment use. The survey area will include all suitable habitat on and within 500 feet of project impact areas, where accessible.

**Mitigation Measure 3.3.3b (Avoidance of Active Nests).** If pre-construction surveys and subsequent project activities are undertaken during the breeding season (February 1-August 31) and active nest burrows are located within or near project impact areas, a 250-foot construction setback will be established around active owl nests, or alternate avoidance measures implemented in consultation with CDFW. The buffer areas will be enclosed with temporary fencing to prevent construction equipment and workers from entering the setback area. Buffers will remain in place for the duration of the breeding season, unless otherwise arranged with CDFW. After the breeding season (i.e. once all young have left the nest), passive relocation of any remaining owls may take place as described below.

**Mitigation Measure 3.3.3c (Passive Relocation of Resident Owls).** During the non-breeding season (September 1-January 31), resident owls occupying burrows in project impact areas may be passively relocated to alternative habitat in accordance with a relocation plan prepared by a qualified biologist. Passive relocation may include one or more of the following elements: 1) establishing a minimum 50 foot buffer around all active burrowing owl burrows, 2) removing all suitable burrows outside the 50 foot buffer and up to 160 feet outside of the impact areas as necessary, 3) installing one-way doors on all potential owl burrows within the 50 foot buffer, 4) leaving one-way doors in place for 48 hours to ensure owls have vacated the burrows, and 5) removing the doors and excavating the remaining burrows within the 50 foot buffer.

Implementation of the above measures will reduce potential project impacts to the burrowing owl to a less than significant level and ensure that the project is in compliance with state and federal laws protecting this species.

### 3.3.4 Project-Related Mortality/Disturbance of Nesting Raptors and Migratory Birds

**Potential Impacts.** The majority of the PPSA consists of habitat that could be used for nesting by one or more avian species protected by the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act and related state laws. Two special-status birds, the Swainson’s hawk and loggerhead shrike, also have the potential to nest within the PPSA. Orchard trees of the PPSA could be used by mourning doves or American robins, while mature trees bordering the PPSA along the ruderal margin of Highway 99 could be used by the western kingbird, Bullock’s and hooded orioles, and various raptors, including the Swainson’s hawk. Killdeers may nest on bare ground or gravel surfaces in ruderal or industrial areas of the PPSA, and the house finch may nest in the PPSA’s buildings. Cliff swallows could nest in the culverts at Road 44’s crossing of Banks Ditch. Raptors and migratory birds nesting within the PPSA at the time that individual projects are implemented have the potential to be injured or killed by project activities. In addition to direct “take” of nesting birds, project activities could disturb birds nesting within or adjacent to work areas such that they would abandon their nests. Project activities that adversely affect the nesting success of raptors and migratory birds or result in the mortality of individual birds constitute a violation of state and federal laws and are considered a potentially significant impact under CEQA.

**Mitigation.** The following measures will be implemented prior to the start of project activities within the PPSA.

**Mitigation Measure 3.3.4a (Avoidance).** In order to avoid impacts to nesting raptors and migratory birds, individual projects within the PPSA will be constructed, where possible, outside the nesting season, or

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
<p>between September 1<sup>st</sup> and January 31<sup>st</sup>.</p> <p><b>Mitigation Measure 3.3.4b (Preconstruction Surveys).</b> If project activities must occur during the nesting season (February 1-August 31), a qualified biologist will conduct preconstruction surveys for active raptor and migratory bird nests within 30 days of the onset of these activities. The survey will include the proposed work area(s) and surrounding lands within 500 feet for all nesting raptors and migratory birds save Swainson’s hawk; the Swainson’s hawk survey will extend to ½ mile outside of work area boundaries. If no nesting pairs are found within the survey area, no further mitigation is required.</p> <p><b>Mitigation Measure 3.3.4c (Establish Buffers).</b> Should any active nests be discovered near proposed work areas, the biologist will determine appropriate construction setback distances based on applicable CDFW guidelines and/or the biology of the affected species. Construction-free buffers will be identified on the ground with flagging, fencing, or by other easily visible means, and will be maintained until the biologist has determined that the young have fledged.</p> <p>Implementation of the above measures will reduce potential project impacts to nesting raptors and migratory birds to a less than significant level, and will ensure that the project remains in compliance with state and federal laws protecting these species.</p> <p><b>3.3.5 Project-Related Mortality of Roosting Bats</b></p> <p><b>Potential Impacts.</b> Development of the PPSA may result in the removal of buildings and mature trees that provide potential roosting habitat for bats, including special status species such as the pallid bat and western mastiff bat. If trees or buildings removed by construction activities contain colonial roosts, many individual bats could be killed. Such a mortality event is considered a potentially significant impact of the project under CEQA.</p> <p><b>Mitigation.</b> The following measures will be implemented for construction activities involving the removal of buildings or mature trees.</p> <p><b>Mitigation Measure 3.3.5a (Temporal Avoidance).</b> To avoid potential impacts to maternity bat roosts, removal of buildings and trees should occur outside of the period between April 1 and September 30, the time frame within which colony-nesting bats generally assemble, give birth, nurse their young, and ultimately disperse.</p> <p><b>Mitigation Measure 3.3.5b (Preconstruction Surveys).</b> If removal of buildings or trees is to occur between April 1 and September 30 (general maternity bat roost season), then within 30 days prior to these activities, a qualified biologist will survey affected buildings and trees for the presence of bats. The biologist will look for individuals, guano, and staining, and will listen for bat vocalizations. If necessary, the biologist will wait for nighttime emergence of bats from roost sites. If no bats are observed to be roosting or breeding, then no further action would be required, and construction could proceed.</p> <p><b>Mitigation Measure 3.3.5c (Minimization).</b> If a non-breeding bat colony is detected during preconstruction surveys, the individuals will be humanely evicted via partial dismantlement of trees or structures prior to full removal under the direction of a qualified biologist to ensure that no harm or “take” of any bats occurs as a result of construction activities.</p> <p><b>Mitigation Measure 3.3.5d (Avoidance of Maternity Roosts).</b> If a maternity colony is detected during preconstruction surveys, a disturbance-free buffer will be established around the colony and remain in place until a qualified biologist deems that the nursery is no longer active. The disturbance-free buffer will range from 50 to 100 feet as determined by the biologist.</p>				

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
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Implementation of the above measure will reduce impacts to roosting bats to a less than significant level under CEQA.”<sup>17</sup>

b and c) As noted in item a., above, the proposed Project area is within the historic sites of various species of concern and contain a known area hosting three elderberry shrubs that are located on ruderal land associated with the Foster Farms industrial complex. LOA also included the following analysis for Project-Related Impacts to Waters of the United States:

**“3.3.6 Project-Related Impacts to Waters of the United States**

**Potential Impacts.** As discussed in Section 2.6, the only hydrologic features on the PPSA include the 3,400 linear foot stretch of Banks Ditch and the 2,235 foot stretch of Traver Canal. Both would likely be considered jurisdictional by the USACE; however, the jurisdictional status of water features is determined by the USACE upon review and verification of a wetland delineation prepared for the project area. The project could result in potentially significant impacts to these ditches, should future development within the planning area require filling large portions or all of the ditches. Project impacts to these ditches of 0.5 acre or more would be considered potentially significant. Impacts to waters of the U.S., regardless of the size of the impact, are also subject to the permit requirements of Section 404 and 401 of the Clean Water Act. The placement of fill within any wetlands or other jurisdictional features will require 1) a Clean Water Act permit from the USACE, and 2) a Water Quality Certification from the RWQCB. These permits cannot be issued without an accepted preliminary jurisdictional determination or a verified approved wetland delineation by the USACE

**Mitigation.** The following measures will reduce impacts to jurisdictional waters to a less than significant level.

**Mitigation Measure 3.3.6a (Avoidance and/ or Minimization).** Individual projects within the PPSA will be designed to avoid and/or minimize impacts to waters of the U.S. to the maximum extent practicable while still achieving its goal of expanding the planning area.

**Mitigation Measure 3.3.6b (Compliance with Terms of the Permits).** If Banks Ditch is determined to be a water of the U.S. by the USACE, then the applicant will be required to follow the permit requirements which may include an employee education program, implementation of Best Management Practices, placement of protective fencing between nearby unaffected waters and construction areas during construction, removal of temporary fills, and restoring temporarily disturbed areas to pre-project conditions, among others.

**Mitigation Measure 3.3.6c (Compensatory Mitigation).** If the ditch is determined to be a water of the U.S., then compensatory mitigation will be provided at a minimum of 1:1 for all losses of waters that exceed 0.5 acre. Compensatory mitigation will be provided in the form of either on-site or off site preservation or creation, through payment into an in-lieu fee program (if one is available), purchase of credits from an approved Mitigation Bank in the vicinity, or some combination of one or more of these options. Preserved and/or created waters would have to be placed under conservation easement held by a third party and managed in perpetuity with an approved endowment fund. If losses are 0.5 acre or less, then impacts would be considered to be less than significant, and compensatory mitigation would not be necessary for purposes of CEQA.

<sup>17</sup> “Traver Community Plan Update Biological Evaluation Tulare County, California” prepared by Live Oak Associates, Inc. May, 2014. Pages 32-40.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
Implementation of the above measures would reduce potential impacts to waters of the U.S. to a <b>Less Than-Significant</b> level and ensure that the project remains in compliance with state and federal laws protecting this resource.” <sup>18</sup>				
d) The subject site is not identified in the Environmental Resources Management Element as being a migration corridor or wildlife nursery for any wildlife species. There will be <b>No Impact</b> as a result of the proposed Project.				
e) As noted in the Biological Evaluation, “The PPSA consists of and is surrounded by developed and/or highly disturbed lands that do not contain important movement corridors for native wildlife. Birds using the Pacific flyway will continue to do so following project development. Future development of the PPSA will result in a less than significant effect on regional wildlife movements.” <sup>19</sup> Therefore, as there will be <b>No Impact</b> , no mitigation is warranted.				
f) The Environmental Resources Management Element indicates, and as validated in the Biological Evaluation, “No known HCPs [Habitat Conservation Plans] or NCCPs [Natural Community Conservation Plan] are in effect for the area. Therefore, the projects are not expected to conflict with local policies or habitat conservation plans.” <sup>20</sup> Therefore, no mitigation is warranted as there will be <b>No Impact</b> .				
<b>5. CULTURAL RESOURCES</b> -- Would the project:				
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in §15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Disturb unique architectural features or the character of surrounding buildings?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Analysis:				
The “Cultural Resources Assessment, Proposed Planning Study Area for the Traver Community Plan Update, Tulare County, California” (Cultural Resources Assessment or CRA) was completed by the Sierra Valley Cultural				

<sup>18</sup> Ibid. 40-42.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid. 44

<sup>20</sup> Ibid. 46

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
<p>Planning (SVCP) Principal Investigator C. Kristina Roper. “This report presents the findings of a records search and windshield survey of the Traver Planning Area, and identification of potential cultural resources constraints on future development (see Appendix “C”). The study area includes approximately 640 acres (259 hectares) and is located in northwest Tulare County along State Route 99, approximately 6 miles south of the Fresno/Tulare County boundary (Maps 1 and 2 [of the CRA]).”<sup>21</sup></p> <p>“...A records search was conducted by the author at the Southern San Joaquin Valley Information Center of the California Historical Resources Information System at CSU Bakersfield to identify areas previously surveyed and identify known cultural resources present within or in close proximity to the study area. Two previously recorded historic-period sites have been recorded within the study area; two additional historic-period sites have been identified within one-half mile of the study area (Map 3 [of the CRA]). There are no other resources within or in the immediate vicinity of the study area that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the California Register of Historic Resources, California Points of Historical Interest, State Historic Landmarks, or the California Inventory of Historic Resources. Six cultural resources surveys have been completed within the study area; an additional study has been completed within one-mile of the study area (Map 4 [of the CRA]). All records search materials are included as Appendix H [of the CRA]”<sup>22</sup>.</p> <p>“Based on current information, there are two known cultural resource sites within or immediately adjacent to the study area. These include two non-Native American historic-era sites (See Map 3 [of the CRA]). No Native American resources have been identified within or in close proximity to the study. P-54-002171 This resource includes an earthen canal flowing in an east/west direction. A wood and steel railroad trestle supports the railroad crossing over the canal. The canal feature is part of the historic 76 Canal built by the 76 Land and Water Company (now known as the raver Canal, part of the Alta Irrigation District) and is associated with agricultural development of the region. The resource was recorded in 1995 as part of the Santa Fe Pacific Pipeline Concord to Colton Project by William Self Associates. P-54-002172 This resource includes two railroad spurs, a concrete reinforced 3-pipe culvert, a concrete railroad bridge, and an earthen canal. The earthen canal, identified as Banks Ditch on the Traver. CA, 7.5’ topographic map, flows in an east/west direction under the railroad tracks and Highway 99, and is associated with agriculture, specifically vineyards and orchards. The resource was recorded in 1995 as part of the Santa Fe Pacific Pipeline Concord to Colton Project by William Self Associates.”<sup>23</sup></p> <p>“Six cultural resource studies have been completed within the study area. One study has been completed within one-mile radius of the study area.”<sup>24</sup> As summarized on pages 9-10 of the CRA, the studies found a total of four historic-period resources which were recorded.</p> <p>“The Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) was contacted on 1 June 2014 in order to determine whether Native American sacred sites have been identified either within or in close proximity to the study area. The request was resent on June 16, 2014. No response has been received to date.”<sup>25</sup></p>				

<sup>21</sup> “Cultural Resources Assessment, Proposed Planning Study Area for the Traver Community Plan Update, Tulare County, California” C.K. Roper 2014. Page 1

<sup>22</sup> Ibid. Page 8

<sup>23</sup> Op. Cit. 9

<sup>24</sup> Op. Cit.

<sup>25</sup> Op. Cit. 12

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
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“On June 12 the author completed a windshield survey of the study area to field check previously recorded resources and identify any structures and/or other features which may be eligible for listing in the California Register of Historic Resources. As noted above, very few structures appear to date to the period prior to 1960, and many of these have been modified to include additions, aluminum windows, and other more modern features. Several structures, however, appear to date to the early 1900s and appear relatively unmodified. Examples are located at 36617 Burke and 36661 Baker. A red barn which appears to date to the early 1900s is located on Bullard west of Zante (see Figures 2a-c). Commercial and industrial structures all appear to be modern in construction. Canal features are present within the study area; at least one canal follows the historic path of the ’76 Canal constructed in the 1880s.”<sup>26</sup>

“Cultural resources consist of significant and potentially significant prehistoric and ethnographic sites, historic and ethnographic resources, cultural material collections, and cultural landscapes. As noted above, based on current information, there are two known cultural resources sites within or adjacent to the Traver Planning Study Area. In addition to these a resources, a number of historic-era structures (older than 50 years in age) exist in the study area but have not been formally recorded.

Very little of the area within the Traver Planning area has been surveyed, and documented resources likely exist. Utilization of the available data is integral to planning for future uses and activities and to determine the best management strategy for such resources at this phase of the planning process. All actions taken pursuant to the Traver Community Plan shall be planned and implemented in coordination with provisions and implementing guidelines of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), as amended March 18, 2010, which states that identification and evaluation of historical resources is required for any action that may result in a potential adverse effect on the significance of such resources, which includes archaeological resources. Once specific projects are planned, targeted studies can be conducted to avoid or minimize impacts to significant cultural resources.

The following recommendations are offered to ensure that cultural resources are afforded an appropriate level of protection and preservation, while also allowing for future planning and development:

- Incorporate within the Traver Community Plan the identification and management of potentially sensitive prehistoric and historic-period resources; Once specific projects are planned, targeted studies can be conducted to avoid or minimize impacts to significant cultural resources.
- Ensure that the local Native American communities are included in all planning and development activities;
- Conduct intensive cultural resources field inventories prior to development of specific projects that could disturb or destroy sensitive and significant cultural resources.”<sup>27</sup>

In addition to the recommendations provided by consultant Sierra Valley Cultural Planning, the Tulare County General Plan has a number of policies that apply to projects within the County of Tulare. General Plan policies that relate to the proposed Project area includes *ERM-6.1 Evaluation of Cultural and Archaeological Resources* wherein the County shall participate in and support efforts to identify its significant cultural and archaeological resources using appropriate State and Federal standard; *ERM-6.2 Protection of Resources with Potential State or Federal Designations* wherein the County shall protect cultural and archaeological sites with demonstrated potential for placement on the National Register of Historic Places and/or inclusion in the California State Office

<sup>26</sup> Op. Cit.

<sup>27</sup> Op. Cit. 12 and 14.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
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of Historic Preservation’s California Points of Interest and California Inventory of Historic Resources. Such sites may be of Statewide or local significance and have anthropological, cultural, military, political, architectural, economic, scientific, religious, or other values as determined by a qualified archaeological professional; *ERM-6.4 Mitigation* which specifies if preservation of cultural resources is not feasible, every effort shall be made to mitigate impacts, including relocation of structures, adaptive reuse, preservation of facades, and thorough documentation and archival of records and *ERM-6.10 Grading Cultural Resources Sites* wherein the County shall ensure all grading activities conform to the County’s Grading Ordinance and California Code of Regulations, Title 20, § 2501 et. seq. Of particular importance is confidentiality of archaeological sites to preserve the County’s unique heritage. As such, *ERM-6.9 Confidentiality of Archaeological Sites* allows the County to, within its power, maintain confidentiality regarding the locations of archaeological sites in order to preserve and protect these resources from vandalism and the unauthorized removal of artifacts.

a, b, and d) As noted above, in addition to the windshield survey, a records search was conducted by the author at the California Historical Resources Information Center (CHRIS), Southern San Joaquin Valley Information Center (SSJVIC) located at California State University, Bakersfield. Two previously recorded historic-period sites have been recorded within the study area; two additional historic-period sites have been identified within one-half mile of the study area. The records search included an examination of the National Register of Historic Places, The History Property Data File, California Historic Landmarks, The California Register, The California Inventory of Historic Resources, and The California Points of Historic Interest (Appendix “H” [of the CRA]). Six cultural resources surveys have been completed within the study area; an additional study has been completed within one-mile of the study area (Map 4 of the CRA). No formal cemeteries or other places of human internment are known to exist on the proposed Project area; however, in accordance with State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 and Public Resource Code Section 5097.98, if human remains are unearthed during project-specific construction as development occurs, no further disturbance shall occur until the County Coroner has made the necessary findings as to the origin and disposition of such remains. If the remains are determined to be Native American, the Coroner must notify the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) within 48 hours of the Coroner’s determination. The NAHC will then identify the person(s) thought to be the most likely descendent of the deceased Native American, who will then assist in determining what course of action shall be taken in handling the remains. The proposed Project would not result in a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical or archaeological resource as defined in Section 15064.5 of the CEQA Guidelines. Although no cultural resources were identified in the records search, there will, nonetheless, be a potentially significant impact if historical resources were uncovered during proposed specific development project construction; however, implementation of the following Mitigation Measures contained in the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program are included as part of this Mitigated Negative Declaration to reduce potential impacts to historical or archaeological resources to a **Less Than Significant** level.

**CUL-1** If, in the course of construction or operation within the Project area, any archaeological or historical resources are uncovered, discovered, or otherwise detected or observed, activities within fifty (50) feet of the find shall be ceased. A qualified archaeologist shall be contacted and advise the County of the site’s significance. If the findings are deemed significant by the Tulare County Resources Management Agency, appropriate mitigation measures shall be required prior to any resumption of work in the affected area of the proposed Project. Where feasible, mitigation achieving preservation in place will be implemented. Preservation in place may be accomplished by, but is not limited to: planning construction to avoid archaeological sites or covering archaeological sites with a layer of chemically stable soil prior to building on the site. If significant resources are

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
<p>encountered, the feasibility of various methods of achieving preservation in place shall be considered, and an appropriate method of achieving preservation in place shall be selected and implemented, if feasible. If preservation in place is not feasible, other mitigation shall be implemented to minimize impacts to the site, such as data recovery efforts that will adequately recover scientifically consequential information from and about the site. Mitigation shall be consistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15126.4(b)(3).</p> <p><b>CUL-2</b> If cultural resources are encountered during project-specific construction or land modification activities work shall stop and the County shall be notified at once to assess the nature, extent, and potential significance of any cultural resources. If such resources are determined to be significant, appropriate actions shall be determined. Depending upon the nature of the find, mitigation could involve avoidance, documentation, or other appropriate actions to be determined by a qualified archaeologist. For example, activities within 50 feet of the find shall be ceased.</p> <p>c) No paleontological resources are known to exist within the proposed Project area, nor are there any known geologic features in the proposed Project area. Project-specific construction is not expected to disturb any paleontological resources not previously disturbed; however, the measures discussed in item a., above, will ensure proper investigation and handling of any discovery. If, in the course of specific-project construction or operation, any archaeological or historical resources are uncovered, discovered, or otherwise detected or observed, activities within fifty (50) feet of the find shall immediately cease. A qualified archaeologist shall be contacted and advise the County of Tulare of the site’s significance. If the findings are deemed significant by the Tulare County Resources Management Agency, appropriate measures shall be required prior to any resumption of work in the affected area of the proposed Project area. The impact to this resource is <b>Less Than Significant</b>.</p> <p>e) The proposed Project will not disturb unique architectural features or the character of surrounding buildings. Individual site specific development projects will be required to undergo individual assessments on a case-by-case basis. As noted in the CRA, “...based on current information, there are two known cultural resources sites within or adjacent to the Traver Planning Study Area. In addition to these a resources, a number of historic-era structures (older than 50 years in age) exist in the study area but have not been formally recorded.” Implementing the recommendations by the Cultural Consultant and General Plan policies will result in <b>Less Than Significant Impact</b> to this resource</p>				
<b>6. GEOLOGY AND SOILS --</b> Would the project:				
a) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
42				
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
iv) Landslides?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
v) Subsidence?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Analysis:

The Official Maps of Earthquake Fault Zones delineated by the California Geological Survey, State of California Department of Conservation, through December 2010 under the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act, indicate that there are no substantial faults known to occur in Tulare County. The nearest known fault likely to affect the proposed Project area is the San Andreas Fault (approximately 40 miles to the west)

According to the Five County Seismic Safety Element (FCSSE), the Project area is located in the V-1 zone, characterized as a moderately thick section of marine and continental sedimentary deposits overlying the granitic basement complex. The FCSSE further states that, “The requirements of the Uniform Building Code Zone II should be adequate for normal facilities.” Amplification of shaking that would affect low to medium-rise structures is relatively high but the distance to either of the fault systems that are expected sources of the shaking is sufficiently great that the effect would be minimal.

In addition to the Uniform Building Code, the Tulare County General Plan has a number of policies that apply to projects within the County of Tulare. General Plan policies that relate to the proposed Project area includes *ERM-7.2 Soil Productivity* wherein the County shall encourage landowners to participate in programs that reduce soil erosion and increase soil productivity; *ERM-7.3 Protection of Soils on Slopes* wherein, unless otherwise provided

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
<p>for in the Tulare County General Plan, building and road construction on slopes of more than 30 percent shall be prohibited, and development proposals on slopes of 15 percent or more shall be accompanied by plans for control or prevention of erosion, alteration of surface water runoff, soil slippage, and wildfire occurrence; and <i>HS-2.8 Alquist-Priolo Act Compliance</i> wherein the County shall not permit any structure for human occupancy to be placed within designated Earthquake Fault Zones (pursuant to and as determined by the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act; Public Resource code, Chapter 7.5) unless the specific provision of the Act and Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations have been satisfied.</p> <p>a.i.) No specific development proposal will be occur as part of the proposed Project thus the risk of injury to persons caused by seismic activity is very minimal. There will be a <b>Less Than Significant</b> Impact.</p> <p>a.ii.) Any potential impacts regarding strong seismic ground shaking have been discussed in Impact VI. a.i. There will be <b>No Impact</b>.</p> <p>a.iii.) According to the Five County Seismic Safety Element the V-1 zone the Project site has a low risk of liquefaction. No subsidence-prone soils or oil or gas production is involved with the Project. There will be <b>No Impact</b>.</p> <p>a.iv.) According to the Five County Seismic Safety Element the V-1 zone the Project site would have a minimal risk of landslides. No geologic landforms exist on or near the site that would result in a landslide event. As noted in the 1989 Traver Community Plan Environmental Impact Report, the area is essentially flat and topographically featureless. Traver is located at an elevation of approximately 285 feet above sea level and has a very gentle gradient of 0.2 percent. Thus, the probability of landslides is non-existent. There will be <b>No Impact</b>.</p> <p>a.v.) The proposed Project does not contain any activity that will result in result subsidence. However, according to the General Plan Health and Safety Element Figure 10-5 (Seismic/Geologic Hazards and Microzone) the V-1 zone the proposed Project area inhabits has a low to moderate risk of subsidence. The impact would be <b>Less Than Significant</b>.</p> <p>b) As development occurs, site construction activities would involve earthmoving activities to shape land, trenching for sewer and potable water distribution systems, pouring concrete for sidewalks, curbs, and gutters, and other typical construction-related activities. These activities could expose soils to erosion processes. The extent of erosion would vary depending on slope steepness/stability, vegetation/cover, concentration of runoff, and weather conditions.</p> <p>To prevent water and wind erosion during the construction-related activities, a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) will be developed for developments within the Project areas as required for all projects which disturb more than one acre in size. As part of the SWPPP, applicants would be required to provide erosion control measures to protect the topsoil. Any stockpiled soils would be watered and/or covered to prevent loss due to wind erosion as part of the SWPPP during construction. As a result of these efforts, loss of topsoil and substantial soil erosion during the construction period are not anticipated. The impact would be <b>Less Than Significant</b>.</p> <p>c) Substantial grade change would not occur in the topography to the point where the developments within the proposed Project area would expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects on, or offsite, such</p>				

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
<p>as landslides, lateral spreading, liquefaction or collapse. According to the Five County Seismic Safety Element the V-1 zone the proposed Project site inhabits has a low to moderate risk of subsidence. The impact would be <b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>.</p> <p>d and e) According to the USDA, NRCS, and the Soil Survey of Tulare County, the proposed Project area consists of Traver Loam, Cajon Sandy Loam, and Fresno Fine Sandy Loam soils. Generally, these soils are fine sandy loams which have significant amounts of clay in the surface layers. These soils absorb water slowly and are alkaline in nature. Further, as noted in the 1989 Community Plan, the Traver community also contains discontinuous layers of hardpan averaging one to three feet in thickness which is not conducive to on-site septic systems. Fresno Fine Sandy Loam soils are located generally at the northwest and northeast corners of Road 44 and Avenue 368; and the very northwest quadrant of the Planning Area. Traver Sandy Loan soils is generally located north and south of Merritt Drive (to Avenue 368 on the north and to Kitchner Drive on the south); existing residential development and Traver School are situated on Traver Sandy Loan soils. Cajon Sandy Loam soils are generally located south of Kitchner Driver and west of Burke Street; existing highway commercial and light industrial land uses are situated on Cajon Sandy Loam soils. Thus, in addition to existing land uses, whenever development has occurred such development has been required to connect to the existing wastewater treatment facility thereby eliminating a potential threat to public health. As future development occurs, such development will also be required to connect to the wastewater treatment system. This impact would be <b>Less Than Significant</b>.</p>				
<b>7. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS -- Would the project:</b>				
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment, based on any applicable threshold of significance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with any applicable plan, policy or regulation of an agency adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Analysis:</p> <p>This Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration is relying on the guidance and expertise of the Valley Air District in addressing GHG emissions. The following is an excerpt contained in the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District’s Draft Guidance for Assessing and Mitigating Air Quality Impacts – 2012:</p> <p>“By enacting SB 97 in 2007, California’s lawmakers expressly recognized the need to analyze greenhouse gas emissions as a part of the CEQA process. SB 97 required OPR to develop, and the Natural Resources Agency to adopt, amendments to the CEQA Guidelines addressing the analysis and mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions. It is widely recognized that no single project could generate enough GHG emissions to noticeably change the global climate temperature. However, the combination of GHG emissions from past, present and future projects could contribute substantially to global climate change. Thus, project specific GHG emissions should be evaluated in</p>				

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
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terms of whether or not they would result in a cumulatively significant impact on global climate change.

On December 17, 2009, the District’s Governing Board adopted the District Policy: *Addressing GHG Emission Impacts for Stationary Source Projects Under CEQA When Serving as the Lead Agency*. The District’s Governing Board also approved the guidance document: *Guidance for Valley Land-Use Agencies in Addressing GHG Emission Impacts for New Projects Under CEQA*. In support of the policy and guidance document, District staff prepared a staff report: *Addressing Greenhouse Gas Emissions Under the California Environmental Quality Act*. These documents and the supporting staff report are available on-line at the District’s website at [www.valleyair.org](http://www.valleyair.org).

In summary, the staff report evaluates different approaches for assessing significance of GHG emission impacts. As presented in the report, District staff reviewed the relevant scientific information and concluded that the existing science is inadequate to support quantification of the extent to which project specific GHG emissions would impact global climate features such as average air temperature, average rainfall, or average annual snow pack. In other words, the District was not able to determine a specific quantitative level of GHG emissions increase, above which a project would have a significant impact on the environment, and below which would have an insignificant impact. This is readily understood, when one considers that global climate change is the result of the sum total of GHG emissions, both manmade and natural that occurred in the past; that is occurring now; and will occur in the future.

In the absence of scientific evidence supporting establishment of a numerical threshold, the District policy applies performance based standards to assess project specific GHG emission impacts on global climate change. The determination is founded on the principal that projects whose emissions have been reduced or mitigated consistent with the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006, commonly referred to as “AB 32”, should be considered to have a less than significant impact on global climate change. For a detailed discussion of the District’s establishment of thresholds of significance for GHG emissions, and the District’s application of said thresholds, the reader is referred to the above referenced staff report, District Policy, and District Guidance documents.”

In addition to consistency with Valley Air District GHG Guidance, the Tulare County General Plan has a number of policies that apply to projects within County of Tulare regarding GHG emissions. For example, General Plan policies that would apply to future development in the Project area include *AQ-1.7 Support Statewide Climate Change Solutions* wherein the County shall monitor and support the efforts of Cal/EPA, CARB, and the SJVAPCD, under AB 32 (Health and Safety Code §38501 et seq.), to develop a recommended list of emission reduction strategies; *AQ-1.9 Support Off-Site Measures to Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions* wherein the County will support and encourage the use of off-site measures or the purchase of carbon offsets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions; *AQ-1.10 Alternative Fuel Vehicle Infrastructure* wherein the County shall support the development of necessary facilities and infrastructure needed to encourage the use of low or zero-emission vehicles (e.g. electric vehicle charging facilities and conveniently located alternative fueling stations, including CNG filling stations); *AQ-3.5 Alternative Energy Design* wherein the County shall encourage all new development, including rehabilitation, renovation, and redevelopment, to incorporate energy conservation and green building practices to maximum extent feasible. Such practices include, but are not limited to: building orientation and shading, landscaping, and the use of active and passive solar heating and water systems; and *LU-1.1 Smart Growth and Healthy Communities* wherein the County shall promote the principles of smart growth and healthy communities

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
<p>in UDBs and HDBs, including <i>LU-1.1.-3.</i> creating a strong sense of place, <i>LU-1.1.-4.</i> mixing land uses, and <i>LU-1.1.-9.</i> preserving open space,</p> <p>a and b) The proposed Project will not result in GHG emissions until specific development occurs. Each development proposal will be subject to a GHG estimation using CalEEMOD as required by the Valley Air District to estimate potential GHG emissions (see Appendix “D”). Thus, the proposed Project will not generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment, based on any applicable threshold of significance, nor will the proposed Project conflict with any applicable plan, policy or regulation of an agency adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases. The impacts will be <b>Less Than Significant</b>.</p>				
<b>8. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS --</b> Would the project:				
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment or risk explosion?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working the project area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
g) Impair implementation of, or physically				

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
interfere with, an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
h) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
i) Expose people to existing or potential hazards and health hazards other than those set forth above?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Analysis:

The General Plan has a number of policies that apply to projects within Tulare County. General Plan policies that relate to the proposed Project such as: *HS-4.1 Hazardous Materials* wherein the County shall strive to ensure hazardous materials are used, stored, transported, and disposed of in a safe manner, in compliance with local, State, and Federal safety standards, including the Hazardous Waste Management Plan, Emergency Operations Plan, and Area Plan; *HS-4.3 Incompatible Land Uses* wherein the County shall prevent incompatible land uses near properties that produce or store hazardous waste; and *HS-4.4 Contamination Prevention* wherein the County shall review new development proposals to protect soils, air quality, surface water, and groundwater from hazardous materials contamination.

a-d) The proposed Project will not involve any hazards or hazardous materials. In the event a specific proposal may include the use of potential hazardous materials, such proposal will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and will be required to comply with all rules/regulations of the Tulare County Environmental Health Department, San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, and any other regulatory agency's rules and regulations. There will be **Less Than Significant Impact**.

e-f) The nearest airport, Visalia Municipal Airport (located in Visalia, CA), is approximately 15 miles south of the proposed Project area. As such, the airport would pose no safety hazard to persons within or adjacent to Traver. There will be **No Impact**.

g) The proposed Project will not impair implementation of, or physically interfere with, an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. There will be **No Impact**.

h) As the proposed Project is located outside of any wildland areas, the proposed site will not result in any exposure to people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death from wildland fires. As the proposed project is located outside of any wildland areas, the proposed site will not result in any exposure to people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death from wildland fires. There will be **No Impact**.

i) The site does not contain nor will it result in any hazard; nor will the proposed Project result in any potential hazards or health hazards other than those set forth in this resource. There will be **No Impact**.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>9. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY --</b> Would the project:				
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge or the direction or rate of flow of ground-water such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on-or off-site?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course or stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) Otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
g) Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures which would impede or redirect flood flows?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding,				

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including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam, or inundation by seiche, tsunami or mudflow?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Analysis:

No proposed development projects are part of this proposed amendment. No natural surface water features exist in the community or immediate vicinity. A number of irrigation canals; however, provide water to the agricultural area surrounding Traver, and flow on a seasonal basis. The Kings River channel lies approximately two and a half miles north of the community. The Traver Storm Drainage Master Plan (June 2011) divides the community in to various storm drain zones and areas within zones to address storm water management. As noted in the Traver Storm Drainage Master Plan, “Since most of the area within the Traver Urban Development Boundary is not developed to full urban standards and has minimal improvements, any standing rainfall runoff appears to be absorbed and percolated into the native soil. The existing native soil has been classified by USDA/NRCS as predominantly silty sand; either a Traver loam or Cajon sandy loam (See Local Soil Types map, Figure 6 [of the Traver Storm Drainage Master Plan]). Previous soil reports have indicated the presence of a hardpan layer about 3 to 4 feet below the ground surface and a very sandy layer below the hardpan. Based on similar sites and soil conditions, the community has the potential for percolation systems that reduces the drainage and basin size. These systems of minimal environmental impact like percolation by permeable concrete or permeable pavement will not be pursued in this study but will be suggested as an alternative to minimize runoff and retention at basins.”<sup>28</sup> “The storm drain master plan for the community of Traver provides a drainage plan that sets flow grades for improvement and development within the Urban Development Boundary (UDB). Assumptions were made for the expected runoff, drainage boundaries, basin site and future development. The storm drain study used existing roadway elevations to identify the current drainage flow patterns. The low and high areas defined the proposed drainage grades and the lowest spots dictated the collection points for the storm drain pipeline to direct to the basin.”<sup>29</sup> The Storm Drainage Master Plan discusses the need for funding to provide improvements to the community storm drain system. “The storm drain master plan would need funding for the basin site and the construction of the storm drain collection system to prepare for the improvement to be constructed. Funding by means of developmental fees or drainage fees or other fee assessments may be necessary to implement the master storm drain system. As improvements are constructed, concern for curb and gutter constructed in unimproved areas where the street runoff accumulates at the downstream end of the construction with no continuation of flow meaning that it floods at the end of the constructed curb and gutter, it is suggest to require an on-site basin and drainage agreement to capture the street and property runoff when construction is granted. Certain on-site basins may be eliminated as all improvements and the master basin for the boundary area are constructed.”<sup>30</sup>

Consultants Provost and Pritchard (P&P) prepared a Memorandum (“Memo”, see Appendix “E”) discussing Traver’s recorded water usage, assumed current water usage, projected water usage, and current water quality issues. “California Water Services (CWS) supplied Provost and Pritchard (P&P) with totalized monthly well usage data for Traver’s three wells for the years 2007 through 2013 (see attached *Monthly Water Usage* for raw data).”<sup>31</sup>

<sup>28</sup> Traver Storm Drainage Master Plan, June 2011. Pages 9-10.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid. 25.

<sup>30</sup> Op. Cit. 28.

<sup>31</sup> “Traver Water Usage” memo prepared by consultants Provost & Pritchard, September 12, 2014.

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“In order to more correctly estimate Traver’s current water demand and create future projections, the years 2010, 2011 and 2012 are not representative of actual water usage/demand and will be adjusted for the final analysis.”<sup>32</sup> Consultants Provost & Pritchard estimated current water usage by averaging annual data. “A plot of monthly water usage from 2007 through 2013 shows water usage patterns inconsista[e]nt with typical winter and summer usage patterns (see attached *Traver Monthly Water Usage* graph[in the Memo]). Usage patterns for areas governed by residential demand will typically follow a sinusoidal [wave-like] pattern with the lowest water usage occurring during January/February and then gradually increasing until water usage peaks during July/August.”<sup>34</sup> See also Checklist Item 17 Utilities and Service Systems for additional analysis.

Traver’s water system quality was also analyzed by consultant Provost & Pritchard as part of the Memo (see Appendix “E”). “CWS provided provost & Pritchard with Consumer Confidence Reports (CCRs) for the years 2011 through 2013 (see attached *Traver CCR* [part of Appendix “E”]). During those three years, the system as a whole had no Maximum Contaminate Levels (MCLs) exceeded. Although no MCLs were exceeded during the reporting periods, according to CWS, Nitrate levels in Well 3 have been on a steady increase over the last three years (see Nitrate Readings table below). CWS stated that Well No. 3 has exceeded the Nitrate MCL in the past, is now only used as a backup well, and when used is blended with other wells to ensure Nitrate levels are below the required MCL.”<sup>35</sup> See also Checklist Item 17 Utilities and Service Systems for additional analysis.

In addition to General Plan policies, “The Tulare County Environmental Health Services Division regulates retail food sales and hazardous waste storage and disposal; inspects contaminated sites and monitors public water systems, which protects and reduces the degradation of groundwater. The Division... also serves as staff to the Tulare County Water Commission appointed by the Board of Supervisors. The goal of HHSA's Environmental Health division is to protect Tulare County's residents and visitors by ensuring that our environment is kept clean and healthy.”<sup>36</sup>

There are several General Plan policies which will be implemented to avoid and/or minimize any potentially adverse impacts to hydrology/water quality such as *HS-4.4 Contamination Prevention* wherein the County shall review new development proposals to protect soils, air quality, surface water, and groundwater from hazardous materials contamination; *WR-2.1 Protect Water Quality* wherein all major land use and development plans shall be evaluated as to their potential to create surface and groundwater contamination hazards from point and non-point sources.; *WR-2.2 National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Enforcement* wherein the County shall continue to support the State in monitoring and enforcing provisions to control non-point source water pollution contained in the U.S. EPA NPDES program as implemented by the Water Quality Control Board; *WR-2.3 Best Management Practices (BMPs)* wherein the County shall continue to require the use of feasible BMPs and other mitigation measures designed to protect surface water and groundwater from the adverse effects of construction activities, agricultural operations requiring a County Permit and urban runoff in coordination with the Water Quality Control Board; *WR-2.4 Construction Site Sediment Control* wherein the County shall continue to enforce provisions to control erosion and sediment from construction sites; *WR-3.3 Adequate Water Availability*

<sup>32</sup> Ibid. 2.

<sup>33</sup> Op. Cit. 2

<sup>34</sup> Op. Cit.

<sup>35</sup> Op. Cit. 4

<sup>36</sup> Tulare County Environmental Health Division, <http://www.tularehhsa.org/index.cfm/public-health/environmental-health/>

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<p>wherein the County shall review new development proposals to ensure the intensity and timing of growth will be consistent with the availability of adequate water supplies. Projects must submit a Will-Serve letter as part of the application process, and provide evidence of adequate and sustainable water availability prior to approval of the tentative map or other urban development entitlement; <i>WR-3.6 Water Use Efficiency</i> wherein the County shall support educational programs targeted at reducing water consumption and enhancing groundwater recharge; <i>HS-5.1 Development Compliance with Federal, State, and Local Agencies</i> wherein the County shall ensure that all development within the designated floodway or floodplain zones conforms with FEMA regulations and the Tulare County Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance. New development and divisions of land, especially residential subdivisions, shall be developed to minimize flood risk to structures, infrastructure, and ensure safe access and evacuation during flood conditions; and <i>HS-5.2 Development in Floodplain Zones</i> wherein the County shall regulate development in the 100-year floodplain zones as designated on maps prepared by FEMA in accordance with the following: (1) Critical facilities (those facilities which should be open and accessible during emergencies) shall not be permitted; (2) Passive recreational activities (those requiring non-intensive development, such as hiking, horseback riding, picnicking) are permissible; and (3) New development and divisions of land, especially residential subdivisions, shall be developed to minimize flood risk to structures, infrastructure, and ensure safe access and evacuation during flood conditions.</p> <p>a) No proposed development projects are part of this proposed amendment. The proposed Project is anticipated to comply with storm water improvements specified in Traver Storm Drainage Master Plan. As such, impacts to water quality and waste discharge will be <b>Less Than Significant</b>.</p> <p>b) As noted above, consultants Provost and Pritchard prepared a Memorandum (see Appendix “E”) discussing Traver’s recorded water usage, assumed current water usage, projected water usage, and current water quality. The proposed Project will not deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge or the direction or rate of flow of ground-water such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level. Individual development proposals will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis to determine the ability of the Traver Water, LLC, Tito Balling, Inc., California Water Services to provide adequate water to meet development needs as noted in General Plan policy <i>WR-3.3 Adequate Water Availability</i> wherein the County shall review new development proposals to ensure the intensity and timing of growth will be consistent with the availability of adequate water supplies. Therefore, impacts to groundwater supplies will be <b>Less Than Significant</b>.</p> <p>c - f) The majority of activity which could affect items c-f in the proposed Project area will be in the form of earthmoving (such as leveling or elevating) during construction-related activities to accommodate development projects. As there are no streams or rivers located on the within the Project area, the Project will not result in direct on- or off-site erosion. The nearest bodies of water are the Kings River (which is approximately two-and-a-half miles north of the proposed Project area), Traver Ditch on the northern boundary of the Project Area, and Banks Ditch located in the extreme southeast and southern area of the proposed Project area. As noted in the analysis of item 6. b. of the Geology/Soils discussion, to prevent water and wind erosion during construction-related activities, a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) will be developed for individual development projects as required for all projects which disturb more than one acre in size. As part of the SWPPP, erosion control measures will be required to protect the topsoil. Any stockpiled soils will be watered and/or covered to prevent loss due to wind erosion as part of the SWPPP during construction. As a result of these efforts, loss of topsoil and substantial soil erosion during the construction-related activities are not anticipated. Thus, future construction-related</p>				

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activities within the proposed Project area will not create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff. There will be **No Impact** as a result of the proposed Project.

g - h) “Official floodplain maps are maintained by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). FEMA determines areas subject to flood hazards and designates these areas by relative risk of flooding on a map for each community, known as the Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM). A 100-year flood is considered for purposes of land use planning and protection of property and human safety. The boundaries of the 100-year floodplain are delineated by FEMA on the basis of hydrology, topography, and modeling of flow during predicted rainstorms.”<sup>37</sup> Although some areas of Tulare County have experienced major flooding along its major rivers, the Traver Plan Area has not.

Development within flood prone areas not only threatens property and life, but can also increase the possibility of flooding downstream. Additionally, the County and its property owners risk the loss of federally-sponsored flood insurance programs if the County’s development regulations do not minimize the risks of flooding. The 100-year flood plain is the basic planning criteria to identify areas in which precautions should be taken. A substantial portion of the planning area in Traver is subject to 100-year flood hazard (Flood Zone A; see Figure 2 of the Traver Community Plan).



As noted earlier, a large portion of Traver is subject to 100-year flood hazard. Although the Project does not contain any development proposals at this time; future development will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis as development occurs and project design and standards will be implemented to ensure future housing or structures will be significant impacted by flooding. As noted above, HS-5.1 indicates that new development and divisions of land, especially residential subdivisions, shall be developed to minimize flood risk to structures, infrastructure, and ensure safe access and evacuation during flood conditions. As such, there will be **Less Than Significant Impact**.

i) No structures are proposed for construction as part of the proposed Project, thus the proposed Project will not expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam, or inundation by seiche, tsunami or mudflow. There will be **No Impact**.

<b>10. LAND USE PLANNING --</b> Would the project:				
a) Physically divide an established community?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with any applicable land use plan,				

<sup>37</sup> General Plan Background Report, page 8-14

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policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**Analysis:**

The Tulare County 2030 General Plan contains policies that promote the elements of this Community Plan update such as *LU-1.2 Innovative Development* wherein the County shall promote flexibility and innovation through the use of planned unit developments, development agreements, specific plans, Mixed Use projects, and other innovative development and planning techniques; *LU-1.8 Encourage Infill Development* wherein the County shall encourage and provide incentives for infill development to occur in communities and hamlets within or adjacent to existing development in order to maximize the use of land within existing urban areas, minimize the conversion of existing agricultural land, and minimize environmental concerns associated with new development; *PF-1.3 Land Uses in UDBs/HDBs* wherein the County shall encourage those types of urban land uses that benefit from urban services to develop within UDBs and HDBs; *PF-2.4 Community Plans* wherein the County shall ensure that community plans are prepared, updated, and maintained for each of the communities. These plans shall include the entire area within the community's UDB and shall address the community's short and long term ability to provide necessary urban services; *PF-2.6 Land Use Consistency* wherein the County Shall require all community plans, when updated, to use the same land use designations as used in this Countywide General Plan (See Chapter 4-Land Use); *PF-2.7 Improvement Standards in Communities* wherein the County shall require development within the designated UDBs to meet an urban standard for improvements. Typical improvements shall include curbs, gutters, sidewalks, and community sewer and water systems; and *AQ-3.6 Mixed Land Uses* wherein the County to encourage the clustering of land uses that generate high trip volumes, especially when such uses can be mixed with support services and where they can be served by public transportation.

In addition to Tulare County General Plan policies, the Traver Community Plan includes policies specific to the community. See page 85 of the Traver Community Plan, Land Use Plan Policies, 1.1 through 1.7.

a) The Traver Community Update provides for economic development opportunities. There are no recommendations for any development (for example, a new railroad line or a major roadway) or any plans, programs or projects that would divide the community. There will be **No Impact** to this resource.

b) Policy PF-2.4 is implemented by this Community Plan update. This Community Plan implements Policy PF-2.6 by retaining the same land use designations as used in the General Plan. The Community Plan also implements policy PF-2.7 to addresses infrastructure improvements (including curbs, gutters, sidewalks, sewer, and water). The Proposed Project includes changes to the Zoning Code of by right uses (changes to Section 16 of the Zoning Code) and a Mixed Use Overlay zone (changes to Section 18 of the Zoning Code) specifically within the Traver Urban Development Boundary, found in appendices A-1 and A-2 of the Community Plan. These implements Policy AQ 3.6 and LU-1.2 by expanding uses and allowing mixed uses. As this Community Plan update implements the General Plan, there will be **No Impact** to this resource.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>11. MINERALS AND OTHER NATURAL RESOURCES -- Would the project:</b>				
a) Result in a loss of availability of a known mineral or other natural resource (timber, oil, gas, water, etc.) that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Analysis:				
<p>a) According to the California Department of Conservation, the only three areas within Tulare County that produce gas and oil are the Deer Creek, North; Deer Creek; and Terra Bella fields located in the southeastern Valley portion of Tulare County. No gas or oil fields are within or near the proposed Project area. Timber and water resources are also absent within and near the proposed Project area. The proposed Project will result in <b>No Impact</b> to this resource.</p> <p>b) The Tulare County Environmental Resources Management Element (ERME) states, “The most important contributors to the economics of Tulare County’s mineral production are clay, sand, gravel, and crushed rock as well as natural gas.” The ERME also notes that, “Three streams have been major sources of sand and gravel in Tulare County – the Kaweah River, Lewis Creek, and the Tule River.” These sources are located in the eastern Valley portion of Tulare County, thus they are neither within nor near the proposed Project area. The proposed Project will result in <b>No Impact</b> to this resource.</p>				
<b>12. NOISE -- Would the project:</b>				
a) Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive ground-borne vibration or ground-borne noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been or	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

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public use airport, would the adopted, within two miles of a public airport project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?				
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**Analysis:**

The Health and Safety Element of the Tulare County General Plan recognizes areas that are potentially noise-impacted for existing (2010) and future (2030) conditions. Table 10.1 Land Use Compatibility for Community Noise Environments of the Tulare County Health and Safety Element establishes noise level criteria for typical land uses throughout Tulare County. Exterior noise levels in the range of 50-65 dB Ldn or Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) or below, are generally considered acceptable for residential land uses and 50-75 dB Ldn (or CNEL), or below are considered acceptable for industrial, manufacturing utilities, and agriculture land uses.

The distinction between short-term construction noise impacts and long-term operational noise impacts is a typical one in CEQA documents and local noise ordinances, which generally acknowledge that short-term noise from construction-related activities is inevitable and cannot be mitigated beyond a certain level. The Tulare County Health and Safety Element does identify short-term, construction-noise-level thresholds as noted in General Plan Policies HS-8.18 and HS-8.19, below. Noise generating activities such as construction-related activities are limited to the hours of 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., Monday through Saturday when construction activities are located near sensitive receptors. No construction shall occur on Sundays or national holidays without a permit from the County to minimize noise impacts associated with development near sensitive receptors. Thus, local agencies consent to short-term noise at levels consistent with the Health and Safety Element that they would not accept from permanent noise sources.

**Existing Noise Conditions:**

As part of the process to assess potential noise impacts which may occur as a result of the Project, the County of Tulare obtained the services of consultants VRPA Technologies (VRPA). Consultants VRPA Technologies prepared a Noise Study Report (Noise Study) to determine existing noise levels and potential future noise impacts as the community develops (see Appendix “F”).

“Developed and undeveloped land uses in the community of Traver were identified through land use maps, aerial photography, and site inspection. Within each land use category, sensitive receptors were then identified. Land uses in the community of Traver include agricultural, single-family residences, retail, and industrial uses. The generalized land use data and location of particular sensitive receptors and existing traffic volumes were the basis for the selection of the noise monitoring and analysis sites. One (1) field receptor location was measured in the field and represents a residential land use adjacent to Merritt Drive. Traver is a small community with a population of just of 700 and Merritt Drive, which runs through the heart of the community, provides access to all of the local

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
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roads. This field receptor location is shown in Figure 4 [of the Noise Study] and described in Table 2 [of the Noise Study]. Figure 4 [of the Noise Study] also shows additional modeled receptor locations that reflect locations of other sensitive receptor locations. Modeled receptors 2 - 5 represent outdoor areas of residential, industrial, and school land uses.”<sup>38</sup> “Existing traffic noise levels were evaluated using TNM 2.5. Traffic volumes collected from the circulation element completed for the Traver Community Plan and average vehicle speeds along Merritt Drive and 6th Street were entered into the model to estimate noise levels at various land uses in the Traver Community.”<sup>39</sup> “To assess the traffic noise on sensitive receptors in the community of Traver, the first step is to determine the baseline or the existing noise condition. The second is to then compare the baseline to future level results, based on expected traffic growth, and Tulare County’s Land Use Compatibility for Community Noise Environments.”<sup>40</sup> “Results of the analysis show that noise levels at all of the modeled receptors do not exceed Tulare County’s Land Use Compatibility for Community Noise Environments.”<sup>41</sup>

**Future Year Noise Conditions:**

“The noise impacts to the Traver community were analyzed considering future traffic conditions in the year 2030. The levels of traffic expected in 2030 relate to the cumulative effect of traffic increases resulting from the implementation of the General Plan of local agencies. Traffic conditions in the Year 2030 were estimated using the Tulare County Association of Governments (TCAG) regional travel model. Traffic volumes, truck mix, and vehicle speeds were used as inputs to the model for the Future Year 2030 scenario. Traffic volumes and truck mix were determined by the Circulation Element prepared for the Traver Community Plan. Table 5 [of the Noise Study] shows the predicted noise levels at the 5 sensitive receptors evaluated in this noise element. Results of the analysis show that none of the sensitive receptors will exceed Tulare County’s Land Use Compatibility for Community Noise Environments for the Future Year 2030 scenario.”<sup>42</sup>

In addition to the noise sources and receptors analyzed, the Noise Study also notes that the Union Pacific Railroad (which runs adjacent to Sixth Street (and SR 99) and the industrial land uses in the Community) currently operates approximately 19 train movements per day at the Merritt Drive crossing. The Noise Study notes; “The typical speed of the trains over the crossing ranges from 20 to 70 mph. Train operators are required to sound the warning horn when approaching within approximately 1,000 feet of a grade crossing. As a result, train noise levels are higher at locations near grade crossings, such as the crossing at Merritt Drive. It is estimated that noise level’s from train passby’s (with warning horn) at approximately 175 feet from the tracks range from 94 – 102 dB’s.”<sup>43</sup> Because of State mandated requirements that train horns be sounded a minimum of 1,000 feet from a street crossing and the intermittent exposure of noise from train horns; this temporary and short-term impact is less than significant.

General Plan Policies:

There are several General Plan policies which will be implemented to avoid and/or minimize any potentially

<sup>38</sup> Traver Community Plan Noise Study Report, VRPA Technologies, July 2014. Page 11

<sup>39</sup> Ibid. 13

<sup>40</sup> Op. Cit. 14

<sup>41</sup> Op. Cit.

<sup>42</sup> Op. Cit. 15

<sup>43</sup> Op. Cit. 15-16

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
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adverse impacts to noise such as *HS-8.2 Noise Impacted Areas* wherein the County shall designate areas as noise-impacted if exposed to existing or projected noise levels that exceed 60 dB Ldn (or Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL)) at the exterior of buildings; *HS-8.3 Noise Sensitive Land Uses* wherein the County shall not approve new noise sensitive uses unless effective mitigation measures are incorporated into the design of such projects to reduce noise levels to 60 dB Ldn (or CNEL) or less within outdoor activity areas and 45 dB Ldn (or CNEL) or less within interior living spaces; *HS-8.5 State Noise Standards* wherein the County shall enforce the State Noise Insulation Standards (California Administrative Code, Title 24) and Chapter 35 of the Uniform Building Code (UBC); *HS-8.6 Noise Level Criteria* wherein the County shall ensure noise level criteria applied to land uses other than residential or other noise-sensitive uses are consistent with the recommendations of the California Office of Noise Control (CONC); *HS-8.8 Adjacent Uses* wherein the County shall not permit development of new industrial, commercial, or other noise-generating land uses if resulting noise levels will exceed 60 dB Ldn (or CNEL) at the boundary of areas designated and zoned for residential or other noise-sensitive uses, unless it is determined to be necessary to promote the public health, safety and welfare of the County; *HS-8.18 Construction Noise* wherein the County shall seek to limit the potential noise impacts of construction activities by limiting construction activities to the hours of 7 am to 7pm, Monday through Saturday when construction activities are located near sensitive receptors. No construction shall occur on Sundays or national holidays without a permit from the County to minimize noise impacts associated with development near sensitive receptors; and *HS-8.19 Construction Noise Control* wherein the County shall ensure that construction contractors implement best practices guidelines (i.e. berms, screens, etc.) as appropriate and feasible to reduce construction-related noise-impacts on surrounding land uses.

a) As noted in the Noise Study, existing and future year noise impacts do not exceed Tulare County General Plan noise thresholds. The Proposed Project does not include any construction-related activity, as such, it does not involve long- or short-term noise sources. During the construction phase of a development or activity (for example road repair, trenching to install water/sewer lines, etc.), noise from construction activities would contribute to the noise environment in the immediate proposed Project vicinity. Activities involved in construction would generate maximum noise levels, as indicated in the table below, ranging from 79 to 91 dBA at a distance of 50 feet, without feasible noise control (e.g., mufflers, well maintained equipment, shielding noisier equipment parts, and/or time and activity constraints) and ranging from 75 to 80 dBA at a distance of 50 feet, with feasible noise control. Although the noise generated from earthmoving equipment may exceed the 65 dB Ldn during earthmoving operations, the impact is short-term, temporary, and will only occur during normal business hours, typically from 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Existing General Plan policies and draft Community Plan policies will be implemented to minimize noise exposure. Therefore, the impact is **Less Than Significant**.

**Typical Construction Noise Levels**

Type of Equipment	dBA at 50 ft	
	Without Feasible Noise Control	With Feasible Noise Control <sup>1</sup>
Dozer or Tractor	80	75
Excavator	88	80
Scraper	88	80
Front End Loader	79	75
Backhoe	85	75
Grader	85	75

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
Truck	91		75	

Source: U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Transit Administration. 2006.

<sup>1</sup> Feasible noise control includes the use of intake mufflers, exhaust mufflers, and engine shrouds operating in accordance with manufacturers specifications.

b) Vibration is the periodic oscillation of a medium or object. Vibration sources may be continuous, such as factory machinery, or transient, such as explosions. Similar to airborne sound, ground borne vibrations may be described by amplitude and frequency. Vibration amplitudes are usually expressed in peak particle velocity (PPV) or root mean squared (RMS), as in RMS vibration velocity. The PPV and RMS (VbA) vibration velocity are normally described in inches per second (in/sec). PPV is defined as the maximum instantaneous positive or negative peak of a vibration signal and is often used in monitoring of blasting vibration because it is related to the stresses that are experienced by buildings (FTA 2006).

Although PPV is appropriate for evaluating the potential for building damage, it is not always suitable for evaluating human response. As it takes some time for the human body to respond to vibration signals, it is more prudent to use vibration velocity when measuring human response. The vibration velocity level is reported in decibels relative to a level of  $1 \times 10^{-6}$  inches per second and is denoted as VdB. The typical background vibration-velocity level in residential areas is approximately 50 VdB. Ground borne vibration is normally perceptible to humans at approximately 65 VdB. For most people, a vibration-velocity level of 75 VdB is the approximate dividing line between barely perceptible and distinctly perceptible levels (FTA 2006).

Typical outdoor sources of perceptible ground borne vibration are construction equipment, steel-wheeled trains, and traffic on rough roads. Construction vibrations can be transient, random, or continuous. The approximate threshold of vibration perception is 65 VdB, while 85 VdB is the vibration acceptable only if there are an infrequent number of events per day (FTA 2006). The table below describes the typical construction equipment vibration levels.

#### Typical Construction Vibration Levels

Equipment	VdB at 25 ft <sup>2</sup>
Small Bulldozer	58
Jackhammer	79

Source: U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Transit Administration, Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment. 2006.

The Proposed Project does not include any construction-related activity; as such, it does not involve long- or short-term noise sources. Vibration from future construction-related activities will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. As construction-related activity is short term and temporary, it is not anticipated to exceed the FTA threshold for the nearest potential receptors. The impact would be **Less Than Significant**.

c and d) As noted in the Noise Study, existing and future year noise impacts do not exceed Tulare County General Plan noise thresholds. The Proposed Project does not include any construction-related activity, as such, it does not

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involve long- or short-term noise sources from construction-related activities (for example, earthmoving equipment operations). Construction-related activities will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and will be required to comply with County Noise standards as defined in Table 10.1 of the General Plan. Intermittent construction-related activities would result in avoidance of a substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the Project. Existing General Plan policies and draft Community Plan policies will be implemented to minimize noise exposure. Therefore, the impact is <b>Less Than Significant</b> .				
e and f) The proposed Project is not located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been or public use airport, would the adopted, within two miles of a public airport project nor is it within the vicinity of a private airstrip. There is no possibility of exposing people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels in or near an existing airport public or private airstrip. There will be <b>No Impact</b> .				
<b>13. POPULATION AND HOUSING --</b> Would the project:				
a) Cumulatively exceed official regional or local population projections?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Substantially change the demographics in the area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Substantially alter the location, distribution, or density of the area's population?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
g) Conflict with adopted housing elements?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>Analysis:</p> <p>The proposed Project is intended to result in a comprehensive update to the Traver Community Plan. It is consistent with the adopted/certified Tulare County Housing Element and the draft 2014 Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) prepared by the Tulare County Association of Governments (TCAG).</p> <p>General Plan Policies:</p> <p>Among the policies this Community Plan update will implement are General Plan Housing Element <i>Housing</i></p>				

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
<p><i>Guiding Principle 1.1</i> which endeavors to improve opportunities for affordable housing in a wide range of housing types in the communities throughout the unincorporated area of the County; <i>Housing Policy 1.11</i> which encourages the development of a broad range of housing types to provide an opportunity of choice in the local housing market; <i>Housing Policy 1.12</i> which encourages Federal and State governments to expand and adequately fund housing programs for very low, low and moderate income households, to stimulate mortgage financing for such programs, and to revise program requirements that preclude certain programs from being utilized; <i>Housing Policy 1.16</i> which calls for review of community plans and zoning to ensure they provide for adequate affordable residential development; <i>Housing Guiding Principle 1.3</i> which strives to meet the housing needs of migrant and non-migrant farmworkers and their families with a suitable, affordable and satisfactory living environment; <i>Housing Policy 1.42</i> which supports and encourages non-profit organizations expressing interest in developing special needs housing with incentives (fast track processing, etc.); <i>Housing Guiding Principle 1.6</i> which assess and allows amendments County ordinances, standards, practices and procedures considered necessary to carry out the County’s essential housing goal of the attainment of a suitable, affordable and satisfactory living environment for every present and future resident in unincorporated areas; <i>Housing Policy 2.11</i> which encourages Federal and State governments to increase the level of funding for improvements or expansion of public infrastructure serving the unincorporated communities. <i>Housing Guiding Principle 2.2</i> which requires proposed new housing developments located within the development boundaries of unincorporated communities to have the necessary infrastructure and capacity to support the development; <i>Housing Policy 2.21</i> which requires all proposed housing within the development boundaries of unincorporated communities is either (1) served by community water and sewer, or (2) that physical conditions permit safe treatment of liquid waste by septic tank systems and the use of private wells; <i>Housing Policy 2.22</i> which coordinates capital improvement programs for public infrastructure projects with housing rehabilitation programs; <i>Housing Policy 3.15</i> which allows multi-family residential projects or mixed-use developments in commercial zone districts within development boundaries of unincorporated communities; <i>Housing Policy 3.21</i> which promotes and encourages “infill” development within the development boundaries of unincorporated communities and review current zoning to ensure that it is not impeding development; <i>Housing Policy 3.22</i> which implement adopted community plans, which designate adequate sites for residential development; <i>Housing Policy 3.23</i> which compels the County to prepare new and/or updated community plans that provide adequate sites for a variety of types of housing within the development boundaries of community; and <i>Housing Policy 4.12</i> which facilitates land use policies and programs that meet housing and conservation objectives.</p> <p>a - g) The proposed Project does not include any proposed residential development. As such, it will not result in demographic or population changes; it will not induce growth; it will not alter the location, distribution, or density of the area’s population; it will not displace any housing or people; nor will it conflict with the adopted housing element. There will be <b>No Impact</b> to these resources.</p>				
<p><b>14. PUBLIC OR UTILITY SERVICES --</b> Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered government and public services facilities, need for new or physically altered government facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios,</p>				

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:				
a) Fire protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Police protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Schools?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Parks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Electrical power or natural gas?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Communication?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
g) Other public or utility services?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Analysis:

The Project does not contain any development proposals; as such, the need to expand public or utility services will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis as development occurs. There are several General Plan policies which will be implemented to avoid and/or minimize any potentially adverse impacts to public or utilities services such as *PFS-7.1 Fire Protection* wherein the County shall strive to expand fire protection service in areas that experience growth in order to maintain adequate levels of service; *PFS-7.2 Fire Protection Standards* wherein the County shall require all new development to be adequately served by water supplies, storage, and conveyance facilities supplying adequate volume, pressure, and capacity for fire protection; *PFS-7.3 Visible Signage for Roads and Buildings* wherein the County shall strive to ensure all roads are properly identified by name or number with clearly visible signs; *PFS-7.4 Interagency Fire Protection Cooperation* wherein the County shall continue to promote cooperative fire protection agreements with municipal and special district fire departments, State and federal forest agencies, and adjacent County fire departments to provide added fire protection on a year round basis; *PFS-7.5 Fire Staffing and Response Time Standards* wherein the County shall strive to maintain fire department staffing and response time goals consistent with National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards.

In addition to fire protection services, the General Plan contains policies to ensure police services (provided by the Tulare County Sheriff's Office) meets the needs of the affected community such as *PFS-7.8 Law Enforcement Staffing Ratios* wherein the County shall strive to achieve and maintain a staffing ratio of 3 sworn officers per 1,000 residents in unincorporated area; *PFS-7.9 Sheriff Response Time* wherein the County shall work with the Sheriff's Department to achieve and maintain a response time of Less than 10 minutes for 90 percent of the calls in the valley region; *PFS-7.10 Interagency Law Enforcement Protection Cooperation* wherein the County shall continue to promote cooperative law enforcement protection agreements with the Sheriff's Department, California Highway Patrol (CHP), local city police, and adjacent County law enforcement agencies to provide added public protection on a year round basis; or both fire and police services needs as specified in *PFS-7.11 Locations of Fire and Sheriff Stations/Sub-stations* wherein the County shall strive to locate fire and sheriff sub-stations in areas that

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
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ensure the minimum response times to service calls.

Providing school facilities falls within the purview of local school districts. Traver Joint Elementary School District (grades K-8) and Kingsburg Joint High School District (grades 9-12) provide school facilities for school-age children. The Community Plan projects population growth of an increase of 172 persons will occur in Traver during the planning period (that is, Year 2030). As noted in the Community Plan, approximately 21% of the population is school-age persons. If this proportion remains consistent through the Year 2030 planning period, approximately 36 more school-age persons will be added to the school-age population. The Tulare County General Plan contains policies to ensure adequate schools (and community facilities) are provided and are conveniently located for County residents such as *PFS-8.1 Work with Local School Districts* wherein the County shall work with local school districts to develop solutions for overcrowded schools and financial constraints of constructing new facilities; *PFS-8.2 Joint Use Facilities and Programs* wherein the County shall encourage the development of joint school facilities, recreation facilities, and educational and service programs between school districts and other public agencies; *PFS-8.3 Location of School Sites* wherein the County shall work with school districts and land developers to locate school sites consistent with current and future land uses. The County shall also encourage siting new schools near the residential areas that they serve and with access to safe pedestrian and bike routes to school; and *PFS-8.6 School Funding* wherein to the extent allowed by State law, the County may require new projects to mitigate impacts on school facilities, in addition to the use of school fees. The County will also work with school districts, developers, and the public to evaluate alternatives to funding/providing adequate school facilities.

Regarding communications, the County General Plan contains policies intended to expand the use of information technology in order to increase the County’s economic competitiveness, develop a more informed citizenry, and improve personal convenience for residents and businesses in the County through *PFS-6.1 Telecommunications Services* wherein the County shall work with telecommunication providers to ensure that all residents and businesses have access to telecommunications services, including broadband internet service; *PFS-6.2 Communication Technologies to Improve Citizen Participation* wherein the County shall strive to expand opportunities for all citizens to participate in County governance through use of communication technologies, including the County website and cable television; and *PFS-6.3 Siting of Telecommunications Infrastructure* to minimize the visual and locational impact of wireless telecommunications facilities, the County shall encourage the siting of telecommunications infrastructure to meet the following conditions: (1) Located away from residential and open space areas; (2) When possible, are located or collocated on existing buildings, existing towers, or other existing support structures and (3) Painted, camouflaged, textured, or otherwise designed to better integrate into existing conditions adjacent to the installation site.

a) Fire protection services to the Project site are provided by the Traver Tulare County Fire Department substation located in Traver. The Tulare County Fire Station #2, Kings River Station, is located approximately five miles north of Traver in Kingsburg, CA. The Kings River Station has one (1) Fire Engine and it is staffed with one (1) Company officer on a forty eight (48) hour shift. This station has three (3) Company officers assigned to it, two (2) Fire Lieutenants and one (1) Fire Captain. Eight (8) Paid On-Call Fire Fighters are assigned to this station and they respond when called or toned out to an incident. Response time is approximately seven (7) minutes from this station to Traver. As the proposed Project does not involve any development proposals that could contribute to a need for expanded fire protection or other emergency services, impacts to fire protection will be **Less Than Significant**.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
<p>b) Police services to the project site, which is located in unincorporated Tulare County, are provided by the County of Tulare Sheriff's Office. The nearest Sheriff's Substation is located in Oroshi (approximately 12.5 miles northeast). The substation provides patrol services 24-hours per day, 365 per year. The Substation runs a four shift operation which includes 23 deputies, four sergeants and one lieutenant. There are a minimum of three deputies and one sergeant in the field at all times. In addition to that general shift staffing the communities of Cutler, Oroshi and New London/Traver have assigned Community Based Officers assigned specifically to those area. The substation is open for walk-ins from 8am to 5pm Monday thru Friday. After hours and weekends there is a phone provided outside the substation that calls directly into the dispatch center. Additional Sheriff resources are available as needed via dispatch from the main Sheriff's Office in Visalia, CA. As the proposed Project does not involve any development proposals that could contribute to a need for expanded police services, impacts to police services will be <b>Less Than Significant</b>.</p> <p>c) As the proposed Project does not involve any development proposals that could contribute to the need for expanded school facilities. The estimated growth rate applied to this community is 1.3% per year. As such, even within the planning timeframe (Year 2030) it is not anticipated that population growth of school-aged children will exceed the capabilities of the Traver Joint Elementary School District (grades K-8) or Kingsburg Joint High School District (grades 9-12) to provide school facilities. There will be <b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>.</p> <p>d) There are no County owned/operated parks in Traver. The nearest County owned/operated parks are the Ledbetter Park in the unincorporated community of Cutler approximately 12.5 miles northeast of Traver and the Kings River Nature Preserve located 2 miles east of State Route 99 near Road 28. The proposed Project does not include plans for a future park within the community. There will be <b>No Impact</b> to this resource.</p> <p>e) The proposed Project does not involve any development proposals that could contribute to the need for expanded electrical power or natural gas services. Development proposals will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and referred to the local electricity and gas providers to determine the availability of the respective service. The impact will be <b>Less Than Significant</b>.</p> <p>f) The proposed Project will not result in the need for additional communication services. There will be <b>No Impact</b>.</p> <p>g) The proposed Project will not result in need for increased demand for other public services causing a need for the expansion of public facilities that will cause adverse physical environmental effects. There will be <b>No Impact</b>.</p>				
<b>15. RECREATION -- Would the project?:</b>				
a) Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?				
<p>Analysis:</p> <p>The only improved recreational facilities currently accessible to the general public and the community are the Traver Elementary school grounds when they are not in use by students or during school hours. The proposed Project does not include planning for additional parks or other recreational facilities. As noted in the discussion at item 14 Public or Utility Services d) parks, there are no County owned/operated parks in Traver. The nearest County owned/operated parks are the Ledbetter Park in the unincorporated community of Cutler approximately 12.5 miles northeast of Traver and the Kings River Nature Preserve located 2 miles east of State Route 99 at Road 28.</p> <p>a and b) The proposed Project does not include plans for a future park within the community. The proposed Project will not result in an increase in the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility will occur or be accelerated; nor will it include recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment. There will be <b>No Impact</b> to these resources.</p>				
<b>16. TRANSPORTATION/TRANSIT --</b> Would the project?:				
a) Conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation including mass transit and non-motorized travel and relevant components of the circulation system, including but not limited to intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with an applicable congestion management program, including, but not limited to level of service standards and travel demand measures, or other standards established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design				

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Result in inadequate emergency access?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Analysis:

The “Traver Community Plan Traffic Impact Assessment and Circulation Element” (TIA) study for the Traver Community Plan Update was prepared by consultant VRPA Technologies (or VRPA) (see Appendix G”). The TIA describes the following:

**“Existing Circulation and Traffic Conditions**

The purpose of this Circulation Element Update for the community of Traver is to provide for a safe, convenient and efficient transportation system. The Circulation Element has been designed to accommodate anticipated transportation needs based on the land use element. In compliance with state law, all city and county general plans must contain a circulation element that designates future road improvements and extensions, addresses non-motorized transportation alternatives, and identifies funding options. The intent of the Circulation Element is to:

- identify transportation needs and issues within Traver, as well as regional relationships that affect the transportation system;
- consider alternatives to the single-occupant vehicle as means of providing services and access to facilities; and
- establish policies that coordinate the Traver transportation planning circulation system with General Plan and area plan land use maps and provide direction for future decision-making.”<sup>44</sup>

The TIA provides a description of existing transportation conditions, in particular, existing circulation and traffic conditions as follows: “In the Traver area, northbound Highway 99 narrows from three traffic lanes to two just south of the community. Similarly, southbound Highway 99 includes two travel lanes through Traver, but widens to three lanes south of the community. There is a freeway interchange at Merritt Drive in Traver, affording access between the community and the freeway. Additionally, there is a northbound off-ramp at the southerly end of the community providing access to the highway-oriented commercial uses developed at that location and continuing onto Sixth Street which follows the previous Highway 99 alignment. Sixth Street also leads to a northbound on-ramp north of Traver, where it also intersects Avenue 368 just east of Highway 99.

Merritt Drive, a tangential extension of Avenue 368, is an arterial roadway. It follows a generally northeast/southwest alignment through the center of the community. To the northeast, Merritt Drive joins Elkhorn Avenue, which intersects Road 80 (Dinuba Highway), thus affording access between Traver and Dinuba and Reedley. To the southwest, Merritt Drive terminates just west of Highway 99 at its intersection Road 36 after

<sup>44</sup> “Traver Community Plan Traffic Impact Assessment and Circulation Element” prepared by VRPA Technologies June 2014. Page 5-1

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
<p>crossing Highway 99 by an overpass. Merritt Drive is improved to one traffic lane in each direction for its length through Traver.</p> <p>Sixth Street and Burke Drive are collector roads that parallel the highway on opposite sides of the Union Pacific Railroad main line, traversing the community in a southeasterly/northwesterly direction. Sixth Street carries traffic through the community and back onto Highway 99 from the highway-oriented commercial development located at the community’s southerly freeway access. Sixth Street also affords access to abutting commercial and industrial properties for local traffic.</p> <p>Burke Drive extends from Avenue 360 at the southerly edge of the planning area boundary to Avenue 368 at the northerly end of the community. It carries traffic generated by local industrial and residential development and affords access to abutting commercial and industrial properties.</p> <p>All other streets and roads in the community’s planning area function essentially as local streets, carrying only traffic accessing abutting urban and rural properties. Canal Street, at the northeastern end of the community, serves the Traver School, which is just northeast of its intersection with Merritt Drive.”<sup>45</sup></p> <p>As part of its analysis, VRPA Technologies conducted AM and PM peak hour turning movement counts at seven Traver intersections. This effort resulted in determining traffic levels of service (LOS) which could be used to evaluate the adequacy of Traver’s road network for serving current and future traffic demand. 2014 existing and projected 2030 traffic and intersection operating conditions were calculated using the Transportation Research Board’s 2010 Highway Capacity Manual (HCM) while actual calculations were performed using Synchro intersection analysis software. “In order to project future traffic roadway conditions, a variety of sources were used. Historic population data suggest that the population of Traver has been relatively flat or declining slightly, and TCAG current RTP forecast indicates a continuation of this trend. On the other hand TCAG’s jobs forecast show employment in the TCAG RTP model traffic analysis zones (TAZs) that cover Traver and vicinity increasing at an annual rate of 2.7% between 2010 and 2032. Based on these and other data County staff determined an overall rate of traffic growth of 1.3% per year was a reasonable forecast assumption. This rate of growth was applied to existing traffic count data to create future year (2030) traffic levels. This annual rate results in an overall growth in peak hour traffic of approximately 23% for the period 2014-2030.”<sup>46</sup></p> <p>The Project will not result in significant impacts to circulation/traffic. As indicated in the TIA, “Figure 8 [in the TIA] shows Average Daily traffic conditions for 2030. Figures 9 and 10 [in the TIA] show projected 2030 traffic turning movements in the morning (AM) and afternoon (PM) peak hours, as well as delay levels and LOS results at each intersection. Table 2 [in the TIA] summarizes delay and LOS results at all intersections in both the AM and PM peak hours and under both current 2030 conditions</p> <p>Examining Table 2 [in the TIA], it is evident that all intersections meet or exceed the County LOS D standard under all scenarios. In fact, all intersections will perform at LOS C or better, with the exception of the</p>				

<sup>45</sup> Ibid. Page 5-3 thru 5-4

<sup>46</sup> Op. Cit. 5-7 thru 5-8

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
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Church/Merritt intersection in 2030 PM, goes to LOS D, with still acceptable average delay of 28 seconds during the most heavily trafficked hour of the day.”<sup>47</sup>

The public transit system serving Traver was analyzed by VRPA Technologies to determine availability and service capabilities of the only public provider, Tulare County Transit Agency (TCAT). “The public transit system alternatives for Traver include fixed route public transit systems, common bus carriers, and other local agency transit and paratransit services.

The Tulare County Transit Agency (TCAT) operates fixed-route services that link communities with each other and with Visalia and Tulare’s urban transit systems. Traver is connected via TCAT Route 50 to Dinuba and its transit center (see Figure 3 [in the TIA]). TCAT Route 50 provides service to Dinuba four times per day on weekdays and four times on Saturdays. In Dinuba, transfers can be made to connect to Visalia, Tulare, and the remainder of the TCAT public transit system. TCAT vehicles are wheelchair accessible and all full size buses include bike racks.”<sup>48</sup>

“Public transit is likely to remain a limited option due to fiscal constraints and the high cost of providing services to a community of less than one thousand residents. The low level of auto congestion in Traver, now and in the future suggests that driving will continue to be more convenient than transit for those with access to a private car.”<sup>49</sup>

In addition to circulation and traffic, consultant VRPA Technologies analyzed bikeway and pedestrian facilities.

**“Bikeways and Pedestrian Facilities**

Investment in bikeways provides an inexpensive environment-friendly transportation opportunity. Bicycling is considered an effective alternative mode of transportation that can help to improve air quality and reduce the number of vehicles traveling along existing highways, especially within the cities and unincorporated communities. While the numbers of cyclists is small in comparison to the amount of auto traffic, the size of the community of Traver means that most local trips can be as fast by bicycle as by car.

Pedestrian facilities include sidewalks, walkways, crosswalks, signals, lighting, and benches, among other items. Where such facilities exist, people will be much more likely to make shorter trips by walking rather than by vehicle. Pedestrian facilities serving the school and recreational facilities enhance the safety of those who choose to walk to and from these destinations.”<sup>50</sup>

The Project will not result in significant impacts to circulation/traffic. As indicated in the TIA, “Public transit is likely to remain a limited option due to fiscal constraints and the high cost of providing services to a community of less than one thousand residents. The low level of auto congestion in Traver, now and in the future suggests that driving will continue to be more convenient than transit for those with access to a private car. For those without access to a car, the best approach for improving transit in Traver will be to enhance rider information systems that

<sup>47</sup> Op. Cit. 5-8

<sup>48</sup> Op. Cit. 5-4

<sup>49</sup> Op. Cit.

<sup>50</sup> Op. Cit. 5-5

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give potential transit patrons precise arrival and departure times for transit and paratransit vehicles. Such real time information systems, by reducing the uncertainty and time spent waiting, can both increase demand for transit and paratransit and improve riders’ overall experience.

With respect to pedestrian and bicycle modes, the current and projected low levels of vehicular traffic in Traver, together with short travel distances within the community, means that these modes can be very competitive for trips within Traver, even with minimal facilities. A reasonably flat, safe surface on the side of a low traffic road can often suffice for pedestrians and bicycles, especially if signs alert drivers to the presence of non-motorized traffic.”<sup>51</sup>

As contained in the Transportation and Circulation policies section of the Tulare County General Plan, a variety of policies were adopted “To promote an efficient roadway and highway system for the movement of people and goods, which enhances the physical, economic, and social environment while being safe, environmentally friendly, and cost-effective.” which are applicable to Traver. For example, *TC-1.3 Regional Coordination* wherein the County shall work with State, regional, and local agencies to assess transportation needs and goals and support coordinated transportation planning and programming with the Tulare County Association of Governments (TCAG) and other local agencies; *TC-1.4 Funding Sources* wherein the County should seek to enhance funding available for transportation projects with TCAG, Federal and State agencies and enhance local funding sources, including assessment of transportation impact fees to pay for appropriate construction, enhancement, and maintenance of transportation facilities; *TC-1.16 County Level Of Service (LOS) Standards* which compels the County to develop and manage its roadway system (both segments and intersections) to meet a LOS of “D” or better in accordance with the LOS definitions established by the Highway Capacity Manual;etc.

The General Plan contains numerous policies in support of transit services, pedestrian and bicycle facilities such as *AQ-3.3 Street Design* wherein the County shall promote street design that provides an environment which encourages transit use, biking, and pedestrian movements; *LU- 7.1 Friendly Streets* wherein the County shall encourage new streets within UDBs to be designed and constructed to not only accommodate traffic, but also serve as comfortable pedestrian and cyclist environments; *TC-1.2 Intermodal Connectivity* wherein the County shall ensure that, whenever possible, roadway, highway, and public transit systems will interconnect with other modes of transportation; *TC-4.7 Bicycle/Pedestrian Trail System* wherein the County shall coordinate with TCAG and other agencies to develop a Countywide integrated multi-purpose trail system that provides a linked network with access to recreational, cultural, and employment facilities, as well as offering a recreational experience apart from that available at neighborhood and community parks; *TC-5.2 Consider Non-Motorized Modes in Planning and Development* wherein the County shall consider incorporating facilities for non-motorized users, such as bike routes, sidewalks, and trails when constructing or improving transportation facilities and when reviewing new development proposals; etc.

**Complete Streets**

“Legislatively, the California Complete Streets Act (AB 1358) requires all cities and counties to identify how to provide for routine accommodation of all roadway users, including motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, people with disabilities, seniors, and users of public transportation. In a nutshell, this integrated approach is characterized as “designing complete streets for all users.” On August 13, 2014, the Board of Supervisors approved the submittal of

<sup>51</sup> Op. Cit. 5-8

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
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a grant application, along with a detailed scope of work, to the Tulare County Association of Governments (TCAG) in the amount of \$150,000 for development of a Complete Streets Policy. Funding was awarded from TCAG to develop complete streets policies for the communities of Traver, Goshen and Pixley. A scope of work has been developed that includes a comprehensive analysis of the selected streets including (a) traffic analysis, (b) public meetings and workshops, (c) walkability audits of the project area, and (d) recommendations regarding the accommodations that are needed to make each street more complete, thus insuring that all affected streets can better accommodate all users. The selected streets in Traver include, Merritt Drive, from Burke Street to Canal Drive and 6<sup>th</sup> Street, from SR99 to Merritt Drive. Thus, these Complete Street Policies, once approved, can lead to an award of construction funding from TCAG for communities in Tulare County.”<sup>52</sup> As noted in the Traver Community Plan (page 26), according to Caltrans the Complete Streets program provides benefits by integrating sidewalks, bike lanes, transit amenities, and safe crossings into the initial design of a project spares the expense of retrofits later; increased bicycling and walking are indicative of vibrant and livable communities; improved safety by designing and accommodating bicyclists and pedestrians which reduces the incidence of crashes; and by providing more walking and bicycling opportunities that provide room for children partake in physical activity and gain independence to combat obesity.

**Safe Routes to School**

On September 26, 2013, Governor Brown signed legislation creating the Active Transportation Program (ATP) in the Department of Transportation (CalTrans). The ATP consolidates existing federal and state transportation programs, including State Safe Routes to School (SR2S). One sidewalk project has been completed along the east side of Canal Street adjacent to Traver Elementary School to provide school children a safe walking path to and from school. The Project benefits Traver Elementary School as the new sidewalks will provide a safer, more protected path than the roadway shoulders the school children must currently travel on to walk to school. Construction was completed begin in the Spring of 2014. The County of Tulare will seek additional funding opportunities for projects which may qualify for ATP funding.



a and b) The proposed Project will not conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system nor will it conflict with an applicable congestion management program. Over time, as the community builds out, development within the proposed Project area will result in a slight increase in population and a corresponding increase in vehicle travel; however, as indicated in the TIS; “The current street system functions adequately and barring major unforeseen development in Traver will continue to do so through the year 2030.”<sup>53</sup> . Therefore new intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit will not be required. There will be a **Less Than Significant Impact**.

c) The proposed Project is not near an airport and will not result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks. There will be **No Impact**.

d) The proposed Project does not include any development project and, over time, development is limited to areas within the UDB and traffic generated by development will travel along existing streets. As such, it will not

<sup>52</sup> Draft Traver Community Plan. Page 26

<sup>53</sup> Op. Cit.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment). There will be <b>Less Than Significant Impact</b> .				
e) As there will be no changes to any streets directly adjacent to or in proximity of the proposed Project site that could be used for emergency access, there will be <b>No Impact</b> .				
f) The proposed Project will not conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such facilities. As noted above, TCAT provides public transit within the community with a transit stop (located at Tri M's Market, 3920 Merritt Drive) and service to Dinuba (the nearest Tulare County city). From Dinuba, riders can connect to transit services in Visalia and other areas within the TCAT service area. Even as Traver builds out, public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities will remain adequate to meet the needs of the community. There will be a <b>Less Than Significant Impact</b> to this resource.				
<b>17. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS --</b> Would the project?:				
a) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment or collection facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction which could cause significant environmental effects?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Have sufficient water supplies, including fire flow available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes				

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
and regulations related to solid waste?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Analysis: Below are analyses discussing potential impacts to wastewater, potable water, and storm water drainage systems. The demand, consumption, and capacity of potable and waste water systems are driven by residential uses (and its corresponding population) and by commercial, industrial, institutional, and other potable and waste water system users. As such, it should be noted that the population for Traver has not achieved the projected population growth figures contained in the existing 1989 Traver Community Plan. The 1989 Traver Community plan forecasted populations of 862 for Year 2000 and 1,148 for its build-out year of 2010. The 2000 and 2010 U.S. Census indicate that Traver had populations of 732 in Year 2000 and 713 in Year 2010. Traver has not realized population projections included in the adopted 1989 Community Plan. The nearest projection year (1995), versus the U.S. Census' 732 in Year 2000, estimated a population of 748 in 1995. Traver has not grown based on the 1989 Traver Community Plan annual growth rate of 2.9%. This Community Plan Update uses the 2010 General Plan Background Report growth rate of 1.3% rather than continue using an unachievable 2.9% population growth rate. While the 1989 Community Plan projected a population of 995 in 2005, the draft Traver Community Plan contains a population projection of 923 in 2030. Using a 1.3% growth rate, Traver could reach 1,001 persons in Year 2035 or about six more persons than the 2005 projection contained in the 1989 Traver Community Plan.

Wastewater

“Tulare County’s Traver Wastewater Treatment Facility (WWTF) serves 178 residential users, 4 churches, 2 commercial facilities and 2 small schools. It is located at 36550 Road 44, 0.5 miles south of Avenue 368, in Traver, California and includes 2.6 miles of gravity sewer line, 0.03 miles of force main, and 0.05 miles of laterals. The main lines are constructed of polyvinyl chloride. The WWTF’s discharge is regulated by Waste Discharge Requirement (WDRs) Order No. 88-098, which regulates a maximum discharge of 0.572 million gallons per day of domestic wastewater from an aerated pond and facultative pond (both lined with soil cement) to two evaporation/percolation ponds. Current average dry weather flow is 42,161 gallons per day. Only a small section of each of the two evaporation/percolation ponds is utilized for effluent disposal. The WWTF headworks consist of a magnetic flow meter, a channel-mounted raw sewage grinder and a bypass bar screen. A backup generator powers the WWTF and associated lift stations in the event of a power outage.”<sup>54</sup> “The County utilizes AutoCAD (Computer Aided Drafting) to maintain an up-to-date map of its wastewater collection system facilities. The computerized map indicates pipe size and locations, gravity line segments, manholes, pump station locations, force mains and sewer laterals. To speed emergency response and ensure overflow sewage does not enter the nearest creek or river, the map also indicates the directional flow of storm water (Fig. 4-1 [of the SSMP]).”<sup>55</sup> “There are very few changes in the number of lateral connections to the Traver system as the area is very rural and experiences limited growth. As a result, the collection system map is updated approximately every five (5) years. The master map is kept electronically, as well as physically, in the RMA Administration Building, Solid Waste Division, and can be used as a checklist for distributing updated map sets, when necessary.”<sup>56</sup> Routine preventative operation and maintenance activities are provided by a private operator (Water Dynamics, Inc., Fresno, CA). They are required to perform operations and maintenance of the WWTF through a yearly purchase agreement with Tulare County. The operator is required to perform routine maintenance duties, such as weekly site visits, headworks and lift station wash downs, weed abatement, required water sampling, lab analysis, flow meter

<sup>54</sup> County of Tulare Traver Wastewater Treatment Facility Sewer System Management Plan (SSMP). Page 1

<sup>55</sup> Ibid. 2

<sup>56</sup> Op. Cit.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
<p>calibration, adequate freeboard and monthly reporting and electronic monitoring of the system through the use of computer software.<sup>57</sup> To ensure that the existing infrastructure is maintained and replaced, major repairs are authorized through by Tulare County Board Agreement (Number 22795) with Water Dynamics, Inc. “Sewer infrastructure rehabilitation and replacement projects are identified through an ongoing condition assessment program by Water Dynamics, Inc. Condition assessments include visual inspections, flushing/cleaning, manhole and Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) inspections. Prioritization of preventive and reactive maintenance activities occur through verbal communication as well as work orders. Data on stoppages and other operational problems are collected in field logs and entered into a computer based information system which is reviewed regularly by system managers for prioritization. As these tasks are performed each item is ranked and placed on a list for repair and/or further assessment for rehabilitation or replacement. Short and long term rehabilitation and replacement needs are identified. Short term rehabilitation projects occur within two (2) years and long term projects within five (5) years. Capital Improvement Projects are also identified in this analysis and provided to Tulare County Solid Waste on a regular basis. At present, there are no significant defects identified in the Traver collection system which could result in an SSO.”<sup>58</sup> “The Traver WWTF is not a self sufficient facility. As a result, the County provides monies for the additional operational and maintenance costs. As rehabilitation or replacement projects are required, the Solid Waste Division looks to the Tulare County Capital Improvement Program (CIP) which is proactive by design, but allows for reactive responses when needed. It is designed to be fluid and flexible in nature allowing it the ability to respond to fast changing economic, operational and physical conditions as they arise.”<sup>59</sup></p> <p>The County of Tulare Traver Wastewater Treatment Facility Sewer System Management Plan (SSMP), the Tulare County General Plan has a number of policies that apply to projects within County of Tulare. For example, General Plan policies that would apply to future development in the Project area include <i>PFS-3.2 Adequate Capacity</i> wherein the County shall require development proposals to ensure the intensity and timing of growth is consistent with the availability of adequate wastewater treatment and disposal capacity; <i>PFS-3.3 New Development Requirements</i> wherein the County shall require all new development, within UDBs, UABs, Community Plans, Hamlet Plans, Planned Communities, Corridor Areas, Area Plans, existing wastewater district service areas, or zones of benefit, to connect to the wastewater system, where such systems exist. The County may grant exceptions in extraordinary circumstances, but in these cases, the new development shall be required to connect to the wastewater system when service becomes readily available; and <i>PFS-3.7 Financing</i> wherein the County shall cooperate with special districts when applying for State and federal funding for major wastewater related expansions/upgrades when such plans promote the efficient solution to wastewater treatment needs for the area and County.</p> <p>In addition to Tulare County General Plan policies, the Traver Community Plan contains policies specific to infrastructure including wastewater collection and treatment. See <u>Infrastructure Policies</u> 7.1 through 7.4 of the Traver Community Plan, page 90.</p>				

<sup>57</sup> Op. Cit. 16

<sup>58</sup> Op. Cit.

<sup>59</sup> Op. Cit.

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Storm Water Drainage

In addition to implementing the County of Tulare Traver Storm Drain Master Plan, the Tulare County General Plan has a number of policies that apply to projects within County of Tulare. For example, General Plan policies that would apply to future development in the Project area include *HS-5.4 Multi-Purpose Flood Control Measures* wherein the County shall encourage multipurpose flood control projects that incorporate recreation, resource conservation, preservation of natural riparian habitat, and scenic values of the County's streams, creeks, and lakes. Where appropriate, the County shall also encourage the use of flood and/or stormwater retention facilities for use as groundwater recharge facilities; *PFS-4.1 Stormwater Management Plans* wherein the County shall oversee, as per Community Plan Content Table PF-2.1 and Specific Plan Content, Hamlet Plans Policy PF-3.3, and Table LU-4.3, the preparation and adoption of stormwater management plans for communities and hamlets to reduce flood risk, protect soils from erosion, control stormwater, and minimize impacts on existing drainage facilities, and develop funding mechanisms as a part of the Community Plan and Hamlet Plan process; *PFS-4.2 Site Improvements* wherein the County shall ensure that new development in UDBs, UABs, Community Plans ... includes adequate stormwater drainage systems. This includes adequate capture, transport, and detention/retention of stormwater; *PFS-4.4 Stormwater Retention Facilities* wherein the County shall require on-site detention/retention facilities and velocity reducers when necessary to maintain existing (pre-development) storm flows and velocities in natural drainage systems. The County shall encourage the multi-purpose design of these facilities to aid in active groundwater recharge; *PFS-4.5 Detention/Retention Basins Design* wherein the County shall require that stormwater detention/retention basins be visually unobtrusive and provide a secondary use, such as recreation, when feasible; *PFS-4.6 Agency Coordination* ; *PFS-4.7 NPDES Enforcement* wherein the County shall continue to monitor and enforce provisions to control non-point source water pollution contained in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program

Water Availability and Supply

The community's growth rate noted earlier is significant as it demonstrates that, based on population, water demand and subsequent consumption would not have exceeded water supply during the 1989-2010 planning period. To accommodate the 2030 population projection, it is estimated that an additional 34 housing units (30 SFR and 4 mobile homes) will be added. Since the water system currently has 180 connections, it can be assumed that a minimum of 34 additional connections in the form of housing will be added to the water distribution system bringing the total to 214 connections. Recent water usage records are available between Years 2007 and 2013 as shown below:

Recorded Water Usage	
Calendar Year	Traver's Water Usage (Millions of Gallons)
2007	61.43
2008	58.96
2009	59.03
2010	26.58
2011	28.20
2012	38.85
2013	62.30

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
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Years 2010-2012 are considered anomalous years that are not representative of typical water usage due to wells either being taken out of service due to sand production, Nitrate MCL exceedance, or not all of the well usage data being collected and/or recorded during this period of time for unclear reasons. As such, it is reasonable to use an average of water usage during Years 2007-2009 and 2013.

As indicated by a Memorandum prepared by Mr. David McGlasson of consultant Provost & Pritchard (See Appendix “E”); “If 180 connections use the average annual quantity of water consumed during Years 2007-2009, and 2013, then approximately 60.43 mg/y are used; or about 335,777 gallons per year per connection. or just less than 1.0 AF/year, which is very moderate usage in the Central Valley. Projecting this usage to the future 233 connection results in a projected annual water demand of (233 x 335,777 = 78,263,174 gallons) in 2030. Between 2013 and 2030, water consumption is projected to increase by 17.83 mg/y, the same 29.5% as the projected population increase.

With regard to the subject water system, the capacity of the existing water supply wells will be exceeded over the course of the planning horizon, and additional wells, pumps, and a storage tank will be needed to meet those increased demands. That is not an environmental impact, but rather a capital improvement issue.”<sup>60</sup>

Mr. McGlasson further indicated that mitigation measures can be implemented to off-set the potential growth of water consumption as summarized below:

“The following are feasible mitigation measures that could allow the impact to be reduced to less than significance. Each of these is currently in use in one or more California communities:

1. Install water meters and adopt a use-weighted rate schedule to encourage reduced usage by the rate-payers.
2. Retrofit homes with water-efficient faucets, showers and toilets.
3. Limit permissible landscape area for each residence to 2,500 square feet or less.
4. Adopt limited outdoor watering days and hours (now in force statewide, as of August 1, [2014] by order of the [California] Department of Water Resources).
5. Mandate use of native and drought-tolerant species for all landscaping.
6. Acquire a new surface water supply that could be shown to benefit the basin and offset the pumping that comes with growth.

The first five of these measures could reduce per-unit [connection] water consumption by 25-30 percent...”<sup>61</sup>

In addition to implementing the suggested mitigation measures identified by consultant Provost and Pritchard (see Appendix “E”) and requirements by the California Water Services Company-Traver, the Tulare County General Plan has a number of policies that apply to existing development and future development projects within the County of Tulare. For example, General Plan policies that would apply to existing and future development in the Project area include *LU-7.16 Water Conservation* wherein the County shall encourage the inclusion of “extraordinary’ water conservation and demand management measures for residential, commercial, and industrial indoor

<sup>60</sup> Memorandum prepared by Mr. David McGlasson, Provost & Pritchard, August 2014

<sup>61</sup> Ibid. 2

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<p>and outdoor water uses in all new urban development; <i>PFS-1.1 Existing Development</i> wherein the County shall generally give priority for the maintenance and upgrading of County-owned and operated facilities and services to existing development in order to prevent the deterioration of existing levels-of-service; <i>PFS-1.2 Maintain Existing Levels of Services</i> wherein the County shall ensure new growth and developments do not create significant adverse impacts on existing County-owned and operated facilities; <i>PFS-1.3 Impact Mitigation</i> wherein the County shall review development proposals for their impacts on infrastructure (for example, sewer, water, fire stations, libraries, streets, etc). New development shall be required to pay its proportionate share of the costs of infrastructure improvements required to serve the project to the extent permitted by State law. <i>PFS-1.6 Funding Mechanisms</i> wherein the County shall use a wide range of funding mechanisms, such as the following, to adequately fund capital improvements, maintenance, and on-going operations for publicly-owned and/or operated facilities: Establishing appropriate development impact fees, Establishing assessment districts, and Pursuing grant funding; <i>PFS-1.7 Coordination with Service Providers</i> wherein the County shall work with special districts, community service districts, public utility districts, mutual water companies, private water purveyors, sanitary districts, and sewer maintenance districts to provide adequate public facilities and to plan/coordinate, as appropriate, future utility corridors in an effort to minimize future land use conflicts; <i>PFS-1.8 Funding for Service Providers</i> wherein the County shall encourage special districts, including community service districts and public utility districts to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Institute impact fees and assessment districts to finance improvements,</li> <li>2. Take on additional responsibilities for services and facilities within their jurisdictional boundaries up to the full extent allowed under State law, and</li> <li>3. Investigate feasibility of consolidating services with other districts and annexing systems in proximity to promote economies of scale, such as annexation to city systems and regional wastewater treatment systems;</li> </ol> <p><i>PFS-2.1 Water Supply</i> wherein the County shall work with agencies providing water service to ensure that there is an adequate quantity and quality of water for all uses, including water for fire protection, by, at a minimum, requiring a demonstration by the agency providing water service of sufficient and reliable water supplies and water management measures for proposed urban development; <i>PFS-2.2 Adequate Systems</i> wherein the County shall review new development proposals to ensure that the intensity and timing of growth will be consistent with the availability of adequate production and delivery systems. Projects must provide evidence of adequate system capacity prior to approval. <i>PFS-2.3 Well Testing</i> wherein the County shall require new development that includes the use of water wells to be accompanied by evidence that the site can produce the required volume of water without impacting the ability of existing wells to meet their needs; <i>PFS-2.4 Water Connections</i> wherein the County shall require all new development in UDBs, UABs, Community Plans, Hamlet Plans, Planned Communities, Corridor Areas, Area Plans, existing water district service areas, or zones of benefit, to connect to the community water system, where such system exists. The County may grant exceptions in extraordinary circumstances, but in these cases, the new development shall be required to connect to the water system when service becomes readily available; <i>PFS-2.5 New Systems or Individual Wells</i> where connection to a community water system is not feasible per PFS-2.4: Water Connections, service by individual wells or new community systems may be allowed if the water source meets standards for quality and quantity; <i>PFS-7.1 Fire Protection</i> wherein the County shall strive to expand fire protection service in areas that experience growth in order to maintain adequate levels of service; <i>LU-7.16 Water Conservation</i> wherein the County shall encourage the inclusion of “extra-ordinary” water conservation and demand management measures for residential, commercial, and industrial indoor and outdoor water uses in all new urban development; <i>WR-1.5 Expand Use of Reclaimed Wastewater</i> to augment groundwater supplies and to conserve potable water for domestic purposes, the County shall seek opportunities to expand groundwater recharge efforts; <i>WR-1.6 Expand Use of Reclaimed Water</i> wherein the County ; <i>WR-3.3 Adequate Water Availability</i></p>				

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
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wherein the County shall review new development proposals to ensure the intensity and timing of growth will be consistent with the availability of adequate water supplies. Projects must submit a Will-Serve letter as part of the application process, and provide evidence of adequate and sustainable water availability prior to approval of the tentative map or other urban development entitlement; *PF-1.4 Available Infrastructure* wherein the County shall encourage urban development to locate in existing UDBs and HDBs where infrastructure is available or may be established in conjunction with development. The County shall ensure that development does not occur unless adequate infrastructure is available, that sufficient water supplies are available or can be made available, and that there are adequate provisions for long term management and maintenance of infrastructure and identified water supplies.

In addition to Tulare County General Plan policies, the Traver Community Plan contains policies specific to infrastructure including water supply and water systems. See Infrastructure Policies 7.2 through 7.4 of the Traver Community Plan, page 90.

Solid Waste Disposal

*PFS-5.3 Solid Waste Reduction* wherein the County shall promote the maximum feasible use of solid waste reduction, recycling, and composting of waste, strive to reduce commercial and industrial waste on an annual basis, and pursue financing mechanisms for solid waste reduction programs; *PFS-5.5 Private Use of Recycled Products* wherein the County shall work with recycling contractors to encourage businesses to use recycled products and encourage consumers to purchase recycled products; *PFS-5.6 Ensure Capacity* wherein the County shall require evidence that there is adequate capacity within the solid waste system for the processing, recycling, transmission, and disposal of solid waste prior to approving new development; and *PFS-5.7 Provisions for Solid Waste Storage, Handling, and Collection* wherein the County shall ensure all new development adequately provides for solid waste storage, screening, handling, and collection prior to issuing building permits.

a, b, and e) As development proposals are considered on a case-by-case basis, complying with criteria and other provisions contained in the Traver SSMP will prevent exceedences of wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board; will not require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment or collection facilities or expansion of existing facilities; and will not result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project’s projected demand in addition to the provider’s existing commitments. There will be a **Less Than Significant Impact**.

c) As noted in Item **9 Hydrology and Water Quality, a-f**, the proposed Project will not create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems. Thus, the proposed Project will not require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects. There will be a **Less Than Significant Impact**.

d) The proposed Project does not include a development proposal that would immediately affect water supply. Although the Traver Water Company provides potable (drinking) water for the entire Traver community. Traver Water has 180 existing connections; the system has reached its capacity and no drinking water connections are available. As noted in General Plan Policy *PF-1.4 Available Infrastructure* the County shall encourage urban

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
development to locate in existing UDBs and HDBs where infrastructure is available or may be established in conjunction with development. <i>PF-1.4</i> also indicates that development shall not be allowed to occur unless adequate infrastructure is available, that sufficient water supplies are available or can be made available, and that there are adequate provisions for long term management and maintenance of infrastructure and identified water supplies. The impact will be a <b>Less Than Significant</b> .				
f) The proposed Project will not generate solid waste in quantities that will potentially impact a landfill in an adverse manner. As such, it will be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs. There will be a <b>Less Than Significant Impact</b> .				
g) All applicable federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste will be strictly adhered to. There will be <b>No Impact</b> .				
<b>18. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE</b>				
a) Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of an endangered, rare or threatened plant or animal species, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Does the project have environmental impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Analysis:				
a) As discussed in Item 4 Biological Resources, impacts associated with future development of proposed Project Study Area (PPSA) would be less than significant, as defined by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), for special status plant species, wildlife movement corridors, downstream water quality, and sensitive				

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
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habitats. Loss of habitat for special status animal species would also be considered less than significant under CEQA. Project impacts will also potentially be significant for waters of the U.S., which in the PPSA consists of approximately 3,400 linear feet of Banks Ditch and 2,235 linear feet of Traver Canal. Impacts to Banks Ditch and the Traver Canal can be mitigated through on-site or off site preservation or creation, through payment into an in-lieu fee program (if one is available), purchase of credits from an approved Mitigation Bank in the vicinity, or some combination of one or more of these options. Mitigation Measures contained in the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program are included as part of this Mitigated Negative Declaration which are intended to prevent or minimize disturbance or accidental take of species of concern. In the unlikely event of discovery of a special species on the site, protocols established by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFW) or California Department of Fish and Game (DFG) will be implemented before any future construction-related activities are allowed to commence. If discovery occurs during future construction-related activities, all activities will be immediately ceased until a qualified biologist determines which course of action to implement per USFW or DFG protocols. As noted in item 5. Cultural Resources, a cultural resources records search was conducted by the consultant Sierra Valley at the Southern San Joaquin Valley Information Center of the California Historical Resources Information System at CSU Bakersfield to identify areas previously surveyed and identify known cultural resources present within or in close proximity to the study area. Two previously recorded historic-period sites have been recorded within the study area; two additional historic-period sites have been identified within one-half mile of the study area (Map 3 [of the CRA]). There are no other resources within or in the immediate vicinity of the study area that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the California Register of Historic Resources, California Points of Historical Interest, State Historic Landmarks, or the California Inventory of Historic Resources. No formal cemeteries or other places of human internment are known to exist within the Project area. Implementation of the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program as part of this Mitigated Negative Declaration will reduce potential impacts to historical or archaeological resources. Therefore, the proposed Project does not have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of an endangered, rare or threatened plant or animal species, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory. There will be a **Less Than Significant Impact**.

b) The proposed Project is a comprehensive update to the Traver Community Plan. It is intended to accommodate projected growth and to provide a mechanism to stimulate economic development within the existing geographic area and consistent with current General Plan Land Use and Zoning designations for the contained in the Community Plan. It is not growth inducing, however, development is anticipated to occur consistent with the policies contained in the Tulare County General Plan, the Traver Community Plan, and other agencies (for example, the Valley Air District and Regional Water Quality Control Board). As such, it will result in Less Than Significant Impacts to resources such as air quality, noise, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, hazard or hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, population and housing, public services, transportation/traffic, or utilities and service systems. The proposed Project will result in Less Than Significant environmental impacts that are individually limited nor cumulatively considerable. There will be **Less Than Significant Impacts**.

c) As noted in b), above, The proposed Project is a comprehensive update to the Traver Community Plan. It is intended to accommodate projected growth and to provide a mechanism to stimulate economic development within the existing geographic area and consistent with current General Plan Land Use and Zoning designations for the contained in the Community Plan. The proposed Project will not result in environmental effects which will

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly. There will be <b>No Adverse Impact</b> .				

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