Sewerage Commission-Oroville Region

Ruddy Creek Pump Station Project

Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration

March 2025

Prepared for:
Sewerage Commission-Oroville Region

Prepared by:

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Report Prepared for:

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Table of Contents

List of Figures

Acronyms and Abbreviations

AB	Assembly Bill
AFY	Acre-feet per year
AHERA	Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act
APE	Area of Potential Effect
BCAQMD	Butte County Air Quality Management District
BMPs	Best Management Practices
CAA	Clean Air Act
CAAQS	California Ambient Air Quality Standards
CalEEMod	California Emissions Estimator Model
CalEPA	California Environmental Protection Agency
Calfire	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
Cal Green	California Green Building Standards Code
CalNAGPRA	California Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act
Cal/OSHA	California Division of Occupational Safety and Health
CAP	Climate Action Plan
CARB	California Air Resources Board
CCAA	California Clean Air Act
CCR	California Code of Regulations
CDFW	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
CEC	California Energy Commission
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CESA	California Endangered Species Act
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CH_4	Methane
CHRIS	California Historical Resources Information System
CNDDB	California Natural Diversity Database
CNPS	California Native Plant Society
CPUC	California Public Utilities Commission
CO	Carbon Monoxide
CO_2	Carbon Dioxide Equivalent
CRHR	California Register of Historical Resources
CUPA	Certified Unified Program Agency
CVRWQCB	Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board
CWA	Clean Water Act
dB	Decibel
dBA	A-weighted decibels
DTSC	California Department of Toxic Substances Control
DWR	California Department of Water Resources
EDUs	Equivalent Dwelling Units
EIR	Environmental Impact Report
EOC	Emergency Operations Center
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FMMP	California Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program
FHSZ	Fire Hazard Severity Zone
GC	Government Code
GHGs	Greenhouse Gases
GIS	Geographic Information System

HWMP	Hazardous Waste Management Program
Lbs/Day	pounds per day
LTS	less than significant
IPaC	US Fish and Wildlife Service's Information for Planning and Consultation
IS	Initial Study
IS/MND	Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration
LOS	Level of Service
MGD	million gallons per day
MMRP	Mitigation Monitoring & Reporting Program
MBTA	Migratory Bird Treaty Act
MLD	Most Likely Descendant
MMT	million metric tons
$MMTCO2_e$	million metric tons of Carbon Dioxide Equivalent
MND	Mitigated Negative Declaration
MAHC	Native America Heritage Commission
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
ND	Negative Declaration
NEIC	Northeast Information Center
NFPA	National Fire Protection Association
NO_2	Nitrogen Dioxide
NOX	Nitrogen Oxide
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
NVLAP	National Voluntary Laboratory Accreditation Program
O_3	Ozone
OHWM	Ordinary High Water Mark
Pb	Lead
PM_{10}	Particulate Matter less than 10 microns in diameter
$PM_{2.5}$	Particulate Matter less than 2.5 microns in diameter
PRC	Public Resources Code
Project	Sewerage Commission-Oroville Region Ruddy Creek Pump Station Project
RCRA	Resource Conservation and Recovery Act
ROG	Reactive Organic Gases
RWQCB	Regional Water Quality Control Board
SB	Senate Bill
SC-OR	Sewerage Commission-Oroville Region
SFHA	Special Flood Hazard Area
SGMA	Sustainable Groundwater Management Act
SIP	State Implementation Plan
SO2	Sulfur Dioxide
SPCC	Spill Prevention, Control, and Countermeasure
SVAB	Sacramento Valley Air Basin
SWRCB	State Water Resources Control Board
SWPPP	Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan
Tons/year	tons per year
USACE	US Army Corps of Engineers
USC	United State Code
USFWS	US Fish & Wildlife Service
USGS	US Geological Survey

UST	Underground Storage Tanks
VELB	Valley elderberry longhorn beetle
VHFHSZ	Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone
VMT	Vehicle Miles Traveled
WDR	Waste Discharge Requirements

Chapter 1 Introduction

Yuba Planning Group, LLC has prepared this Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration on behalf of the Sewerage Commission-Oroville Region (SC-OR). This document has been prepared in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), Public Resources Code 21000 et seq. SC-OR is the lead agency for this project.

An Initial Study (IS) is a document prepared by a lead agency to determine whether a project may have a significant effect on the environment. In accordance with California Code of Regulations Title 14 (Chapter 3, Section 15000, et seq), also known as the CEQA Guidelines, Section 15064(a)(1) states that an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) must be prepared if there is substantial evidence in light of the whole record that the proposed Project under review may have a significant effect on the environment and should be further analyzed to determine mitigation measures or project alternatives that might avoid or reduce project impacts to less-than-significant (LTS) levels. A Negative Declaration (ND) may be prepared instead if the lead agency finds that there is no substantial evidence in light of the whole record that the project may have a significant effect on the environment. An ND is a written statement describing the reasons why a proposed Project, not otherwise exempt from CEQA, would not have a significant effect on the environment and, therefore, why it would not require the preparation of an EIR (CEQA Guidelines Section 15371). According to CEQA Guidelines Section 15070, an ND or Mitigated ND (MND) shall be prepared for a project subject to CEQA when either:

a. The IS shows there is no substantial evidence, in light of the whole record before the agency, that the proposed Project may have a significant effect on the environment, or
b. The IS identifies potentially significant effects, but:
    i. Revisions in the project plans or proposals made by or agreed to by the applicant before the proposed MND or IS is released for public review would avoid the effects or mitigate the effects to a point where clearly no significant effects would occur is prepared, and
    ii. There is no substantial evidence, in light of the whole record before the agency, that the proposed Project, as revised, may have a significant effect on the environment.

This Initial Study uses the following terms to describe the level of significance of adverse impacts. These terms are defined as follows.

- **No Impact**: An impact that would result in no adverse changes to the environment.
- **Less than Significant Impact**: An impact that is potentially adverse but does not exceed the thresholds of significance as identified in the impact discussions. Less than significant impacts do not require mitigation.
- **Less than Significant with Mitigation**: An environmental effect that may cause a substantial adverse change in the environment without mitigation, but which is reduced to a level that is less than significant with mitigation identified in the Initial Study.
- **Potentially Significant Impact**: An environmental effect that may cause a substantial adverse change in the environment; either additional information is needed regarding the extent of the impact to make the significance determination, or the impact would or could cause a substantial adverse change in the environment. A finding of a potentially significant impact would result in the determination to prepare an EIR.

Chapter 2 Project Description

2.1.1 Project Title

Ruddy Creek Pump Station Project

2.1.2 Lead Agency Name and Address

Sewerage Commission-Oroville Region
P.O. Box 1350
Oroville, CA 95965

2.1.3 Contact Person and Phone Number

Lead Agency Contact

Glen Sturdevant, Manager Superintendent
Sewerage Commission-Oroville Region
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CEQA Consultant

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2.1.4 Project Location

The project is in south Butte County, northern California, within the Sphere of Influence of the City of Oroville and within the unincorporated community of Thermalito. The current pump station site is located within a fenced area located on the south side of State Route (SR) 162, less than one mile east of the Oroville Municipal Airport between Harlan Ave and 14th Street (see Figure 1, Project Vicinity Map and Figure 2, Project Location Map). The current pump station site is at an elevation of 47 feet above mean sea level, on Assessor's Parcel Number 030-212-043. The new pump station will be located approximately 15 feet south of the existing pump station, on Assessor's Parcel Number 030-212-046, which consists of approximately 0.25 acres. The Area of Potential Effect (APE) is approximately 0.9 acres, which includes demolition of existing facilities and construction of new facilities within the two subject parcels as well as off-site within Caltrans right of way. Surrounding land uses include commercial, residential, and agricultural, with a highway, SR 162, at the northern boundary, and Ruddy Creek on the eastern boundary. Ruddy Creek lies approximately 15 feet east of the current main pump station. An existing discharge line starting from the pump station crosses underneath the western side of the creek bed and connects to a new manhole on SR 162. A new discharge line will be constructed starting from the new pump station and will follow a similar path to the old pump station discharge line.

2.1.5 Latitude and Longitude

The centroid of the parcel is 39.497910, -121.598866.

2.1.6 General Plan Designation

MHDR – Medium High Density Residential[1]

[1] Oroville 2030 General Plan. https://www.cityoforoville.org/home/showpublisheddocument/12187/635955765376170000. Accessed June 26, 2030

2.1.7
MHDR – Medium High Density Residential

2.1.8 Project Description

Project Purpose and Background
The Sewerage Commission-Oroville Region (SC-OR) Ruddy Creek Pump Station Rehabilitation Project involves the removal and decommissioning of an existing pump station (wet well/dry well pump station and discharge pipes) and construction of a new wet well pump station with three pumps and a grinder, as well as a new discharge line through Ruddy Creek to a new manhole. Evaluations done by SC-OR indicate that installing a new wet well system will provide more efficient service and be cost-effective.

The original pump station was built in 1975 and has reached the end of its useful life, as wet weather flows now exceed the station's pumping capacity. The increase in pumping capacity is needed to meet the demand of existing flows due to infiltration and inflow (I&I)-related storm events and to serve future expansion planned for the Thermalito area. SC-OR will build a new pump station and demolish the old station on an adjacent 0.25-acre SC-OR-owned property immediately south of the existing pump station site, with an Area of Potential Effect of 0.9 acres ("project area"). The new pump station will be updated with modern controls and expanded pumping capacity. The station was originally designed to serve the City of Oroville's Airport Business Park and parts of the unincorporated area of Thermalito south of Oro Dam Boulevard and west of Harlan Avenue. This station will continue to serve those areas, and will provide additional pumping capacity for future customers, as the existing business park and neighborhoods in those areas continue to build out.

Existing Facility
The existing pump station consists of a dry well and a wet well that perform influent pumping. The existing pump station has two pumps that each pump 380 gallons per minute. The treated effluent is discharged via a pipeline that is routed east from the main station then underneath Ruddy Creek to a manhole on SR 162.

Proposed Project
Demolition
In order to prepare the site for the upgraded lift station facilities, SC-OR proposes to demolish most of the existing features, including the following, within the 0.9-acre Project Area:

- Plug and abandon the existing 15-inch sanitary sewer pipe
- Demolish the existing gates and fencing
- Demolish the concrete foundation on which the existing structures are located
- Remove and reuse the shed/storage box at the northeast corner of the site
- Demolish a valve box and preserve the bypass pumping port and existing valve in a new box at grade
- Demolish all existing electronical control panels
- Demolish the top portion of a dry well and filling the remainder
- Demolish an existing communications pole
- Demolish and relocate overhead power lines in coordination with PG&E.
- Demolish a wetwell manhole in the western area of the site
- Demolish an existing billboard and associated electrical box and lighting

PG&E overhead power lines and support wires will remain in place during construction. New power lines will be constructed by PG&E on a new pole located onsite where the existing guy anchor pole is currently. Following the new power line construction, the existing overhead pole and power lines will be removed.

Storm drain pipes and the Ruddy Creek culvert and headwall will also be protected in place. See Figure 3, Demolition Plan for more information.

Construction

The proposed project includes rehabilitation and expansion of an existing gravel access road over areas where previous facilities are being demolished to access the new facilities to the south of existing facilities. In the new project area, the following will be constructed:

- 10-foot-high fencing and gate
- Wet well at surface to approximately 13.5 feet below grade
- Grinder manhole at surface to approximately 10 feet below grade
- Two additional manholes to 7 to 10 feet below existing grade
- Electrical equipment, control panels, valve vault, and emergency generator with shade structure on a 532 square-foot raised structure with the top of the concrete set one foot above base flood elevation
- Control panels
- 10-inch sanitary sewer force main approximately 6.5 feet under the bed of Ruddy Creek
- 18-inch sanitary sewer from the gravel access to the valve vault
- Two (2) 20.5-foot tall pole lights

All construction would occur within SC-OR property boundaries and Caltrans right of way. Construction staging would be located on adjacent property away from the creek. The entire area would be compacted and graveled to the limit shown on Figure 5, which includes the access driveway and fenced site. The area of gravel (including the concrete structures) is 9,245 sf (0.12 acres), which does not include the area disturbed by the staging, ditch regrading, and force main trench and sanitary sewer lines outside the area of gravel. The total area of disturbance is anticipated to be approximately 0.25 acres, while the Area of Potential Effect is approximately 0.9 acres. See Figure 4, Proposed Site Plan with Aerial; Figure 5, Proposed Site Plan; and Figure 6, Proposed Piping Plan, for more details.

Construction is anticipated to begin in 2025 and end in 2026 within 12 months. Construction hours are anticipated to be standard hours, Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. through 7 p.m.

Operations and Maintenance

The new pump station will have 3 pumps that will each pump 500 gallons per minute. Operations and maintenance of the new pump station will be performed as needed by the existing SC-OR operational staff during regular business hours. The new pump station will run automatically with level control sensors and flow meters that monitor the amount of sewage coming into and out of the station. This station will be operational 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. It is anticipated that the new pump station will only require one pump on duty to handle the average daily flows of the station. However, because it does experience higher than average flows during periods of wet weather, two pumps will be installed to handle excess flows and a third pump will perform as a backup.

The new pump station will be incorporated into SC-OR's operation and maintenance program. As part of that program this station will be assigned daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, semiannually, and annual maintenance tasks. All maintenance of the station will be performed by SC-OR personnel and/or its designated contractors. Operations personnel will monitor and visit the station daily to assess the condition of the station and check its daily operation, and staff will perform weekly pump-downs of the wet well to flush out any accumulated grease and scum built up in the station, and to exercise all three submersible raw sewer pumps.

Figure 1 - Project Vicinity Map

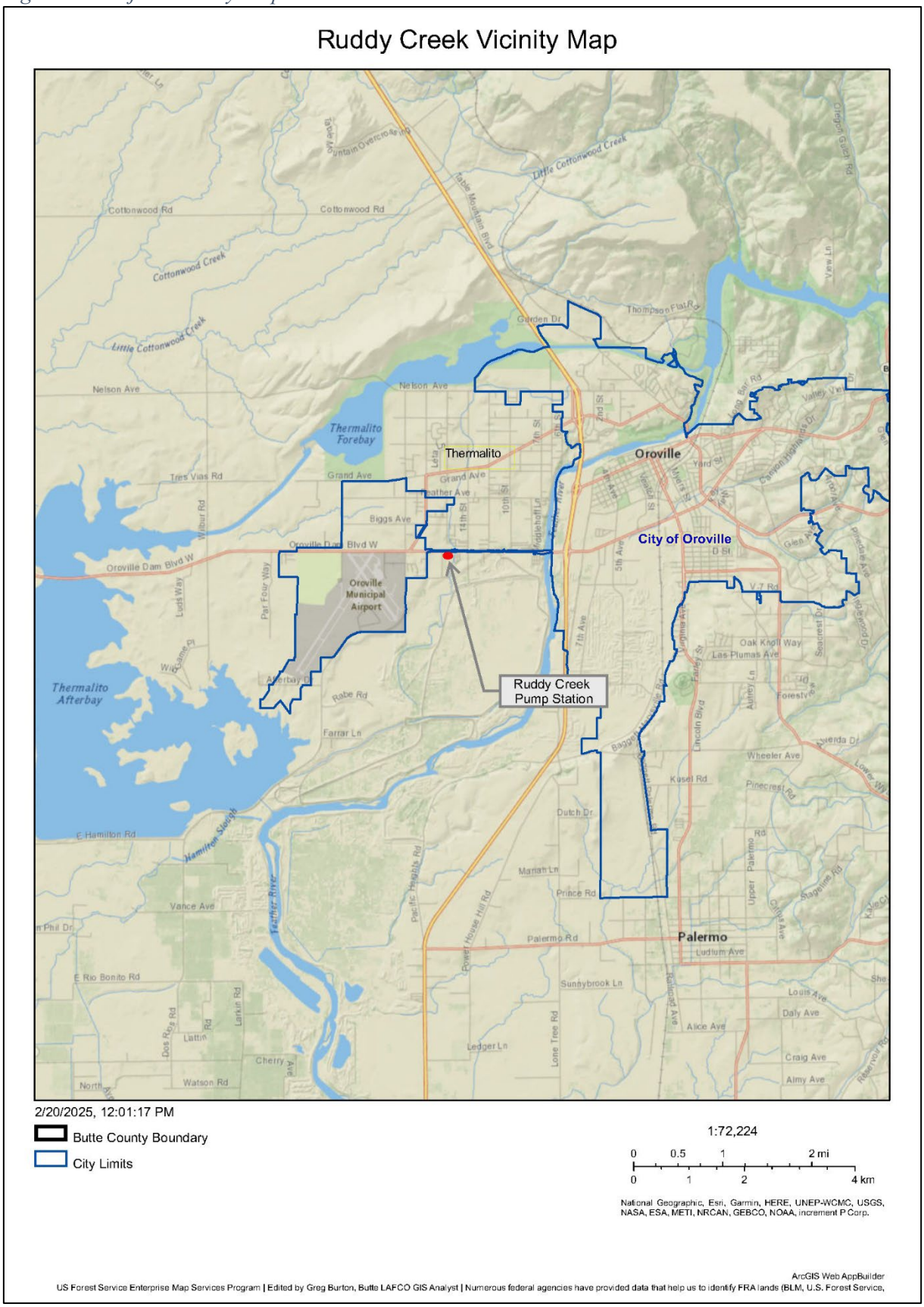


Figure 2 - Project Location Map

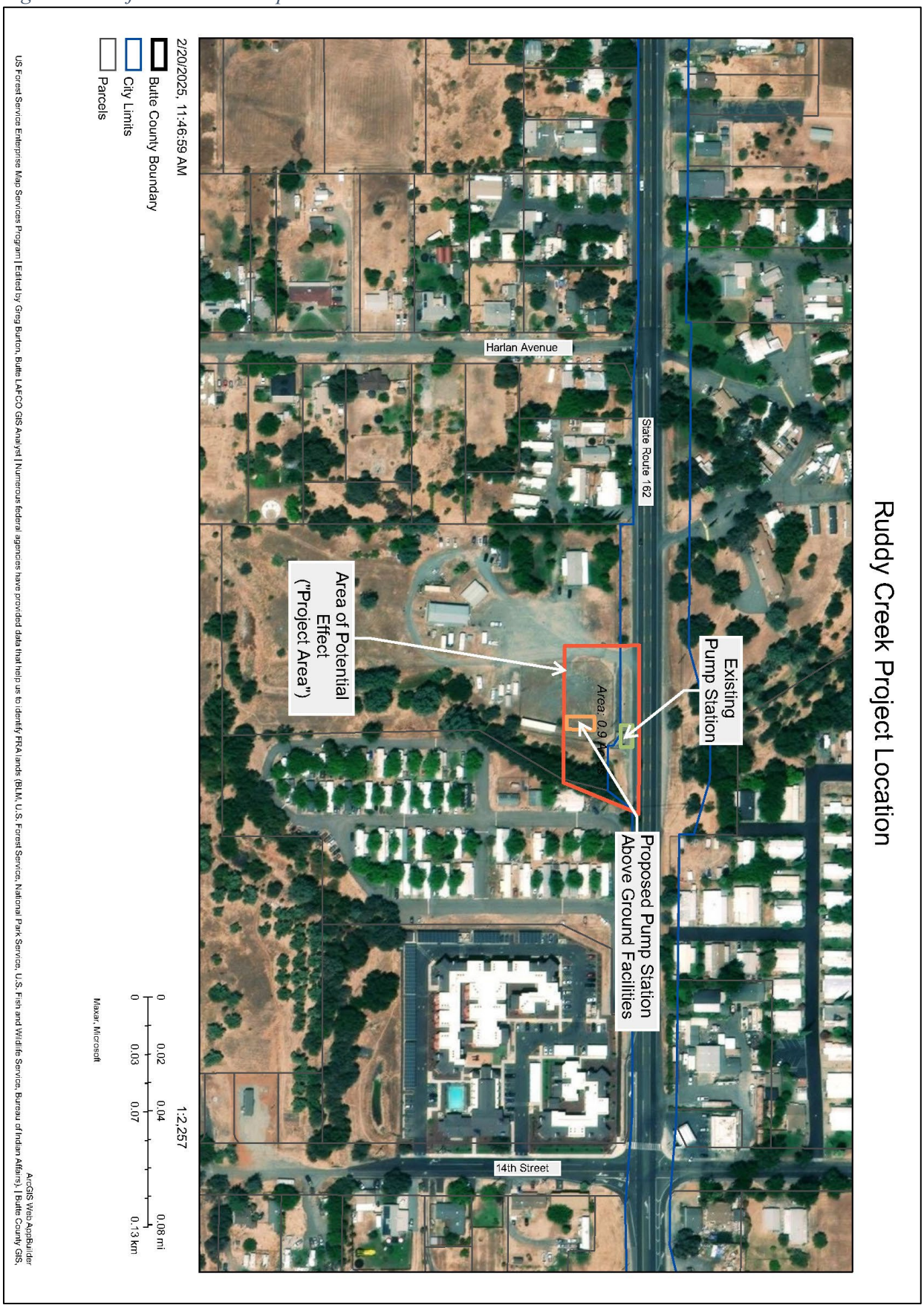


Figure 3 - Demolition Plan

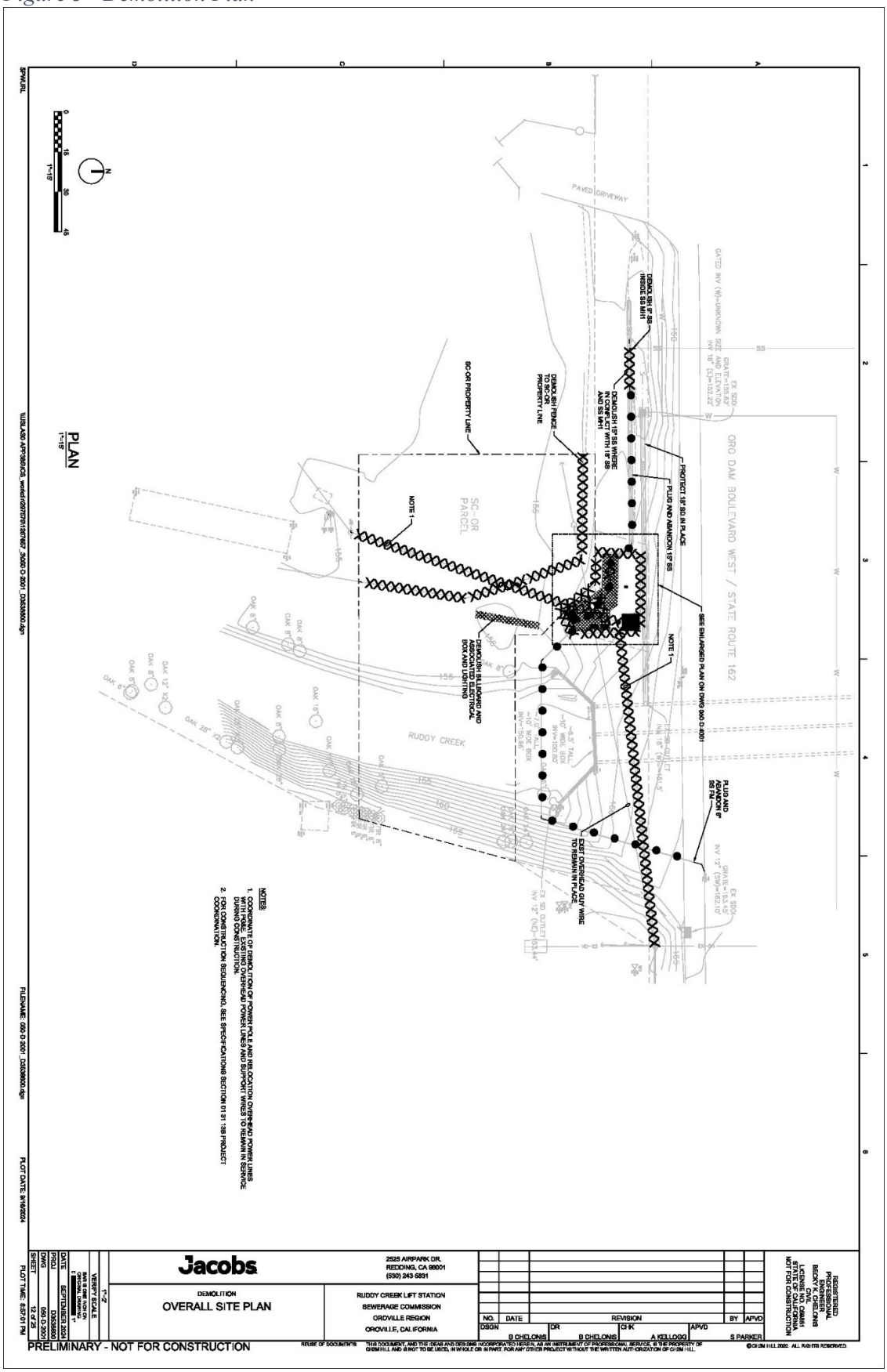


Figure 4 - Proposed Site Plan with Aerial

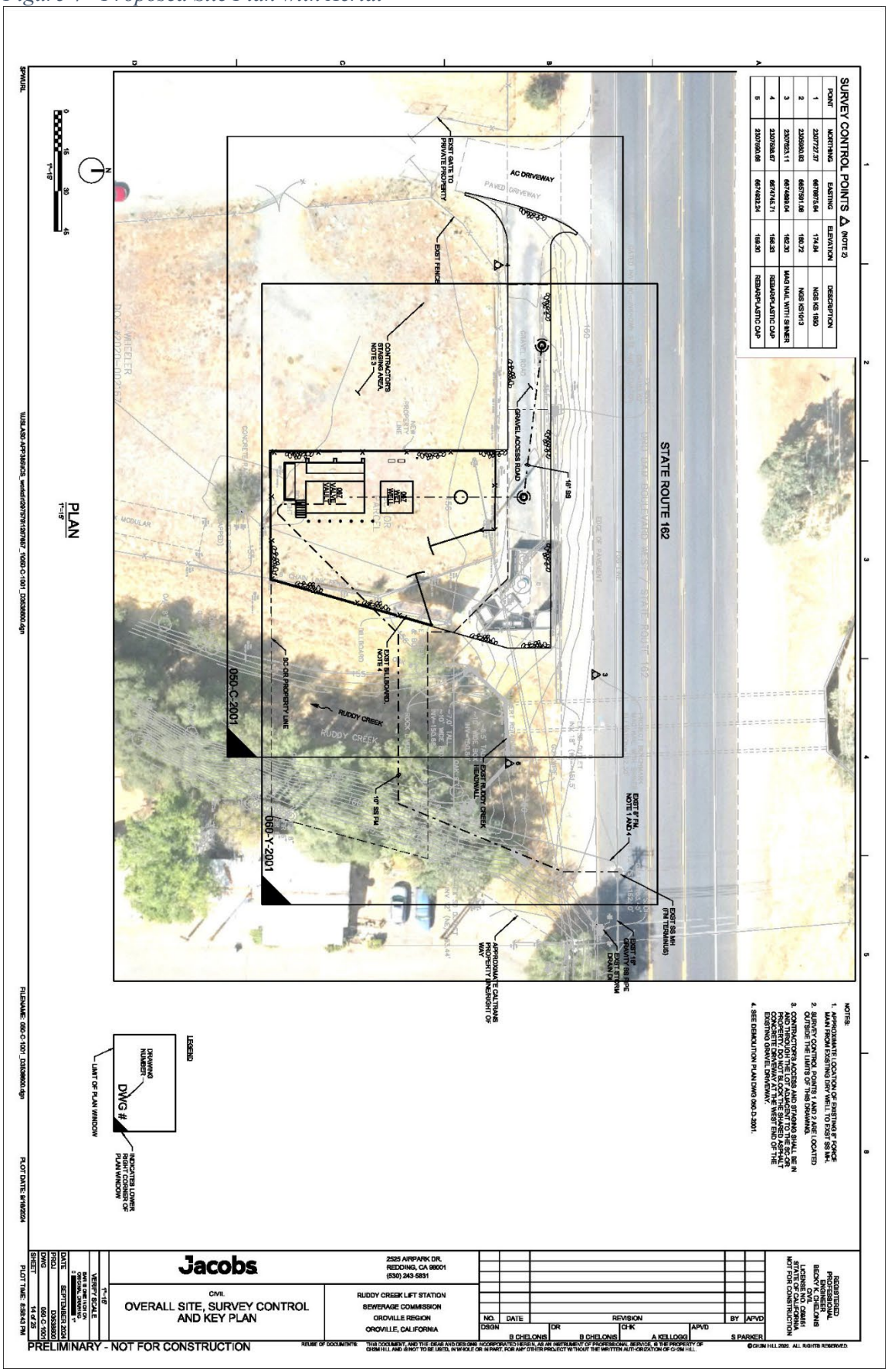


Figure 5 - Proposed Site Plan

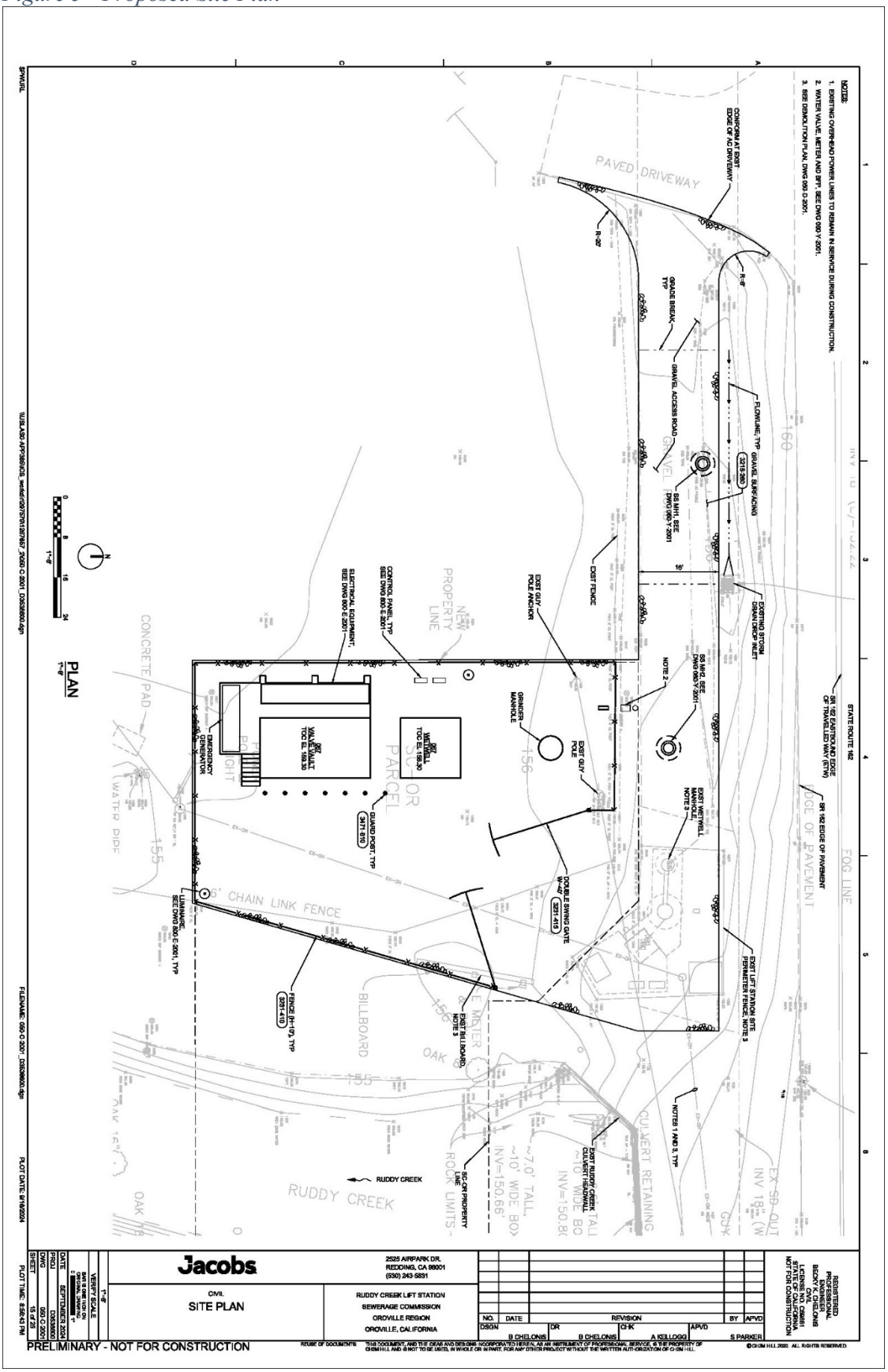
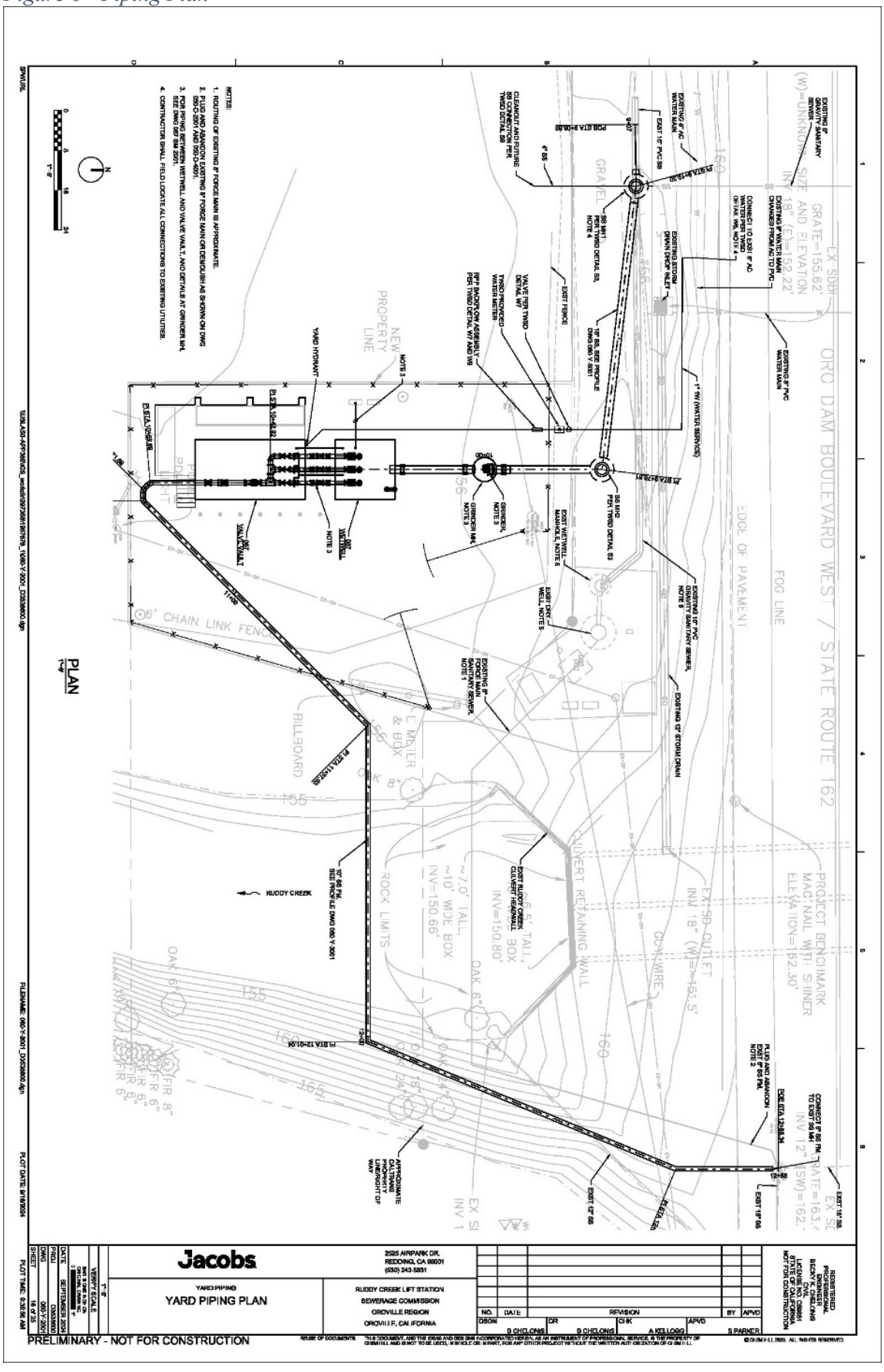


Figure 6 - Piping Plan



2.1.9 Surrounding Land Uses and Setting:

Surrounding land uses include commercial and residential, with SR 162 at the northern boundary and Ruddy Creek on the eastern boundary. Ruddy Creek lies approximately 15 feet east of the current main pump station. An existing discharge line starting from the pump station crosses underneath the western side of the creek bed and connects to a manhole on SR 162. Surrounding land uses include the following:

- North: SR 162, RV park, single-family residential, fueling station, and miscellaneous commercial uses, including vacant commercial buildings
- South: Mobile homes, single-family residential, storage buildings, agricultural (orchards)
- West: Mobile home park, single-family residential
- East: Ruddy Creek, mobile home park

The nearest sensitive receptors are residences starting at approximately 45 feet from the eastern property boundary line. Additional residences are located further east, south, and west, as well as north of SR 162, which has a 100-foot right of way.

2.1.10 Other Public Agencies Whose Approval May Be Required:

- Butte County – Building Permit, Erosion Control Permit, Grading Permit
- Butte County Air Quality Management District – Rules and Regulations for Construction
- California Department of Fish & Wildlife – Streambed Alteration Agreement
- Caltrans – Encroachment Permit
- Central Valley Regional Water Quality Board – Construction NPDES Storm Water Pollution Prevention Permit

2.1.11 Consultation with Native American Tribes

Assembly Bill 52 (AB 52, codified at Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 21080.1, et seq) requires that a lead agency, within 14 days of determining that it will undertake a project, must notify in writing any California Native American Tribes traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of the project if that Tribe has previously requested notification about projects in that geographic area. The notice must briefly describe the project and inquire whether the Tribe wishes to initiate formal consultation. Tribes have 30 days from receipt of notification to request formal consultation. The lead agency then has 30 days to initiate the consultation, which then continues until the parties come to an agreement regarding necessary mitigation or agree that no mitigation is needed, or one or both parties determine that negotiation occurred in good faith, but no agreement will be made.

SC-OR, as a lead agency, has not received any written correspondence from a California Native American Tribe traditionally or culturally affiliated with the project's geographic area formally requesting notification of proposed projects pursuant to PRC Section 21080.3.1. However, written correspondence was sent to Tribes who have requested notification from Butte County, the area within which this project is located, on January 24, 2025. As of February 24, 2025, no response has been received. Additionally, California Native American Tribes who have requested notification from Butte County, and those tribes listed on the contact list for this project by the Native American Heritage Commission will be sent a Notice of Availability for Public Review and Notice of Intent to Adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration for this project, which will allow the Tribes the opportunity to comment on the analysis of environmental impacts. Mitigation has been included in Sections 5 and 18 of this initial study to address a plan for further consultation, if needed.

Chapter 3 Impact Analysis

3.1 Environmental Factors Potentially Affected

All of the following environmental factors have been considered. Those environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is "Less Than Significant with Mitigation" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

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

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 by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

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

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

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

3/3/25

Glen Sturdevant, Manager/Superintendent Date

1. AESTHETICS

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

Existing Setting

The current pump station site is within a cyclone-fenced area located on the south side of State Route (SR) 162, less than one mile east of the Oroville Municipal Airport between Harlan Ave and 14th Street. The site is visible from SR 162, but slatted fencing blocks views of equipment from the road, as shown in Figure 7 below. The property south of the project site contains mobile homes, RVs, and a number of storage buildings and ancillary structures[2]. Mobile home parks are located to the east and west of the project site. Single-family residences are located north of the site across SR 162.

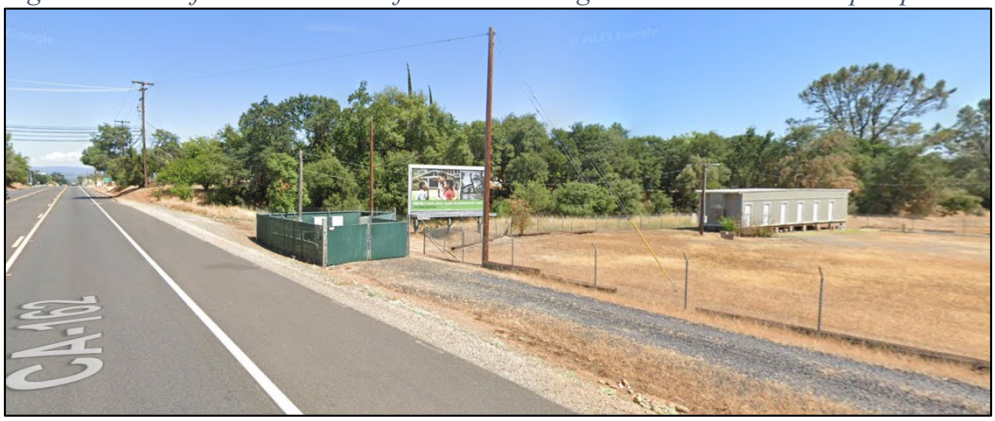
The closest sensitive receptor is a residence approximately 45 feet from the eastern property boundary line, with multiple other residences within 250 feet. Ruddy Creek is present on the eastern side of the property, oriented approximately parallel to the eastern and southern boundaries. The section of Ruddy Creek adjacent to the project supports a riparian ecosystem as shown in Figure 8 below. Additionally, there is a billboard to the southeast of the existing pump station, as shown in Figure 8 below. An existing gravel access road runs parallel to SR 162 and is highly visible from SR 162 as shown in Figure 9.

[2] ENGEO Inc. *Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment – 1551 Oroville Dam Boulevard West, Draft.* November 22, 2023.

Figure 7 - View from south side of SR 162 looking southwest toward the pump station

Figure 8 – View of Ruddy Creek looking northwest from western side of pump station

Figure 9 - View from south side of SR 162 looking southeast toward the pump station



Impact Discussion

1a,c. The project is located approximately 1 mile west of the Feather River, and the Oroville Wildlife Area, 3.6 miles west of the Sierra Nevada foothills, 3 miles northeast of Thermalito Afterbay, and 6.5 miles southwest of Lake Oroville. However, the project site is not within the viewshed of many of these scenic features. The project involves improvements to existing pump infrastructure on a developed urban plot. The proposed improvements would not stand out from their surroundings in any remarkable fashion and would not alter the current aesthetic character the site. Additionally, the project does not conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality, as the proposed improvements would occur on property that is already urbanized. Therefore, impacts of the proposed project would be ***less than significant***.

1d. The project includes two 20.5-foot pole lights located at the western boundary and eastern boundary. These lights would only be used during emergency night-time repair work and would not be lit on a nightly operational basis. It is expected that the vegetation within Ruddy Creek would at least partially block any off-site light trespass from the new pole light at the eastern boundary. However, given the proposed lighting and the project's high visibility on SR 162, the project has potential to create a new temporary source of substantial light or glare that could adversely affect nighttime views in the area on an occasional basis. Impacts would be ***less than significant with mitigation*** as identified below in Mitigation Measure 1A, which would minimize light and glare from lighting fixtures.

1b. SR 162, parallel to the project area, is not a State-designated scenic highway. Therefore, the proposed project would have ***no impact*** on scenic resources within a state scenic highway.

Mitigation: To offset potentially adverse aesthetic impacts associated with public vantage points, the following mitigation measures shall be required:

Mitigation Measure 1A: Minimize light and glare from light fixtures. All external light fixtures shall be designed to minimize light spillage and glare, including the use of shielding devices to orient the light downward and reduce glare, and low intensity lights to reduce light spillage. This mitigation shall be incorporated into construction documents for the project.

Timing: *Prior to issuance of building permits*
Responsible Entities:

- *Sewerage Commission-Oroville Region for inclusion of mitigation measure in building permits*
- *Construction contractor for inclusion of measure in construction documents and implementation of measure during construction*

2. AGRICULTURAL/FORESTRY RESOURCES

Would the proposed project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Department of Conservation's Division of Land Resource Protection, to non-agricultural use?				✓

b. Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or conflict with a Williamson Act contract?				✓
c. Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resource Code section 12220(g)), timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code Section 4526)?				✓
d. Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?				✓
e. Involve other changes in the existing environment, which due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to nonagricultural use or conversion of forest land to nonforest use?				✓

Existing Setting

The project site contains an existing pump station surrounded by residences and semi-vacant lots used for storage. The Butte County General Plan land use designation for the property is Medium High Density Residential. The subject property is designated "Urban and Built-Up Land" by the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Department of Conservation, and the property is currently zoned and designated for residential uses. The project site is highly disturbed and partially developed, including the existing pump station and large staging areas. No agricultural uses exist onsite or immediately adjacent to the site.

Impact Discussion

2a,b,e. The proposed pump station facility and the existing pump station are located in an area that is entirely designated "Urban and Built Up Land" and will not result in a conversion of Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance to non-agricultural use. Additionally, the proposed project will not conflict with or convert existing zoning for agricultural use. Neither the subject property nor adjacent properties are under a Williamson Act contract, and surrounding lands are zoned and designated for commercial and residential uses. The proposed project is anticipated to have ***no impact*** on a Williamson Act contract(s) and conversion of farmlands to a non-agricultural use.

2c,d. The land division does not propose a change in zoning out of a Forest or Timber Production Zone and would not result in the loss or conversion of land zoned Forest or Timber Production Zone. Additionally, the project site is not located on or near forest land as defined by the California Public Resource Code Section 12220(G). Therefore, the project would have ***no impact*** related to Forest or Timber Production Zone zoning.

Mitigation: None required.

3. AIR QUALITY

Would the proposed project:	**Potentially Significant Impact**	**Less Than Significant with Mitigation**	**Less Than Significant Impact**	**No Impact**
a. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan.				✓

b. Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is in non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?				✓
c. Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?		✓		
d. Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?				✓

Existing Setting:

The project lies within the Sacramento Valley Air Basin (SVAB) which is managed by Butte County Air Quality Management District (BCAQMD). Air quality in SVAB is impacted by multiple factors including topography and local / regional meteorology, which can cause poor air dispersion, leading to air quality issues.

State and Federal air quality standards have been established for specific "criteria" air pollutants including ozone, carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide, lead, and particulate matter. In addition, there are State standards for visibility reducing particles, sulfates, hydrogen sulfide, and vinyl chloride. State standards are called California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS) and federal standards are called National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). NAAQS are composed of health-based primary standards and welfare-based secondary standards.

Butte County is currently classified as a Nonattainment area for ozone by both state and federal standards. Ozone forms when nitrogen oxides and reactive organic gases (also known as Volatile Organic Compounds) interact in the presence of sunlight, particularly during high temperatures. This issue primarily occurs in the summer, with peak concentrations typically observed in July and August, especially in the late afternoon and evening hours.

Butte County is also Nonattainment area for particulate matter (PM10 and PM2.5) by CAAQS. The number after "PM" refers to maximum particle size in microns. PM10 is a mixture of dust, combustion particles (smoke) and aerosols, whereas PM2.5 is mostly smoke and aerosol particles. PM2.5 sources include woodstoves and fireplaces, vehicle engines, wildfires and open burning. PM10 sources include PM2.5 plus dust, such as from surface disturbances, road sand, vehicle tires, and leaf blowers. Some pollen and mold spores are also included in PM10, but most are larger than 10 microns.

Ultramafic rock and its altered form, serpentine rock (or serpentinite), both typically contain asbestos, a cancer-causing agent. Ultramafic rock and serpentine are likely to exist in several areas of Butte County; however, the area of the project site is not mapped as an area that is likely to contain natural occurrences of asbestos, which are generally found in foothill areas of the County[2,3]. The soil composition in the general area of the property includes gravelly-loam soil[2].

Impact Discussion:

3a,d. The proposed project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of an applicable air quality plan; therefore, ***no impact*** is anticipated on the potential adoption or implementation of an air quality plan.

[3] California Department of Conservation, Division of Mines & Geology. *Report 2000-19: A General Location Guide for Ultramafic Rocks in California -- Areas More Likely to Contain Naturally Occurring Asbestos*. August 2000. Accessed July 15, 2024. https://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/stelprdb5126473.pdf

3b. Given that there is no substantial grading associated with this project, construction impacts would not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is in non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard. Additionally, operational impacts will be minimal as the current pump station does not produce significant emissions in any category, and the new pump station will not exceed these emission levels. Therefore, ***no impact*** is anticipated in emission levels of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is in non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard.

3c. The Area of Potential Effect is 0.9 acres, and the closest sensitive receptors are residences approximately 45 feet from the eastern property boundary line. While the proposed pump station is not anticipated to generate substantial pollutant concentration during operation, demolition of the old pump station and construction of the new station could impact nearby residential uses without dust and emissions controls during construction. Mitigation Measures 3A and 3B[4] are proposed to reduce emissions during project construction (increased particulate matter from diesel and dust and increased hydrocarbon release for the synthesis of ozone) from heavy equipment used for demolition, grading, trenching, etc. Therefore, it is anticipated that the project would result in impacts that are ***less than significant with mitigation*** related to exposing sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations.

Mitigation: To offset potentially adverse air quality impacts associated with the project activities, the following mitigation measures shall be required and shall be included in the improvement plans for the project:

Mitigation Measure 3A: Reduce Fugitive Dust during Construction. The following are the minimum mitigation measures designed to help reduce project fugitive dust related to construction and shall be included as a note on all plans prior to issuance of all grading permits. Failure to perform the following measures could result in a violation of BCAQMD's Rules 200 and 205. "Nuisance" and "Fugitive Dust", respectively.

1. Reduce the amount of disturbed area where possible.
2. Use water trucks or sprinkler systems in sufficient quantities to prevent airborne dust from leaving the site. Increased watering frequency would be required whenever wind speeds exceed 15 mph. Reclaimed (non-potable) water should be used whenever possible.
3. Sweep streets at the end of each day if visible soil material is carried onto adjacent paved roads (SR 162). Water sweepers with reclaimed water should be used where feasible.

Timing: *Prior to issuance of grading permits*
Responsible Entities:

- *Sewerage Commission-Oroville Region for inclusion of mitigation measure in building permits*
- *Construction contractor for inclusion of measure in construction documents and implementation of measure during construction*

Mitigation Measure 3B: Reduce Emissions During Construction. The following are the minimum mitigation measures designed to help reduce project emissions related to construction, which shall be included as a note on all plans prior to issuance of all grading, improvement, and building permits. In addition to these measures, all statewide air pollution control regulations shall

[4] Butte County Air Quality Management District. *Butte County Air Quality Management District CEQA Air Quality Handbook Appendix C.* March 2024. Accessed July 16, 2024. https://bcaqmd.org/wp-content/uploads/CEQA-Handbook-2024-Update-Final.pdf

be followed, including diesel regulations (which may be accessed at www.arb.ca.gov/diesel/diesel.htm).

1. At least 50% of the mobile off-road construction equipment in use at any time on the project shall be equipped with Tier 1 engines (or cleaner).
2. All architectural coatings shall comply with the California Air Resources Board's 2007 Suggested Control Measure for Architectural Coatings (available at www.arb.ca.gov/coatings/arch/Approved_2007_SCM.pdf).
3. Construction equipment idling times shall be minimized either by shutting equipment off when not in use, or reducing the maximum idling time to 5 minutes (as required by the California airborne toxics control measure Title 13, Section 2485 of California Code of Regulations [CCR]) and all construction equipment shall also be maintained and properly tuned in accordance with manufacturer's specifications." Clear signage shall be provided for construction workers at all access points.
4. The applicant shall use reasonable precautions to minimize dust generation. Reasonable precautions may include watering exposed soils, as well as any stockpiled material, and limiting traffic speeds. Such methods shall be noted on improvement plans prior to approval.

Timing: *Prior to issuance of grading and building permits*
Responsible Entities:

- *Sewerage Commission-Oroville Region for inclusion of mitigation measure in building permits*
- *Construction contractor for inclusion of measure in construction documents and implementation of measure during construction*

4. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Would the proposed project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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?				✓
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?		✓		
c. Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?		✓		
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?				
e. Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?			✓	
f. Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?				✓

Existing Setting:

This section is based on a biological inventory was prepared for the subject property in January 2025 by Greg Matuzak, a CDFW-qualified Biologist with extensive experience developing similar reports for projects located in Butte County.[5] Mr. Matuzak conducted a reconnaissance-level biological field survey on foot of the entirety of the Project area on June 6, 2024, with the purpose of identifying habitat and vegetation types within the Project area and to determine the potential of any special-status plant and wildlife species identified in the desktop analysis and background research to occur within the Project area. The project area is within an area best characterized as ruderal and disturbed with some fragments of non-native annual grassland habitat that includes non-native annual grassland species located along the banks of Ruddy Creek and along the edges of the heavily disturbed Project area. The open areas of the project site contain no trees and are dominated by asphalt, concrete, and gravel and dirt. non-native annual grassland and pasture species. Ruddy Creek runs north to south along the eastern section of the Project area. Ruddy Creek is a flood control creek that also accommodates flow from the surrounding areas after precipitation events.

Impact Discussion:

4a. According to the Biological Inventory, the project site does not contain or have the potential to contain any special-status species. Of the plant species previously documented within the Oroville USGS Topo Quad, a total of seven plants are defined as potential special-status species given that CNPS List 3 and List 4 species are watch list species and are not protected under CEQA. The seven CNPS List 1 or 2 species are Spicate Calycadenia (*Calycadenia spicata*), Aharts Paronychia (*Paronychia ahartii*), Butte County Gold Clover (*Trifolium jokerstii*), Red Bluff Dwarf Rush (*Juncus leiospermus var. leiospermus*), Butte County Meadowfoam (*Limnanthes floccosa spp. californica*), Woolly Rose - Mallow (*Hibiscus lasiocarpos var. occidentalis*), and Pink Creamsacs (*Castilleja rubicundula var. rubicundula*). None of these species were identified during the field survey and suitable habitat for them does not occur within the Project area.

Species that occur within the California Natural Diversity Database search that have the potential for occurrence in the Project include California black rail (*Laterallus jamaicensis coturiculus*), California red-legged frog (*Rana draytonii*), foothill yellow-legged Frog (*Rana boylii*), bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), osprey (*Pandion haliaeetus*), golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*), North American porcupine (*Erethizon dorsatum*), coast horned lizard (*Phrynosoma blainvillii*), western spadefoot (*Spea hammondii*), giant garter snake (*Thamnophis gigas*), northwestern pond turtle (*Actinemys marmorata*), Townsend's big-eared bat (*Corynorhinus townsendii*), western mastiff bat (*Eumops perotis californicus*), silver haired bat (*Lasionycteris noctivagans*), monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*), Vernal pool fairy shrimp (*Branchinecta lynchi*), vernal pool tadpole shrimp (*Lepidurus packardi*), California linderiella (*Linderiella occidentalis*), and yellow-billed cuckoo

[5] Matuzak, Greg. *Ruddy Creek Pump Station Upgrade Project, City of Oroville, Butte County.* Biological Resources Assessment. January 2025.

(*Coccyzus americanus occidentalis*). However, none of these species was observed during the field review, and there are no suitable habitats to support any of these special-status species, such as perennial wetlands, dense woodlands, vernal pools, or cliffs or abandoned buildings. Additionally, the Project area and areas adjacent to it do not contain any elderberry plants, shrubs, or trees and therefore, the presence of the host plant for the valley longhorn elderberry beetle is absent, and the species would not be present or impacted within the Project area or by the Project respectively.

None of these species, nor any other special-status species (plants or wildlife), were observed during the site visit and field survey. Given the lack of suitable aquatic habitat and a lack of Designated Critical Habitat (DCH) by the USFWS within the Project area for any of these species, none of the listed species have the potential to occur within the Project area. Therefore, the Biological Resources Assessment concludes that the proposed Project would have ***no impact*** on any special-status species.

4b,c There is a single aquatic resource within the Project area, Ruddy Creek, that is mapped within the National Wetland Inventory within or directly adjacent to the Project area. The blue line stream feature along the eastern section of the Project area is a flood control facility that does contain the required defined bed and bank to be regulated by California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). The bed is gravel and the few plants within the bed of the creek include species that are not wetland associated. The banks of Ruddy Creek contain non-native annual grassland species. The Project may require a state permit for crossing Ruddy Creek with a proposed 10-inch pipeline. Federal permitting for any impacts to the creek within the Project area would not be required given the creek is seasonal in nature and is not a perennial stream that connects directly with a navigable waterway, which is the most up to date federal requirement for being subject to regulation under the Clean Water Act (CWA).

The applicant has applied for a Streambed Alteration Agreement (SAA) with CDFW, and it has been determined that the project would have impacts to about 0.2 acres of riparian habitat, which may be temporarily impacted by project activities, including trenching, limbing work, and construction within the banks and bed of the creek. There would be no permanent impacts associated with the project. A fully executed SAA is required in Mitigation Measure 4A and would reduce this impact to a less than significant level.

In order to ensure the timely implementation of these and other mitigation measures pertaining to biological resources, Mitigation Measure 4B, requiring that copies of the mitigation measures be provided to contractors, is also required. Standard erosion control measures provided in Mitigation Measure 4C would also reduce any impacts to Ruddy Creek. With implementation of Mitigation Measure 4A to obtain an SAA, Mitigation Measure 4B requiring mitigation within construction documents, and Mitigation Measure 4C requiring standard erosion control practices, the project would have impacts that are ***less than significant with mitigation.***

4d. There is a very low potential for nesting raptors and other nesting migratory bird species protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) to occur within the project area as the Project area represents very marginal potential habitat. In addition, active and inactive nests within and adjacent to the project area were not identified during the field survey. However, given the possibility of nesting birds within the project area, this impact would be ***less than significant with mitigation*** with implementation of Mitigation Measure 4D below**.**

4e. The proposed project is not anticipated to conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance. The Project area contains native live oak trees (*Quercus sp.*) and the few trees identified within the Project area are associated

with Ruddy Creek. Several small to medium sized live oak trees are located adjacent to both sides of the creek and are located well up outside the banks of the creek. The definition of protected oak resources under the Butte County Oak Woodland Mitigation Ordinance (Ordinance) no longer requires oaks to be 10% of the tree canopy in order for the project to be subject to the Ordinance. A cap for the removal of oak woodlands requires that 30% of oak woodlands remain and no more than 70% removal can occur. A small portion of native live oaks will have their limbs removed and a few of the trees may be required to be fully removed. However, less than 10% of the native live oaks along Ruddy Creek will be removed or impacted. Therefore, no mitigation would be required for their removal under local ordinances. (Tree resources are required to be mitigated under the CDFW SAA permit if they occur within the riparian area.) Conflicts with local policies and ordinances are therefore expected to be ***less than significant.***

4f. The subject property is not part of a Habitat Conservation Plan or any other adopted conservation plans; therefore, the project would have ***no impacts*** or conflicts with adopted conservation plans.

Mitigation: To reduce potential construction impacts to biological resources, the following mitigation measures shall also be required and shall be included as notes on the approved improvement plans:

Mitigation Measure 4A: Obtain a Streambed Alteration Agreement from California Department of Fish and Wildlife and Implement Its Conditions. The applicant shall obtain a Streambed Alteration Agreement from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife prior to any ground disturbance.

Timing: *Prior to ground disturbance*
Responsible Entities:

- *Sewerage Commission-Oroville Region for inclusion of mitigation measure in grading and building permits*
- *Construction contractor for inclusion of measure in construction documents and implementation of measure during construction*

Mitigation Measure 4B: Provide Copies of Permit Conditions/Mitigation Measures to Contractors. To ensure the proper and timely implementation of all mitigation measures contained in this report, as well as the terms and conditions of any other required permits, the applicant shall distribute copies of these mitigation measures and any other permit requirements to the contractors prior to grading and construction, and these measures shall be incorporated into construction documents, including grading and building plans as applicable.

Timing: *Prior to issuance of grading and building permits*
Responsible Entities:

- *Sewerage Commission-Oroville Region for inclusion of mitigation measure in grading and building permits*
- *Construction contractor for inclusion of measure in construction documents and implementation of measure during construction*

Mitigation Measure 4C: Implement Best Management Practices (BMPs) During Construction. To protect water quality and aquatic life in downstream aquatic resources, the contractor shall implement the following BMPs during construction, which shall also be shown as a note on all improvement and grading plans:

1. Disruption of soils and native vegetation shall be minimized to limit potential erosion and sedimentation; disturbed areas shall be graded to minimize surface erosion and siltation; bare soils shall be immediately stabilized and revegetated. Seeded areas shall be covered with broadcast straw or mulch.

2. If straw is used for erosion control, only certified weed-free straw shall be used to minimize the risk of introducing noxious weeds such as yellow star thistle.
3. The contractor shall exercise every reasonable precaution to prevent contamination of the project area with spilled fuels, oils, bitumen, calcium chloride, and other harmful materials. Contamination of the project area soils from construction byproducts and pollutants such as oil, cement, and wash water shall be minimized. Drip pans or absorbent pads should be used during vehicle and equipment maintenance work that involves fluids. All construction debris and associated materials and litter shall be removed from the work site immediately upon completion.
4. To minimize erosion, development runoff shall not be discharged directly across steep slopes. Runoff shall instead be directed through energy dissipaters constructed at discharge points to reduce flow velocity and prevent erosion.

Timing: *Prior to issuance of grading and building permits*
Responsible Entities:

- *Sewerage Commission-Oroville Region for inclusion of mitigation measure in building permits*
- *Construction contractor for inclusion of measure in construction documents and implementation of measure during construction*

Mitigation Measure 4D: Nesting raptors and migratory birds. The following note shall be added to all improvement/grading/construction plans and the measures implemented as noted:

Impacts to nesting raptors and migratory birds can be avoided by removing vegetation before the start of the nesting season, or delaying removal until after the end of the nesting season.

a) Tree removal and construction shall not take place during the breeding season (March 1 –July 31), unless supported by a report from the qualified biologist verifying that birds, including raptors, are not nesting in the trees proposed for removal or disturbance.
b) If construction is to take place during the nesting season (March 1 - August 31), including any ground disturbance, preconstruction surveys for nesting raptors and migratory birds shall be conducted within 7 days prior to the beginning of construction activities by a California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)-approved biologist and in accordance with California and Federal requirements. If active nests are found, a buffer (protected area surrounding the nest, the size of which is to be determined by a qualified biologist) and monitoring plan shall be developed. Nest locations shall be mapped and submitted, along with a report stating the survey results, to the Nevada County Planning Department within one week of survey completion.
c) An additional survey shall be required if periods of construction inactivity (e.g., gaps of activity during grading, tree removal, road building, or structure assembly) exceed a period of two weeks, an interval during which bird species, in the absence of human or construction-related disturbances, may establish a nesting territory and initiate egg laying and incubation.
d) Any trees containing non-active nests that must be removed as a result of development shall be removed during the non-breeding season. However, the project proponent shall be responsible for offsetting the loss of any nesting trees. The project proponent and biologist/monitor shall consult with CDFW and the extent of any necessary compensatory mitigation shall be determined by CDFW. Previous recommended mitigation for the loss of nesting trees has been at a ratio of three trees for each nest tree removed during the non-nesting season.

Timing: *Prior to issuance of grading and building permits*
Responsible Entities:

- *Sewerage Commission-Oroville Region for inclusion of mitigation measure in building permits*

- *Construction contractor for inclusion of measure in construction documents and implementation of measure during construction*

5. CULTURAL RESOURCES

Would the proposed project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to § 15064.5?		✓		
b. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to § 15064.5?		✓		
c. Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?		✓		

Existing Setting:

The project is located in a region utilized by Konkow populations at the time of Euro-American contact. Indigenous populations used the local region for seasonal and/or permanent settlement, as well as for the gathering of plants, roots, seeds, domestic materials, and hunting seasonal game. Historically, Euro-Americans utilized the region for mining and transportation opportunities.[6]

Impact Discussion:

5a-c. A records search from the Northeast Information Center (NEIC) of the California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS), located at California State University, Chico was conducted in January 2025. The NEIC records search includes a review of all recorded archaeological and built-environment resources as well as a review of cultural resource reports on file. In addition, the California Points of Historical Interest (SPHI), the California Historical Landmarks (CHL), the California Register of Historical Resources (CAL REG), the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), and the California State Built Environment Resources Directory (BERD) listings were reviewed for the above referenced APE and an additional ¼-mile radius. Due to the sensitive nature of cultural resources, archaeological site locations are not released.

The NEIC search did not result in the discovery of any archaeological or prehistoric resources in the Project area, and no built environment resources have been recorded within or adjacent to the project boundaries. Numerous previous investigations have been conducted on portions of the site. The NEIC has indicated that the Project area has low sensitivity for cultural resources.

In addition, on January 24, 2025, SC-OR contacted all tribes whose contact information was previously provided by the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC), and whose information was provided to Butte County. They were provided with a brief description of the Project, project plans, and a map showing its location. SC-OR also requested that the NAHC perform a search of the Sacred Lands File to determine if any Native American resources have been recorded in the immediate APE. The NAHC identifies, catalogs, and protects Native American cultural resources – ancient places of special religious or social significance to Native Americans

[6] California Historical Resources Information System, Northeast Information Center. "IC File # NE24-609, Project Review Review, Ruddy Creek Pump Station Upgrade." January 2, 2025.

and known ancient graves and cemeteries of Native Americans on private and public lands in California. The NAHC is also charged with ensuring California Native American tribes' accessibility to ancient Native American cultural resources on public lands, overseeing the treatment and disposition of inadvertently discovered Native American human remains and burial items, and administering the California Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (CalNAGPRA), among many other powers and duties. No response has been received from local tribes as of the date of this writing, and the NAHC has indicated that the Sacred Land File search yielded no results.

However, due to possibility of encountering previously unknown resources in the area and the proximity of Ruddy Creek which is an area of higher sensitivity, Mitigation Measure 5A requires that work be halted and proper notification and consultation required if any artifacts or cultural resources are discovered during construction. With the implementation of Mitigation Measure 5A, impacts to cultural resources are expected to be ***less than significant with mitigation.***

Mitigation: To offset potentially adverse cultural or historical resources impacts associated with the construction activities, the following mitigation measure shall be required and shall be included as notes on all grading and construction plans:

Mitigation Measure 5A: Halt Work if Subsurface Deposits Encountered. If subsurface deposits believed to be cultural, human, or paleontological in origin are discovered during construction, all work shall halt within a 100-foot radius of the discovery. A qualified professional archaeologist, meeting the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards for pre-contact and historic archaeologist, shall be retained to evaluate the significance of the find, and shall have the authority to modify the no-work radius as appropriate, using professional judgment. The following notifications shall apply, depending on the nature of the find: (If the professional archaeologist determines that the find does not represent a cultural resource, work may resume immediately, and no agency notifications are required.)

a. Archaeological Resources. If the professional archaeologist determines that the find does represent a cultural resource from any time period or cultural affiliation, he or she shall immediately notify SC-OR who shall consult on a finding of eligibility and implement appropriate treatment measures if the find is determined to be a Historical Resource under CEQA. Work may not resume within the no-work radius until the lead agencies, through consultation as appropriate, determine that the site either: 1) is not a Historical Resource under CEQA; or 2) that the treatment measures have been completed to their satisfaction.

b. Human or Potentially human remains. If the find includes human remains, or remains that are potentially human, the archaeologist shall ensure reasonable protection measures are taken to protect the discovery from disturbance (AB 2641). The archaeologist shall notify the Butte County Coroner (per § 7050.5 of the Health and Safety Code). The provisions of § 7050.5 of the California Health and Safety Code, § 5097.98 of the California PRC and AB 2641 will be implemented. If the Coroner determines the remains are Native American and not the result of a crime scene, the Coroner will notify the NAHC, who then will designate a Native American Most Likely Descendant (MLD) for the project (§ 5097.98 of the PRC). The designated MLD will have 48 hours from the time access to the property is granted to make recommendations concerning treatment of the remains. If the landowner does not agree with the recommendations of the MLD, the NAHC may mediate (§ 5097.94 of the PRC). If no agreement is reached, the landowner must rebury the remains where they will not be further disturbed (§ 5097.98 of the PRC). This shall also include either recording the site with the NAHC or the appropriate Information Center; using an

open space or conservation zoning designation or easement; or recording a reinternment document with the county in which the property is located (AB 2641). Work may not resume within the no-work radius until the lead agencies, through consultation as appropriate, determine that the treatment measures have been completed to their satisfaction.

Timing: *If needed during construction*
Responsible Entities:

- *Sewerage Commission-Oroville Region for inclusion of mitigation measure in grading and building permits*
- *Construction contractor for inclusion of measure in construction documents and implementation of measure during construction*

6. ENERGY

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

Existing Setting:

The subject property currently has electric service from PG&E, which would also provide power to the new pump station. Additionally, to meet the power requirements of this project, a 480V, three-phase, wye connected system will be requested from PG&E.

Impact Discussion:

6a. The proposed project is not anticipated to result in significant environmental impacts due to wasteful, inefficient or unnecessary consumption of energy resources during either the construction or the operational phase of the project. Electricity is currently available to the property. Operationally, energy needs for the project are low, with the only need being for the gate and security monitoring, lighting, and the pump system. Lighting is proposed as energy-efficient LED lighting, which would be more energy efficient than the existing system. Improvements would be required to meet energy standards in place at the time of their construction. Similarly, any grading required for roadway improvements would be minimal, and equipment would be required to meet current standards. The requirements to meet energy standards for both construction equipment and materials will ensure that the use of energy resources would not be excessive, and the project would have a ***less than significant impact.***

6b. The proposed pump station would not conflict with any state or local plans for renewable energy or energy efficiency. Permits would be required to construct the proposed improvements. As part of the building permit review, all equipment and structures would be required to meet energy standards identified in the California Building Code. Likewise, the project would not obstruct or prevent plans for renewable energy or efficiency. Therefore, the project would have ***no impact*** to state or local plans for renewable energy or energy efficiency.

Mitigation: None required.

7. GEOLOGY / SOILS

Would the proposed project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including risk of loss, injury or death involving: i. Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42. ii. Strong seismic ground shaking? iii. Seismic-related ground failure including liquefaction? iv. Landslides?		✓		
b. Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?		✓		
c. Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or offsite landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?		✓		
d. Be located on expansive soil creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?		✓		
e. Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?				✓
f. Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?			✓	

Existing Setting:

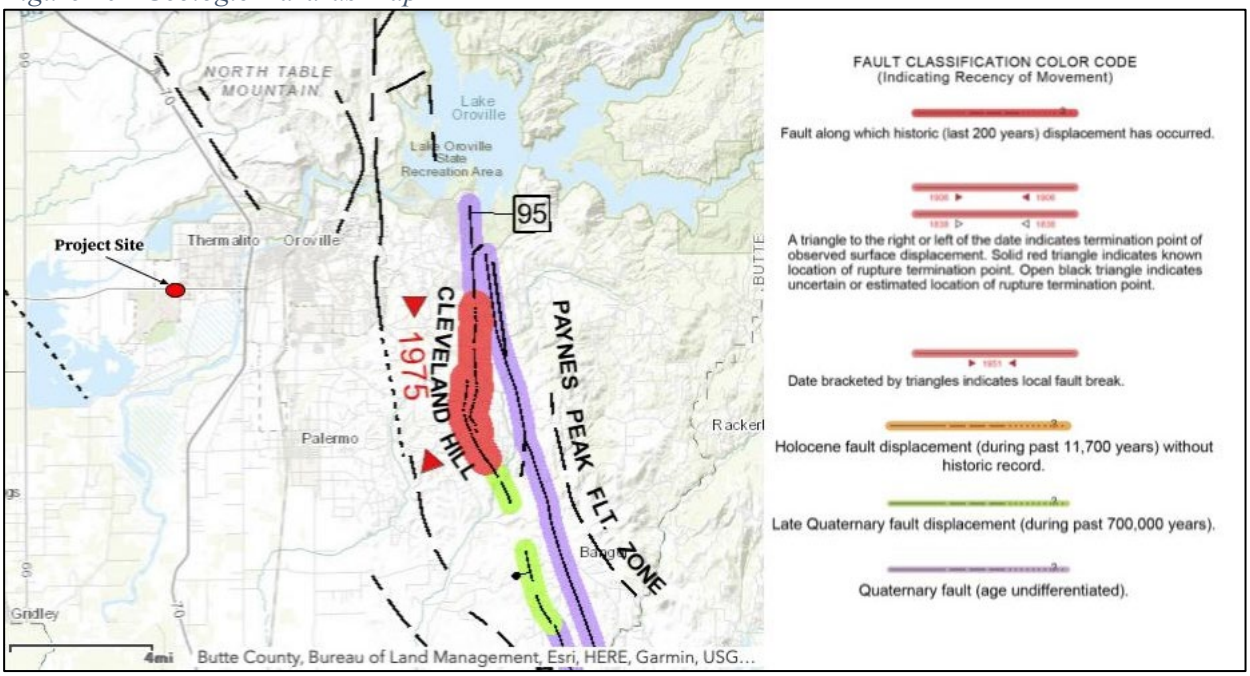
The subject property is located approximately 40 feet east of Ruddy Creek in the unincorporated community of Thermalito. The elevation of the property ranges from approximately 159 feet in the northwest and southeast to approximately 148 feet within the creek bed on the southeastern side of the property. The property is underlain by Holocene age alluvium soil, which consists of unconsolidated silt, sand, and gravel[7]. A representative soil surface profile consists of about 30 inches of clayey sand with gravel. Permeability of alluvium soil is moderate to low, and runoff is moderate to high depending on slope.

The Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act was adopted in 1972 to prevent the construction of buildings in areas where active faults have surface expression. Ground or fault rupture is generally defined as the displacement that occurs along the surface of a fault during an earthquake. The project site is not

[7] Saucedo, G., Wagner, D. *Geologic Map of the Chico Quadrangle: Regional Geologic Map 7A, 1:250,000.* California Division of Mines and Geology. 1992.

located within a designated fault hazard zone, and no known faults cut through the soil at the site[8]. The nearest major fault is the Maacama Fault, located approximately 89 miles southwest of the Project site. The Maacama fault is the northward continuation of the Hayward-Rodgers Creek fault system in northern California. The Cleveland Hill Fault, a northern reach of the Foothills Fault System, is approximately 7 miles east of the site.

Figure 10 - Geologic Hazards Map



Impact Discussion:

7a,c,d. The proposed project is not anticipated to result in adverse effects due to unstable soils or cause significant erosion given that much of the site is already pre-graded and level, and that standard erosion control measures will be implemented in the project (see Mitigation Measure 4C). The site is not within an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone and is not located within a Seismic Zone, meaning the site has no risk for strong ground motion and thus the project is not anticipated to result in earthquake-related impacts. Additionally, the site's soils are not described by the USDA Soil Conservation Service as being unstable or expansive. Building permits will be required for all earthwork, which would require compliance with the Butte County grading standards outlined in Butte County's Code of Ordinances, Chapter 13, Article I, Section 11[9]. Building permits would also require compliance with the California Building Code (CBC) requirements to ensure protection during seismic events. Therefore, due to the project soils, standard permit requirements, impacts associated with unstable earth conditions are expected to be ***less than significant with mitigation*** as identified in Mitigation Measure 4C.

7b. Project construction is not anticipated to result in substantial soils erosion, or in grading on steep slopes as there are no moderate or steep slopes on the site. Additionally, all work would be required

[8] California Department of Conservation. *The California Earthquake Hazards Zone Application (EQ Zapp).* September 2021. Accessed July 24, 2024. https://www.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/geohazards/eq-zapp

[9] Butte County Department of Public Works. *Code of Ordinances: Chapter 13, Article 1, Section 11.* May 2024. Accessed July 30, 2024. https://library.municode.com/ca/butte_county/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=CH13GRMI_ARTIGR_13-11ST

to be in compliance with Butte County grading standards and the California Building Code, requiring erosion control measures as needed to ensure that activities do not result in substantial erosion. Additionally, Mitigation Measure 4C would minimize any impacts related to erosion. Therefore, impacts relative to soil erosion, or to disturbance within steep slopes resulting from the proposed project are anticipated to be ***less than significant with mitigation***.

7e. The proposed Project does not require any wastewater or septic systems. Therefore, the project would have ***no impact*** relative to a lack of soils for sewage disposal.

7f. There are no known unique paleontological resources/sites or unique geologic features present on the Project site. Barring any evidence to the contrary it is not anticipated that the Project would directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geological feature. Construction activities associated with the Project are not expected to be conducted significantly below grade, at a level where they would have the potential to disturb any previously unknown paleontological resources or geologic features. Impacts would be ***less than significant***.

Mitigation: See Mitigation Measure 4C.

8. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Would the proposed project:	**Potentially Significant Impact**	**Less Than Significant with Mitigation**	**Less Than Significant Impact**	**No Impact**
a. Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?		✓		
b. Conflict with any applicable plan, policy or regulation of an agency adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?		✓		

Existing Setting:

Greenhouse gases (GHGs) are those gases that trap heat in the atmosphere. GHGs are emitted by natural and industrial processes, and the accumulation of GHGs in the atmosphere regulates the earth's temperature. GHGs that are regulated by the State and/or EPA are carbon dioxide (CO_2), methane (CH_4), hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), perfluorocarbons (PFCs), sulfur hexafluoride (SF_6) and nitrous oxide (NO_2). CO_2 emissions are largely from fossil fuel combustion. In California, approximately 40 percent of the CO_2 emissions come from cars and trucks. Electricity generation is another important source of CO_2 emissions. Agriculture is a major source of both methane and NO_2, with additional methane coming primarily from landfills. Most HFC emissions come from refrigerants, solvents, propellant agents and industrial processes, and persist in the atmosphere for longer time-periods and have greater effects at lower concentrations compared to CO_2. The adverse impacts of global warming include impacts to air quality, water supply, ecosystem balance, sea level rise (flooding), fire hazards, and an increase in health-related problems.

Assembly Bill 32 (AB 32), the California Global Warming Solutions Act, was adopted in September 2006 and requires that statewide GHG emissions be reduced to 1990 levels by the year 2020. This reduction will be accomplished through regulations to reduce emissions from stationary sources and from vehicles. The California Air Resources Board (CARB) is the State agency responsible for developing rules and regulations to cap and reduce GHG emissions. In addition, the Governor signed Senate Bill 97 in 2007 directing the California Office of Planning and Research to develop guidelines for the analysis and

mitigation of the effects of greenhouse gas emissions and mandating that GHG impacts be evaluated in CEQA documents. CEQA Guidelines Amendments for GHG Emissions were adopted by OPR on December 30, 2009.

Impact Discussion:

8a-b. Carbon dioxide (CO_2) is the main component of greenhouse gases, and vehicles are a primary generator of CO_2. The project is not expected to generate greenhouse gases that would result in significant environmental impacts or that would be in conflict with plans for greenhouse gas reductions. The overall GHG impact is not anticipated to be substantially adverse due to several factors, including the fact that the pump station will apply standard building permit requirements, ensuring any new structures meet energy efficiency standards; the structures will not be heated and cooled; and the project would adhere to Mitigation Measure 3B, which requires 50 percent of equipment to utilize Tier 1 engines or clear; and equipment idle times to be less than 5 minutes. With implementation of Mitigation Measure 3B and other requirements under current Building Codes, the project would result in GHG emission impacts that are ***less than significant with mitigation***.

Mitigation: See Mitigation Measure 3B.

9. HAZARDS/HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Would the proposed project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?			✓	
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?			✓	
c. Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?				✓
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, create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?				✓
e. For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?				✓
f. Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?				✓
g. Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?				✓

Existing Setting:

The subject parcel is not within or adjacent to any hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5.[10] The project area is not within any fire hazard severity zone as designated by CAL FIRE.[11] The closest sensitive receptors are residences located 45 feet from the eastern boundary line, including within a nearby mobilehome park. The nearest schools are approximately one mile away, and the nearest airport is the Oroville Municipal Airport approximately 2,000 feet west.

Impact Discussion:

9a-b. The project involves the demolition of an existing pump station and construction of a new pump station. Demolition materials must be disposed of properly in compliance with local and State laws. Hazardous materials could also be stored, used, and handled during construction. The hazardous materials anticipated for use are small volumes of petroleum hydrocarbons and their derivatives (e.g., gasoline, oils, lubricants, and solvents) required to operate the construction equipment. These relatively small quantities would be below reporting requirements for hazardous materials business plans and would not pose substantial public health and safety hazards through release of emissions or risk of upset. Safety risks to construction workers for the proposed project would be reduced by compliance with Occupational Safety and Health Administration standards.

The wet well and the grinder manhole are both Class 1, Division II hazardous locations due to the presence of methane gas. This is inherent to any wastewater collection system, and the condition remains the same from the existing setting to the proposed setting.

The operation of the new facility would include a small amount of diesel for the emergency generator to operate for 24 hours if needed. This amount of diesel is below reporting requirements of 55 gallons. The project does not involve the use of any other hazardous materials. Therefore, project related hazard impacts relative to routine transport, use, disposal or emission of hazardous substances to the public or environment would be ***less than significant***.

9c. The nearest school is approximately one mile from the project site. Due to the type and amount of materials associated with this project, in conjunction with the distance to the nearest school, ***no impact*** relative to transport, use, or emissions of hazardous materials within proximity of a school is anticipated.

9d. The subject property is not on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5; therefore, there would be ***no impact.***

9e. The project site is located within the Airport Influence Area and is within Airport Compatibility Zone C, Long General Aviation Runway zone, and within the Overflight Zone of the Oroville Municipal Airport, located west of the project site.[12] However, the proposed project is not anticipated to interfere with air traffic patterns or aircraft safety as it does not propose a sensitive use within Airport zones and proposes no reflective or obstructive materials. Therefore, safety hazard impacts on people residing or working in the project area are anticipated to have ***no impact***.

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[10] California Department of Toxic Substances Control. Envirostor. Available at: https://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/. Accessed February 19, 2025.

[11] Calfire. Fire Hazard Severity Zones in State Responsibility Area. Available at: https://calfire-forestry.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=4466cf1d2b9947bea1d4269997e86553. Accessed February 19, 2025.

[12] Butte County Airport Land Use Commission. *Butte County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan*. Adopted November 15, 2017. Available at: https://www.buttecounty.net/541/Airport-Land-Use-Commission-ALUC. Accessed February 19, 2025.

9f. There is currently no adopted emergency response plan for the project area. The project would not impair implementation of, or physically interfere with, adopted emergency response plans, and ***no impact*** on any emergency response plan would occur as a result of the project.

9g. The proposed Project is not within a Wildland Urban Interface or other high fire hazard severity zone, and is outside the State Responsibility Area. The proposed project would not expose people or structures to wildland fires and there would therefore be ***no impact*** related to wildland fires from the project.

Mitigation: None required.

10. HYDROLOGY / WATER QUALITY

Would the proposed project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?		✓		
b. Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?				✓
c. Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner that would: i. result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site; ii. substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or offsite? iii. create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted run off; or iv. impeded or redirect flood flows?		✓		
d. In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?				✓
e. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?				✓

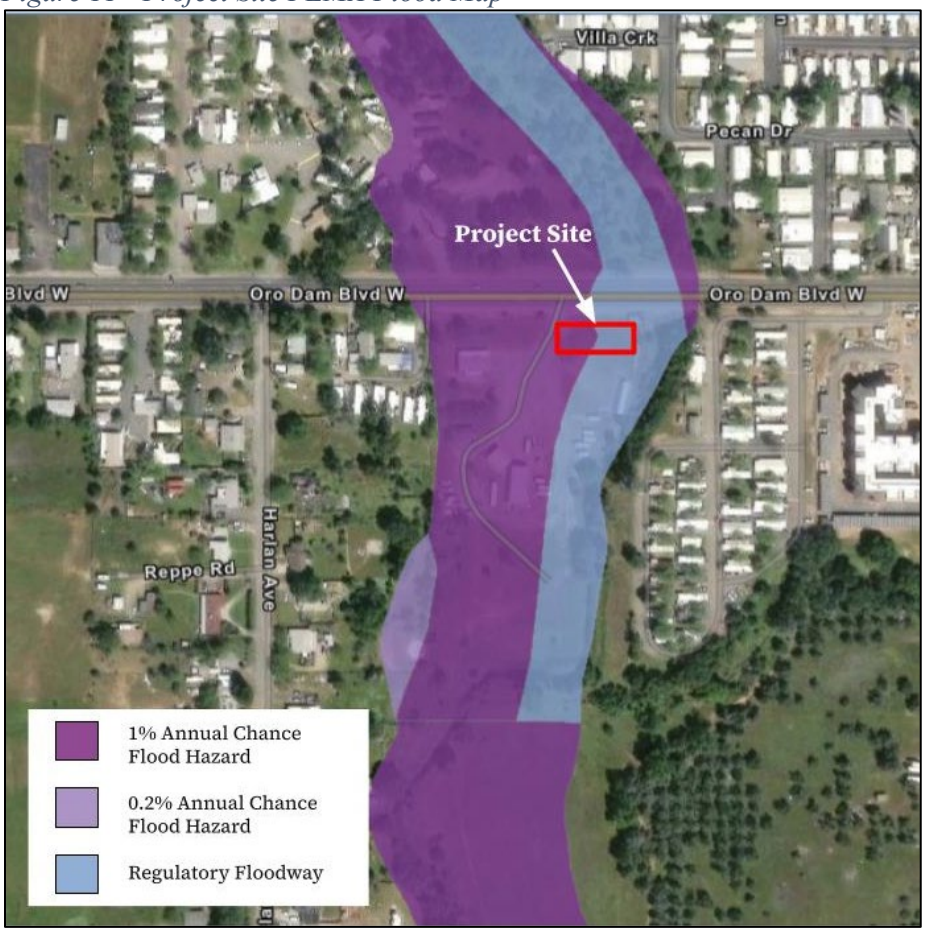
Existing Setting:

The project is located within the Lower Feather River watershed which begins at the Oroville Dam, according to the USGS classification system. The property is located within a regulatory floodway, which is defined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) as the primary area surrounding a channel. In this case the floodway is Ruddy Creek, which is a natural conduit for flood waters.[13]

[13] Federal Emergency Management Agency. *Guidance for Flood Risk Analysis and Mapping.* December 2020. Accessed July 23, 2024. https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/documents/fema_floodway-analysis-and-mapping.pdf

Additionally, the project is located in the 100-year flood plain, or an area that has a one percent annual chance of flooding.[14] However, the site does not contain any Waters of the U.S. or wetlands. Drainage on the property flows in a southwesterly direction, and Ruddy Creek is located along the eastern side of the property approximately 40 feet to the east of the current pump station.

Figure 11 - Project Site FEMA Flood Map



Impact Discussion:

10a,c. The proposed project is not anticipated to negatively affect water quality standards or waste discharge requirements, nor is it anticipated to contribute amounts that could exceed drainage system capacity or alter existing drainage patterns. Minimal grading is anticipated with the project, and standard erosion control measures will be required under Mitigation Measure 4C to ensure that this work does not result in offsite erosion or deposition of sediment into water features. With these protective measures, including Mitigation Measure 4C, the project would not alter off-site drainage patterns, degrade water quality, or violate water quality standards. Based on the above discussion, project-related impacts to water quality standards or waste discharge requirements, including contributing amounts that could exceed drainage system capacity or alter existing drainage patterns would be ***less than significant with mitigation***.

10b. The proposed pump station would not result in a substantial decrease in groundwater supplies, interfere with groundwater recharge or conflict with water quality/groundwater management plans

[14] Federal Emergency Management Agency. *Base Flood Elevation (BFE).* Accessed July 23, 2024. https://www.fema.gov/glossary/base-flood-elevation-bfe

as there is no groundwater use proposed with the project. The proposed pump station project is anticipated to have ***no impact*** on the existing wells on this or adjacent properties.

10d. While the project site is located in a flood hazard zone and floodway, the project does not conflict with or obstruct the implementation of a water quality control plan, nor does it expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding. Therefore, there would be ***no impact*** associated with the proposed project.

10e. The proposed pump station would not result in a substantial decrease in groundwater supplies, interfere with groundwater recharge or conflict with water quality/groundwater management plans. The proposed self-storage project is anticipated to have ***no impact*** on the existing wells on this or adjacent properties. The proposed pump station is anticipated to have no impact on the implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan.

Mitigation: See Mitigation Measure 4C.

11. LAND USE / PLANNING

Would the proposed project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Physically divide an established community?				✓
b. Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?			✓	

Existing Setting:

The subject property is currently occupied by the existing Ruddy Creek Pump Station. The current pump station site is within a fenced area located on the south side of State Route (SR) 162, less than one mile east of the Oroville Municipal Airport between Harlan Ave and 14th Street. The property has approximately 145 feet of frontage on SR 162. The property is west facing, with elevation ranging from approximately 159 feet in the northwest and southeast to approximately 148 feet within the creek bed on the southeastern side of the property. Surrounding land uses are residential and mixed use. The site is bounded on the northern side by SR 162, which, with a 100-foot right of way and three lanes of traffic, provides a formidable boundary to the residential area north of the property.

Impact Discussion:

11a. The proposed new pump station would not physically divide an established community. The subject property is located in a larger residential area and is consistent with the existing use of the pump station in this area. Thus, ***no impact*** to established communities is anticipated from the rezone or development of the site.

11b. Since approximately 1978, the parcel has been in use with the pump station, which is small public facility consuming approximately 0.05 ac of land, within the larger Medium Density Residential zoning. Potential conflicts with applicable land use plans, policies, or regulations that could result in physical impacts are identified within this Initial Study and are found to be less than significant. Impacts related to land use policy inconsistency and land use incompatibility are therefore considered ***less than significant***.

Mitigation: None required.

12. MINERAL RESOURCES

Would the proposed project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?				✓
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?				✓

Existing Setting:

The project area is not mapped within a Mineral Resource Zone (MRZ), or area of known valuable mineral deposits.

Impact Discussion:

12a-b. The proposed project is not mapped within a known mineral resource area or MRZ and would not result in the loss of known mineral resources on the project site. Therefore, the project would have ***no impact*** on mineral resources.

Mitigation: None required.

13. NOISE

Would the proposed project result in:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess standards established in the local General Plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?		✓		
b. Generation of excessive ground borne vibration or ground borne noise levels?		✓		
c. For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?				✓

Existing Setting:

The subject property is currently being used to house existing Ruddy Creek Pump Station. The current pump station site is a fenced area located on the south side of State Route (SR) 162, less than one mile east

of the Oroville Municipal Airport between Harlan Ave and 14th Street. The property has approximately 145 feet of frontage on SR 162. Surrounding land uses are residential and commercial. The nearest closest sensitive receptor is a residence approximately 45 feet from the eastern property boundary line, with multiple other residences within 250 feet. The site is bounded on the northern side by SR 162, which, with a 100-foot right of way and three lanes of traffic, provides a formidable boundary to the residential area north of the property.

The existing ambient noise setting is dominated by intermittent to constant traffic noise from SR 162 to the west. Traffic and other noise from surrounding residential uses, as well as ambient noise from the existing pump station, is part of the ambient setting.

Impact Discussion:

13a,b. A typical sewer pump station produces noise levels ranging from around 60 to 80 decibels (dB) at a close distance, often described as a low hum or rumble. Newer, well-maintained stations are typically quieter due to improved pump technology and soundproofing measures. The proposed project is expected to result in a reduction of noise levels due to the fact that the new pumps will be completely submersed in the water of a 13-foot deep well.

The existing conditions include a backup generator for power during testing and emergencies, and the proposed project also includes a generator for the same purposes. This generator will be enclosed within a Level 2 sound attenuation cover and is anticipated to be quieter than the existing generator due to the fact that it is newer and more efficient.

The construction of the proposed pump station would include demolition and construction activities that could be impactful to residences to the east, south, and west, which could be sensitive to intermittent and temporary noise generated during construction. Construction noise and construction-related vibration are not an ongoing land use and are short-term in nature; however, there could be a temporary exposure of nearby uses to noise in excess of thresholds. Therefore, Mitigation Measure 13A is recommended to limit construction work to the hours of 7AM to 7PM Monday through Saturday, resulting in impacts that are ***less than significant with mitigation***.

13c. The project site is located within the Oroville Municipal Airport Influence Area and is within Airport Compatibility Zone C, Long General Aviation Runway zone, and within the Overflight Zone of the Oroville Municipal Airport, located west of the project site.[15] However, the proposed project is not anticipated to expose people to noise from airport operations as it would not have any inhabitants or regular users that would be sensitive to airport noise. Given the restricted use of and distance to the Oroville Municipal Airport, as well as the nature of the project which does not include sensitive receptors, there would ***no impacts*** related to airport noise.

Mitigation: To mitigate potential construction related noises, the following mitigation measures shall be required and shall be included as notes on the improvement and grading permits prior to permit issuance:

Mitigation Measure 13A. Limit construction work hours to 7AM to 7PM: During grading and construction, work hours shall be limited from 7AM to 7PM, Monday through Saturday. Prior to issuance of grading, improvement, and building permits, plans shall reflect hours of construction.

Timing: *If needed during construction*
Responsible Entities:

[15] Butte County Airport Land Use Commission. *Butte County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan*. Adopted November 15, 2017. Available at: https://www.buttecounty.net/541/Airport-Land-Use-Commission-ALUC. Accessed February 19, 2025.

- *Sewerage Commission-Oroville Region for inclusion of mitigation measure in grading and building permits*
- *Construction contractor for inclusion of measure in construction documents and implementation of measure during construction*

14. POPULATION / HOUSING

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

Existing Setting:

The project site is zoned as MHDR (Medium High Density Residential) and is surrounded by MHDR and MDR (Medium Density Residential) zoning and residential uses.[16] The existing pump station provides services to the community and would not provide housing.

Impact Discussion:

14a-b. The proposed improvements to the pump station would not result in an inducement of unplanned population growth or displace existing people or housing. While improvements would be made to pump station to increase capacity, it would not induce growth but would simply accommodate the growth that has already been planned for the area. Therefore, the proposed project would have ***no impact*** related to population growth or housing displacement.

Mitigation: None required.

15. PUBLIC SERVICES

Would the proposed project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of or need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the following the public services:				

[16] Oroville 2030 General Plan. https://www.cityoforoville.org/home/showpublisheddocument/12187/635955765376170000. Accessed June 26, 2024

1. Fire protection?				✓
2. Police protection?				✓
3. Schools?				✓
4. Parks?				✓
5. Other public services or facilities?				✓

Existing Setting:

The following public services are provided to this site:

Fire: The Butte County Cooperative Fire Agencies provides fire protection services to this area.
Police: The Butte County Sheriff provides law enforcement services.
Schools: Thermalito Union School District provides education for the area.
Parks: The project is within the Feather River Recreation and Park district.
Water & Sewer: There is currently no water access provided to the property and a servicing tie into the nearby Thermalito Water and Sewer District main line will occur as needed. The area is served by SC-OR for sewer service.

Impact Discussion:

15a. The proposed project is not anticipated to have significant impacts on fire protection, law enforcement services, schools, parks and other public services and facilities because fees are in place for these services and the project is not contributing to the local population. Structures will be made with metal and other non-flammable materials, and all defensible space requirements will be met. School, fire mitigation, and recreation impact fees are in place and applicable at the time of building permit issuance to offset the incremental impact on these services. Electrical service will be provided by PG&E. The project would not impact sewer services negatively; instead the project aims to increase flow capacity and thus would overall improve sewer services in the area. For all of the reasons listed above, there would be ***no impact*** as a result of the approval of this project.

Mitigation Measures: None required.

16. RECREATION

Would the proposed project:	**Potentially Significant Impact**	**Less Than Significant with Mitigation**	**Less Than Significant Impact**	**No Impact**
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?			✓	
b. Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?			✓	

Existing Setting:

The subject property is located within the Feather River Recreation and Parks district, which maintains a public park at Riverbend Park approximately 1.5 miles south of the project. No recreational facilities occur

on the subject property. The Butte County General Plan currently states that the level of service for recreation as 7 acres per each 1,000 persons, countywide.[17]

Impact Discussion:

16a,b. The proposed pump station rehabilitation is not anticipated to result in negative impacts to recreational facilities, trigger the need for new facilities, or conflict with established facilities. With no increase in population resulting from the proposed project, it would not result in negative impacts to existing recreational facilities, nor trigger the need for new facilities. Due to the lack of any increase in population from the project and the lack of existing facilities onsite or in close proximity, the proposed project would have ***less than significant impact*** related to recreational facilities.

Mitigation: None required.

17. TRANSPORTATION

Would the proposed project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Conflict with a program plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle or pedestrian facilities?				✓
b. Would the project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?			✓	
c. Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., a sharp curve or dangerous intersection) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?		✓		
d. Result in inadequate emergency access?				✓
e. Result in an increase in traffic hazards to motor vehicles, bicyclists, or pedestrians, including short-term construction and long-term operational traffic?		✓		

Existing Setting:

The subject property is located approximately 50 feet south of SR 162 in Thermalito, an unincorporated area of Butte County. The property takes access from a shared driveway off of SR 162, with a short access road running parallel to the highway. SR 162 is a state highway and is maintained by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans).

Impact Discussion:

17a. The project would not conflict with transit, roadway, bicycle or pedestrian facilities policies or plans and includes no provisions for these facilities. There would be ***no impact***.

17b. The Project involves an upgrade to an existing pump station. Primary access to the site would be through the entrance with direct access on SR 162. Construction traffic associated with the Project would be minimal and temporary, lasting approximately 6 months, and project activities do not propose any lane closures or traffic diversions. Operations would not require additional staffing or

[17] Butte County Planning Department. *Butte County General Plan 2040: Public Facilities and Services Element, 12-16.* November 2022. Accessed Aug 7, 2024. https://www.buttecounty.net/367/Butte-County-General-Plan-2040

maintenance, and therefore operational traffic will be unchanged from existing conditions. There would therefore not be a significant adverse effect to existing roadways in the area, and this impact is considered ***less than significant***.

17c,e. The project would not result in an increase in hazards due to incompatible uses, or due to a geometric design feature either during construction or during future occupation of the properties. The existing pump station and the proposed rehabilitation would take access via SR 162. Although there is no existing right or left turn lane into the access road, the project would not contribute substantially to traffic that would result in the need for turn lanes. During project construction, construction traffic could result in hazards at the project entrance. With implementation of Mitigation Measure 17A, impacts related to hazardous features would be reduced to ***less than significant with mitigation.***

17d. The proposed project would have ***no impact*** relative to resulting in inadequate emergency access due to the fact that no emergency access is needed for the pump station, and it is located immediately off SR 162.

Mitigation: To mitigate potential construction-related traffic hazards, the following mitigation measure shall be required and shall be included as notes on the improvement and grading permits prior to permit issuance:

Mitigation Measure 17A. Obtain an encroachment permit from Caltrans. Prior to any project construction activities, the construction contractor shall obtain an Encroachment Permit from Caltrans, and shall comply with the terms of the Encroachment Permit throughout construction.

Timing: *Prior to construction*
Responsible Entities:

- *Sewerage Commission-Oroville Region for inclusion of mitigation measure in grading and building permits*
- *Construction contractor for obtaining encroachment permit and implementing any traffic control measures as needed during construction*

18. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

Would the proposed project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is: i. Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k), or ii. A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in		✓		

subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.				

Existing Setting:

The Project lies within the Oroville region which is the ancestral homeland of the Maidu people. The Maidu have been divided into three primary groups: the Nisenan; the Mountain Maidu; and the KonKow. The KonKow continued to reside in the Oroville area at the time of Euro-American contact and were likely the final native occupants of lands within the Project area. Villages were most intensely occupied during winter months and frequently located on flats adjoining streams and on ridges above rivers and creeks. The Oroville area provided an abundance of year-round food sources in the form of seasonal harvests as well as hunting, gathering, and fishing.

Upon the discovery of gold, there was a rapid influx of Euro-Americans and native tribal populations dwindled. Disturbance caused by dredging and other intensive mining techniques substantially affected pre-historic sites in the area.

Presently, the most common type of prehistoric site found in the Thermalito/Oroville and surrounding areas are milling stations, followed by temporary campsites, habitation sites, burial locations, and rock features.

Impact Discussion:

18a. A records search from the Northeast Information Center (NEIC) of the California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS), located at California State University, Chico was conducted in January 2025. The NEIC records search includes a review of all recorded archaeological resources, including Tribal resources, as well as a review of cultural resource reports on file. The NEIC search did not result in the discovery of any archaeological or prehistoric resources in the Project area. Numerous previous investigations have been conducted on portions of the site, and the NEIC has indicated that the Project area has low sensitivity for cultural resources.

In addition, on January 24, 2025, SC-OR contacted all tribes whose contact information was previously provided by the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) in Sacramento, and whose information was provided to Butte County. They were provided with a brief description of the Project, project plans, and a map showing its location. SC-OR also requested that the NAHC perform a search of the Sacred Lands File to determine if any Native American resources have been recorded in the immediate APE. The NAHC identifies, catalogs, and protects Native American cultural resources – ancient places of special religious or social significance to Native Americans and known ancient graves and cemeteries of Native Americans on private and public lands in California. The NAHC is also charged with ensuring California Native American tribes' accessibility to ancient Native American cultural resources on public lands, overseeing the treatment and disposition of inadvertently discovered Native American human remains and burial items, and administering the California Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (CalNAGPRA), among many other powers and duties. No response was received from local tribes, and the Sacred Land File search did not yield results.

However, due to possibility of encountering previously unknown Tribal resources in the area and the proximity of Ruddy Creek which is an area of higher sensitivity, Mitigation Measure 5A requires that work be halted and proper notification and consultation required if any artifacts or cultural resources are discovered during construction. With the implementation of Mitigation Measure 5A, impacts to Tribal resources are expected to be ***less than significant with mitigation.***

Mitigation: See Mitigation Measure 5A.

19. UTILITIES / SERVICE SYSTEMS

Would the proposed project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Require or result in the relocation or the construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas or telecommunication facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?			✓	
b. Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?				✓
c. Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?				✓
d. Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste goals?			✓	
e. Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?			✓	

Existing Setting:

The Project site is located within the unincorporated area of Thermalito in Butte County, which is served by SC-OR for sewer service and Thermalito Water & Sewer for water service. Storm drainage is provided on a site-by-site basis and within County and City roadways near the site. The site and surrounding area is essentially fully developed with urban residential and commercial uses. The site is served by existing utility services including PG&E. The closest landfill to the Project site is the Neal Road Recycling and Waste Facility located approximately 15.5 miles north of the site

Impact Discussion:

19a. The Project involves improvements to an existing pump station and does not propose any uses that would create additional demand for domestic water, nor would the Project result in an increase in wastewater. Furthermore, the Project would not require the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or the expansion of existing facilities. There is no population increase associated with Project and operations will not require additional staffing or maintenance. Therefore, Project-related impacts to water or wastewater treatment facilities would be ***less than significant***.

19b. The Project involves improvements to the pump station. No water use is required for the project and there would be ***no impact***.

19c. The Project involves improvements to the existing pump station. There is no population increase associated with Project and operations would not require additional staffing or maintenance. There would be ***no impact***.

19d,e. The construction phase of the Project would generate solid waste in the form of construction debris. However, the Project would comply with Section 5.408 of the California Green Building Standards Code, which requires a minimum of 65% of nonhazardous construction and demolition waste be recycled and/or salvaged for reuse. The operational phase of the Project would continue to produce biosolids, which are transferred to Neal Road Recycling and Waste Facility after treatment. The Project involves improvements to an existing WWTP in order to meet increasingly stringent waste discharge requirements. Operation of the proposed improvements would not increase the output of biosolids in quantity or frequency. Furthermore, operations would not require additional staffing or maintenance, and therefore solid waste associated with employees and vendors onsite would be unchanged from existing conditions. Any project-related impacts associated with landfill capacity and solid waste disposal would be ***less than significant***.

Mitigation: None required.

20. WILDFIRE

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

Existing Setting:

The Project site is not within a State Responsibility Area or a moderate or high fire hazard zone for wildland fire. The responsibility for the prevention and suppression of fires within the project area belongs to the Butte County Fire Department.

Impact Discussion:

20a-d. The nearest Fire Hazard Severity Zone, according to Calfire, is over approximately three miles west of the Project. Therefore, the site is at minimal risk to wildland type fires. The existing pump station is located within Butte County Fire Department's jurisdiction for fire suppression and prevention but is situated on a flat site that is not subject to downslope instability or landslides. The Project does not include any residential components that would be at risk from project activities. The

Project would be subject to local building permit approvals including compliance with the California Fire Code requirements applicable to the facilities being constructed. This impact would therefore be ***less than significant***.

Mitigation: None required.

21. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECT

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

Impact Discussion:

21a. The analysis conducted in this Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration results in a determination that the Project, with incorporation of mitigation measures, would have a less than significant effect on the environment. The potential for impacts to biological resources and cultural resources from the implementation of the Project would be less than significant with the incorporation of the mitigation measures discussed in Sections 4 and 5 of this Initial Study. Accordingly, the Project would involve no potential for significant impacts through the degradation of the quality of the environment, the reduction in the habitat or population of fish or wildlife, including endangered plants or animals, the elimination of a plant or animal community or example of a major period of California history or prehistory. This impact is considered ***less than significant.***

21b. CEQA Guidelines Section 15064(i) States that a Lead Agency shall consider whether the cumulative impact of a project is significant and whether the effects of the project are cumulatively considerable. The assessment of the significance of the cumulative effects of a project must, therefore, be conducted in connection with the effects of past projects, other current projects, and probable future projects. The Project involves improvements to the existing pump station at Ruddy Creek in order to upgrade and replace aged or obsolete equipment, meet the demand of existing flows due to infiltration and inflow (I&I)-related storm events, and to provide increased pumping capacity necessary for existing and planned development. Evaluations done by SC-OR indicate that installing a new wet well system will provide more efficient service and be cost-effective. No additional roads would be constructed as a result of the Project, nor would any additional public

services be required. The Project is intended to improve the municipal wastewater treatment process and would not result in direct or indirect population growth. Therefore, implementation of the Project would not result in significant cumulative impacts and all potential impacts would be reduced to ***less than significant*** through the implementation of mitigation measures and basic regulatory requirements incorporated into future Project design.

21c. The Project would involve improvements to the existing pump station at Ruddy Creek. The Project in and of itself would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment. On the contrary, implementation of the Project would decrease the number of I&I events that result in water quality degradation. Construction-related air quality/dust exposure impacts could occur temporarily as a result of construction. However, implementation of basic regulatory requirements identified in this IS/MND would ensure that impacts are less than significant. Therefore, the Project would not have any direct or indirect adverse impacts on humans. This impact would be ***less than significant.***