
**DRAFT MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION
FOR THE
VENTURA COUNTY WATERWORKS DISTRICT NO. 1
STOCKTON RESERVOIR REPLACEMENT PROJECT**

LEAD AGENCY/PROJECT PROPONENT:

Ventura County Waterworks District No. 1
P.O. Box 250
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Moorpark, CA 93020-0250

Contact: Mr. Matt Grieger, Project Manager
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PROJECT LOCATION:

The existing Stockton Reservoir is located on the south side of Stockton Road in unincorporated Ventura County. The replacement reservoir site is located on the east side of Stockton Road slightly northwest of the existing Stockton Reservoir and about 0.5-mile north of Broadway Road. The Assessor's Parcel No. is 108-0-170-115. Additionally, a segment of water pipeline is proposed to be installed in Stockton Road between the existing and proposed reservoir sites. A Regional and Project Location Map is provided as Figure 1.

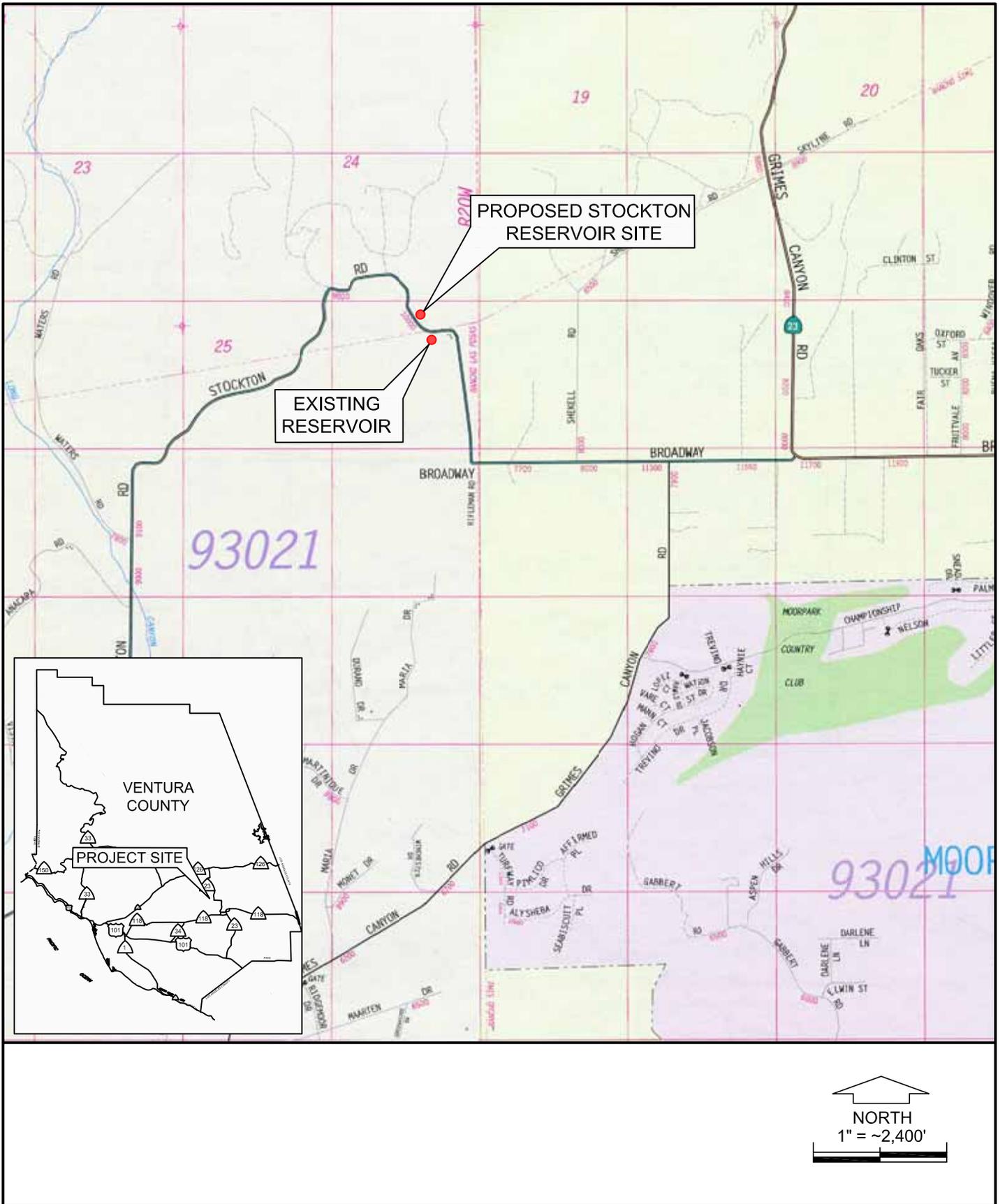
Staging of equipment and material laydown area will occur within the boundaries of the proposed new reservoir site. Some laydown of materials for pipeline installation within the right-of-way of Stockton Road will occur adjacent to the pipeline trench. Construction within the Stockton Road right-of-way may temporarily take out one traffic lane.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

Background and Project Objective. Ventura County Waterworks District (VCWWD) No. 1 (or District) was formed November 22, 1921, and serves approximately 37,576 customers through 10,194 service connections, including 10,053 residential and commercial service connections and 141 agricultural service connections. The District encompasses approximately 19,800 acres and includes the City of Moorpark and contiguous unincorporated areas to the north and west (County of Ventura, March 2013). VCWWD No. 1 provides both water and sanitation services to the customers within its service area. District water supplies come from both imported and local (groundwater sources).

Pressure Zone 994, located in the western portion of the District service area, has only one existing reservoir (0.5 million gallon [MG] capacity) which is at the end of its useful life. In 2008, the District commissioned the preparation of a Water Service Master Plan update. As a result of this report, it was recommended that the existing reservoir be replaced with a 1.0 MG reservoir in the near-term. An additional future 1.0 MG reservoir was also recommended.

Penfield & Smith, an engineering consulting firm, was retained by the District to investigate alternative sites and designs for the replacement reservoir. The results of this study are presented in Preliminary Design Report for Stockton Reservoir Replacement Project (Penfield & Smith, March 25, 2013). Site A as identified in the Penfield & Smith Preliminary Design Report



Base Map Source: Thomas Guide 2009, Ventura County (pgs. 475 & 476)

was selected by the District as the best location for a replacement reservoir. The selected site is located on the east side of Stockton Road slightly northwest of the existing reservoir site and about 0.5-mile north of Broadway Road. The site is 0.65 acre in size and is presently developed as a citrus orchard. A preliminary design for the reservoir was also included in the report and is described further herein.

Water facilities within Pressure Zone 994 serve exiting agricultural irrigation, agricultural facilities such as barns and some domestic customers. VCWWD No. 1 proposes to implement the Project to meet the water storage requirements for Pressure Zone 994 and replace an existing reservoir that is at the end of its useful life. Since the construction of the existing Stockton Reservoir in 1974, the population within the service area for the reservoir has increased. Fire flow demand within the service area has also increased. Therefore, the proposed replacement reservoir is 1 MG to safely accommodate this increased need and to ensure continued uninterrupted, safe delivery of adequate water supplies within this zone.

Per the Master Plan for VCWWD No. 1, each pressure zone is to have two reservoirs. For maintenance purposes, one tank can be taken out of service without effecting the operation of the system within that particular zone. Therefore, once the new reservoir (tank) is constructed the old tank will be drained but will not be deconstructed until plans for another new tank are completed at some undetermined future date.

Project Components. The District proposes to build a new 1.0 MG reservoir at a site near the existing Stockton Reservoir site. The new reservoir will be an above-ground, welded steel tank, 80-feet in diameter, 30-feet in height with a knuckled roof. It is anticipated that the tank will be founded on a concrete ring wall and soil pad at an approximate elevation of 974 feet. There will be a concrete berm and asphalt road around the perimeter of the tank. Other elements of the proposed tank replacement include construction/installation of:

- Paved access road from Stockton Road to the tank;
- Pipeline (420 linear feet, 12-inch diameter, from the new tank to connect with an existing 12-inch water line located approximately 300 feet west of the intersection of the proposed tank access road and Stockton Road near the existing tank);
- Road culvert;
- Storm drain (18-inch to carry water from the pad to existing drainage channel on Stockton Road and accommodate flow from an emergency overflow event from the reservoir);
- Fencing (6-feet high chain link with three strands of barbed wire on top);
- Retaining wall;
- Solar-powered supervisory control and data acquisition (SCADA) system;
- Solar-powered lighting;
- Seeding of the site for erosion control.

Once the proposed reservoir is operational, the existing reservoir will be decommissioned and placed on standby for emergency use.

The preliminary construction start date is April 2016 and completion is expected to occur by December 2016. Construction will occur eight hours per day, Monday through Friday between the hours of 7:00 am and 4:00 pm.

The project is defined further in the attached Initial Study prepared for this project.

PROPOSED FINDINGS:

VCWWD No. 1 has prepared this Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) pursuant to Section 15070 of the State Guidelines for the Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act. This MND documents VCWWD No. 1's finding that there are no significantly adverse, unavoidable impacts associated with the proposed Project, and the Project does not require the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR). The attached Initial Study (IS) identifies and discusses potential impacts, mitigation measures that will be incorporated into the proposed project and residual impacts for identified subject areas. Any element in the Project Description that is not met as described shall constitute an action not considered as part of the MND/IS. If the Project Description changes, VCWWD No. 1 will require that a reevaluation of potential environmental effects be conducted that considers these changes.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Due to the non-complex nature of this project, a separate environmental hearing will not be held. In compliance with Section 15072 of the State Guidelines for the Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act, the VCWWD No. 1 issued a public Notice of Intent and established a public review period from February 9, 2015 through March 10, 2015. The purpose of this review period is to accept written or oral comments on the adequacy of the information contained in the Draft MND/IS. Comments will be addressed in the Final MND for the project.

MITIGATION MEASURES:

The following measures are incorporated into the proposed Project to reduce impacts to a less than significant level.

AIR QUALITY:

AQ1 The District shall implement a fugitive dust control program. The dust control program should include the following procedures:

- The area disturbed by clearing, grading, earth moving, or excavation operations shall be minimized to prevent excessive amounts of dust.
- Pre-grading/excavation activities shall include watering the area to be graded or excavated before commencement of grading or excavation operations. Application of water (preferably reclaimed, if available) should penetrate sufficiently to minimize fugitive dust during grading activities.
- All trucks shall be required to cover their loads as required by California Vehicle Code §23114.
- All graded and excavated material, exposed soil areas, and active portions of the construction site, including unpaved on-site roadways, shall be treated to prevent fugitive dust. Treatment shall include, but not necessarily be limited to, periodic watering, application of environmentally-safe soil stabilization materials, and/or roll-

compaction as appropriate. Watering shall be done as often as necessary and reclaimed water shall be used whenever possible.

- Graded and/or excavated inactive areas of the construction site shall be monitored at least weekly for dust stabilization. Soil stabilization methods, such as water and roll-compaction, and environmentally-safe dust control materials, shall be periodically applied to portions of the construction site that are inactive for over four days. If no further grading or excavation operations are planned for the area, the area shall be seeded and watered until plant growth is evident, or periodically treated with environmentally-safe dust suppressants, to prevent excessive fugitive dust.
- Signs shall be posted on-site limiting traffic to 15 miles per hour or less.
- During periods of high winds (i.e., wind speed sufficient to cause fugitive dust to impact adjacent properties), all clearing, grading, earth moving, and excavation operations shall be curtailed to the degree necessary to prevent fugitive dust created by on-site activities and operations from being a nuisance or hazard, either off-site or on-site. The site superintendent / supervisor shall use his/her discretion in conjunction with the APCD in determining when winds are excessive.
- Personnel involved in grading operations, including contractors and subcontractors, shall be advised to wear respiratory protection in accordance with California Division of Occupational Safety and Health regulations.
- Material stockpiles shall be enclosed, covered, stabilized, or otherwise treated as needed to prevent blowing fugitive dust off-site.
- All project construction and site preparation operations shall be conducted in compliance with all applicable Ventura County APCD Rules and Regulations with emphasis on Rule 50 (Opacity), Rule 51 (Nuisance), Rule 55 (Fugitive Dust) and Rule 10 (Permits Required).

AQ2 Minimize equipment idling time.

AQ3 Maintain equipment engines in good condition and in proper tune as per manufactures' specifications.

AQ4 Lengthen the construction period during smog season (May through October), to minimize the number of vehicles and equipment operating at the same time.

AQ5 Use alternatively fueled construction equipment such as compressed natural gas (CNG), liquefied natural gas (LNG), or electric, if feasible.

GROUNDWATER QUANTITY

GWQ1 Any landscaping provided at the proposed Stockton Reservoir site, shall include low water usage landscape plants and irrigation systems and/or low water usage plumbing fixtures and other measures designed to reduce water usage.

SURFACE WATER QUALITY:

WQ1 Project construction shall meet performance criteria defined in Section 1 of Part 4.F of the Ventura Countywide Municipal Stormwater Permit through the inclusion of the effective Best Management Practices (BMPs) for Construction Sites Less than One Acre during all ground disturbing activities or the BMPs for Construction Sites Over One Acre but Less than Five Acres as appropriate. The project applicant (District) is required to develop and implement a Stormwater Pollution Control Plan (SWPCP). VCWWD No. 1 shall review and approve the SWPCP for the Project for compliance with Section 1 or 2 and Section 6 regarding repaving of Part 4.F of the NPDES permit. The review shall be done by qualified personnel. The VCWWD No. 1 shall provide a copy of the approved SWPCP to the Watershed Protection District, Water and Environmental Resources Division for permit tracking purposes. The SWPCP shall be reviewed and approved by the Watershed Protection District prior to issuance of a notice to proceed to the contractor. A VCWWD No. 1 inspector shall conduct inspections per Section 8 of Part 4.F of the MS4 permit to assure effective installation and functionality of the approved BMPs.

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES:

BIO1 Purpose: In order to prevent impacts on birds protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, land clearing activities shall be regulated.

Requirement: The District shall conduct all demolition, tree removal/trimming, vegetation clearing, and grading activities (collectively, "land clearing activities") in such a way as to avoid nesting native birds. This can be accomplished by implementing one of the following options:

1. Timing of construction: Prohibit land clearing activities during the breeding and nesting season February 1 - August 31 or January 1 - September 1 if raptors have the potential to occur, in which case the following surveys are not required; or
2. Surveys and avoidance of occupied nests: Conduct site-specific surveys prior to land clearing activities during the breeding and nesting season (January 1 – September 1) and avoid occupied bird nests. Surveys shall be conducted to identify any occupied (active) bird nests in the area proposed for disturbance. Occupied nests shall be avoided until juvenile birds have vacated the nest. All surveys shall be conducted by a County-approved biologist.

An initial breeding and nesting bird survey shall be conducted 30 days prior to the initiation of land clearing activities. The project site must continue to be surveyed on a weekly basis with the last survey completed no more than 3 days prior to the initiation of land clearing activities. The nesting bird survey must cover the development footprint and 300 feet from the development footprint. If occupied (active) nests are found, land clearing activities within a setback area surrounding the nest shall be postponed or halted. Land clearing activities may commence in the setback area when the nest is vacated (juveniles have fledged) provided that there is no evidence of a second attempt at nesting, as determined by the County-

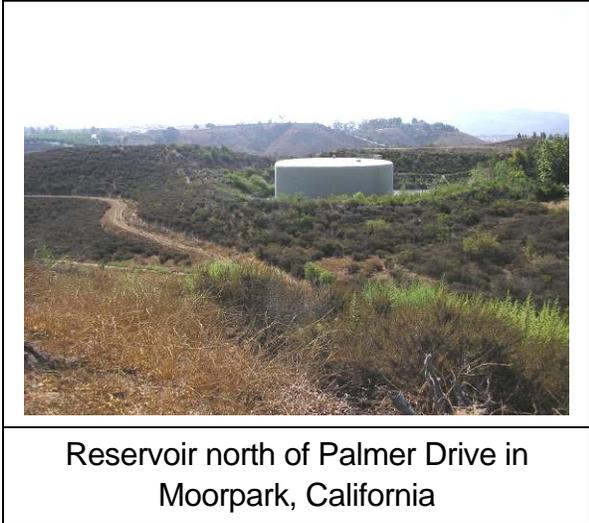
approved biologist. Land clearing activities can also occur outside of the setback areas. The required setback is 300 feet for most birds and 500 feet for raptors, as recommended by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. This setback can be increased or decreased based on the recommendation of the County-approved biologist and approval from the Planning Division.

Documentation: The District shall commission a Survey Report from a County-approved biologist documenting the results of the initial nesting bird survey and a plan for continued surveys and avoidance of nests in accordance with the requirements above. The District shall commission a Mitigation Monitoring Report from a County-approved biologist following land clearing activities documenting actions taken to avoid nesting birds and results.

Timing: If land clearing activities will occur between January 1 and September 1, nesting bird surveys shall be conducted 30 days prior to initiation of land clearing activities, and weekly thereafter, and the last survey for nesting birds shall be conducted no more than 3 days prior to initiation of land clearing activities. The Survey Report documenting the results of the first nesting bird survey shall be finalized prior to construction. The Mitigation Monitoring Report shall be finalized within 14 days of completion of the land clearing activities.

SCENIC RESOURCES:

SR1 The new tank should be colored to blend in with the natural surroundings and the edges rounded to soften its appearance. The following photo of the reservoir north of Palmer Drive in Moorpark is an example.



PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES

P1 Geologic borings along the pipeline route will be taken prior to construction start. Boring logs will be interpreted by a qualified geologist. If it is determined that pipeline installation will impact Saugus Formation or borings are not conducted, then measure P2 will be implemented.

P2 The District shall implement a paleontological monitoring program for Project areas where excavation would have the potential to impact native Saugus Formation materials (pipeline route). The paleontological monitoring program shall be comprised of at least the following elements:

- a) A qualified, Ventura County-approved paleontologist shall be retained by the District to monitor initial excavation activities within the pipeline route where excavation has the potential to extend into native Saugus Formation materials to determine if continued monitoring is warranted, and if so, to develop a monitoring schedule.
- b) The Project paleontologist will provide an educational overview relating to paleontological issues in Ventura County and protection of resources at the Project site to all construction employees who will be onsite during the ground-disturbing phases of Project construction.
- c) In the event that fossil remains are found during Project construction in any location, work shall be stopped immediately or redirected away from the find. The Project paleontologist or other Ventura County approved paleontologist shall be called to the site immediately to assess the site and determine further mitigation measures to be implemented as necessary.
- d) If fossils are encountered, the paleontologist will salvage scientifically significant fossil remains.
- e) The paleontologist shall have the power to temporarily halt or divert grading efforts to allow evaluation and any necessary salvage of exposed fossils which are determined as potentially significant.
- f) All significant fossils collected shall be identified. These remains shall be donated to an institution with research and/or educational interest in the materials and a retrievable storage system such as the Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History.
- g) Locations of recorded fossil localities are confidential and are to be released on a “need to know” basis only to reduce unauthorized collecting activities.
- h) A final report summarizing findings, including an itemized inventory and contextual stratigraphic data, shall accompany the fossils to the designated repository with a copy also retained by the District.

CULTURAL RESOURCES:

CUL1 In the event that archaeological resources are unearthed during project construction, all earth disturbing work within 30 meters (100 ft) of the find must be temporarily suspended until an archaeologist has evaluated the nature and significance of the find. After the find has been appropriately mitigated, work in the area may resume.

A Chumash representative should monitor any archaeological field work associated with Native American materials.

CUL2 If human remains are unearched, State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 requires that no further disturbance shall occur until the County Coroner has made the necessary findings as to origin and disposition pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 5097.98. If the remains are determined to be of Native American descent, the coroner has 24 hours to notify the Native American Heritage Commission. The District shall also be notified of any such find.

HYDRAULIC HAZARDS

HH1 The Project design will incorporate: 1) measures for detention of runoff (e.g., swales or basin) to ensure that runoff from the site is maintained at existing levels; and 2) runoff energy-dissipation features (e.g. placement of cobbles at discharge points) to prevent erosion.

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS AND WASTE

HAZ1 Ventura County Waterworks District No. 1 shall ensure that soil disturbing activities in agricultural areas will be done under the assumption that residual pesticides exist within these soils, and appropriate safety precautions as required under the applicable Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations will be followed. Additionally, if during construction of the Project, any other type of soil contamination is suspected by the construction contractor, construction in the area shall stop and appropriate health and safety procedures shall be implemented including contact with the Ventura County Environmental Health Department. If determined necessary by the Ventura County Health Department or other regulatory agency with jurisdiction over the environmental resources affected, appropriate remedial activity shall be conducted prior to the resumption of work in the area of concern. Remediation could involve removal and proper disposal of contaminated materials, on-site treatment, etc.

HAZ2 Prior to Project construction and as part of the coordination with Southern California Edison regarding the Project, the District will request information regarding the PCB (historical and current) content of the pole-mounted transformers located at the Project site. If the transformers contain PCBs, then a qualified environmental consultant will visually inspect the transformers and ground surface underneath the transformers for any evidence of leakage. In the event there is evidence of leakage, then chemical analyses of the soil will be conducted in accordance with all applicable regulations to determine if the soil contains regulated quantities of PCBs. Should regulated quantities of PCBs exist at the Project site, then the Project site will be remediated to regulatory standards by appropriately trained hazardous materials remediation personnel prior to any construction work at the site including site preparation activities.

TRANSPORTATION/CIRCULATION:

- T1** The District shall make a condition of the construction contractor bid specifications that during the construction phase of the Project, all construction-related trips affecting State Highways will occur outside of the peak hours to the maximum extent feasible. Peak hours are 6:30 to 9:30 am and 3:30 to 6:30 p.m. weekdays.
- T2** The District shall apply for Encroachment Permits from the Permits Division of the County Transportation Department for work on County roads. The District should contact the Permits Division at 805-654-2055 for the requirements of this permit.
- T3** A Traffic Control Plan shall be prepared by a traffic engineer, submitted, reviewed and approved by the County for any road closure or partial road closure. The Plan shall be designed to mitigate any potential disruptions to vehicle, pedestrian and bicycle movements, as well as property access during construction within the road right-of-way. The Plan must be approved the required minimum number of days (seven calendar days for the County) prior to the actual road closure, or detour. The Traffic Control Plan should include, but not necessarily be limited to the following as appropriate:
- Use of a flagger at work access areas;
 - Maintain two-way traffic at all times, where feasible;
 - Provide safety measures to separate motorists from the construction workers and the work zone;
 - Ensure access for emergency vehicles at all times;
 - Provide access to adjacent residences and businesses to the extent feasible;
 - Open lanes as soon as possible to restore normal traffic patterns;
 - Provide advance notification of the construction Project to residences and business in the affected area;
 - Notify the public during construction, using methods such as large electronic monitoring signs, notification to impacted residents, appropriate detour signs, and notifications to schools and emergency providers;
 - Provide an information hotline to be manned during business hours;
 - Provide a designated traffic control coordinator to ensure compliance with the Traffic Control Plan;
 - During construction, cover open trenches with metal plates at the end of the work day;
 - After construction, restore the roads to their pre-construction condition;
 - During the hauling of material to or from the Project sites, the trucks shall be covered to secure all material so that any nuisance or danger to the public from flying debris can be avoided, and
 - Inspect and maintain truck safety equipment.

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- T4** Provide the County Transportation Department a Site Plan that shows the proximity of trenching operation, construction equipment, and storage of materials to the Stockton Road right-of-way and road edge.
 - T5** Oversize vehicle permits shall be obtained from Caltrans, the County of Ventura and any other impacted jurisdiction as appropriate if such vehicles are to be used in the truck hauling operations.
 - T6** All construction within the roadway right-of-way shall conform to the applicable County Road Standards.
 - T7** Any wide loads or unusual loads (e.g., excessively long loads) to be transported on State highways will require a Transportation Permit from Caltrans.
 - T8** The District shall comply with the Ventura County Transportation Department policy regarding a moratorium on trenching on recently paved roads. If the road has been paved in the last five years, then the District will be responsible for overlaying the entire width of the road. (Stockton Road was paved in 2011.)
 - T9** The District shall require the construction contractor(s) for the Project to protect pavement, berms, and drainage structures within the Project work area from damage that may be caused by trucks and construction-related trips. Any portion damaged during construction, in the opinion of the Transportation Department or Designee, shall be replaced in accordance with the current Standard Construction Details and/or in a manner acceptable to the Transportation Department or designee of the affected roadway within 30 days of completion of the Project.
 - T10** The Project driveway shall be constructed per County Road Standard Plate E-7.
 - T11** The Project shall maintain clear sight visibility north and south of the driveway.

WATER SUPPLY

- WS1** Project impact areas requiring revegetation, shall be revegetated using drought-tolerant native plants and water conserving techniques.
- WS2** Short-term Project construction water demands shall be met using reclaimed water (e.g., dust suppression and irrigation of revegetated areas).

SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT

- SW1** Recyclable Construction Materials: Contract specifications for this project must require that all recyclable materials generated during the demolition and/or construction phases of the project (e.g., concrete, asphalt, rebar, wood, and metal) be recycled at an appropriate, permitted, recycling facility. A complete list of permitted construction and demolition debris recycling facilities in Ventura County is available at: www.vcpbublicworks.org/C&D. All non-recyclable materials must be disposed at a permitted solid waste disposal facility.
- SW2** Soil - Recycling & Reuse: Contract specifications for this project must include a requirement that soil and sand not reused on-site during the construction phase of the project be transported to an authorized or permitted organics facility for recycling

or reuse. Illegal disposal and landfilling of soil is prohibited. A complete list of facilities in Ventura County that recycle soil is available at: www.vcpbublicworks.org/C&D.

- SW3** Green Materials - Recycling & Reuse: The Contract Specifications for this **project must include a requirement that all wood waste and vegetation removed** during the construction phase of this project must be diverted from the landfill. This can be accomplished by on-site chipping and land-application at various project sites, or by transporting the materials to an authorized or permitted greenwaste facility in Ventura County. A complete list of authorized greenwaste facilities is located at: www.vcpbublicworks.org/greenwaste.
- SW4** Recyclable Construction & Demolition Debris – Required Report: Contractors shall submit a **Form B – Recycling Plan** to the IWMD for approval prior to the issuance of the Notice to Proceed, as provided in Section 6-7.4. of the VCSS. The **Recycling Plan** must specify how all recyclable materials generated by the project (e.g., metal, concrete, wood, greenwaste, and soil) will be diverted from the landfill. A copy of IWMD’s **Form B – Recycling Plan** is available at: www.vcpbublicworks.org/formsB&C.
- SW5** Recyclable Construction & Demolition Debris – Required Report: Contractors shall submit a Form C – Recycling Report to the IWMD for approval prior to the Engineer’s preparation of the final estimate, as provided in Section 9-3.2 of the VCSS. The Form C – Recycling Report must have original recycling facility receipts and/or other documentation attached to verify recycling, on-site reuse, or salvage occurred. A copy of IWMD’s Form C – Recycling Report is available at: www.vcpbublicworks.org/formsB&C.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

- L1** The District shall ensure that proper security measures are followed during the construction phase of the Project to protect materials, tools and equipment.