

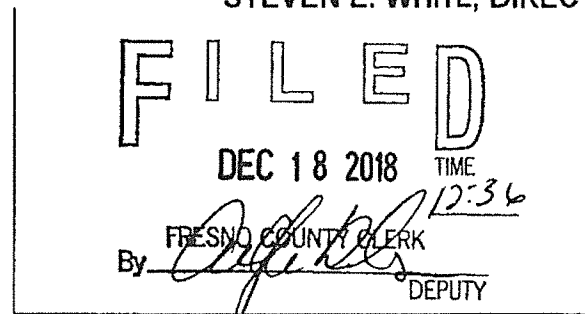


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County of Fresno

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND PLANNING
STEVEN E. WHITE, DIRECTOR

NOTICE OF INTENT TO ADOPT A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION



For County Clerk's Stamp

Notice is hereby given that the County of Fresno has prepared Initial Study Application (IS) No. 7513 pursuant to the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act for the following proposed project:

INITIAL STUDY APPLICATION NO. 7513 and **CLASSIFIED CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT APPLICATION NO. 3622** filed by **SUPERIOR SOIL SUPPLEMENTS, LLC**, proposing to allow a commercial establishment for the storage and sale of gypsum and anhydrate (agricultural mineral soil supplements) on a portion of a 645.05-acre parcel in the AE-20 (Exclusive Agricultural, 20-acre minimum parcel size) Zone District. This site will receive approximately 220,000 tons per year of gypsum and anhydrate via existing rail spurs, store these materials on a 2.5-acre area of land, and truck these minerals to local clients. The project site is located on the north side of W. Whitesbridge Avenue (SR 180), at the northwest corner of its intersection with N. San Mateo Avenue, approximately 2.5 miles southeast of the nearest city limits of the City of Mendota (29400 W. Whitesbridge Avenue) (Sup. Dist. 1) (APN 019-070-61S). Adopt the Mitigated Negative Declaration prepared for Initial Study Application No. 7513, and take action on Classified Conditional Use Permit Application No. 3622 with Findings and Conditions.

(hereafter, the "Proposed Project")

The County of Fresno has determined that it is appropriate to adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Proposed Project. The purpose of this Notice is to (1) provide notice of the availability of IS Application No. 7513 and the draft Mitigated Negative Declaration, and request written comments thereon; and (2) provide notice of the public hearing regarding the Proposed Project.

Public Comment Period

The County of Fresno will receive written comments on the Proposed Project and Mitigated Negative Declaration from December 21, 2018 through January 20, 2019.

Email written comments to dacrider@co.fresno.ca.us, or mail comments to:

Fresno County Department of Public Works and Planning
Development Services and Capital Projects Division
Attn: Danielle Crider
2220 Tulare Street, Suite A
Fresno, CA 93721

IS Application No. 7513 and the draft Mitigated Negative Declaration may be viewed at the above address Monday through Thursday, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. (except holidays), or at <http://www.co.fresno.ca.us/initialstudies>. An electronic copy of the draft Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Proposed Project may be obtained from Danielle Crider at the addresses above.

Public Hearing

The Planning Commission will hold a public hearing to consider approving the Proposed Project and the Mitigated Negative Declaration on January 24, 2019, at 8:45 a.m., or as soon thereafter as possible, in Room 301, Hall of Records, 2281 Tulare Street, Fresno, California 93721. Interested persons are invited to appear at the hearing and comment on the Proposed Project and draft Mitigated Negative Declaration.

For questions please call Danielle Crider at (559) 600-9669.

Published: December 21, 2018



County of Fresno

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND PLANNING
STEVEN E. WHITE, DIRECTOR

DRAFT NOTICE OF DETERMINATION

To: Office of Planning and Research
1400 Tenth Street, Room 121
Sacramento, CA 95814

County Clerk, County of Fresno
2221 Kern Street
Fresno, CA 93721

From: Fresno County Department of Public Works and Planning, Development Services and Capital Projects Division
2220 Tulare Street (corner of Tulare and "M") Suite "A", Fresno, CA 93721

Subject: Filing of Notice of Determination in compliance with Section 21152 of the Public Resource Code

Project: Initial Study Application No. 7513 and Classified Conditional Use Permit Application No. 3622

Location: The project site is located on the north side of W. Whitesbridge Avenue (SR 180), at the northwest corner of its intersection with N. San Mateo Avenue, approximately 2.5 miles southeast of the nearest city limits of the City of Mendota (29400 W. Whitesbridge Avenue) (Sup. Dist. 1) (APN: 019-070-61S).

Description: Allow a commercial establishment for the storage and sale of gypsum and anhydrate (agricultural mineral soil supplements) on a portion of a 645.05-acre parcel in the AE-20 (Exclusive Agricultural, 20-acre minimum parcel size) Zone District. This site will receive approximately 220,000 tons per year of gypsum and anhydrate via existing rail spurs, store these materials on a 2.5-acre area of land, and truck these minerals to local clients.

This is to advise that the County of Fresno (Lead Agency Responsible Agency) has approved the above described project on January 24, 2018, and has made the following determination:

1. The project **will** **will not** have a significant effect on the environment.
2. An Environmental Impact Report (EIR) **was not** prepared for this project pursuant to the provisions of CEQA. / A Mitigated Negative Declaration **was not** prepared for this project pursuant to the provisions of CEQA.
3. Mitigation Measures **were** **were not** made a condition of approval for the project.
4. A statement of Overriding Consideration **was** **was not** adopted for this project.

This is to certify that the Initial Study with comments and responses and record of project approval is available to the General Public at Fresno County Department of Public Works and Planning, 2220 Tulare Street, Suite A, Corner of Tulare and "M" Streets, Fresno, California.

Danielle Crider, Planner
(559) 600-9669 / dacrider@co.fresno.ca.us

Date

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DRAFT

File original and one copy with: Fresno County Clerk 2221 Kern Street Fresno, California 93721		Space Below For County Clerk Only. CLK-2046.00 E04-73 R00-00	
Agency File No: IS 7513	LOCAL AGENCY PROPOSED MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION		County Clerk File No: E-
Responsible Agency (Name): Fresno County	Address (Street and P.O. Box): 2220 Tulare St. Sixth Floor	City: Fresno	Zip Code: 93721
Agency Contact Person (Name and Title): Danielle Crider, Planner	Area Code: 559	Telephone Number: 600-9669	Extension: N/A
Applicant (Name): Superior Soil Supplements, LLC	Project Title: CUP 3622		
<p>Project Description:</p> <p>Allow a commercial establishment for the storage and sale of gypsum and anhydrate (agricultural mineral soil supplements) on a portion of a 645.05-acre parcel in the AE-20 (Exclusive Agricultural, 20-acre minimum parcel size) Zone District. This site will receive approximately 220,000 tons per year of gypsum and anhydrate via existing rail spurs, store these materials on a 2.5-acre area of land, and truck these minerals to local clients. The project site is located on the north side of W. Whitesbridge Avenue (SR 180), at the northwest corner of its intersection with N. San Mateo Avenue, approximately 2.5 miles southeast of the nearest city limits of the City of Mendota (29400 W. Whitesbridge Avenue) (Sup. Dist. 1) (APN: 019-070-61S).</p>			
<p>Justification for Negative Declaration:</p> <p>Based upon the Initial Study prepared for Conditional Use Permit Application No. 3622, staff has concluded that the project will not have a significant effect on the environment. It has been determined that there would be no impacts to Mineral Resources, Population and Housing, and Recreation.</p> <p>Potential impacts related to Agricultural and Forestry Resources, Air Quality, Geology and Soils, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Land Use and Planning, Noise, Public Services, and Utilities and Service Systems have been determined to be less than significant.</p> <p>Potential impacts relating to Aesthetics, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Hydrology and Water Quality, and Transportation and Traffic have been determined to be less than significant with adherence to the listed Mitigation Measures.</p> <p>A Mitigated Negative Declaration is recommended and is subject to approval by the decision-making body. The Initial Study is available for review at 2220 Tulare Street, Suite A, street level, located on the southwest corner of Tulare and "M" Street, Fresno, California.</p>			
<p>FINDING:</p> <p>The proposed project will not have a significant impact on the environment.</p>			
Newspaper and Date of Publication: Fresno Business Journal – December 21, 2018		Review Date Deadline: Planning Commission – January 24, 2018	
Date: TBD	Type or Print Signature: Danielle Crider, Planner	Submitted by (Signature):	

State 15083, 15085

County Clerk File No.: _____

**LOCAL AGENCY
MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION**



County of Fresno

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND PLANNING
STEVEN E. WHITE, DIRECTOR

INITIAL STUDY ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST FORM

1. **Project title:** *Initial Study No. 7513 and Classified Conditional Use Permit No. 3622*
2. **Lead agency name and address:** *Fresno County Department of Public Works and Planning
Development Services and Capital Projects Division
2220 Tulare Street, Sixth Floor
Fresno, California, 93721*
3. **Contact person and phone number:** *Danielle Crider, (559) 600-9669*
4. **Project location:** *29400 W. Whitesbridge Avenue*
5. **Project Applicant's name and address:** *Superior Soil Supplements, LLC, 12100 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 800,
Mendota, CA*
6. **General Plan designation:** *Agricultural*
7. **Zoning:** *AE-20 (Exclusive Agricultural, 20-acre minimum parcel size)*
8. **Description of project:** *Allow a commercial establishment for the storage and sale of gypsum and anhydrate (agricultural mineral soil supplements) on a portion of a 645.05-acre parcel in the AE-20 (Exclusive Agricultural, 20-acre minimum parcel size) Zone District. This site will receive approximately 220,000 tons per year of gypsum and anhydrate via existing rail spurs, store these materials on a 2.5-acre area of land, and truck these minerals to local clients.*
9. **Surrounding land uses and setting:** *The project site is located on the north side of W. Whitesbridge Avenue (SR 180), at the northwest corner of its intersection with N. San Mateo Avenue, approximately 2.5 miles southeast of the nearest city limits of the City of Mendota (29400 W. Whitesbridge Avenue) (Sup. Dist. 1) (APN: 019-070-61S).*
10. **Briefly describe the project's surroundings:** *The project is located amongst structures and existing rail spurs, which were originally built for a beet sugar processing facility on a small portion of the parcel. The project area is approximately 900 feet north of SR 180, and 1,700 feet west of San Mateo Avenue. There is an agricultural operation immediately west of the project area, and ponding basins immediately north of the project area.*

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED:

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

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

DETERMINATION OF REQUIRED ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT:

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

- I find that the proposed project **COULD NOT** have a significant effect on the environment. **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 the Mitigation Measures described on the attached sheet have been added to the project. **A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION WILL BE PREPARED.**
- I find the proposed project **MAY** have a significant effect on the environment, and an **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT** is required
- I find that as a result of the proposed project, no new effects could occur, or new Mitigation Measures would be required that have not been addressed within the scope of a previous Environmental Impact Report.

PERFORMED BY:

REVIEWED BY:

Danielle Crider
Danielle Crider, Planner

M. Mollring
Marianne Mollring, Senior Planner

Date: 12-17-18

Date: 12-17-18

**INITIAL STUDY
ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST FORM
(Initial Study Application No. 7513 and
Classified Conditional Use Permit
Application No. 3622)**

The following checklist is used to determine if the proposed project could potentially have a significant effect on the environment. Explanations and information regarding each question follow the checklist.

1 = No Impact

2 = Less Than Significant Impact

3 = Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated

4 = Potentially Significant Impact

I. AESTHETICS

Would the project:

- 2 a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?
- 2 b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?
- 2 c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?
- 3 d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?

II. AGRICULTURAL AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

Would the project:

- 2 a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance, as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?
- 2 b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act Contract?
- 2 c) Conflict with existing zoning for forest land, timberland or timberland zoned Timberland Production?
- 2 d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?
- 2 e) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

III. AIR QUALITY

Would the project:

- 2 a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable Air Quality Plan?
- 2 b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?
- 2 c) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under applicable Federal or State ambient air quality standards (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?
- 2 d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?
- 2 e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?

IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

- 3 a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?
- 2 b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?
- 2 c) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally-protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?
- 2 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?
- 2 e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?
- 2 f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state Habitat Conservation Plan?

V. CULTURAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

- 3 a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in Public Resources Code Section 15064.5?
- 3 b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 15064.5?
- 3 c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site, or unique geologic feature?
- 3 d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?
- 3 e) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource as defined in Public Resources Code Section 21074?

VI. GEOLOGY AND SOILS

Would the project:

- a) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:
 - 2 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?
 - 2 ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?
 - 2 iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?
 - 1 iv) Landslides?
- 2 b) Result in substantial soil erosion or loss of topsoil?
- 2 c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse?

- 1 d) Be located on expansive soil as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?
- 1 e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?

VII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Would the project:

- 2 a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?
- 2 b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?

VIII. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Would the project:

- 2 a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?
- 2 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?
- 1 c) Create hazardous emissions or utilize hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?
- 2 d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?
- 1 e) Result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area 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?
- 1 f) Result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area for a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip?
- 2 g) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted Emergency Response Plan or Emergency Evacuation Plan?
- 2 h) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?

IX. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Would the project:

- 2 a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?
- 2 b) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?
- 3 c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on or off site?
- 3 d) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on or off site?

- 3 e) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned storm water drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?
- 3 f) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?
- 3 g) Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a Federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?
- 3 h) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures which would impede or redirect flood flows?
- 3 i) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?
- 2 j) Cause inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?

X. LAND USE AND PLANNING

Would the project:

- 1 a) Physically divide an established community?
- 2 b) Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to, the General Plan, Specific Plan, local coastal program, or Zoning Ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?
- 2 c) Conflict with any applicable Habitat Conservation Plan or Natural Community Conservation Plan?

XI. MINERAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

- 1 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?
- 1 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?

XII. NOISE

Would the project:

- 2 a) Expose persons to or generate noise levels in excess of standards established in the local General Plan or Noise Ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?
- 2 b) Expose persons to or generate excessive ground-borne vibration or ground-borne noise levels?
- 2 c) Create a substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?
- 2 d) Create a substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?
- 2 e) Expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels, 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?
- 2 f) Expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels, for a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip?

XIII. POPULATION AND HOUSING

Would the project:

- 1 a) Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?
- 1 b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

- 1 c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

XIV. PUBLIC SERVICES

Would the project:

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

- 2 a) Fire protection?
2 b) Police protection?
2 c) Schools?
2 d) Parks?
2 e) Other public facilities?

XV. RECREATION

Would the project:

- 1 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?
1 b) Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?

XVI. TRANSPORTATION / TRAFFIC

Would the project:

- 3 a) Conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation including mass transit and non-motorized travel and relevant components of the circulation system, including, but not limited to, intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit?
3 b) Conflict with an applicable Congestion Management Program including, but not limited to, level of service standards and travel demand measures, or other standards established by the County congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?
1 c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location, which results in substantial safety risks?
1 d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?

- 1 e) Result in inadequate emergency access?

- 1 f) Conflict with adopted policies, plans or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such facilities?

XVII. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

Would the project:

- 2 a) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?
2 b) Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?
2 c) Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?
2 d) Have sufficient water supplies available to service the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?
2 e) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?
2 f) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?
2 g) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?

XVIII. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Would the project:

- 3 a) Have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?
3 b) Have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.)
2 c) Have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?

Documents Referenced:

This Initial Study is referenced by the documents listed below. These documents are available for public review at the County of Fresno, Department of Public Works and Planning, Development Services and Capital Projects Division, 2220 Tulare Street, Suite A, Fresno, California (corner of M & Tulare Streets).

Fresno County General Plan, Policy Document and Final EIR
Fresno County Zoning Ordinance
Important Farmland 2014 Map, State Department of Conservation

DTC:
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County of Fresno

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND PLANNING
STEVEN E. WHITE, DIRECTOR

EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

- APPLICANT:** Superior Soil Supplements, LLC
- APPLICATION NOS.:** Initial Study Application No. 7513 and Classified Conditional Use Permit Application No. 3622
- DESCRIPTION:** Allow a commercial establishment for the storage and sale of gypsum and anhydrate (agricultural mineral soil supplements) on a portion of a 645.05-acre parcel in the AE-20 (Exclusive Agricultural, 20-acre minimum parcel size) Zone District. This site will receive approximately 220,000 tons per year of gypsum and anhydrate via existing rail spurs, store these materials on a 2.5-acre area of land, and truck these minerals to local clients.
- LOCATION:** The project site is located on the north side of W. Whitesbridge Avenue (SR 180), at the northwest corner of its intersection with N. San Mateo Avenue, approximately 2.5 miles southeast of the nearest city limits of the City of Mendota (29400 W. Whitesbridge Avenue) (Sup. Dist. 1) (APN: 019-070-61S).

I. AESTHETICS

- A. Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista; or
- B. Would the project substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a State scenic highway; or
- C. Would the project substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The project is located in a flat area with no nearby scenic vistas, trees, outcroppings, historic buildings, or designated state scenic highways. The most notable aesthetic impact of this project will be the piles of gypsum and anhydrate, and the 30-foot-tall screen to be located on the western side of the material stockpiles. The stockpiles may reach up to 25 feet in height, and could cover up to 2.5 acres of the project site. However, these improvements will be located approximately 1,800 feet away from State

Route 180 (SR 180). The project will also include a 200 square-foot mobile office, and an existing 7,000 square-foot metal structure. These improvements will all be set back over 1,000 feet from SR 180, and will be shorter than the existing on-site improvements. These structure will be clearly subordinate to the many industrial structures already located on the property from its previous use as a sugar factory. As a result, the project will have an insignificant impact on the appearance of the property.

- D. Would the project create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?

FINDING POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

Mobile lighting equipment will be used at night when gypsum and anhydrate are delivered via train, and must be unloaded. This is expected to occur an average of two nights per month. Mobile lighting may also be necessary for operation within their typical business hours (5am to 5pm) during certain times of the year. This lighting will be directed at the operation, and will not shine on neighboring properties or produce any glare. Due to the distance (approximately 0.5 mile) between the proposed operation and the adjacent parcels to the west and north, and the existing structures immediately to the south and east of the material storage area, the proposed mobile lighting around the gypsum and anhydrate piles is unlikely to impact any of the surrounding properties. The proposed mobile trailer is over 1,000 feet from SR 180, and any lighting on this structure would be the most likely to impact surrounding properties because it is closest to a parcel boundary and the least shielded by existing structures. To ensure a less than significant impact, adherence to the following mitigation measure will be required.

* **Mitigation Measure(s)**

1. *All outdoor lighting shall be hooded and directed downward so as not to shine upward or toward adjacent properties and public streets.*

II. AGRICULTURAL AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

- A. Would the project convert prime or unique farmlands or farmland of state-wide importance to non-agricultural use; or
- B. Would the project conflict with existing agricultural zoning or Williamson Act Contracts?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The project impact area is designated as “Urban and Built Up Land” in the California Department of Conservation’s 2014 Important Farmland Map. No land designated as prime, unique, or of statewide importance will be developed as a result of the proposed project. The parcel is designated as AE-20 (Exclusive Agricultural, 20-acre minimum parcel size), and is designated for agricultural use by the Fresno County General Plan. Land uses that support agricultural operations, such as agricultural chemical, fertilizer, and soil supplement distribution operations, are allowed in agricultural areas with approval of a discretionary use permit.

- C. Would the project conflict with existing zoning for or cause rezoning of forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned Timberland Production; or
- D. Would the project result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The proposed project is not in an area of forest land or timberland production.

- E. Would the project involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural uses or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

There is farmland that is actively cultivated to the west of the proposed project site. It is located on the same property as the proposed facility, and a 30-foot-tall dust screen will be erected between the proposed gypsum/anhydrite stockpiles and the agricultural operation to ensure that dust from the proposed stockpiles does not negatively impact the growth of the crops. The land directly to the north of the proposed operation (on the same parcel) is not currently engaged in agricultural cultivation, and is designated as “Vacant or Disturbed Land” by the California Department of Conservation. The “Prime Farmland” and “Farmland of Statewide Importance” to the south and east of the operation (located on the same parcel) is separated from the proposed operation by existing industrial structures. One existing private roadway on the parcel, which will be used by the proposed operation, crosses through this farmland. However, no new roads will be built through this area, and there is no current cultivation.

III. AIR QUALITY

- A. Would the project conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable Air Quality Plan; or
- B. Would the project violate any air quality standard or contribute to an existing or projected air quality violation; or
- C. Would the project result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under a Federal or State ambient air quality standard; or
- D. Would the project expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations; or
- E. Would the project create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The County of Fresno is a non-attainment area for PM-2.5, PM-10, and Ozone. The proposed project will result in limited construction emissions, necessary for road improvements, and installation of the mobile office and dust screens. Heavy equipment will be operated to move gypsum/anhydrate, spray water, and perform other essential functions. The applicant estimates that an average of 36 (maximum of 50) haul trucks will deliver materials to farmers within a 100 mile radius of the project site each day. The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD) reviewed the project and expressed no concerns. The project will be subject to the policies set forth by SJVAPCD, which could require emissions reduction or appropriate dust management measures. The applicant already proposes one large, permanent dust screen, the use of water to minimize dust from the stockpiles, and they plan to either use water or cloth screens on the haul trucks to minimize the amount of dust produced during delivery. With adherence to the policies of SJVAPCD, this project will have a less than significant impact on the air quality.

IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

- A. Would the project have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any candidate, sensitive, or special-status species?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED:

A biological assessment was performed for the project site, and it was determined that some special-status species are present or could be present in the project area. The San Joaquin coachwhip, coast horned lizard, burrowing owl, Swainson's hawk, mountain plover, western mastiff bat, western red bat, American Badger, and San Joaquin kit fox were determined to be "possibly" present by a qualified biologist in their assessment of the site on October 24, 2018. The loggerhead shrike was observed on the project site during the survey. Based on the required habitat and behavioral tendencies of the present and potentially present species, as well as the project description, the following mitigation measures will ensure that all impacts to these species are less than significant.

* **Mitigation Measure(s)**

- 1. For the initial date(s) of ground disturbance and substantial activity, a qualified biologist shall be present to ensure that no special-status species are present on site which could be disturbed by the proposed activity. A memorandum from this biologist shall be provided to the County confirming that they were present during this time. If special-status species are detected or suspected of being present at this time, all activity shall cease and the applicant must consult with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and/or the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) to ensure that all species-specific guidelines are followed.*
- 2. All project-related vehicles shall observe a 20-mph speed limit within the boundaries of the subject parcel. Traffic shall not deviate from the circulation demonstrated in the site plan.*

3. *All construction shall occur during daylight hours, and at the close of each working day, any excavated, steep-walled holes or trenches of more than two feet deep shall be covered (with plywood or similar material) or provided with at least one "escape ramp" of earth fill or wooden planks to prevent inadvertent entrapment. Before any such holes or trenches are filled, they must be thoroughly inspected for trapped animals.*
 4. *All construction pipes, culverts, or similar structures with a diameter of four inches or greater that are stored at the site overnight should be thoroughly inspected for kit foxes before they are moved, buried or capped. If a kit fox is discovered in one of these structures, USFWS shall be consulted immediately. If necessary, the structure may be moved once to remove it from the path of construction activity; it shall only be moved once and it shall only be done under the direct supervision of a qualified biologist.*
 5. *All trash and food items shall be discarded into closed containers and properly disposed of at the end of each workday.*
 6. *No dogs, cats, or other pets shall be allowed on the project site.*
 7. *If a special-status reptile is found in the work area during construction, work in that area shall cease until the creature moves off the site of their own accord.*
 8. *If construction activities are scheduled during the breeding bird season, from February 15th through September 15th, a pre-construction survey for nesting birds shall be conducted within the project footprint with a 500-foot buffer area surrounding the project footprint. Construction activities may not take place within 250 feet of an active bird nest or within 500 feet of an active raptor nest. This distance may only be reduced if a biological monitor determines that the activities are not affecting the breeding success of the nesting birds.*
- B. Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS); or
- C. Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on federally-protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption or other means; or
- D. Would the project 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?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The project area does not include any riparian habitat, sensitive natural communities, or wetlands. The project is located on a developed portion of the subject parcel, which was

once used for an industrial operation. There are no trees or foliage indicative of a riparian habitat on site. Additionally, the elevated rail spurs (approximately four feet tall) form a barrier between the artificially-flooded ponds to the north of the project site and the proposed operation. There are natural, freshwater, riverine, wetland habitats nearby; adherence to the County Flood Hazard Ordinance, which will either result in a watertight barrier surrounding the whole operation or the stockpile area being raised above the existing grade, will ensure that even in 100-year flood conditions, the project does not significantly impact these resources with runoff.

- E. Would the project conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance; or
- F. Would the project conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project will not conflict with any local ordinances or conservation plans.

V. CULTURAL RESOURCES

- A. Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in Section 15064.5; or
- B. Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5; or
- C. Would the project directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature; or
- D. Would the project disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries; or
- E. Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource as defined in Public Resources Code Section 21074?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED:

The proposed project includes the following ground-disturbing activities: setting posts for the dust screen, tie downs for a mobile office, burying an electrical line, and the grading necessary to build a watertight earthen barrier or a raised storage area in compliance with the County Flood Hazard Ordinance. This soil will come from within the same flood zone that the project is situated in. The project is located in the same area of the parcel as an old sugar factory, so the ground has been disturbed and heavily trafficked in the past. The project is in an area of medium archaeological sensitivity according to the Fresno County General Plan Background Report (FCGPBR). The Southern San Joaquin Valley Information Center (SSJVIC) reviewed the project and

reported that there were no known cultural resources present on site. Additionally, no tribes expressed concerns about archaeological resources when given the opportunity to review the proposed project. The following Mitigation Measure will ensure a less than significant impact to cultural resources if they are encountered during construction activities.

* **Mitigation Measure(s)**

1. *In the event that cultural resources are unearthed during ground-disturbing activities related to this project, all work shall be halted in the area of the find. An Archeologist shall be called to evaluate the findings and make any necessary mitigation recommendations. If human remains are unearthed during ground-disturbing activities, no further disturbance is to occur until the Fresno County Sheriff-Coroner has made the necessary findings as to origin and disposition. All normal evidence procedures should be followed by photos, reports, video, etc. If such remains are determined to be Native American, the Sheriff-Coroner must notify the Native American Commission within 24 hours.*

VI. GEOLOGY AND SOILS

- A. Would the project expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including risk of loss, injury or death involving:
1. Rupture of a known earthquake; or
 2. Strong seismic ground shaking; or
 3. Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

According to the Fresno County General Plan Background Report (FCGPBR) Figure 9-5, the project area's probability of experiencing a seismic hazard in 50 years, which would exceed peak ground acceleration, is 20-40%. Current building codes are designed to account for seismic hazard, and adherence to these codes will be required with building permits. Approximately 36 truck drivers and three employees will be on site during operation each day, but the truck drivers will only be there for the amount of time it takes to fill the haul trucks.

4. Landslides?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The proposed project is not located in an area of steep slopes (FCGPBR Figure 7-2). The topography of the area is quite flat, and the proposed project will not change this or increase the risk of loss, injury, or death due to landslides.

- B. Would the project result in substantial erosion or loss of topsoil?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The subject parcel is flat, and the proposed project will not increase the possibility of on-site or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse. Additionally, all grading activities will be subject to the County's standard permitting review process.

- C. Would the project result in on-site or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

Grading will be required for the proposed project to conform to the County Flood Hazard Ordinance, either through the construction of an earthen berm around the project site or to raise the stockpile area. Ultimately, this construction will prevent erosion from the project site. Additionally, all grading activities will require permits from the County, and this review process will reduce any erosion-causing activities to a less than significant impact.

- D. Would the project be located on expansive soils, creating substantial risks to life or property?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

According to the Fresno County General Plan (Figure 7-1), expansive soils are not a concern in or around the project area.

- E. Would the project have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative disposal systems where sewers are not available for wastewater disposal?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

No new septic systems are proposed.

VII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

- A. Would the project generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment; or
- B. Would the project conflict with any applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD) reviewed the project and had no concerns regarding the proposal. It is required that the project adhere to all standards and reporting guidelines set forth by SJVAPCD.

VIII. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

- A. Would the project create a significant public hazard through routine transport, use or disposal of hazardous materials; or
- B. Would the project create a significant public hazard involving accidental release of hazardous materials into the environment?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

Gypsum and anhydrate are not hazardous materials, and they will be the primary substances transported as a result of the proposed project. A 5,000-gallon fuel storage tank is being installed on site to provide fuel for operational equipment. Natural gas or propane will also be used on site. These substances are prevalent, and the use, storage, and transportation of these materials is not expected to have a significant impact on the environment when they are handled in accordance with state and local regulations.

- C. Would the project create hazardous emissions or utilize hazardous materials, substances or waste within one quarter-mile of a school?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project area is approximately 3.38 miles from the nearest school in Mendota, CA.

- D. Would the project be located on a hazardous materials site?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The project would be located on an old beet sugar factory site. It will only utilize one existing structure, but the entire project will be within the vicinity of the old facility. As such, it is located on a hazardous waste (RCRA) site that has previously reported toxic releases (TRI) and air pollution (ICIS-AIR). The last reported toxic release was Ammonia in 2008. In the 1980's and 1990's, the facility also reported releases of Nitrate Compounds, Nitric Acid, Hydrochloric Acid, Chlorine, and Sodium Hydroxide. ICIS-AIR records indicate that the operation is permanently closed, so the major emissions once produced on the property are no longer produced. Data from the National Emissions Inventory (NEI) further corroborates this conclusion, showing that Hazardous Air Pollutants (HAPs) dropped from 1,300.93 pounds in 2008 to 0.71 pounds in 2014. Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) dropped from 2,014.17 pounds in 2008 to 0.19 pounds in 2014. The facility is currently being monitored under the RCRA (Resource Conservation and Recovery Act), and is currently in compliance with these regulations.

- E. Would a project located within an airport land use plan or, absent such a plan, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project does not fall within the land use plan of the nearest airport, Mendota Municipal.

- F. Would a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project is not in the vicinity of a private airstrip.

- G. Would the project impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted Emergency Response Plan or Emergency Evacuation Plan; or

- H. Would the project expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The project location is classified as having a moderate fire hazard. The Fresno County Fire Protection District and the Fresno County Sheriff's Department were provided the opportunity to comment on the proposed project and expressed no concerns. The proposed operation is set back over 1,000 feet from the nearest public roadway, State Route 180. This project will not conflict with an existing emergency response plan, and it will not expose people or structures to additional risk of loss.

IX. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

- A. Would the project violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise degrade water quality; or
- B. Would the project substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge so that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The proposed project will utilize up to 3,000,000 gallons of water per year for dust suppression. Spraying water on piles of gypsum and anhydrate forms a crust on the material, which keeps it in place. This water will be drawn from an off-site well on APN 013-030-17S. The project is not in a water-short portion of the County, and the anticipated water use will not have a significant impact on water quality.

- C. Would the project substantially alter existing drainage patterns, including alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on or off site; or
- D. Would the project substantially alter existing drainage patterns, including alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in flooding on or off site; or
- E. Would the project create or contribute run-off which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned storm water drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted run-off; or
- F. Would the project otherwise substantially degrade water quality; or
- G. Would the project place housing within a 100-year floodplain; or
- H. Would the project place structures within a 100-year flood hazard area that would impede or redirect flood flows; or
- I. Would the project expose persons or structures to levee or dam failure?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED:

There are no permanent or intermittent streams or rivers running through the project area. The proposed project is located in a special flood hazard area, Zone A, which is within the 100-year floodplain. The area is not subject to flood due to levee or dam failure (FEMA). To comply with the County Flood Hazard Ordinance, steps must be taken to ensure that in a 100-year flood scenario, the large quantities of gypsum and anhydrate stored on site are not displaced. This will be achieved either through the construction of a watertight barrier of sufficient height around the project site, or by raising the stockpile area. Additionally, it is the applicant's responsibility to adhere to the requirements set forth by the California State Water Resources Control Board, which could mean obtaining an Industrial General Permit for their facility. With adherence to the following Mitigation Measure, the project will have a less than significant impact on erosion, flood hazards, and water quality.

* **Mitigation Measure(s)**

1. *The outdoor storage of bulk materials shall comply with Fresno County Ordinance Code Chapter 15.48, Flood Hazard Areas, through the construction of a watertight barrier taller than the Base Flood Elevation (BFE) or by elevating the storage site to an elevation above the BFE.*

- J. Would the project cause inundation by seiche, tsunami or mudflow?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The subject parcel is not in an area of steep slopes (FCGPBR), nor is it near a large body of water with risk for seiche or tsunami.

X. LAND USE AND PLANNING

- A. Will the project physically divide an established community?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The proposed project will not divide an established community; it will only allow the stockpiling and transportation of gypsum and anhydrate materials on the site of a closed beet sugar factory. The project site is in a rural area outside of the community of Mendota. No existing structures will be demolished, only a dust screen and mobile office will be installed, and no communities will be divided as a result of the project.

- B. Will the project conflict with any Land Use Plan, policy or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The proposed operation is allowed on land reserved for agricultural uses by the Fresno County General Plan and in the AE-20 (Exclusive Agricultural, 20-acre minimum parcel size) Zone District when a Conditional Use Permit is approved by the Planning Commission for such an operation. If the associated use permit is approved, the project will not conflict with any land use plans, policies or regulations.

- C. Will the project conflict with any applicable Habitat Conservation Plan or Natural Community Conservation Plan?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

There are no applicable Habitat Conservation Plans or Natural Community Conservation Plans for this geographic area.

XI. MINERAL RESOURCES

- A. Would the project result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource; or
- B. Would the project result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site designated on a General Plan?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The Fresno County General Plan Mineral Resources Location Map, Figure 7-7, indicates that the proposed project is not near any known mineral resources. If unknown mineral resources are present, the proposed project would not eliminate these resources or significantly affect their accessibility because no concrete or large structures are proposed.

XII. NOISE

- A. Would the project result in exposure of people to severe noise levels?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

Loading trucks with gypsum and anhydrate, unloading these materials from rail cars, and hitching/unhitching rail cars from trains will result in noise. All of this noise production will be concentrated in the area south of the existing rail spurs. The only nearby residential housing is approximately 2,000 feet south and west of the noise-producing area of the parcel and on the other side of SR 180. Between the area of noise production and this housing are also four existing structures, which will help muffle the sound. Rail deliveries will be made 92 train cars at a time, approximately 36 times per year. It is required that all operations adhere to the Fresno County Noise Ordinance, and this operation will be no exception. Trucks will be loaded from 5am to 5pm. Due to the distance from nearby residences, existing barriers between the operation and housing, infrequent rail deliveries, and mandatory adherence to the noise ordinance, it is determined that the facility will have a less than significant impact.

- B. Would the project result in exposure of people to or generate excessive ground-borne vibration or ground-borne noise levels?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The operation may produce some vibration through the use of heavy equipment, however, the distance between the proposed operation and the edge of the subject parcel (approximately 1,000 feet) will make any vibration-related impacts insignificant.

- C. Would the project cause a substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity; or
- D. Would the project result in a substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The engines of operating machinery will create ambient noise, but are in excess of 1,000 feet from residential structures and the site is separated from the residences by a four-lane highway.

- E. Would the project expose people to excessive noise levels associated with a location near an airport or a private airstrip; or
- F. For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The nearest airport, Mendota Municipal, is approximately 2.6 miles northwest of the project site. It has a planning area with delineated sound contours, and the project is not located within this area. The airport's proximity to the project will not result in noise-related concerns.

XIII. POPULATION AND HOUSING

- A. Would the project induce substantial population growth either directly or indirectly; or
- B. Would the project displace substantial numbers of existing housing; or
- C. Would the project displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of housing elsewhere?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The proposed agricultural mineral soil supplement transloading facility will not induce population growth, eliminate existing housing, or displace anyone from their homes. Population and housing will not be impacted.

XIV. PUBLIC SERVICES

- A. Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically-altered public facilities in the following areas:
 - 1. Fire protection;
 - 2. Police protection;
 - 3. Schools;
 - 4. Parks; or
 - 5. Other public facilities?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The proposed project will not result in population growth or otherwise require the expansion or alteration of any public facilities.

XV. RECREATION

- A. Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks; or
- B. Would the project require the construction of or expansion of recreational facilities?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The proposed agricultural equipment facility will not affect the usage of parks or recreational facilities because it will not affect the population or demographics of the community. No new parks or recreational facilities will be required as a result of the proposed project.

XVI. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC

- A. Would the project conflict with any applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation; or
- B. Would the project conflict with an applicable congestion management program, including, but not limited to, level of service standards and travel demands measures?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED:

The maximum number of trips per day is 50 two-way truck trips and 5 two-way employee trips. All vehicles will enter the facility from San Mateo Avenue, and will therefore use the 0.32-mile stretch of San Mateo Avenue between State Route 180 (SR 180) and the entrance to the facility. Caltrans has jurisdiction over SR 180, and has determined that the project will have a less than significant impact on the traffic congestion and condition of this roadway. San Mateo Avenue is a County-maintained road. The 0.32-mile stretch between SR 180 and the facility's entrance has an ADT of 700, pavement width of 32.3 feet, and is in very poor condition. The stretch of road north of this 0.32-mile section is in fair condition. Due to the relatively low number of daily traffic trips and the distribution of these trips, traffic impacts will be less than significant. However, the very poor condition of San Mateo Avenue and the weight of the trucks required to move large quantities of gypsum and anhydrate could further deteriorate a road already in poor condition. Therefore, the following mitigation measure is required to ensure that the integrity of this public road is not jeopardized by the proposed use.

* **Mitigation Measure(s)**

1. *A 2-inch asphalt overlay must be applied to the entire width (32.3 feet) of San Mateo Avenue, between State Route 180 and 0.32 miles north of State Route 180. This overlay must properly tie into the surface of State Route 180 and the existing overlay north of the stretch of San Mateo Avenue used to access the proposed facility. Re-striping and other road improvements will be required by the Road Maintenance and Operations Division to ensure safety and usability.*

- C. Would the project result in a change in air traffic patterns?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The proposed project will not result in any tall structures or air hazards.

D. Would the project substantially increase traffic hazards due to design features?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The design of the proposed project is not conspicuous. The project site already hosts many structures much taller and larger than the proposed structures. Additionally, it will be set back approximately 1,000 feet from the nearest road.

E. Would the project result in inadequate emergency access?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The proposed project will not affect emergency access to any existing structures. The Fresno County Fire Protection District and Sheriff's Department expressed no concerns regarding the proposed project.

F. Would the project conflict with adopted plans, policies or programs regarding public transit, bicycle or pedestrian facilities or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such facilities?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The proposed project will not inhibit the use of pedestrian facilities or the implementation of related plans, policies, or programs.

XVII. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

A. Would the project exceed wastewater treatment requirements; or

B. Would the project require construction of or the expansion of new water or wastewater treatment facilities; or

C. Would the project require or result in the construction or expansion of new storm water drainage facilities?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

No new water or wastewater facilities are proposed. Three employees and up to 50 truck drivers per day will use portable waste facilities.

D. Would the project have sufficient water supplies available from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The applicant estimates that the operation will use up to 3,000,000 gallons of water per year for dust suppression purposes. Additional water usage will be negligible. This

water will be drawn from an existing well on the northerly adjacent parcel (APN: 013-030-17S). No new entitlements or resources will be necessary.

- E. Would the project result in a determination of inadequate wastewater treatment capacity to serve project demand?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

No new facilities are proposed which would require wastewater treatment. Wastewater will be contained in portable sanitary facilities and serviced by the provider.

- F. Would the project be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity; or
- G. Would the project comply with federal, state and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The only solid waste that will be produced on site is from office activities and the three employees. The limited quantities of solid waste produced will be taken off site and disposed of at an appropriate waste facility.

XVIII. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

- A. Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California prehistory or history?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED:

The project does have potential to impact special-status species, wetland habitat, and cultural resources. However, through mitigation and project design, impacts to these resources will be less than significant.

- B. Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED:

Cumulative impacts to roads, traffic, air quality, and public services were evaluated and determined to be less than significant with incorporation of mitigation and adherence to state and local policies.

- C. Does the project have environmental impacts which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

Any impacts to humans were determined to be less than significant as a result of location, project scope, and mandatory adherence to state and local policies.

CONCLUSION/SUMMARY

Based upon the Initial Study prepared for Conditional Use Permit Application No. 3622, staff has concluded that the project will not have a significant effect on the environment. It has been determined that there would be no impacts to Mineral Resources, Population and Housing, and Recreation.

Potential impacts related to Agricultural and Forestry Resources, Air Quality, Geology and Soils, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Land Use and Planning, Noise, Public Services, and Utilities and Service Systems have been determined to be less than significant.

Potential impacts relating to Aesthetics, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Hydrology and Water Quality, and Transportation and Traffic have been determined to be less than significant with adherence to the listed Mitigation Measures.

A Mitigated Negative Declaration is recommended and is subject to approval by the decision-making body. The Initial Study is available for review at 2220 Tulare Street, Suite A, street level, located on the southwest corner of Tulare and "M" Street, Fresno, California.

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SUPERIOR SOIL SUPPLEMENTS, LLC MENDOTA TRANSLOADING YARD SITE PLAN

FOR
CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT
MENDOTA, CA

PROJECT AUTHORITY

APPLICANT
SUPERIOR SOIL SUPPLEMENTS, LLC
TIM HILL
12100 WILSHIRE BLVD, STE 800
LOS ANGELES, CA 90025
(626) 788-3977
thill@gatehouse-partners.com

CIVIL ENGINEER
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SPARKS, NV 89431
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(775) 852-9736 FAX
rswitzer@robisoneng.com

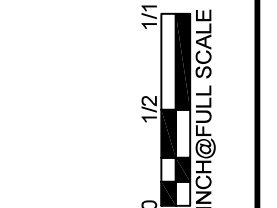
SHEET LIST

T1 TITLE SHEET
C1 SITE PLAN
C2 ACCESS PLAN
C3 GENERAL FLOOR PLANS

PROJECT SUMMARY

ADDRESS: 29400 WEST WHITEBRIDGE AVE MENDOTA, CA 93640
COUNTY: FRESNO, CALIFORNIA
ASSESSORS' PARCEL: 019070615
SITE DESCRIPTION: A PORTION OF SECTION 3, T14S-R15E, MDM
AREA: 645 ACRES
FEMA FLOOD ZONE: A PER FIRM 06019C2025H

CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT
MENDOTA TRANSLOADING YARD SITE PLAN
SHEET T1
TITLE SHEET
FRESNO COUNTY
PROJECT NO. 1702-03.001
CALIFORNIA

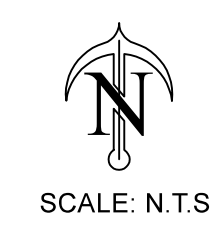
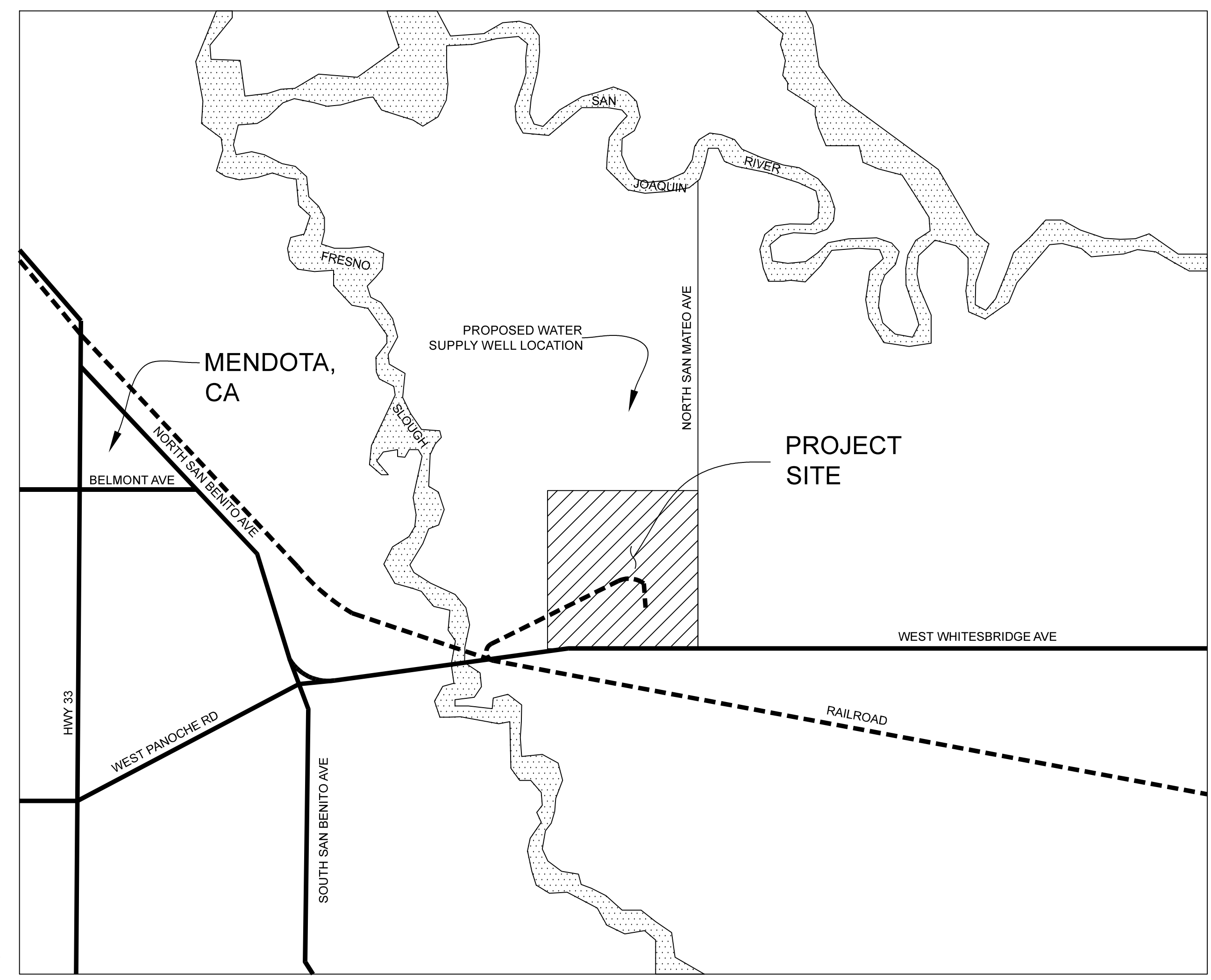


PREPARED FOR:
SUPERIOR SOIL SUPPLEMENTS, LLC
12100 WILSHIRE BLVD, STE 800
LOS ANGELES, CA 90025
(626) 788-3977

Robison Engineering
REGISTERED PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER
12100 WILSHIRE BLVD, STE 800
LOS ANGELES, CA 90025
DRAWN: RMS
DATE: 2018-08-24

PRELIMINARY
NOT FOR
CONSTRUCTION

VICINITY MAP



1	AERIAL IMAGERY PROVIDED BY ESRI WORLD IMAGE
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REFERENCES

NO	DESCRIPTION	DATE	BY	CHKD
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1	FOR CUP SUBMITTAL	2018-08-24	RMS	NER

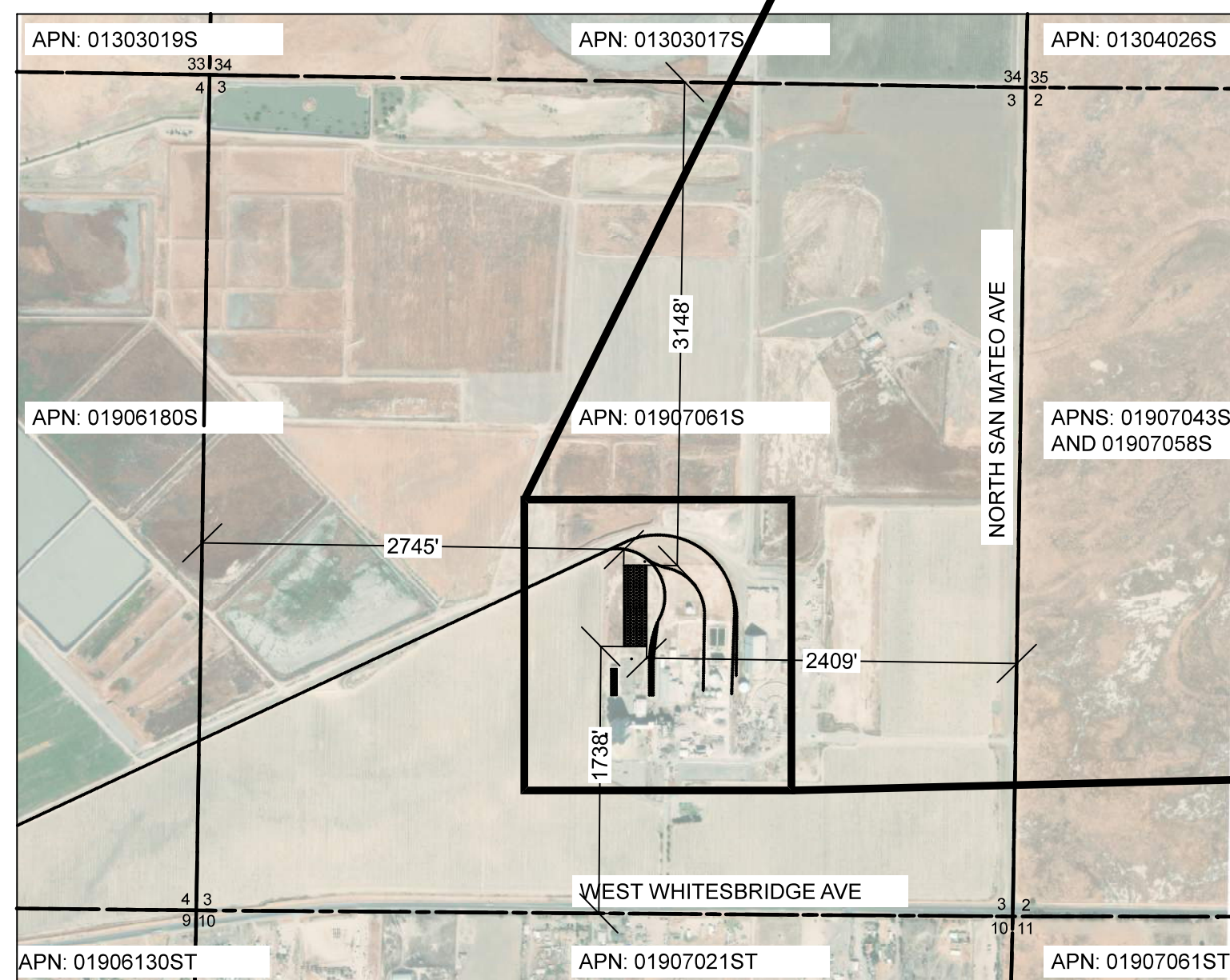
REVISIONS

NO	DESCRIPTION	DATE	BY	CHKD
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SHEET
T1

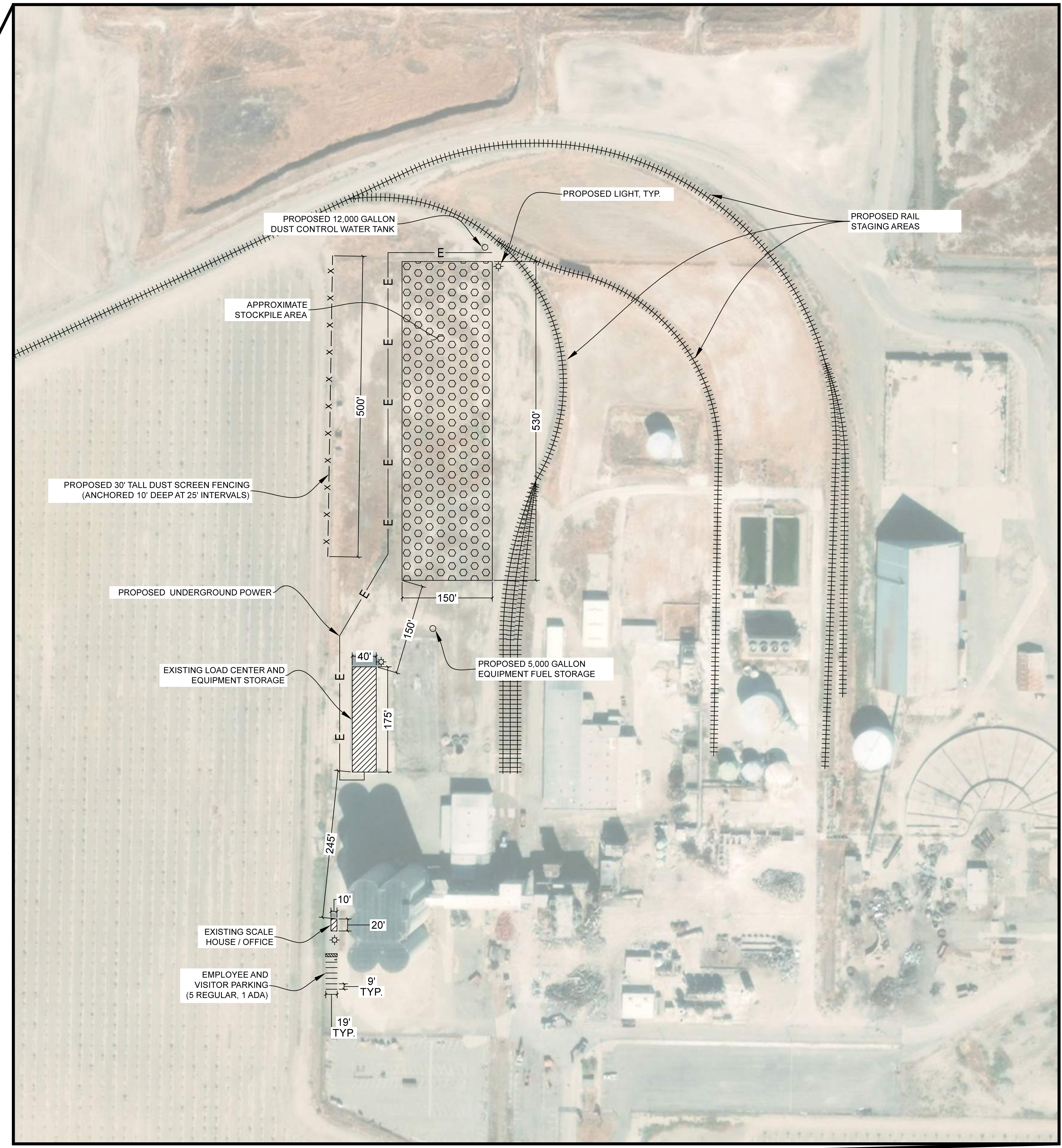
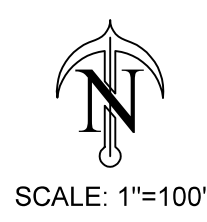
NOTES:

1. THIS MAP IS PREPARED TO ILLUSTRATE FEATURES FOR ARCHITECTURAL AND ENGINEERING PLANNING AND DESIGN ONLY. NO INFORMATION SHALL BE CONSTRUED TO REPRESENT A FORMAL SURVEY OF THE SUBJECT PROPERTY, OR TO RENDER ANY OPINION THEREON.
2. LIGHTING INFORMATION: 300W LED SHOEBOX POLE LIGH FIXTURES (39,000LM 5,700K OUTDOOR LOT LIGHT AC100-277V)
3. EXISTING SITE FENCING AND GATES ARE STANDARD 8' HIGH CHAIN LINK.

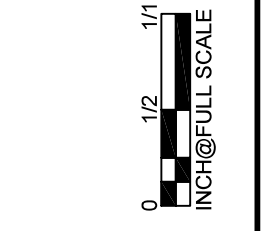


SCALE: 1"=1000'

ALL WITHIN SECTION 3, T14S-R15E, MDM



CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT
MENDOTA TRANSLADING YARD SITE PLAN
SHEET C1
SITE PLAN
FRESNO COUNTY
PROJECT NO. 1702-03.001



PREPARED FOR:
Robinson Superior Soils
SUPERIOR SOIL SUPPLEMENTS, LLC
12100 WILSHIRE BLVD. STE 800
LOS ANGELES, CA 90025
(626) 786-3977
DRAWN: RMS
DATE: 2018-08-28

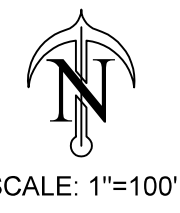
PRELIMINARY
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CONSTRUCTION

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REFERENCES	
NO	DESCRIPTION
P1	FOR CLIENT REVIEW
1	FOR CUP SUBMITTAL

REVISIONS	
NO	DESCRIPTION
P1	FOR CLIENT REVIEW
1	FOR CUP SUBMITTAL

SHEET
C1



SCALE: 1"=100'



NO	PT	DESCRIPTION	DATE	BY	CHKD	REFERENCES					
						1	2	3	4	5	6
		FOR CLIENT REVIEW	2018-08-23	RMS	NER						
		FOR CUP SUBMITTAL	2018-08-24	RMS	NER						

REVISIONS

SHEET

C2

PRELIMINARY

NOT FOR

CONSTRUCTION

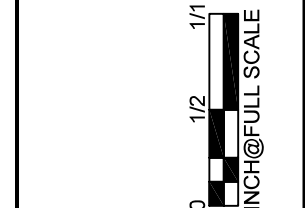
PREPARED FOR:

Robinson Engineering

SUPERIOR SOIL SUPPLEMENTS, LLC

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LOS ANGELES, CA 90025
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www.robinsone.com

DRAWN: RMS
DATE: 2018-08-24



CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT

MENDOTA TRANSLADING YARD SITE PLAN

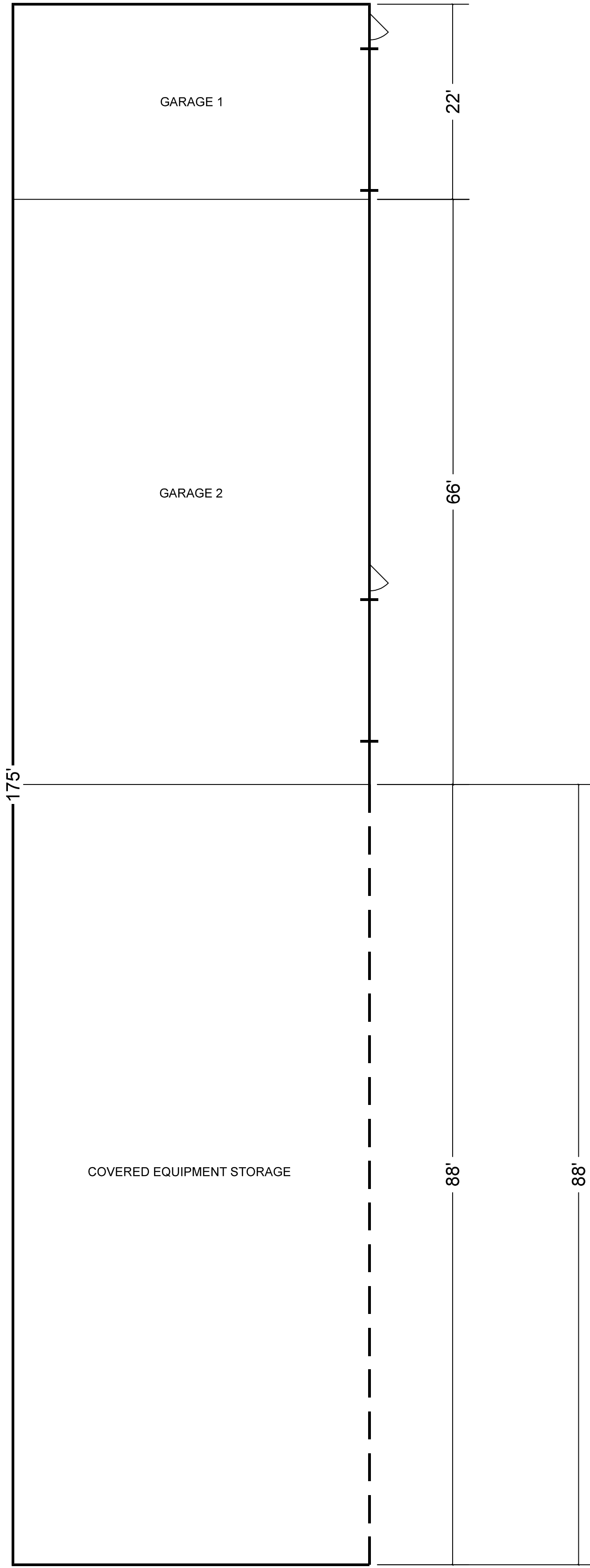
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ACCESS PLAN

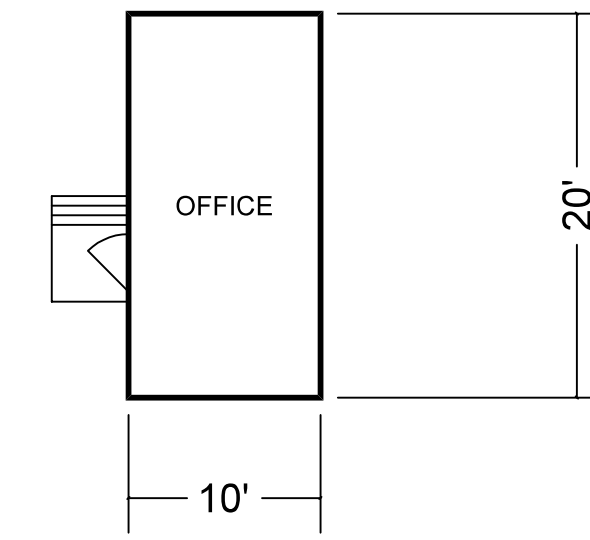
FRESNO COUNTY

CALIFORNIA

PROJECT NO. 1702-03.001



F1-1
C3
LOAD CENTER AND EQUIPMENT STORAGE FLOOR PLAN
SCALE: 1" = 12'



F1-2
C3
SCALE HOUSE / OFFICE FLOOR PLAN
SCALE: 1" = 4'

CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT
MENDOTA TRANSLADING YARD SITE PLAN
SHEET C3
GENERAL FLOOR PLANS
FRESNO COUNTY
CALIFORNIA
PROJECT NO. 1702-03.001

0 1/2 1/1
INCH@FULL SCALE

PREPARED FOR:
SUPERIOR SOIL
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LOS ANGELES, CA 90025
(626) 786-3977

Robinson
Engineering
ARCHITECTURE AND
ENGINEERING
DRAWN: RMS
DATE: 2018-08-24

PRELIMINARY
NOT FOR
CONSTRUCTION

1 AERIAL IMAGERY PROVIDED BY ESRI WORLD IMAGE

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REFERENCES

BY: CHKD
RMS NER
RMS NER

DATE: 2018-08-23
2018-08-24

DESCRIPTION
FOR CLIENT REVIEW
FOR CUP SUBMITTAL

NO
PT

1

REVISIONS

SHEET

C2



OPERATIONAL STATEMENT
Superior Soil Supplements, LLC

**Mendota Transloading Yard
CUP Operations Statement
Pre-Application Number 39514**

Prepared By:

Valerie Rosenkrantz – Managing Consultant

TRINITY CONSULTANTS, INC.
also known as Insight Environmental Consultants

5500 Ming Avenue, Suite 140
Bakersfield, CA 93309
661-282-2200

December 13 2018

Project 180505.0193



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1. PROJECT SUMMARY

- Project Title:** Mendota Transloading Yard Project
- Project Location:** 29400 W. Whitesbridge Avenue, Mendota, Fresno County, CA 93640
Portion of Assessor Parcel Number 019-070-61S
- Entitlements:** Conditional Use Permit Application Package, Pre-Application Number 39514
- Lead Agency:** Fresno County Public Works and Planning
2220 Tulare Street Fresno, CA 93721
- General Plan:** Agriculture **Zoning:** Agriculture (AE-20)

Superior Soil Supplements, LLC (Superior) is proposing to use a portion of the existing Spreckels Sugar Company facility in Mendota, Fresno County. The project would allow the transloading (receive by rail, store, and truck out) of approximately 220,000 tons per year of gypsum and anhydrite (Mendota Transloading Yard Project). The gypsum and anhydrite will be shipped in separate railcars and stored in unique piles in the storage area.

The remainder of this report addresses Fresno County’s pre-application review No. 39514 requests: Section 2 presents the project location details; and Section 3 presents the operations statement.

2. PROJECT LOCATION

The Mendota Transloading Yard Project would be located at the Old Spreckels Sugar Plant at 29400 West Whitesbridge Avenue in Mendota, California 93640. The proposed site is approximately 2.5 miles southeast of the town of Mendota in western Fresno County. It is located at Section 3, Township 14S, Range 15E, Mount Diablo Base & Meridian (36 degrees 44'41.92" N, 120 degrees 19'45.69"W) at an elevation of 163 feet. The regional and project locations of the proposed project are shown in Figures 2-1 and 2-2. The Mendota Transloading Yard Project would be within a portion of Assessor Parcel Number (APN) 019-070-61S. Figure 2-3 shows the assessor's parcel map.

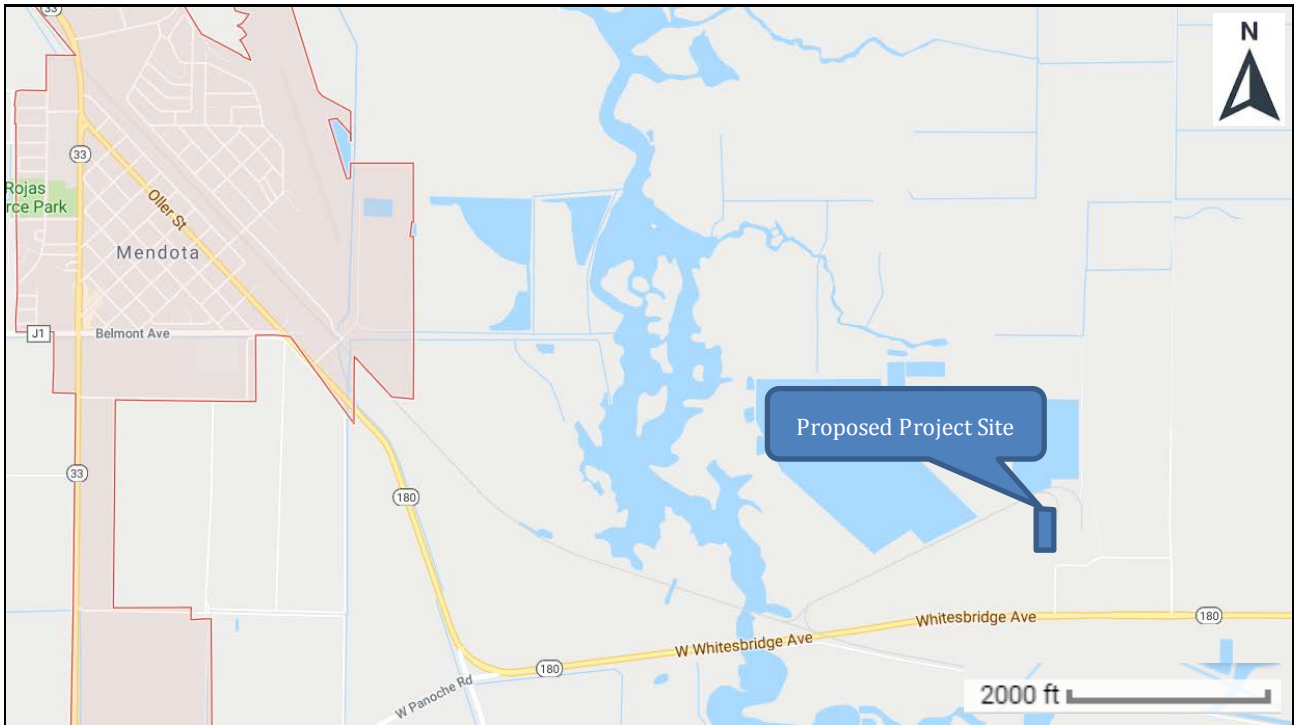
West Whitesbridge Avenue is also known as State Route 180, is a paved roadway, and would be the primary access to the project, with site ingress and egress from San Mateo Avenue. Photographs of the proposed project site are provided in Appendix A.

Figure 2-1. Regional Location



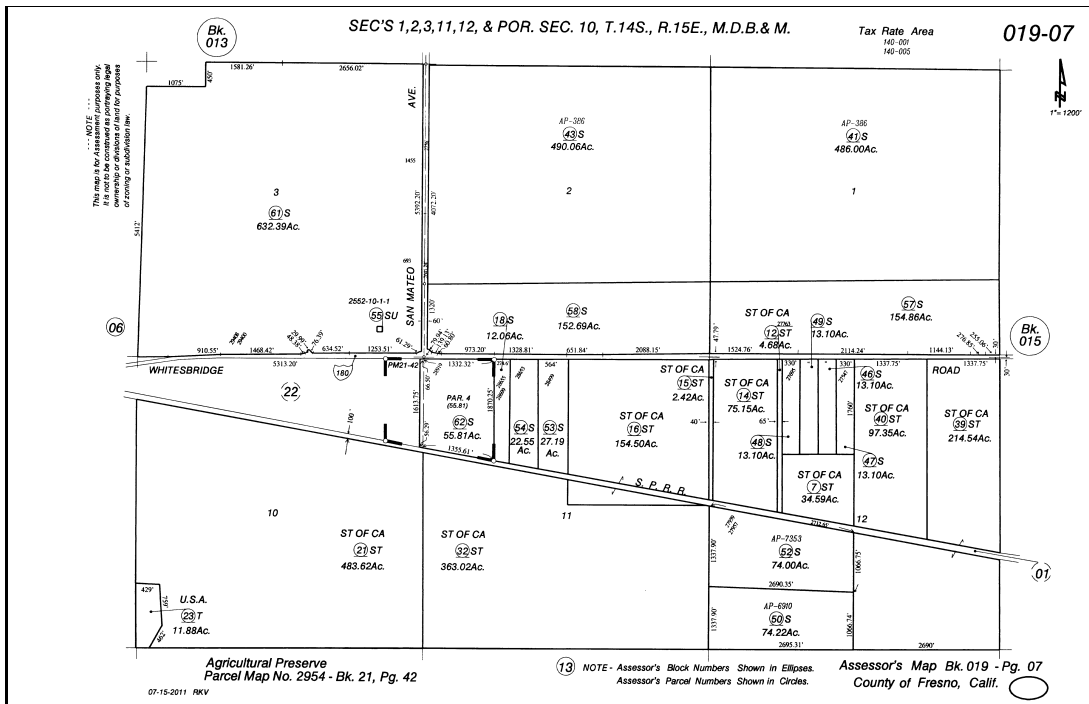
Source: Google Earth, 2018

Figure 2-2. Project Location



Source: Google Maps, 2018

Figure 2-3. Assessor's Map



3. OPERATIONAL STATEMENT

The project is a gypsum and anhydrite transloading operations within the Old Spreckels Sugar Plant, previously approved as CUPs 2652 and 2073 by Fresno County in 1994 and before. The Spreckels operation ceased its operations and cancelled its permits in 2016.

3.1.1. Nature of Operations

The purpose of the proposed Mendota Transloading Yard Project would be to allow the use of a portion of the Speckles Sugar plant property, under lease from the current property owners, for transloading the naturally-occurring minerals gypsum and anhydrite for use by the local agricultural community as soil supplements. The Mendota Transloading Yard Project is estimated to receive approximately 220,000 tons per year of gypsum and anhydrite by train (from Empire Mining Co., LLC in Nevada), transload with mobile excavators to an approximately 2.5-acre storage pile, and then truck out to the market. The gypsum and anhydrite will be shipped in separate railcars and stored in unique piles in the storage area.

The Mendota Transloading Yard Project would include dust control during transfer with water cannons, installation of a dust screen to block dust from being blown west to the adjacent farm fields, and a water truck for dust suppression in areas other than where the water cannons are operating. Water for the proposed dust control will be purchased from an off-site well approximately 5,700 feet north from the proposed operation and trucked via private farm road to the proposed on-site 12,000 gallon water storage tank.

The Mendota Transloading Yard Project would include the installation of the following: 1) a 500 feet long and 30 feet high dust screen; 2) a 5,000 gallon fuel storage tank; and 3) a 12,000 gallon water storage tank. The Mendota Transloading Yard Project would include the use of the existing in-ground truck scale, trailer/office/scale house, and an existing shop/storage building. The Mendota Transloading Yard Project would include the following mobile equipment: excavator for unloading train, loader for stockpiling and loading customer trucks, a stacker/conveyor (possible), two (2) water cannons, and one (1) 4000-gallon water truck.

The trains will deliver the materials in 92-railcar units. At approximately 100 tons per railcar, each rail delivery would carry 9,200 tons. At an estimated 220,000 tons per year, there would be a maximum of 36 rail deliveries per year. The trains would deliver anytime during a 24-hour period, seven days per week, based on when there is availability to pass through the tracks. The trucks would load five days a week, typically for 36 trips per day. At most, 50 trucks would be loaded on any given day.

The Mendota Transloading Yard Project would not mix or package the materials. This would be solely a transloading operation. This project would use the existing facility infrastructure:

- The existing site access from San Mateo Avenue and existing on-site circulation.
- Existing truck scale
- Existing trailer serving as an office/scale house
- Existing shop/storage building
- Existing railroad tracks
- Existing power service on site

3.1.4. Number of Employees/Trips

The Mendota Transloading Yard Facility would employ three (3) year-round employees. The five day per week shift would span from 5:00 a.m. through 5:00 p.m., and when necessary, Saturday and Sunday.

3.1.5. Service and Delivery Vehicles

At an average of 36 trucks per day and a maximum of 50 trucks per day, the haul trucks carrying gypsum/anhydrite off-site for distribution to farming customers within a 100-mile radius would be belt trailers, walking floors (self-unloading) or something comparable. Almost all the trailers would be covered; those without coverage would be sprayed down before exit.

3.1.6. Access to the Site

The Mendota Transloading Yard Project would be located on West Whitesbridge Avenue, approximately 2.5 miles southeast of Mendota in western Fresno County. The main project entrance is located from San Mateo Avenue and intersects with West Whitesbridge Avenue, also known as SR 180, and is a paved road.

Regional traffic would access West Whitesbridge Avenue, which connects to regional routes to the east and west. The internal traffic circulation pattern is show in Figure 3-2.

Figure 3-2. Proposed Truck Circulation On-Site



3.1.7. Number of Parking Spaces

The project would include use of existing on-site parking spaces (5 regular, 1 handicap) near the existing on-site scale (see Figure 3-1).

3.1.8. Goods Sales

The proposed project is a gypsum and anhydrite transloading facility. No sales would occur on site. The Mendota Transloading Yard Project would approximately receive 220,000 tons per year of gypsum and anhydrite by train (from Empire Mining Co., LLC in Nevada), transload with mobile equipment to an approximately 2.5-acre storage pile, and then truck out to the market.

3.1.9. Equipment

The project would include the following mobile equipment which will remain in place on site at all times:

- One excavator for unloading train,
- One loader for stockpiling and loading customer trucks,
- A mobile trailer/office/scale house (tied down),
- A stacker/conveyor (possible),
- Two water cannons, and
- One 4000-gallon water truck.

3.1.10. Supplies/Materials

The project would include the following supplies and materials:

- Raw materials – incoming gypsum and anhydrite;
- Dust suppression water treatment;
- Equipment maintenance - lubricating oil, gear oil, hydraulic oil;
- Natural Gas or Propane; and
- Office supplies.

3.1.11. Does the Use Cause an Unsightly Appearance

The proposed outdoor storage piles of gypsum or anhydrite would include no more than 2.5 acres of surface area, a maximum height of 25 feet in a modified triangular pyramid shapes with a maximum of 50,000 tons stored in an outdoor piles. The addition of an outdoor storage piles would hardly change the visual character of the site. The land uses surrounding the proposed project site are as follows:

North – Railroad spur and agriculture

East – Railroad spur, existing Spreckels plant and agriculture

South – Agriculture, SR 180 and ag/residential

West – Agriculture

Figure 3-3 shows the street-level view of the proposed Mendota Transloading Yard Project site from SR 180, which is behind the existing silos and buildings. Figure 3-4 shows the view of the storage pile area looking south. These images show that the storage piles would not be easily visible behind the storage silos to the west and from over 1,500 feet away from SR 180, even when the storage pile is at its maximum storage height of 25 feet.

Figure 3-3. View of Existing Site from SR 180 / W. Whitesbridge Avenue



Source: Google Earth, 2018

Figure 3-4. View of Storage Pile Area Looking South at Storage Silos



Dust would be managed through (1) use of two on-site water cannons and a watering truck during materials transloading, and (2) installation of a dust screen. On-site lighting would be focused on the existing operations; 24-hour operations would be limited to train deliveries, if necessary (estimated to average two days per month).

All existing light is directed to on-site operations area. Any proposed project lighting would also be directed to on-site operations and would be attached to mobile equipment and office trailer. There would be no off-site glare. Gypsum and anhydrite are inert, organic materials and produce no distinct odor; the transloading facility would therefore not be a source of nuisance odors.

3.1.12. Solid or Liquid Wastes to be Produced

The gypsum and anhydrite transloading yard would have no materials processing and therefore would not generate a solid or liquid industrial waste stream. There could be a small waste stream from employee use of a porta-potty. The water used for dust suppression would be adsorbed into the gypsum and anhydrite to create a cake layer to reduce dust dispersion; there would be no water runoff off site from operations of the water cannons and water truck.

3.1.13. Estimated Volume of Water to be Used (Gallons/Day)

Water consumption at the Mendota Transloading Yard is estimated at up to 10,000 gallons per day and 3,000,000 gallons of water per year for dust suppression. The water would be purchased from the owners of an existing off-site water well located approximately one mile north of the proposed transloading operations on APN 013-030-17S and depicted in Figure 3-5. This purchased water would be trucked on-site via private farm road and stored in the proposed 12,000-gallon storage tank.

Figure 3-5. Location of Off-Site Well



3.1.14. Described Any Proposed Advertising

Signage has already been installed in compliance with County Code for the existing Spreckels plant displaying the facility name, address, and entry restrictions. The project signage is located at the main facility entrance on W. Whitesbridge Avenue.

3.1.15. Will Existing Buildings Be Used? Will New Buildings Be Constructed?

There are no proposed new, permanent buildings. The project would use existing facility scales, existing power, on-site roadways, and existing railroad spurs. The project will use an existing mobile trailer as an office/scale house, depicted in Figure 3-6 below. A permanent 30-foot high dust screen would be installed along 500 feet of the western operations boundary (adjacent to the storage pile) to reduce dust blowing onto the adjacent agricultural fields, as shown in Figure 3-1; it would be anchored every 25 feet with 40-foot poles sunken 10 feet underground.

The project would include a 5,000-gallon fuel storage tank and a 12,000-gallon water storage tank. The project would extend on-site power through underground conduits to install power access as shown in Figure 3-1. The project would use an outhouse for sanitation and truck in drinking water for employee use.

Figure 3-6. View of Existing Trailer for Office/Scale House



3.1.16. Building Uses in Operations

See response to Section 3.1.15 above.

3.1.17. Outdoor Lighted and Sound Amplification

There would be no new buildings and therefore no new permanent exterior lighting. Mobile equipment would be equipped with lighting for nighttime unloading and loading when necessary. There is no proposed sound amplification.

3.1.18. Landscaping and Fencing

The facility already has existing perimeter fencing and drought-tolerant landscaping with native species in compliance with Fresno County regulations. The Mendota Transloading Yard Project would not affect existing landscaping and fencing already approved under CUP 2652. As this is a transloading facility for soil supplements, all landscaping is limited to the exterior of the facility; no new landscaping is proposed.

3.1.19. Identify all Owners, Officers and/or Board Members

Superior Soil Supplements, LLC is the lessee of the project site. The owner of the project site and the adjoining farmland is Meyers Farming, LLC. A copy of the grant deed and legal description for the project site is included in Appendix B. Superior is manager-managed by Gatehouse Partners, LLC and E. Galen Stockton. Gatehouse Partners has three principals, Edward C. Roohan, Henry N. Millner, and Timothy A. Hill. The officers of Superior are:

Rick L. Dreo	President
E. Galen Stockton	Executive Vice President
Timothy A. Hill	Executive Vice President
Henry N. Millner	Executive Vice President and Treasurer
Edward C. Roohan	Executive Vice President and Secretary

3.1.20. Construction Process

The 30-foot high dust screen is the only permanent structure proposed for installation. Forty-foot poles would be installed every 25 feet in 6-inch diameter holes 10 feet deep. On-site installation would entail approximately 1 week of digging and installing foundations for the poles and then assembling the dust screen. The screen materials would be fabricated offsite and transported on-site via truck; anticipated shipping would be from within Fresno County.

The remaining proposed equipment is mobile, including the office trailer. Any supports for stable operations would include hand placed concrete blocks and tie downs for the mobile office trailer.

3.1.21. Approvals and Permits

The proposed project will require the following approvals and permits.

- Fresno County (Lead Agency) – Review for conformity with existing CUP and determine whether a CUP process triggered; complete Site Plan Review; comply with CEQA; approve the proposed project; and issue the building permits (where applicable).
- SJVAPCD (Responsible Agency) – Applicable rules and regulations.
- RWCQB (potential Responsible Agency) - Applicable rules and regulations (storm water).
- State Water Resources Control Board - Division of Drinking Water (potential Responsible Agency) – Applicable rules and regulations.

APPENDIX A: SITE PHOTOGRAPHS

Views from Project Site



At North Site Boundary Looking North



From North Site Boundary Looking into the Site



At South Site Boundary Looking South



From South Site Boundary Looking into the Site



From East Site Boundary Looking East



From East Site Boundary Looking into the Site



From West Site Boundary Looking West



From West Site Boundary Looking into the Site

APPENDIX B: GRANT DEED



October 24, 2018

Mr. Timothy Hill
Executive Vice President
Superior Soil Supplements, LLC.
10367 Houston Avenue
Hanford, CA 93230

Subject: Biological Reconnaissance Survey, Mendota Transloading Facility, Fresno County, California

Dear Mr. Hill,

Quad Knopf, Inc. (QK) conducted a biological reconnaissance survey of the Mendota Transloading Facility (Project) located in western Fresno County, California. The Project site is 2.3 miles east of the City of Mendota, one mile east of the Fresno Slough, and 0.3 miles north of State Route 180 (Figures 1 and 2). The Project is within a portion of APN 091-070-61S and is within Section 3 of Township 14S, Range 15E of the Mount Diablo Base and Meridian.

The proposed Project entails using a portion of the existing Spreckels Sugar Company facility to allow the transloading (receive by rail, store, and truck out) of approximately 220,000 tons per year of gypsum and anhydrite, which will be shipped in separate railcars and stored in separate piles in the storage area. The Project includes installation of a 500-foot-long by 30-foot-tall dust screen, a 5,000-gallon fuel storage tank, and a 12,000-gallon water storage tank. The Project proponents are seeking land use entitlement from the Fresno County Public Works and Planning (County) for Conditional Use Permit 3622. During the preapplication process, the County received a comment letter from the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) regarding the potential for impacts to federally listed species, dated October 9, 2018.

The biological reconnaissance survey was conducted to document existing biological conditions on the Project site, provide a list of common plant and wildlife species observed, identify the potential for occurrence of sensitive habitats and special-status species that are or might be present, and identify potential project constraints imposed by biological resources. Recommendations are provided to reduce the potential for Project-related impacts to sensitive biological resources occurring on the Project site.





Figure 2
Vicinity, Mendota Transloading Facility

The reconnaissance survey focused on identifying signs of federally-listed species identified in the USFWS letter including the palmate-bracted bird's beak (*Cordylanthus palmatus*), vernal pool fairy shrimp (*Branchinecta lynchi*), longhorn fairy shrimp (*Branchinecta longiantenna*), giant garter snake (*Thamnophis gigas*), blunt-nosed leopard lizard (*Gambelia sila*), Fresno kangaroo rat (*Dipodomys nitratoides exilis*), and San Joaquin kit fox (*Vulpes macrotis mutica*). In addition, 28 additional State-listed species, federally-listed species, California Species of Special Concern (CSC), and species ranked by the California Native Plant Society (CNPS), as well as four sensitive natural communities, were also considered during the survey and in this analysis.

Methods

On October 23, 2018, QK Environmental Scientist Alex Single conducted a biological reconnaissance survey of the existing Mendota Transloading Facility. The survey consisted of walking meandering pedestrian transects within the 6.68-acre Project site and within a 100-foot buffer (Survey Area) around the Project site, where feasible, (Figure 3). Transects were spaced at 30 to 50-foot intervals, except for a fenced orchard on the western side of the survey area, which was scanned using binoculars to achieve a 100% visual coverage of the Survey Area. Transects were walked during daylight hours from noon to 2 pm. Weather was hazy and partially cloudy with approximately 20% cloud cover and a light wind. Temperature during the survey was 67 degrees Fahrenheit. The site examination focused on determining the presence of sensitive biological resources including diagnostic signs of species indicating presence.

Vegetation communities occurring on the Project site were identified based upon the presence of dominant plant species. Common plant and wildlife species were identified, and sightings of general wildlife and special-status plant and wildlife species, including diagnostic signs of special-status species, were recorded. Representative photographs of the site were taken to document site conditions at the time of the survey. Information on special-status species that could potentially occur on the Project site was obtained prior to the survey by querying the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB) and the USFWS Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) database. The CNDDDB was queried for species with records within a 10-mile radius of the Project site, and IPaC was queried using the boundary of the Project site plus a 100-foot buffer as an input polygon.

Field Survey Results

The Project site has been extensively disturbed and is dominated by open ground and ground covered with cement pavement. The central portion of the survey area has been graded, and has essentially no vegetation, while the southern portion is taken up almost entirely by industrial structures and cement. The western side of the survey area is a young pistachio (*Pistachia vera*) orchard, and the north and northeastern portions are composed of bare land, non-native grasses and ruderal vegetation, and several train tracks and dirt roads. At the northeastern tip of the survey area, there is a berm for a constructed pond. The Project site is entirely flat and lies approximately 163 feet above mean sea level. Two soil types present on the Project site include: Chino loam on the northwest and Traver sandy loam on

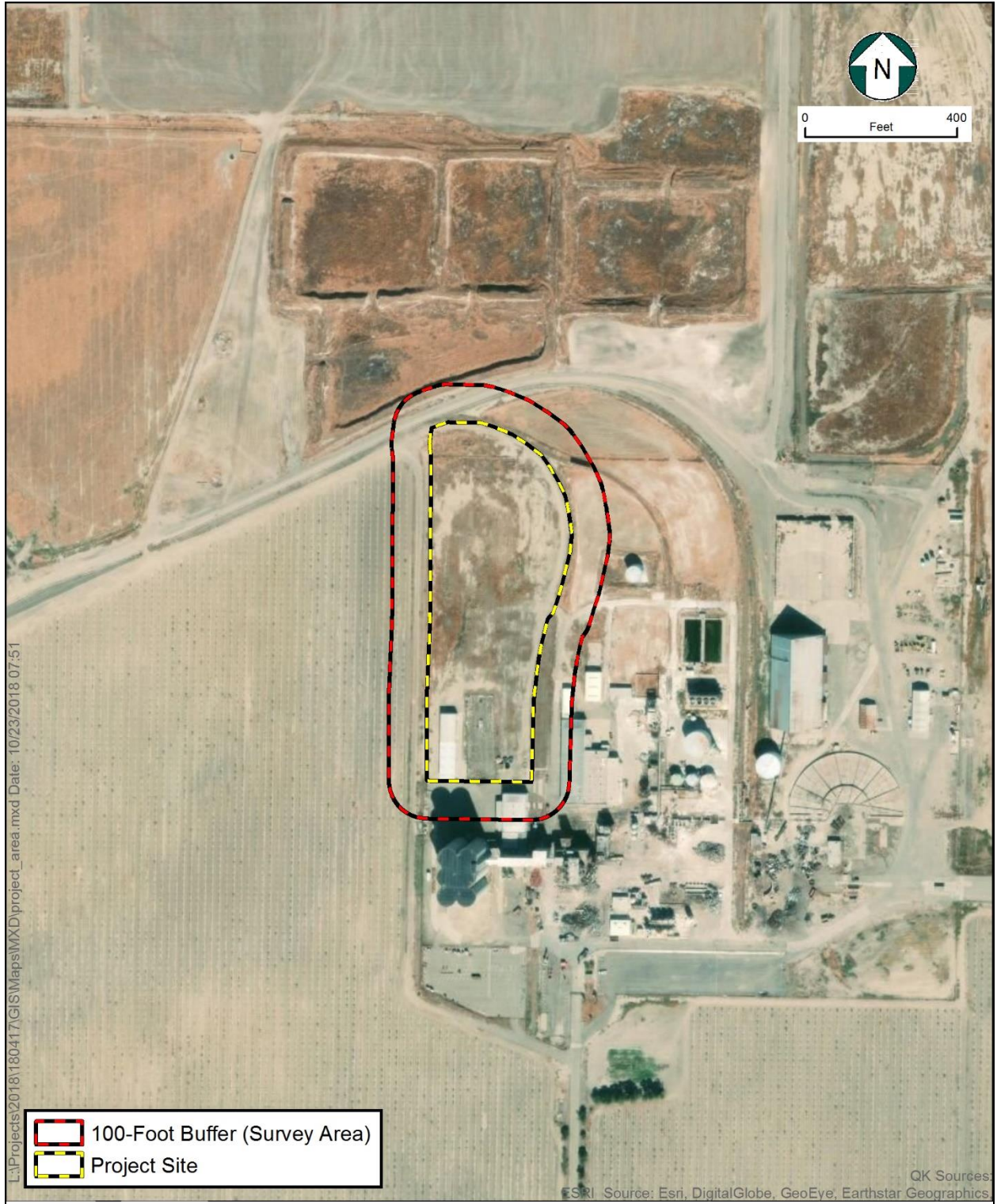


Figure 3
Survey Area, Mendota Transloading Facility

the southeast. Land surrounding the Project site includes industrial buildings associated with the old Spreckels Sugar Plant to the south and east of the Project, a pistachio orchard west of the Project, and constructed ponds north of the Project.

Fourteen plant species and eight animal species were observed and documented in the survey area (Table 1). Dominant plant species on the Project site were red brome (*Bromus madritensis* ssp. *rubens*) and Russian thistle (*Salsola tragus*). The most prevalent animal species on the Project site was the white-crowned sparrow (*Zonotrichia leucophrys*).

Table 1
Plant and Wildlife Species Observed, Mendota Transloading Yard, Fresno County, California

Scientific Name	Common Name
Plants	
<i>Amsinkia menziezii</i>	fiddleneck
<i>Asclepias fascicularis</i>	narrowleaf milkweed
<i>Atriplex lentiformis</i>	quailbush
<i>Bassia hyssopifolia</i>	fivehook bassia
<i>Bromus diandrus</i>	ripgut brome
<i>Bromus madritensis</i> ssp. <i>rubens</i>	red brome
<i>Centaurea solstitialis</i>	yellow star thistle
<i>Datura wrightii</i>	sacred datura
<i>Erigeron canadensis</i>	Canada horseweed
<i>Hemizonia pungens</i>	common tarweed
<i>Lactuca serriola</i>	prickly lettuce
<i>Pistachia vera</i>	pistachio
<i>Salsola tragus</i>	Russian thistle
<i>Stephanomeria</i> sp.	wire lettuce
Wildlife	
<i>Buteo jamaicensis</i>	red-tailed hawk
<i>Columba livia</i>	rock pigeon
<i>Euphagus cyanocephalus</i>	Brewer's blackbird
<i>Lanius ludovicianus</i>	loggerhead shrike
<i>Otospermophilus beecheyi</i>	California ground squirrel
<i>Sayornis nigricans</i>	black phoebe
<i>Uta stansburiana</i>	side-blotched lizard
<i>Zonotrichia leucophrys</i>	white-crowned sparrow

Special-status Species Discussion

CNDDDB records indicate historical records of 14 special-status plant species and four sensitive natural communities occurring within 10 miles of the Project site (Attachment 2). None of these records overlap the Project site. The nearest occurrence of a sensitive natural community is Valley Sink Scrub located 1.2 miles southeast of the Project site. The other three sensitive natural communities were Valley Sacaton Grassland, Coastal and Valley

Freshwater Marsh, and Northern Claypan Vernal Pool. None of the four sensitive natural communities were found on the survey area.

The nearest records of special-status plant species are for heartscale (*Atriplex cordulata*), brittlescale (*Atriplex depressa*), Lost Hills crownscale (*Atriplex coronata* var. *vallicola*), palmate-bracted bird's beak (*Cordylanthus palmatus*), lesser saltscale (*Atriplex minuscula*), and Hoover's eriastrum (*Eriastrum hooveri*), all of which are between 1.4 and 1.7 miles from the Project site. Various factors, including the high level of disturbance, inappropriate soil types, and lack of perennial marshes or vernal pools on the Project site preclude these species and all other special-status plants species that historically occurred within 10 miles of the Project site from being present on the site (See Attachment 2). None of the 14 species were actually found in the survey area.

A total of 24 State-listed, federally-listed, or CSC animal species have historic CNDDDB records within 10 miles of the Project site, appeared in the IPaC search, or were found on the Project site. The closest CNDDDB records were for longhorn fairy shrimp (*Branchinecta longiantenna*). These records (EONDX 95762 and EONDX 95763) cover the entire 7.5 minute United States Geological Survey Tranquility quadrangle. These are artificially large polygons designed to obscure the actual location of especially sensitive species, and it does not mean that the longhorn fairy shrimp is found throughout the entire quadrangle. After those occurrences, the nearest records of special-status animal species are for vernal pool fairy shrimp (*Branchinecta lynchi*), western spadefoot toad (*Spea hammondi*) giant garter snake (*Thamnophis gigas*), blunt-nosed leopard lizard (*Gambelia sila*), western pond turtle (*Emys marmorata*), San Joaquin coachwhip (*Masticophis flagellum ruddocki*), coast horned lizard (*Phrynosoma blainvillii*), Swainson's hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*), western burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*), Fresno kangaroo rat (*Dipodomys nitratoideas exilis*), San Joaquin antelope squirrel (*Ammospermophilus nelsoni*), San Joaquin kit fox (*Vulpes macrotis mutica*), loggerhead shrike (*Lanis ludovicianus*), western mastiff bat (*Eumops perotis californicus*), and western red bat (*Lasiurus blossevillii*) all of which occur between 0.9 and 1.8 miles from the Project site.

Only one special-status species, the loggerhead shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*), was observed on the Project site. However, no nesting habitat on or near the Project was observed. It is unlikely that this species would inhabit the Project site, however, it may occur periodically as a transient forager. The high level of disturbance and previous degradation of habitat on the Project site renders the habitat unsuitable for most special-status species considered and preclude these species from being present. Nonetheless there is a low potential for San Joaquin coachwhip, coast horned lizard, western burrowing owl, western mastiff bat, western red bat, American badger, and San Joaquin kit fox to be present on the Project site as transient foragers.

The Swainson's hawk would not be affected by Project activities since there are no potential nesting trees on or within sight of the Project area, while the western mastiff bat and western red bat would not be affected as no potential bat roosts would be removed due to Project activity. However, these species may occur periodically as transient foragers.

Recommendations

Special-status species could potentially be subject to Project-related impacts including harm, harassment, entrapment, or direct injury and mortality during initial ground disturbance activities. To ensure avoidance of Project-related impacts to these species, it is recommended that the following standard avoidance measures be implemented during initial ground disturbance activities:

To ensure protection of biological resources we recommend that:

- A pre-construction survey of the Project footprint and a 250-foot buffer surrounding the Project footprint be conducted. The survey should occur no less than 14 days prior to the start of ground disturbance activities, and no more than 30 days prior to the start of those activities. If ground disturbance is delayed beyond 30 days from the time of the survey, then another survey would need to be conducted. The survey should be conducted by a qualified biologist.
- If special status species are detected during the pre-construction survey, then Project activities will avoid by following standard USFWS and CDFW species-specific guidelines;
- Project-related vehicles should observe a 20-mph speed limit in all project areas, except on county roads and State and federal highways; this is particularly important at night when kit foxes and American badgers are most active;
- Construction should be conducted during daylight hours;
- Off-road traffic outside of designated project areas should be prohibited;
- To prevent inadvertent entrapment of kit foxes, American badgers, and other animals during work being conducted, the contractor should cover all excavated, steep-walled holes or trenches more than 2 feet deep at the close of each working day with plywood or similar materials or provide one or more escape ramps constructed of earth fill or wooden planks. Before such holes or trenches are filled, the contractor should thoroughly inspect them for trapped animals;
- Kit foxes and other species are attracted to den-like structures such as pipes and may enter stored pipe becoming trapped or injured. All construction pipes, culverts, or similar structures with a diameter of 4 inches or greater that are stored at a construction site for one or more overnight periods should be thoroughly inspected for kit foxes before the pipe is subsequently buried, capped, taped or otherwise used or moved in anyway. If a kit fox is discovered inside a pipe, that section of pipe should not be moved until the USFWS has been consulted. If necessary, and under the direct supervision of the biologist, the pipe may be moved once to remove it from the path of construction activity, until the fox has escaped;
- All trash and food items should be discarded into closed containers and properly disposed at the end of each work day;
- To prevent harassment, mortality of kit foxes, or destruction of dens by dogs or cats, no pets should be permitted on project sites;

- If special-status reptiles are found in the work area during construction, work in that area should cease until the individual species moves off the site on their own; and
- If construction activities are scheduled during the breeding bird season, from February 15th through September 15th, then a pre-construction survey for nesting birds should be conducted within the project footprint and within 500-feet from the outside boundaries of the Project footprint. Construction activities should not be conducted within 250 feet of an active bird nest or within 500 feet of an active raptor nest. That avoidance distance could be reduced if a biological monitor determines that activities are not affecting the breeding success of the nesting birds.

Implementation of these recommended avoidance and minimization measures will reduce potential impacts to special status species. If you have any questions, comments, or require additional information, please do not hesitate to call me at (559) 449-2400.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Alex Single". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Alex" and the last name "Single" clearly legible.

Alex Single
Assistant Environmental Scientist
QK

Attachments:

- Attachment 1:** Photographs
- Attachment 2:** Species Table

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Attachment 1: photographs



Photograph 1: Center of Project site, facing southwest. Photograph taken by Alex Single on October 23, 2018 from 36.739785, -120.322760.



Photograph 2: Industrial area at southern end of Project site, facing northeast. Photograph taken by Alex Single on October 23, 2018 from 36.738146, -120.323246.



**Representative Photos of the Mendota Transloading Project, Fresno
County, California**



Photograph 3: Overview of survey area, facing northeast. Photograph taken by Alex Single on October 23, 2018 from 36.738721, -120.323358.



Photograph 4: Overview of survey area, facing southwest. Photograph taken by Alex Single on October 23, 2018 from 36.740020, -120.322141.





Photograph 5: Overview of Project site, facing north. Photograph taken by Alex Single on October 23, 2018 from 36.738297, -120.322810.



Photograph 6: Overview of Project site, facing southeast. Photograph taken by Alex Single on October 23, 2018 from 36.739561, -120.323414.



Attachment 2: Special-status Species Table

Attachment 2, Potential for Special-status Species to Occur on the Mendota Transloading Facility Project Site,
 Fresno County, California

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status	General Habitat Requirements	Potential to Occur/Determination
SENSITIVE NATURAL COMMUNITIES				
	Coastal and Valley Freshwater Marsh		This community is dominated by perennial, emergent monocots that often form completely closed canopies. <i>Scirpus</i> and <i>Typha</i> are the dominant species. It is permanently flooded by fresh water (rather than brackish, alkaline, or variable). Prolonged saturation permits accumulation of deep, peaty soils. This community is common in the Sacramento and San Joaquin Valleys in river oxbows and other areas on the flood plain.	Absent. The standing water required for this community is not present at the survey area. One CNDDDB record of Coastal and Valley Freshwater Marsh is located within 10 miles of the Project site, 2.8 miles south-southeast of the Project site. The Project will have no effect on this community.
	Northern Claypan Vernal Pool		This community consists of a low, herbaceous community dominated by annual herbs and grasses. Germination and growth begin with winter rains, often continuing even when inundated. Rising spring temperatures evaporate the pools, leaving concentric bands of vegetation. Claypan vernal pools are typically small and contain less cover than northern hardpan vernal pools.	Absent. Vernal pools or seasonally flooded depressions are not found at the survey area. One CNDDDB record of Northern Claypan Vernal Pool is located within 10 miles of the Project site, 7 miles east of the Project site. The Project will have no effect on this community.
	Valley Sacaton Grassland		This community is dominated by alkali sacaton, a tuft formed grass. It is found in areas with fine textured, poorly drained and usually alkaline soils with high water tables, or that are flooded during winter months.	Absent. Sacaton, the dominant species in this community, is not present at the survey area. Two CNDDDB records of Valley Sacaton Grassland occur within 10 miles of the Project site. The closest record is 8.3 miles north of the Project site. The Project will have no effect on this community.
	Valley Sink Scrub		This community consists of low, open to dense succulent shrublands dominated by alkali-tolerant	Absent. The alkali-tolerant shrubs required for this community are not present at the survey area. Two CNDDDB records of Valley Sink Scrub occur within

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status	General Habitat Requirements	Potential to Occur/Determination
			<i>Chenopodiaceae</i> , especially <i>Allenrolfea occidentalis</i> or several <i>Sueda</i> species. Understories usually are lacking, though sparse herbaceous cover dominated by <i>Bromus rubens</i> develop occasionally. Also consists of saline or alkaline clays.	10 miles of the Project site. The closest record is 1.2 miles east-southeast of the Project site. The Project will have no effect on this community.
PLANTS				
<i>Atriplex cordulata</i>	heartscale	1B.2	This annual herb occurs in Chenopod scrubland and grassland habitats, but it also is known to occur in wet areas. It is most common on alkaline soils. It flowers between May and October, and it ranges in elevation from 1 to 1,000 feet.	Absent. Undeveloped scrubland or grassland that could support this species is absent from the survey area. Eight CNDDDB records of heartscale occur within 10 miles of the Project site. The closest record is 1.4 miles west-southwest of the Project site. The Project will have no effect on this species.
<i>Atriplex coronata</i> var. <i>vallicola</i>	Lost Hills crownscale	1B.2	This species prefers chenopod scrub, valley and foothill grassland, and/or vernal pools with alkaline soil. Its blooming period is from April to August and it ranges in elevation from 50 to 635 feet.	Absent. Scrubland or vernal pool habitat that could support this species is absent from the survey area. Three CNDDDB records of Lost Hills crownscale occur within 10 miles of the Project site. The closest record is 1.5 miles east of the Project site. The Project will have no effect on this species
<i>Atriplex depressa</i>	brittlescale	1B.2	This annual herb occurs in Chenopod scrubland, grassland, and alkali sink habitats, but it also is known to occur in wet areas. It flowers between April and October, and it ranges in elevation from 1 to 1050 feet.	Absent. Adequate undeveloped habitat including Chenopod scrubland, grassland, alkali sinks, and wet areas is absent from the survey area. Five CNDDDB records of brittlescale occur within the Project site. The closest record is 1.6 miles east of the Project site. The Project will have no effect on this species.
<i>Atriplex minuscula</i>	lesser saltscale	1B.1	This annual herb occurs in Chenopod scrubland, grassland, and alkali sink habitats, but it also is known to occur in wet areas. It is most common on sandy soils in alkaline areas. It flowers between May and October,	Absent. Adequate undeveloped habitat including Chenopod scrubland, grassland, alkali sinks, and wet areas is absent from the survey area. Seven CNDDDB records of lesser saltscale occur within the Project site. The closest record is 1.4 miles south-southeast of the Project site. The Project will have no effect on this species.

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status	General Habitat Requirements	Potential to Occur/Determination
			and it ranges in elevation from 1 to 330 feet.	
<i>Atriplex persistens</i>	vernal pool smallscale	1B.2	This annual herb is restricted to alkaline vernal pools on the floor of the San Joaquin Valley and is endemic to California. It is most common in northern Claypan soils. It flowers between July and September, and it ranges in elevation from 25 to 345 feet.	Absent. Vernal pool habitat that could support this species is absent from the survey area. One CNDDDB record of vernal pool smallscale occurs within 10 miles of the Project site, approximately 9.8 miles north-northeast of the Project site. The Project will have no effect on this species.
<i>Atriplex subtilis</i>	subtle orache	1B.2	This annual herb occurs in Chenopod scrubland, grassland, and alkali sink habitats, but it also is known to occur in wet areas. It flowers between June and August, and it ranges in elevation from 130 to 330 feet.	Absent. Adequate undeveloped habitat including Chenopod scrubland, grassland, alkali sinks, and wet areas is absent from the survey area. Four CNDDDB records of subtle orache occur within 10 miles of the Project site. The closest record is 6.9 miles east of the Project site. The Project will have no effect on this species.
<i>Cordylanthus palmatus</i>	palmate-bracted bird's beak	1B.1, FE, CE	This annual herb is hemiparasitic and is endemic to California. It occurs in wetland-riparian communities, Shadscale scrub and valley grassland. It is restricted to seasonally-flooded, saline-alkali soils in lowland plains and basins at elevations between 16 to 509 feet. The species flowers from May until October.	Absent. Adequate undeveloped habitat including in wetland/riparian communities, Shadscale scrub and valley grassland is absent from the survey area. Four CNDDDB records of palmate-bracted bird's beak occur within 10 miles of the Project site. The closest record is 1.5 miles east of the Project site. The Project will have no effect on this species.
<i>Delphinium recurvatum</i>	recurved larkspur	1B.2	This perennial plant is commonly found in Chenopod scrub, valley and foothill grassland and cismontane woodland. It is most common on sandy or clay alkaline soils. It flowers from March to May, and it ranges in elevation from 10 to 2,592 feet.	Absent. Adequate habitat including Chenopod scrubland, grassland, and cismontane woodland is absent from the survey area. Two CNDDDB records of recurved larkspur occur within 10 miles of the Project site. The closest record is 2.8 miles northwest of the Project site. The Project will have no effect on this species.

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status	General Habitat Requirements	Potential to Occur/Determination
<i>Eriastrum hooveri</i>	Hoover's eriastrum	4.2	This annual herb is found in chenopod scrub, pinyon/juniper woodland, and valley and foothill grassland. It flowers from March to July and range in elevation from 164 to 3001 feet.	Absent. Adequate habitat including chenopod scrub, pinyon/juniper woodland, and valley and foothill grassland is absent from the survey area. Four CNDDDB records of Hoover's eriastrum occur within 10 miles of the Project site. The closest record is 1.5 miles southwest of the Project site. The Project will have no effect on this species.
<i>Eryngium spinosepalum</i>	spiny-sepaled button-celery	1B.2	This species is associated with vernal pools and depressions within grasslands. It flowers from April to May, and it ranges in elevation from 330 to 840 feet.	Absent. Vernal pool and seasonally wet grassland habitat that could support this species is absent from the survey area. One CNDDDB record of spiny-sepaled button-celery occurs within 10 miles of the Project site, located almost 10 miles northeast of the Project site. The Project will have no effect on this species.
<i>Layia munzii</i>	Munz's tidy-tips	1B.2	This annual herb prefers chenopod scrub, and/or valley and foothill grassland. It flowers between March and April, and it ranges in elevation from 492 to 2,297 feet.	Absent. Undeveloped chenopod scrub or grassland habitat that could support this species is absent from the survey area. Four CNDDDB records of Munz's tidy-tips occur within 10 miles of the Project site, with the closest located 1.5 miles east of the Project site. The Project will have no effect on this species.
<i>Monolopia congdonii</i>	San Joaquin woollythreads	CE, 1B.2	This annual herb prefers chenopod scrub, and/or valley and foothill grassland. It flowers between February and May, and it ranges in elevation from 197 to 2,625 feet.	Absent. Undeveloped chenopod scrub or grassland habitat that could support this species is absent from the survey area. One CNDDDB record of San Joaquin woollythreads occurs within 10 miles of the Project site, located 6.3 miles west-southwest of the Project site. The Project will have no effect on this species.
<i>Puccinellia simplex</i>	California alkali-grass	1B.2	This annual herb occurs in Chenopod scrub, meadows and seeps, valley and foothill grassland, and vernal pools. It occurs in alkaline, vernal mesic soil, and in sinks, flats, and lake margins. It flowers between March and May, and it ranges in elevation from 6 to 3,051 feet.	Absent. Adequate habitat including Chenopod scrub, meadows and seeps, valley and foothill grassland, and vernal pools is absent from the survey area. Three CNDDDB records of California alkali-grass occur within the Project site. The nearest record is 6.6 miles east of the Project site. The Project will have no effect on this species.

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status	General Habitat Requirements	Potential to Occur/Determination
<i>Sagittaria sanfordii</i>	Sanford's arrowhead	1B.2	This perennial plant is found in marshes and swamps, in sandy loam and clay soils. It flowers between July and September, and it ranges in elevation from 10 to 100 feet.	Absent. The marsh or swamp habitat necessary for this species is absent from the survey area. Two CNDDDB records of Sanford's arrowhead occur within 10 miles of the Project site. The nearest record is 3.9 miles northwest of the Project site. The Project will have no effect on this species.
INVERTEBRATES				
<i>Branchinecta longiantenna</i>	longhorn fairy shrimp	FE	This fairy shrimp species occurs in and is endemic to the eastern margin of the central coast mountains. It is found seasonally in astatic grassland vernal pools and inhabits small, clear-water depressions in sandstone and clear-to-turbid clay/grass-bottomed pools in shallow swales.	Absent. Vernal pools or other seasonally flooded habitat that could support this species is absent from the survey area. Two CNDDDB records exist within 10 miles of the Project site. Both records encompass the entire 7.5 minute USGS quad for Tranquility, which encompasses the entire project site. These are artificially large polygons designed to obscure the actual location of especially sensitive species, and it does not mean that the longhorn fairy shrimp is found throughout the entire quadrangle. The Project will have no effect on this species.
<i>Branchinecta lynchi</i>	vernal pool fairy shrimp	FT	This fairy shrimp species occurs in a variety of vernal pool habitats from small, clear sandstone rock pools to large, turbid, alkaline, grassland valley floor pools.	Absent. Vernal pools or other seasonally flooded habitat that could support this species is absent from the survey area. There is one CNDDDB record of this species occurring within 10 miles of the Project site, located 0.9 miles east of the Project site. The Project will have no effect on this species.
FISH				
<i>Hypomesus transpacificus</i>	Delta smelt	FT, CT	This species occurs in the Sacramento and San Joaquin estuaries of the San Francisco Bay. Occurs primarily in main water bodies and sloughs of the Delta and Suisun Bay. Not directly associated with small stream systems.	Absent. Perennial waterways that could support this species are absent from the survey area. There are no CNDDDB records of this species occurring within 10 miles of the Project site. The Project will have no effect on this species.
AMPHIBIANS				

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status	General Habitat Requirements	Potential to Occur/Determination
<i>Rana aurora draytonii</i>	California red-legged frog	FT, CSC	This species occurs in small streams, ponds and marshes, preferably with dense shrubby vegetation such as cattails and willows near deep water pools.	Absent. Marshes or other wetlands with dense emergent vegetation that could support this species is absent from the survey area. There are no CNDDDB records of this species occurring within 10 miles of the Project site. The Project will have no effect on this species.
<i>Spea hammondi</i>	western spadefoot	CSC	This species occurs primarily in grassland habitats, but can be found in valley-foothill hardwood woodlands. Vernal pools are essential for breeding and egg-laying.	Absent. Vernal pool habitat that could support this species is absent from the survey area. There are four CNDDDB records of this species occurring within 10 miles of the Project site. The nearest CNDDDB record is 0.9 miles east of the Project site. The Project will have no effect on this species.
REPTILES				
<i>Anniella pulchra pulchra</i>	silvery legless lizard	CSC	This species occurs in moist warm loose soil with plant cover. Moisture is essential. Occurs in sparsely vegetated areas of beach dunes, chaparral, pine-oak woodlands, desert scrub, sandy washes, and stream terraces with sycamores, cottonwoods, or oaks.	Absent. The sandy soil required for this species is absent from the survey area. There is one CNDDDB record of this species occurring within 10 miles of the Project site located 3.1 miles northeast of the Project site. The Project will have no effect on this species.
<i>Emys marmorata</i>	western pond turtle	CSC	This species occurs in ponds and small lakes with abundant vegetation; also found in marshes, slow moving streams, reservoirs, and brackish water. Require basking sites.	Absent. The water features including ponds, lakes, streams, and marshes required by this species are not present in the survey area. Five CNDDDB records of this species exist within 10 miles of the Project site, with the nearest being 1 mile southwest of the Project site. The Project will have no effect on this species.
<i>Gambelia sila</i>	blunt-nosed leopard lizard	FE, CE, FP	This species occurs in sparsely vegetated alkali and desert scrub habitats, in areas of low topographic relief. It seeks cover in mammal burrows, under shrubs, or structures such as fence posts.	Absent. Flat, undeveloped desert scrub habitat that could support this species is absent from the survey area. There are 10 CNDDDB records of this species occurring within 10 miles of the Project site, with the closest record located 1.6 miles south-southeast of the Project site. The Project will have no effect on this species.

Letter Report to Mr. Hill
 Biological Reconnaissance Survey, Mendota Transloading Project

October 24, 2018

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status	General Habitat Requirements	Potential to Occur/Determination
<i>Masticophis flagellum ruddocki</i>	San Joaquin coachwhip	CSC	This species occurs in open, dry, treeless areas such as the Chenopod scrub, valley and foothill grassland. It takes refuge in rodent burrows, under shaded vegetation, and under surface objects.	Possible. Open, flat spaces are present on the Project site, but the San Joaquin coachwhip is unlikely to use the Project site, since habitat here has degraded by industrial activity. There are 2 CNDDDB records of this species occurring within 10 miles of the Project site, with the closest record located 1.7 miles southeast of the Project site. With the adoption of Avoidance and Minimization Measures, the Project may affect but not likely to adversely affect the San Joaquin coachwhip.
<i>Phrynosoma blainvillii</i>	coast horned lizard	CSC	This species occurs in sandy or alkaline soils, in alkali flats and playas, forests, woodlands, chaparral, grasslands, and open areas with low vegetation in valleys, foothills and semiarid mountains. It can often be found in lowlands along sandy washes with scattered shrubs and along dirt roads, and frequently near ant hills.	Possible. Open, flat spaces are present on the Project site, but the coast horned lizard is unlikely to use the Project site, since habitat here has degraded by industrial activity. There are 3 CNDDDB records of this species occurring within 10 miles of the Project site, with the closest record located 1.4 miles east-southeast of the Project site. With the adoption of Avoidance and Minimization Measures, the Project may affect but not likely to adversely affect the coast horned lizard.
<i>Thamnophis gigas</i>	giant garter snake	FT, CT	This species primarily occurs in permanent or semi-permanent marshes and sloughs, canals, and ditches, particularly around rice fields. It prefers sloughs that are flooded in summer and dry in winter. It can occasionally be found in slow-moving creeks. It prefers locations with vegetation close to the water for basking.	Absent. Marshes or other wetlands with dense emergent vegetation that could support this species are absent from the survey area. There are four CNDDDB records of this species occurring within 10 miles of the Project site, with the closest occurring 0.34 miles south of the Project site, across State Route 180. The Project will have no effect on this species.
BIRDS				
<i>Agelaius tricolor</i>	tricolored blackbird	CT, MBTA	This species occurs near fresh water, and prefer emergent wetland vegetation with tall, dense cattails or tules, but is also found in thickets of willow, blackberry, wild rose, and	Absent. Marshes or other wetlands or farms with dense emergent vegetation or willow thickets that could support this species is absent from the survey area. There are 10 CNDDDB records of this species occurring within 10 miles of the Project site, with

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Scientific Name	Common Name	Status	General Habitat Requirements	Potential to Occur/Determination
			tall herbs. It has been found to nest and forage in grassland and agricultural fields (pastures, dairies, rice fields). A highly social nester, it occurs in large colonies.	the closest occurring 2.3 miles southwest of the Project site. The Project will have no effect on this species.
<i>Athene cunicularia</i>	burrowing owl	CSC, MBTA	This species occurs in open annual or perennial grasslands, deserts and scrublands characterized by low-growing vegetation.	Possible. Open areas with low-growing vegetation required by burrowing owl are present in the survey area. There are seven CNDDDB records of burrowing owl within 10 miles of the Project site, with the nearest being 2.2 miles south of the Project site. With the adoption of Avoidance and Minimization Measures, the Project may affect but not likely to adversely affect the burrowing owl.
<i>Buteo swainsoni</i>	Swainson's hawk	CT, MBTA	This species occurs in riparian forests and other forested areas. It roosts in a variety of trees and forage widely over forests, grasslands, and shrublands. It is easily disturbed by human activities.	Possible. No suitable nesting trees are on the survey area or visible from the survey area, although the area may be used as foraging habitat. There are 21 CNDDDB records of Swainson's hawk within 10 miles of the Project site area. Most of these records indicate Swainson's hawk nests. The nearest record is located 1.3 miles southwest of the Project site. Due to the lack of nesting sites, the use of the Project by Swainson's hawk is unlikely. With the adoption of Avoidance and Minimization Measures, the Project may affect but not likely to adversely affect the Swainson's hawk.
<i>Charadrius montanus</i>	mountain plover	CSC, MBTA	This species occurs in plains and grassy or bare dirt fields. It winters in the Central Valley and coastal valleys, in open short grasslands and plowed agricultural fields, where it forages for seed and grain.	Possible. Grassy and bare dirt fields are present in the survey area, and the area may be used as stopover or wintering habitat. There are 2 CNDDDB records of mountain plover within 10 miles of the Project site. The nearest record is located 6.3 miles southwest of the Project site. With the adoption of Avoidance and Minimization Measures, the Project may affect but not likely to adversely affect the mountain plover.
<i>Coccyzus americanus occidentalis</i>	Western yellow-billed cuckoo	FT, CE, MBTA	This species primarily occurs in riparian forests. It occurs in willows	Absent. Riparian forest habitat that could support this species is absent from the survey area. There is

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status	General Habitat Requirements	Potential to Occur/Determination
			and mixed cottonwood canopy with an understory of blackberry, nettles or wild grape. It nests in riparian-associated woodlands.	one CNDDDB record of this species occurring within 10 miles of the Project site, approximately four miles northwest of the Project site, but this record dates from 1950 and is no listed as possibly extirpated. The Project will have no effect on this species.
<i>Lanius ludovicianus</i>	loggerhead shrike	CSC, MBTA	This species occurs in open habitats with scattered shrubs, trees, posts, fences, utility lines, or other perches. It typically nests in large shrubs.	Present. There are no CNDDDB records of loggerhead shrike within 10 miles of the Project site. However, a loggerhead shrike was observed on the Project site during the reconnaissance survey. With the adoption of Avoidance and Minimization Measures, the Project may affect but not likely to adversely affect the loggerhead shrike.
<i>Riparia riparia</i>	Bank swallow	CT, MBTA	This species occurs in low areas along rivers, streams, ocean coasts, or reservoirs. Its territory usually includes vertical cliffs or banks where it can nest in colonies of 10 to 2,000 nests. These colonies are usually made in fairly loose soils that are easy for the birds to burrow into, and are located near large bodies of water so that there is ample room for vertical flying.	Absent. Banks with friable soil are not present in the survey area. There is one CNDDDB occurrence of bank swallow within 10 miles of the Project site, located 4 miles northwest of the Project site. The Project will have no effect on this species.
MAMMALS				
<i>Ammospermophilus nelsoni</i>	San Joaquin (=Nelson's) antelope squirrel	CT	This species occurs in saltbush scrub and grassland habitats. It prefers washes and open shrub areas with sandy soils.	Absent. Annual grasslands or saltbush scrub that could support this species is absent from the survey area. There is one CNDDDB record of this species occurring within 10 miles of the Project site, located 1.9 miles to the west-northwest, but this record dates to 1918. The Project will have no effect on this species.
<i>Dipodomys nitratoides exilis</i>	Fresno kangaroo rat	FE, CE	This species historically occurred in alkali sink and open grassland habitats on the valley floor in Fresno County and portions of Tulare, Kings,	Absent. Open annual grasslands or alkali sink that could support this species is absent from the survey area. In addition, the Fresno kangaroo rat has not been documented in over 25 years. There are four

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status	General Habitat Requirements	Potential to Occur/Determination
			and Madera counties. The last confirmed specimen was captured in 1992 and it may be extinct.	CNDDDB records of this species occurring within 10 miles of the Project site, with the closest occurring 2.2 miles south-southeast of the Project site. The Project will have no effect on this species.
<i>Eumops perotis californicus</i>	western mastiff bat	CSC	This species occurs in many open, semi-arid to arid habitats, including conifer and deciduous woodlands, coastal scrub, grasslands, and chaparral. It roosts in crevices on cliff faces, high buildings, trees, and tunnels.	Possible. There are two records of western mastiff bat within 10 miles of the Project site. The closest is located 1.2 miles south-southwest of the Project site. The Project may affect the western mastiff bat through altering foraging habitat but is not likely to adversely affect this species since no potential bat roosts will be disturbed.
<i>Lasiurus blossevillii</i>	western red bat	CSC	This species roosts primarily in trees, 2 to 40 feet above ground, from sea level up through mixed conifer forests. It prefers riparian habitat edges with walnuts, oaks, willows, cottonwoods, and sycamores where it roosts, and mosaics with trees protected from above and open below with open areas for foraging.	Possible. There is one record of western red bat within 10 miles of the Project site, located 1.2 miles south-southwest of the Project site. The Project may affect the western mastiff bat through altering foraging habitat but is not likely to adversely affect this species since no potential bat roosts will be disturbed.
<i>Taxidea taxus</i>	American Badger	CSC	This species occurs in drier open stages of most shrub, forest, and herbaceous habitats, with friable soils. It needs sufficient food and open, uncultivated ground. It preys on burrowing rodents and digs burrows.	Possible. Habitat consisting of open grass and ruderal plants that could support this species as a transient forager is present on the survey area. Two records of American badger are located within 10 miles of the Project site. The closest record is located 2.1 miles east-southeast of the Project site. With the adoption of Mitigation Measures, the Project may affect but is not likely to adversely affect the American Badger
<i>Vulpes macrotis mutica</i>	San Joaquin kit fox	FE, CT	This species occurs in annual grasslands or grassy open stages with scattered shrubby vegetation. Need loose-textured sandy soils for burrowing, and suitable prey base.	Possible. Habitat consisting of open grass and ruderal plants that could support this species as a transient forager is present on the survey area. There are 3 CNDDDB records of this species occurring within 10 miles of the Project site. The nearest CNDDDB record is 3.2 miles west-northwest

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Scientific Name	Common Name	Status	General Habitat Requirements	Potential to Occur/Determination
				of the Project site. With the adoption of Mitigation Measures, the Project may affect but is not likely to adversely affect the San Joaquin kit fox.

Sources:

California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). 2018. California Natural Diversity Data Base, California Department of Fish and Wildlife Sacramento, CA. California Native Plant Society (CNPS). 2018. Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants (online edition, v6-05b 4-11-05). Rare Plant Scientific Advisory Committee. California Native Plant Society. Sacramento, CA.
 Unites States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). 2018. Federal Endangered and Threatened Species List.

Abbreviations:

FE Federal Endangered Species
 FT Federal Threatened Species
 CE California Endangered Species
 CT California Threatened Species
 FP California Fully Protected Species
 CSC California Species of Special Concern
 MBTA Migratory Bird Treaty Act

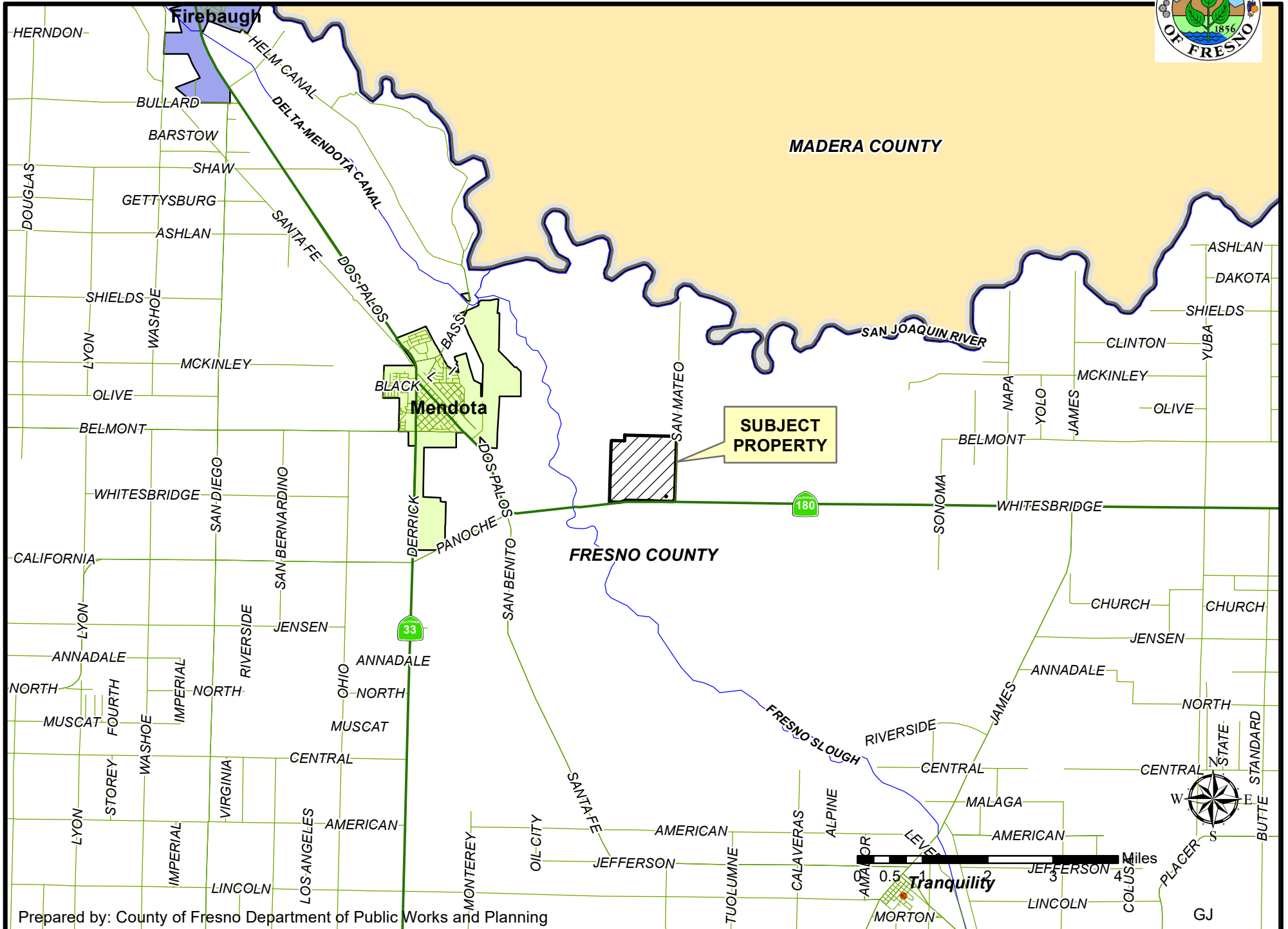
California Native Plant Society Rare Plant Ranks:

1B.1 Plants rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere, and seriously threatened in California (over 80% of occurrences threatened or high degree and immediacy of threat)
 1B.2 Plants rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere, and moderately threatened in California (20-80% occurrences threatened or moderate degree and immediacy of threat)
 2B.1 Plants rare, threatened, or endangered in California but more common elsewhere, and seriously threatened in California (over 80% of occurrences threatened or high degree and immediacy of threat)

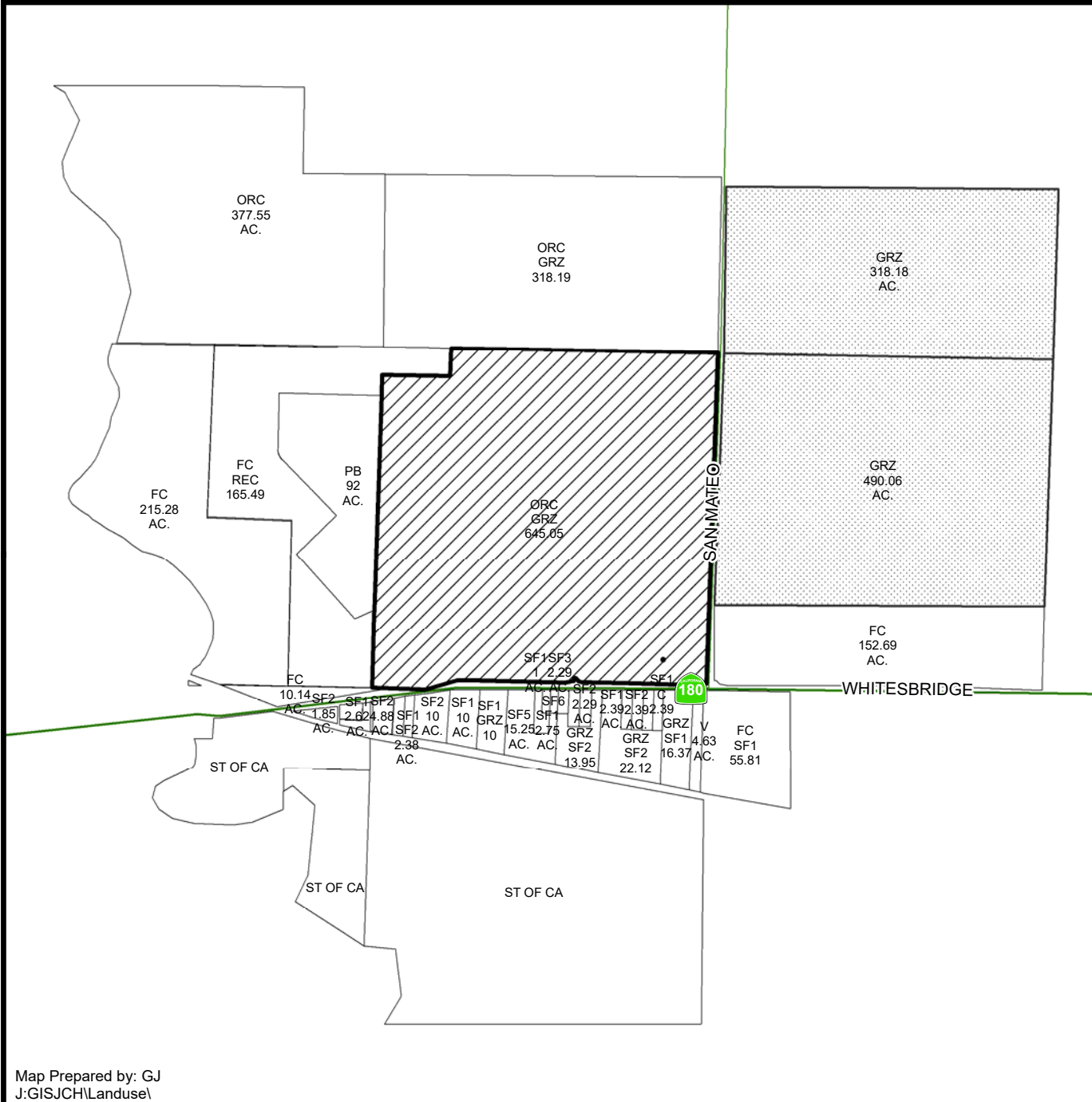
Potential Occurrence Definitions:

Present: The species or sign of their presence was observed within the survey area at time of the field survey.
 Possible: Habitat that could support the species is present within the survey area but the species or sign of their presence was not observed within the survey area at the time of the field survey.
 Absent: Habitat that could support the species is absent from the survey area and the species or sign of their presence was not observed within the survey area at the time of the field survey.

LOCATION MAP



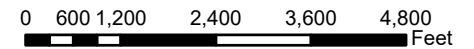
EXISTING LAND USE MAP



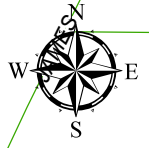
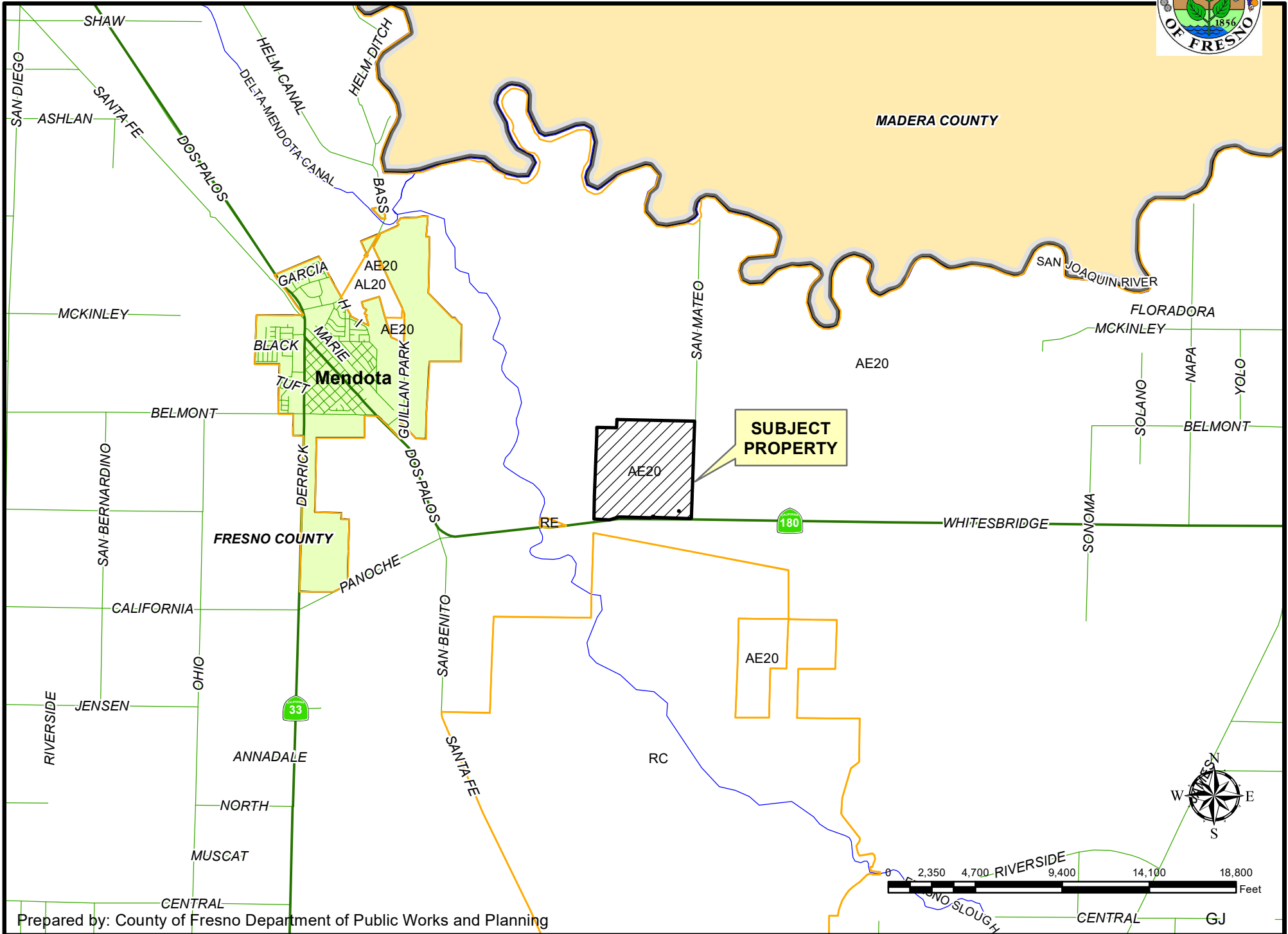
LEGEND	
C	COMMERCIAL
FC	FIELD CROP
GRZ	GRAZING
ORC	ORCHARD
	PONDING BASIN
REC	RECREATION
SF#	SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENCE
V	VACANT

LEGEND:

- Subject Property
- Ag Contract Land



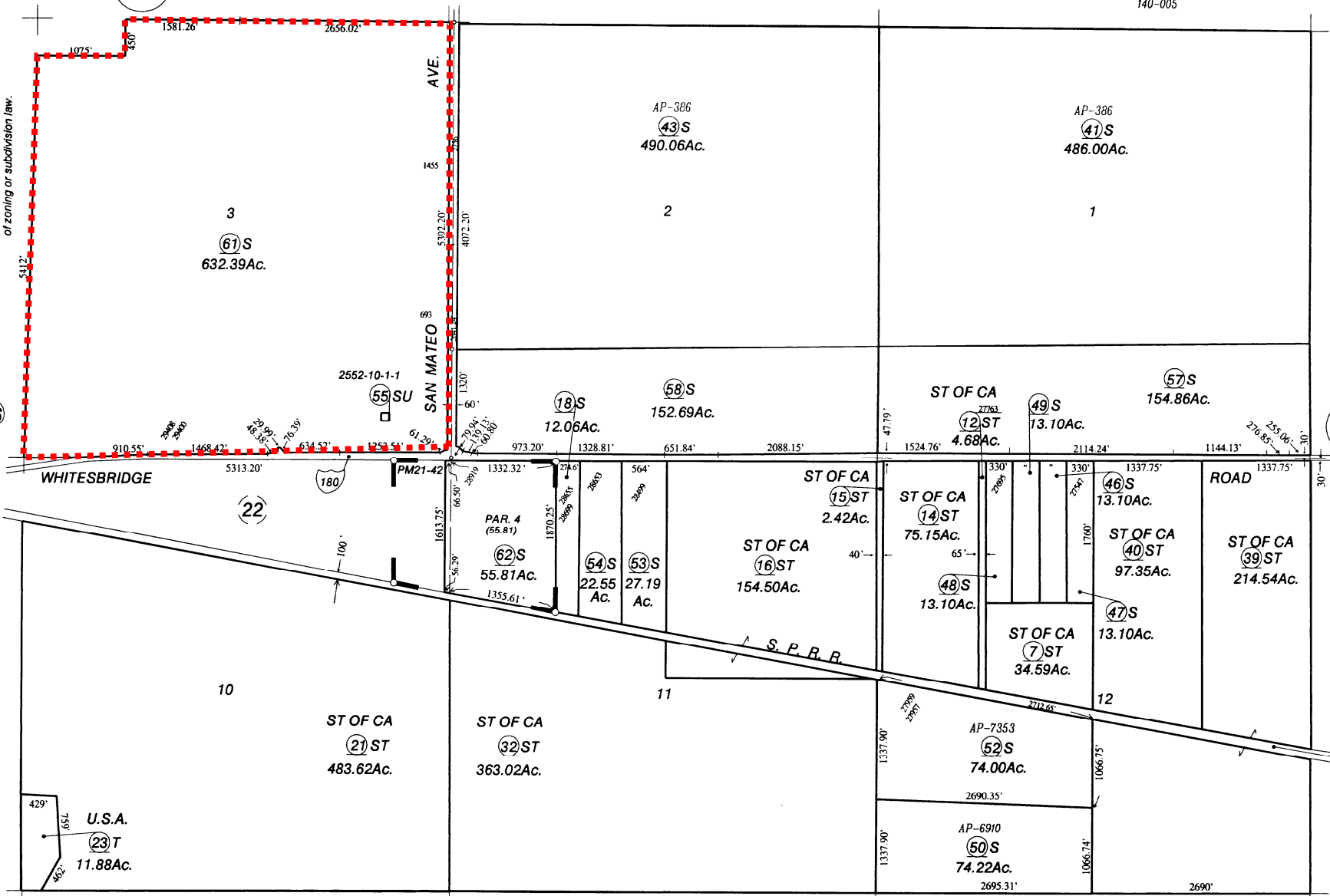
EXISTING ZONING MAP



Bk. 013

Bk. 015

--- NOTE ---
This map is for Assessment purposes only
It is not to be construed as portraying legal
ownership or divisions of land for purposes
of zoning or subdivision law.



Agricultural Preserve
Parcel Map No. 2954 - Bk. 21, Pg. 42

07-15-2011 RKV

13 NOTE - Assessor's Block Numbers Shown in Ellipses.
Assessor's Parcel Numbers Shown in Circles.

Assessor's Map Bk. 019 - Pg. 07
County of Fresno, Calif.

