Draft Initial Study/
Mitigated Negative Declaration

for the

River Bluff Lower Terrace
Project

CEQA Lead Agency
City of Ceres
Planning Division
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April 2018

RIVER BLUFF LOWER TERRACE

INITIAL STUDY

PROJECT TITLE:	River Bluff Lower Terrace
LEAD AGENCY:	City of Ceres
CONTACT PERSON:	Daryl Jordan, Director of Engineering
PROJECT LOCATION:	3761 E. Hatch Road, Ceres, California
PROJECT APPLICANT:	City of Ceres
GENERAL PLAN:	Park (P)
ZONING:	Park (P)
EXISTING LAND USE:	Abandoned Walnut Orchard

PROJECT SUMMARY

The City of Ceres is proposing the expansion of the River Bluff Regional Park, currently part of the Lower Tuolumne River Parkway. The 18.70 acre proposed multi-benefit natural park project consists of the removal of a 16 acre walnut orchard, enhancement and creation of a total of 1.9 acres wetlands, improved flood protection, improved access to an existing constructed pond, improved passive recreational access to the Tuolumne River, and completion of a pedestrian trail system through the park.

The project would enhance the existing riparian and lagoon area by expanding and further developing a lagoon complex and riparian plantings within the Lower Tuolumne River Parkway. This project would also provide improved pedestrian and disabled person access to the Tuolumne River and complete a pedestrian trail system begun under a previous River Parkways grant of California.

The primary project components are as follows:

- The proposed project would remove the remnant orchard, construct lagoon and wetland features, install a temporary irrigation system, and expand the existing trail system. The project would also include educational and wayfinding signage, a non-motorized boat launch, pedestrian bridges, plant restoration, and vehicular and parking access for the project site.
- The new trail system would be built to access the Tuolumne River, as well as to expand the existing trail network. Soil cement will be used to stabilize and ensure the durability of trails during wet weather. As stated previously, pedestrian bridges would be constructed to allow users to travel from island to island. Three pedestrian bridges would be used to provide an access path to island features. These single-span bridges with abutments would allow light maintenance vehicle travel. A precast concrete treaded boardwalk will be developed to allow the launch and docking of non-motorized boats and rafts.
- An overlook tower will be located approximately 600 feet west from the concrete driveway down to the lower terrace in a subsequent phase of project construction. The flooring for the overlook tower and

the flooring for the bridge to overlook will be fabricated using concrete. The main structures, including posts, bracing, roofing, and handrails, will be fabricated using steel. The floor of the main structure of the overlook tower will approximate the elevation of the upper terrace, which is approximately 50 feet higher than the lower terrace. The overview dock will provide visitors with a unique viewpoint to the Tuolumne River Parkway.

- Concrete pads will be created and picnic tables and waste receptacles will be provided in the expanded park area. Bollards will be used to separate pedestrian and vehicular areas. A new river access road, stabilized with soil cement, soil cement parking stalls with concrete bands for separation of stalls, and concrete accessible parking stalls with wheel stops will be constructed. Existing boulders at entry turnaround would be reused on site. Site signs would be posted to show specific site information and wayfinding around the project site.
- Enlarged ponds would be added to the existing habitat to expand the wetland areas on the site. Also, new plant restoration, including new trees, shrubs, and hydroseed planting, along with temporary irrigation for establishment, would be added to the project site. All plants that would be installed are native to California and drought-tolerant.

ACRONYMS

BMP	best management practice
BPS	best performance standards
CAL FIRE	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
CARB	California Air Resources Board
CCAP	Climate Change Action Plan
CCIC	Central California Information Center
CCR	California Code of Regulations
CDFW	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
CNRA	California Natural Resources Agency
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CRHR	California Register of Historical Resources
dBA	A-weighted decibel
GHG	greenhouse gas
GWP	global warming potential
LID	low impact development
LOS	level of service
LRA	local responsibility area
MLD	most likely descendent
mph	miles per hour
MRZ	Mineral Resource Zone
NAHC	Native American Heritage Commission
NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act
NO_x	oxides of nitrogen
$PM_{2.5}$	particulate matter with an aerodynamic diameter of 2.5 micrometers or less
PM_{10}	particulate matter with an aerodynamic diameter of 10 micrometers or less
ROG	reactive organic gas
RWQCB	Regional Water Quality Control Board
SJVAB	San Joaquin Valley Air Basin
SJVAPCD	San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District
SSC	Species of Special Concern
SWPPP	Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan
USACE	United States Army Corps of Engineers
USFWS	United States Fish and Wildlife Service

VELB	Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle
VHFHSZ	Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone

PROJECT LOCATION

The proposed project would complete development of the Ceres River Bluff Regional Park by expanding and further developing the Lower Tuolumne River Parkway and providing improved access to the Tuolumne River. The Stanislaus County Assessor's parcel number for the project area is 039-012-013, which is located at 3761 East Hatch Road in Ceres, California, in the following Public Land Survey System location: NW 1/4, SE 1/4, Section 1, Township 4 South, Range 9 East (see Figure 1, Regional Map, and Figure 2, Site Map and Proposed Project). The closest highway is California State Highway 99, which is approximately 3.5 miles from the proposed project and the closest streets are East Hatch Road, Faith Home Road, and Eastgate Boulevard. The closest schools are Samuel Vaughn Elementary School, which is approximately 1.0 mile from the proposed project site, and Mae Hensley Junior High School, which is approximately 1.4 miles from the proposed project site. River Oaks Golf Course located on Golf Links Road is located approximately 0.8 miles west of the project site.

PROJECT SITE CHARACTERISTICS

The proposed project would develop additional habitat and passive recreation facilities within the City's 76-acre River Bluff Regional Park site and provide improved access to the Tuolumne River. The River Bluff Regional Park is made up of two 38-acre park areas. The upper terrace area located near Hatch Road offers five soccer fields, an outdoor basketball court, an outdoor volleyball court, two softball fields, playground equipment, restrooms, and concession stands. The lower terrace includes open water habitat, emergent wetlands, native meadow habitat, and native riparian woodland habitat in addition to the abandoned walnut orchard.

The project would remove approximately 16 acres of an abandoned walnut orchard, construct and expand wetlands, install a temporary irrigation system, and expand the trail system begun under a previous lagoon and riparian habitat construction project. This project and the prior project have been funded by the River Parkways Grant program of the State of California.

The project area is bounded by active recreation portion of the existing Park and agricultural uses as well as the Tuolumne River.

SURROUNDING LAND USES AND SETTING

- North: Tuolumne River/General Agriculture/Gilton Solid Waste Management Facility
- South: Samuel Vaughn Elementary School/E. Whitmore Avenue
- East: Agriculture (Very Low Density Residential)
- West: Commercial Recreation/River Oaks Golf Course
- Southwest: Mae Hensley Junior High School/Residential and Commercial

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS AND PLANS

The proposed project falls under the influence of the following City of Ceres planning documents and policies. Planning documents applicable to the project are as follows:

- The City of Ceres General Plan with Updates
- The City of Ceres Municipal Code

PROPOSED PROJECT CHARACTERISTICS

The proposed project would involve removal of orchard remnants, construction and expansion of wetlands, installation of a temporary irrigation system, and completion of a trail system. The project would also include educational and wayfinding signage, a non-motorized boat launch, pedestrian bridges, plant restoration, and vehicular and parking access for the project site. The project would ensure balanced cut and fill for the project site throughout project construction.

One of the objectives of the proposed project would be to complete a trail system begun under a previous River Parkways Grant. A new trail would be built to access the Tuolumne River as well as additional trails to allow pedestrian walkways. The trails would use a soil cement to stabilize and ensure durability during seasonal rains. As stated previously, pedestrian bridges would be constructed to allow users to travel from island to island. The proposed project would construct three pedestrian bridges to be used as an access path for pedestrians as well as allow water to equalize between the ponds. These single-span bridges with abutments would allow light vehicular travel and would be made of precast concrete that would allow breakaway from the abutments in case of on-site flooding. A precast concrete treaded boardwalk at the non-motorized boat launch area would also be implemented during construction.

In addition, a steel overlook tower would be constructed. The flooring for the overlook tower and the flooring for the bridge to overlook would be made out of concrete while the main structures, including posts, bracing, roofing, and handrails, would use steel for construction materials. The floor of the main structure of the overlook tower would be around the elevation of the upper terrace, which is approximately 50 feet higher than the lower terrace. The overview dock would allow visitors to experience the wildlife from a better vantage point and would be located approximately 600 feet west from the concrete driveway down to the lower terrace.

Picnic tables placed on concrete pads with waste receptacles would be added to the project site. For visitors who drive to the project site, there would be bollards for pedestrian and vehicular separation, vehicular roads made of soil cement, soil cement parking stalls with concrete bands for separation of stalls, and concrete accessible parking stalls with wheel stops. Existing boulders at entry turnaround would be reused on site. Site signs would be posted to show specific site information and wayfinding around the project site.

Enlarged ponds would be added to the existing habitat to expand the wetland areas on the site. Also, new plant restoration, including new trees, shrubs, and hydroseed planting, along with temporary irrigation for establishment, would be added to the project site. General revegetation information will be provided by O'Dell Engineering. All proposed project features are shown on project design plans (Figure 3, Proposed Project Design).

Circulation, Access, and Parking

The proposed project includes the addition of five new parking stalls, including four wide parking stalls and one ADA-compliant accessible parking stall. These parking stalls will be located near the Tuolumne River put-in/takeout ramp. The project site currently has an existing parking lot with enough space for an estimated 10 cars and a turnaround. The main access road to the proposed project site would be East Hatch Road.

PERMITS AND REQUIRED APPROVALS

The following permits and approvals for the proposed project would be prepared and submitted before any construction on the project site:

- City of Ceres Grading Permit
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act
- Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board under Section 401 of the Clean Water Act
- California Department of Fish and Wildlife under Section 1600 of the California Fish and Game Code.

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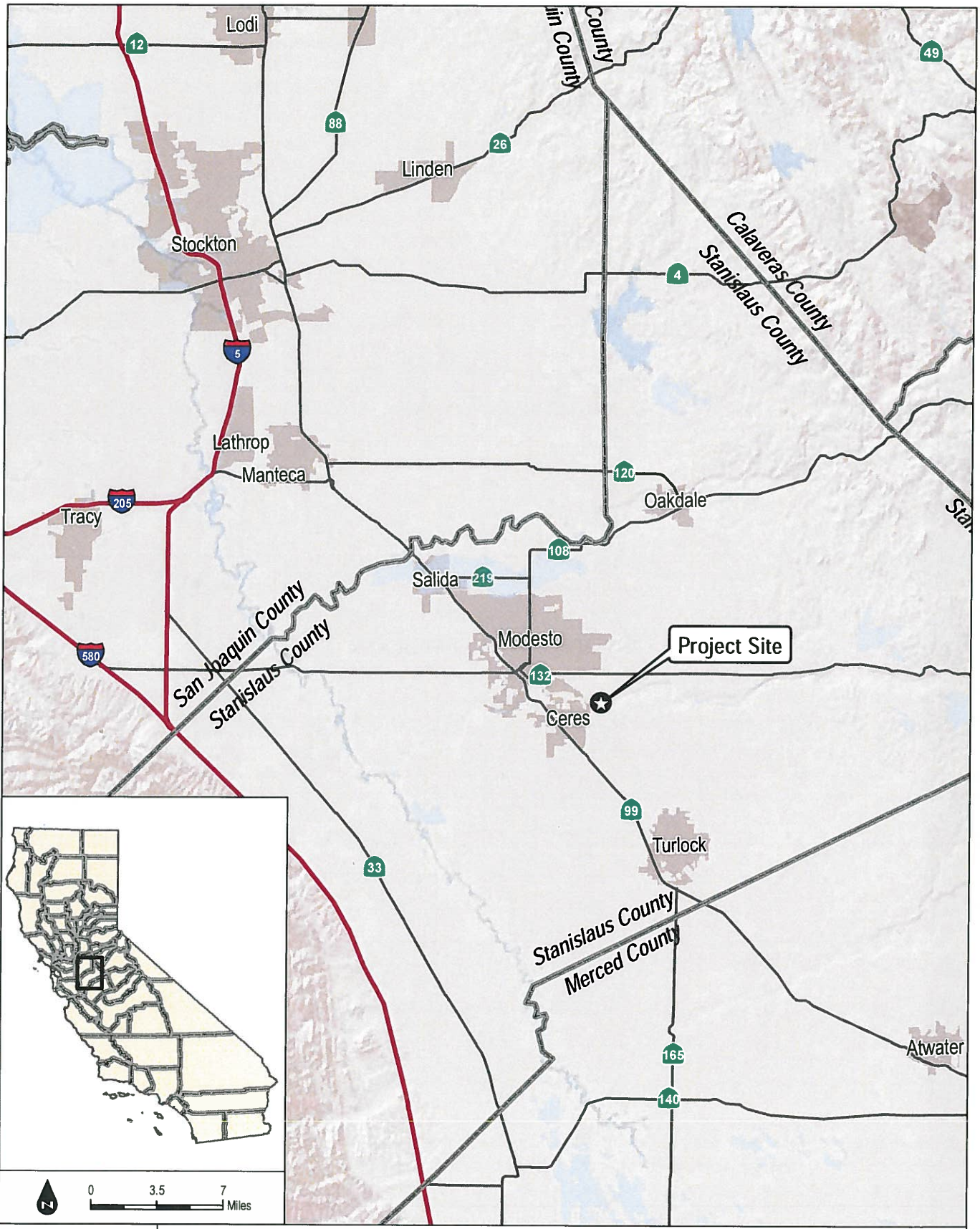

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FIGURE 1
Regional Map

River Bluff Lower Terrace Project

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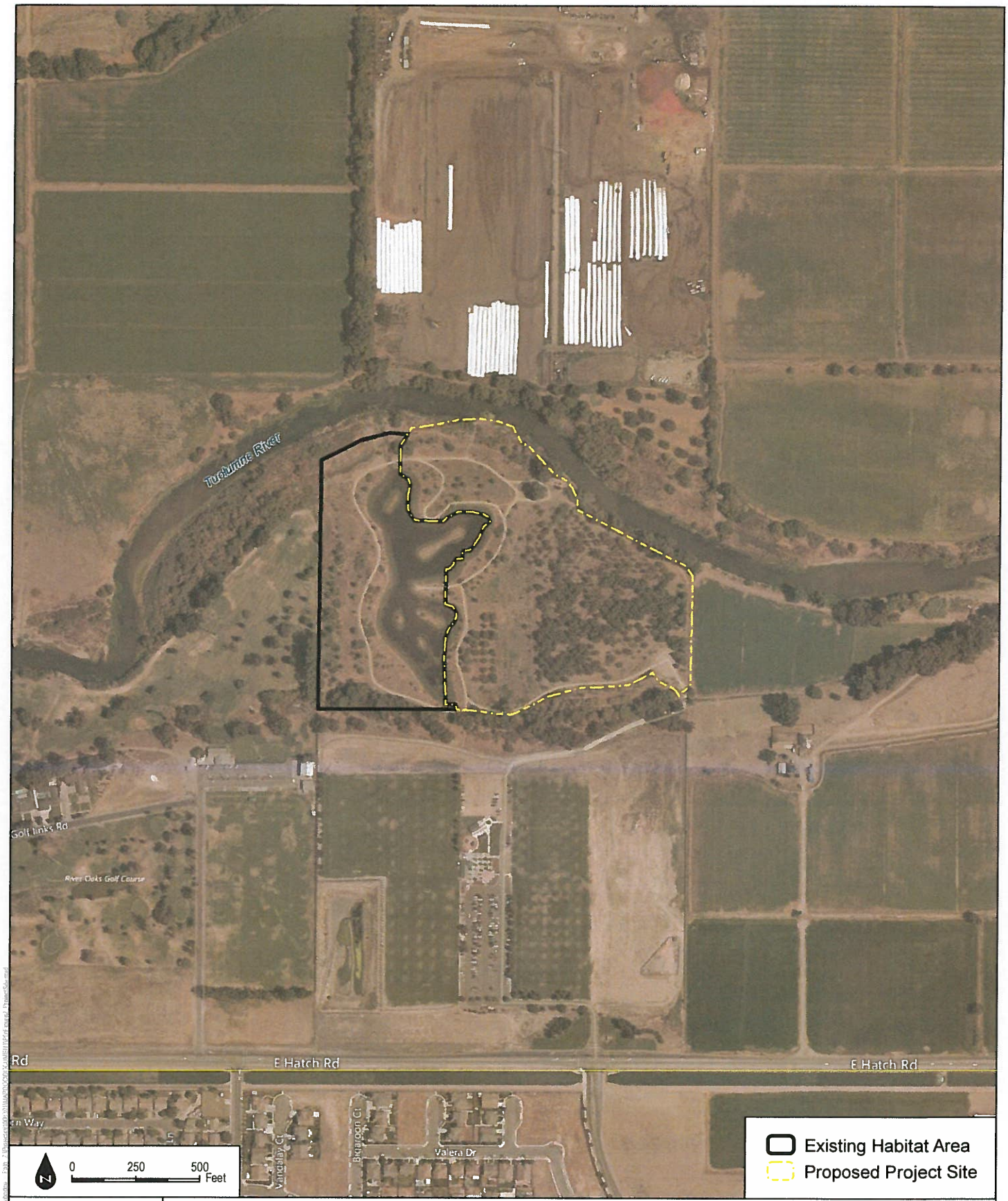

SOURCE: O'Dell Engineering (2017); Bing Maps (Accessed 2017)

FIGURE 2

Site Map and Proposed Project

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River Bluff Lower Terrace Project

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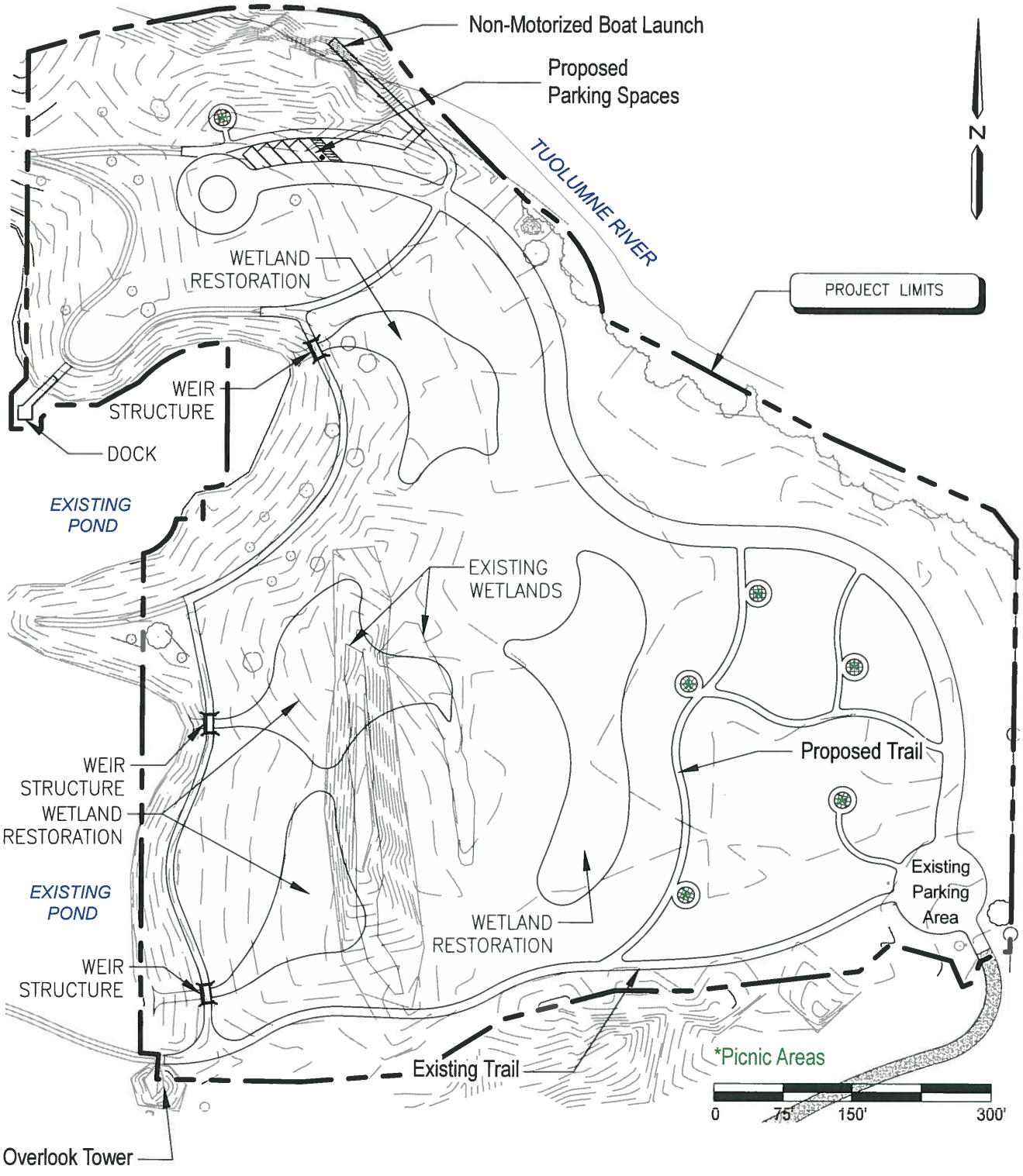

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SOURCE: O'Dell Engineering (2017)

FIGURE 3
Proposed Project Design

River Bluff Lower Terrace Project

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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.

☐ Aesthetics	☐ Agriculture and Forestry Resources	☐ Air Quality
☐ Biological Resources	☐ Cultural Resources	☐ Geology/Soils
☐ Greenhouse Gas Emissions	☐ Hazards and Hazardous Materials	☐ Hydrology/Water Quality
☐ Land Use/Planning	☐ Mineral Resources	☐ Noise
☐ Population / Housing	☐ Public Services	☐ Recreation
☐ Transportation/Traffic	☐ Utilities / Service Systems	☐ Mandatory Findings of Significance
		☒ None with Mitigation

DETERMINATION: (To be completed by the Lead Agency)

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

☐ I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

☒ I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

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

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

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

Signature: 

Printed Name: DARYL JORDAN

Date: 5/16/18

For:

EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS:

I. AESTHETICS Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	☐	☐	☐	☒

a. **No Impact.** For purposes of this analysis, a scenic vista is defined as an expansive view of highly valued landscape feature (e.g., a mountain range, lake or coastline) observable from a publicly accessible vantage point. The proposed project area is located within the River Bluff Regional Park, along the Tuolumne River. The project site is not visible from nearby ridgelines or other scenic vistas. Views of the proposed project from surrounding areas would be largely obscured or entirely blocked by vegetation and trees. The proposed project would restore native riparian habitats and enhance the existing scenic vista. The project does not include any elements that would adversely affect a scenic vista. Therefore, there would be no impact.

b. **No Impact.** There are no officially designated state scenic highways in the vicinity of the project site. Therefore, the project would not damage scenic resources within a state scenic highway and there would be no impact.

c. **No Impact.** For the purposes of this analysis, a substantial degradation of the existing visual character or quality would occur if the project would introduce a new visible element that would be inconsistent with the overall quality, scale, and character of the surrounding development. The proposed project would involve the removal of orchard remnants, the expansion of existing ponds, educational and wayfinding signage, new paths and trails, a non-motorized boat launch, pedestrian boardwalks, plant restoration, vehicular access, and a small five space parking lot. The majority of the project site is currently blocked from view from outside of the property by the site's location on the bottom of a hill. Furthermore, the project would have a minimal effect on the visual character of surrounding areas because the existing and proposed trees on the perimeter of the site and adjacent hillsides would limit visibility from surrounding areas. By introducing extensive native landscaping improvements, the proposed project would enhance the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings. Because the proposed project does not include any visible elements that would be inconsistent with the overall quality, scale, and character of the surrounding development, there would be no impact.

d. **No Impact**. The proposed project does not include any buildings that could create glare from sunlight reflecting off of glass or other smooth surfaces or lights that could affect nighttime views. The project also does not include any lights so it would not create a new source of light or glare; therefore, there would be no impact.

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.

☐ Aesthetics	☐ Agriculture and Forestry Resources	☐ Air Quality
☐ Biological Resources	☐ Cultural Resources	☐ Geology/Soils
☐ Greenhouse Gas Emissions	☐ Hazards and Hazardous Materials	☐ Hydrology/Water Quality
☐ Land Use/Planning	☐ Mineral Resources	☐ Noise
☐ Population / Housing	☐ Public Services	☐ Recreation
☐ Transportation/Traffic	☐ Utilities / Service Systems	☐ Mandatory Findings of Significance
		☒ None with Mitigation

DETERMINATION: (To be completed by the Lead Agency)

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

☐ I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

☒ I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

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

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

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

Signature: _____ Date: 5/16/18

Printed Name: DARYL JORDAN For:

II. AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) 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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d. Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e. Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	☐	☐	☐	☒

a.–e. **No Impact.** The California Department of Conservation, Important Farmland Map for Stanislaus County indicates that there is no Prime Farmland or Unique Farmland on or in the immediate vicinity of the project site (DOC 2015). The project site is zoned as Park (P) under the City of Ceres's General Plan, and is not subject to any Williamson Act contracts (City of Ceres 1997). The proposed project, therefore, would not conflict with any existing zoning for agricultural use. Likewise, there are no areas identified or designated in the City Ceres's General Plan or zoning map as forest or timber land on or near the project site (City of Ceres 1997). Orchard activities that were once conducted on the site have ceased many years ago and many of the walnut tree are dead or dying. The proposed use of the site would not involve any changes to the environment that would otherwise result in the conversion of active farmland or forest land to other uses.

III. AIR QUALITY	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations.				
Would the project:				
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐

III. AIR QUALITY *Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations.*	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	☐	☐	☒	☐
e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?	☐	☐	☐	☒

The federal and state Clean Air Acts define allowable concentrations of several air pollutants. When monitoring indicates that a region regularly experiences air pollutant concentrations that exceed those limits, the region is designated as non-attainment and is required to develop an air quality plan that describes air pollution control strategies to be implemented to reduce air pollutant emissions and concentrations.

The project site is located within the San Joaquin Valley Air Basin, which is designated non-attainment for the federal and state 8-hour ozone standards, the federal particulate matter ($PM_{2.5}$) standard, and the state particulate matter (PM_{10}) standard within San Joaquin Air Quality Management District. The area is in attainment or unclassified for all other state and federal standards, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1
San Joaquin Valley Ambient Air Quality Standards and Attainment Status

Pollutant	Designation/Classification	
	Federal Standards	*State Standards*
Ozone - One hour	No Federal Standard	Nonattainment/Severe
Ozone - Eight hour	Nonattainment/Extreme	Nonattainment
PM 10	Attainment	Nonattainment
PM 2.5	Nonattainment	Nonattainment
Carbon Monoxide	Attainment/Unclassified	Attainment/Unclassified
Nitrogen Dioxide	Attainment/Unclassified	Attainment
Sulfur Dioxide	Attainment/Unclassified	Attainment

Table 1
San Joaquin Valley Ambient Air Quality Standards and Attainment Status

Pollutant	Designation/Classification	
	Federal Standards	*State Standards*
Lead (Particulate)	No Designation/Classification	Attainment
Hydrogen Sulfide	No Federal Standard	Unclassified
Sulfates	No Federal Standard	Attainment
Visibility Reducing Particles	No Federal Standard	Unclassified
Vinyl Chloride	No Federal Standard	Attainment

Source: SJVAPCD 2006-2012

a,b. **Less than Significant.** The project site is located in the San Joaquin Valley Air Basin (SJVAB) which is under the authority of the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD). The SJVAPCD has the primary responsibility for ensuring that the San Joaquin Air Basin attains and maintains compliance with federal and state ambient air quality standards and working to improve health and quality of life for all residents through air quality programs. The SJVAPCD regulates air quality through its permit authority over most types of stationary emissions sources and through its planning and review process.

The federal and state Clean Air Acts define allowable concentrations of six air pollutants, which are referred to as "criteria air pollutants." When monitoring indicates that a region regularly experiences air pollutant concentrations that exceed those limits, the region is designated as nonattainment and is required to develop an air quality plan that describes air pollution control strategies to be implemented to reduce air pollutant emissions and concentrations.

In August 2008, the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board adopted the Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP). The CCAP directed the District Air Pollution Control Officer to develop guidance to assist Lead Agencies, project proponents, permit applicants, and interested parties in assessing and reducing the impacts of project specific greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions on global climate change. The SJVAPCD adopted Guidance for Assessing and Mitigating Air Quality Impacts (GAMAQI) (SJVAPCD 2015; SJVAPCD 2006-2012). The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires environmental impacts of a project to be identified, assessed and avoided or mitigated as feasible if impacts are significant. The GAMAQI provides technical guidance for the review of air quality impacts from proposed projects within the boundaries of the SJVAPCD. The guide provides procedures for assessing potential air quality impacts of proposed projects and for preparing the air quality analyses for environmental documents.

Construction Emissions

The proposed project would complete development of the Ceres River Bluff Regional Park and provide improved access to the Tuolumne River. The SJVAPCD's current adopted thresholds of significance for criteria pollutant emissions is presented in the following table (Table 1). The thresholds of significance are based on a calendar year basis. For construction emissions, the annual emissions are evaluated on a rolling 12- month period and a project evaluation should characterize emissions associated with: grading, excavation, road building, and other earth moving activities; travel by construction equipment, especially on unpaved surfaces; exhaust from construction equipment; architectural coatings; asphalt paving; demolition and renovation of

buildings; and off-road construction equipment. Table 2, below, presents equipment that would be used during project construction and the construction schedule.

Table 2
Air Quality Thresholds of Significance- Criteria Pollutants

Pollutant/Precursor	Construction and Operational Emissions		
	Construction Emissions (tons/year)	*Operational Emissions (Permitted Equipment and Activities) (tons/year)*	*Operational Emissions (Non-Permitted Equipment and Activities) (tons/year)*
CO	100	100	100
NOx	10	10	10
ROG	10	10	10
SOx	27	27	27
PM_{10}	15	15	15
$PM_{2.5}$	15	15	15

Source: SJVAPCD 2015
ROG = reactive organic gas; NOx = oxides of nitrogen; PM_{10} = fine particulate matter; $PM_{2.5}$ = respirable particulate matter

Table 3
Project Construction Equipment Emission Factors

Equipment Type	Unit Amount	Hours/day	Horsepower (HP)	Load Factor	Total Days Used	Equipment Hours
Off-Highway Trucks	6	0.33	402	0.38	150	49.5
Off-Highway Trucks	1	2	402	0.4	120	240
Tractors/Loaders/Backhoes	1	6	97	0.37	120	720
Graders	1	6	187	0.41	90	540
Scrapers	1	6	367	0.48	90	540
Tractors/Loaders/Backhoes	1	6	97	0.37	90	540
Tractors/Loaders/Backhoes	1	4	97	0.37	90	360
Excavators	1	6	158	0.38	75	450
Trenchers	1	6	78	0.5	60	360
Other Construction Equipment	1	6	172	0.42	60	360
Rubber Tired Dozers	1	6	247	0.4	60	360

Source: O'Dell 2018, RCNM 2008

The proposed project would result in temporary emissions of particulate matter, carbon monoxide (CO), and nitrogen oxides (NOx) during project construction from construction vehicles and equipment. The SJVAPCD has established a streamlining process to determine if short-term, on-site combustion exhaust emissions from construction of small projects would exceed ambient air quality standards. This method involves SJVAPCD-calculated small project analysis levels (SPAL) that are associated with pre-quantified emissions for projects based on project type and size. The SJVAPCD has determined that projects that generate less than the SPAL of 1,453 vehicle trips per day are not required to prepare an Ambient Air Quality Analysis (AAQA) and quantify criteria pollutants for CEQA purposes (SJVAPCD 2012).

As construction of the proposed project would not result in an excess of 1,453 vehicle trips per day, criteria pollutant emissions from the proposed project would not exceed standards established by the SJVAPCD. Therefore, construction of the proposed project would not generate substantial amounts of air pollution and would not obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan or contribute to violations of air quality standards in the region; this impact would be less than significant.

Furthermore, the SJVAPCD requires all construction projects to comply with Regulation VIII Control Measures, which set forth best practices for reducing PM_{10} emissions during construction of development projects. Table 3 lists measures included in the GAMAQI to reduce particulate matter emissions from construction. Implementation of control measures specified in Table 3 would reduce project-related construction PM emissions to less than significant.

Table 4
Regulation VIII Control Measures for Construction Emissions of PM_{10}

Control Measure
All disturbed areas, including storage piles, which are not being actively utilized for construction purposes, shall be effectively stabilized of dust emissions using water, chemical stabilizer/suppressant, covered with a tarp or other suitable cover or vegetative ground cover.
All on-site unpaved roads and off-site unpaved access roads shall be effectively stabilized of dust emissions using water or chemical stabilizer/suppressant.
All land clearing, grubbing, scraping, excavation, land leveling, grading, cut & fill, and demolition activities shall be effectively controlled of fugitive dust emissions utilizing application of water or by presoaking
When materials are transported off-site, all material shall be covered, or effectively wetted to limit visible dust emissions, and at least six inches of freeboard space from the top of the container shall be maintained.
All operations shall limit or expeditiously remove the accumulation of mud or dirt from adjacent public streets at the end of each workday. (The use of dry rotary brushes is expressly prohibited except where preceded or accompanied by sufficient wetting to limit the visible dust emissions.) (Use of blower devices is expressly forbidden.)
Following the addition of materials to, or the removal of materials from, the surface of outdoor storage piles, said piles shall be effectively stabilized of fugitive dust emissions utilizing sufficient water or chemical stabilizer/suppressant.
Within urban areas, trackout shall be immediately removed when it extends 50 or more feet from the site and at the end of each workday. Any site with 150 or more vehicle trips per day shall prevent carryout and trackout.

Source: SJVAPCD, 2002

c. **Less than Significant.** As discussed above, although the proposed project would result in short-term criteria pollutant emissions from construction activities, these emissions would have a minimal air quality impact and would not impact air quality in the long-term. The proposed project involves expansion of made-made wetlands, construction of new paths and trails, and installation of pedestrian bridges, an overview dock, and a small parking lot. These uses would not create substantial operational air pollutant emissions, as they would require minimal energy use for maintenance and operation and would not generate a large increase in traffic. Therefore, the project would not result in long-term or cumulatively considerable increases in air pollutant emissions for which SJVAPCD is in non-attainment (ozone precursors, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$). As construction and operation of the proposed project would not result in emissions that would violate any applicable air quality standards or contribute substantially to an existing or project air quality violation, the project would result in a less than significant cumulative impact.

d. **Less than Significant.** The SJVAPCD defines "sensitive receptors" as people that "have an increased sensitivity to air pollution or environmental contaminants" (SJVAPCD 2015). Locations where sensitive receptors are likely to occur include schools, parks, day care centers, hospitals, and residential areas. The project site is primarily surrounded by vacant fields supporting agricultural uses. The nearest sensitive receptors include park visitors and residences located approximately 0.3 mile to the south of the project site. Samuel Vaughn School is the closest school, located approximately 0.8 mile to the south of the project site. The proposed project could emit pollutants including particulate matter, carbon monoxide, ROG, and NOx, during project construction that would impact park visitors and residents near the project site. However, these impacts would be less than significant as construction emissions would be temporary and SJVAPCD Regulation VIII Control Measures to reduce fugitive dust generated by the project would be implemented. As described above, project operation would not result in substantial air quality impacts. Therefore, impacts to sensitive receptors would be less than significant.

e. **No Impact.** The SJVAPCD specifies that land uses that produce substantial objectionable odors include wastewater treatment facilities, sanitary landfills and transfer stations, composting facilities, petroleum refineries, asphalt batch plants, and painting/coating operations (SJVAPCD 2015). The proposed project would not include or be located within the vicinity of any of these uses, and therefore would not create objectionable odors that would affect a substantial number of people or expose people on the project site to objectionable odors. Therefore, no impact would occur.

IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☒	☐	☐
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☒	☐	☐
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?	☐	☒	☐	☐

IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?	☐	☒	☐	☐
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒

a. **Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated.** Dudek prepared a Biological Constraints Evaluation and Preliminary Jurisdictional Delineation Report (BTR) for the proposed project to determine existing biological resources on the site that could be impacted by the proposed project (see Appendix A). The BTR was based on vegetation mapping, a jurisdictional delineation, database search, and on-site wildlife survey. A Dudek biologist surveyed the study area on February 1, 2017 to identify and record all native and naturalized plant species, plant communities, and wildlife species on the site. In addition to species actually observed, expected wildlife use of the site was determined according to known habitat preferences of regional wildlife species and knowledge of their relative distributions in the area. The potential for special-status plant and wildlife species to occur on the project site was evaluated based on site location, elevation, vegetation condition, vegetation/land covers, and amount of suitable habitat and soils present. Plant communities and land covers were mapped onto a digital orthographic map of the study area.

A total of 59 species of native or naturalized vascular plants, 28 native (47%) and 31 non-native (53%), were recorded on the site (see Appendix A). The high percentage of non-native species is likely due to the disturbance evidenced on site from previous grading activities. As on-site surveys of the project site were conducted outside of the blooming period of most special-status plant species, the evaluation of each species' potential to occur on site was based on the elevation, habitat, and soils present on site and Dudek's knowledge of biological resources in the area and regional distribution of each species. Based on the presence of suitable habitat, appropriate elevation, and favorable soil conditions, two special status plant species were considered to have a moderate to high potential to occur on site: Merced monardella (*Monardella leucocephala*) and California alkali grass (*Puccinellia simplex*)(see Table 5). Neither of these species was observed during on-site surveys.

In addition to plant species, a total of 25 wildlife species, including species dependent on adjacent wetlands, upland species, and some urban-adapted species, were recorded within the site (Appendix A). Two special-status wildlife species were detected within the study area during on-site surveys: cackling (Aleutian Canada) goose (*Branta hutchinsii leucopareia*) and valley

elderberry longhorn beetle (*Desmocerus californicus dimorphus*) (see Table 5). The cackling goose is a smaller relative of the Canada goose (*Branta canadensis*) and a common winter resident in the central valley of California. Canada geese, which are a closely related species and use similar habitat as cackling goose, were observed during the site visit using the created wetland directly west of the project site. Thus, there is a high likelihood cackling geese may use the area for wintering habitat.

The valley elderberry longhorn beetle (VELB) was not directly observed, but potential presence of VELB is often identified through observation of its associated host plant. Twenty-two elderberry shrubs were found on and near the project site (see Appendix A). These shrubs are clustered in the northern portion of the project site, near the location of the proposed boat launch, in the northeastern portion of the project site, near the proposed trail, in the south-central portion of the site, within the proposed pond area, and directly below the project site, near the existing circular seating area on the site. Elderberry shrubs on site contain stems greater than 1 inch in diameter and potentially provide habitat for this federally listed species.

There are seven special-status species that were not observed during wildlife surveys but are considered to have a moderate to high potential to occur on site. The following species were considered to have a moderate to high potential to occur within the study area based on the presence of suitable habitat and recorded observations in close proximity to the study area: Western pond turtle *(Actinemys marmorata)*, California legless lizard (*Anniella pulchra)*, Burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia)*, Swainson's hawk *(Buteo swainsoni)*, Hardhead (*Mylopharodon conocephalus)*, Steelhead – Central Valley DPS (*Oncorhynchus mykiss)*, and Townsend's big-eared bat (*Corynorhinus townsendii)*(see Table 5). Construction and tree removal on the site could disturb habitat for some of these species. Mitigation Measures BIO-1 through BIO-10 would ensure that impacts are reduced to a less than significant level.

Table 5
Special Status Species Known to Occur Within Project Area

Common Name (Scientific Name)	Status	Habitat
Merced monardella (*Monardella leucocephala*)	California Rare Plant Rank (CRPR) 1A	Merced monardella is an annual herb in the Lamiaceae family. This species is found in valley and foothill grassland, generally with sandy and mesic soils. Although the grasslands in the study area may provide suitable habitat for this species, all documented occurrences are considered historical and it is extremely unlikely this species persists in California or elsewhere. Therefore, this species is unlikely to occur within the project site despite suitability of habitat and soils.
California alkali grass (*Puccinellia simplex*)	CRPR 1B.2	California alkali grass is an annual herb in the Poaceae family. This species is found in chenopod scrub, meadows and seeps, valley and foothill grassland, and vernal pools with alkaline, vernally mesic soils. It also occurs in sinks, flats, and lake margins within alkaline soils. It has

Table 5
Special Status Species Known to Occur Within Project Area

Common Name (Scientific Name)	Status	Habitat
		been documented throughout the central valley of California and as far west as Santa Clara County. Although the mesic grassland within the study area provides potentially suitable habitat for this species, the soils are not alkaline. This species has not been documented within 5 miles of the project site. Thus, although the study area contains potentially suitable habitat for this species, it is highly unlikely to occur in the area.
Cackling (Aleutian Canada) goose (*Branta hutchinsii leucopareia*)	Federally Delisted (FD)	This species is a small to medium-sized goose that breeds in the tundra of the far northern areas of North America. They migrate south for the winter and commonly use wetlands and other waterbodies in the central valley of California for wintering and stopover habitat during migration. The wetlands and grasslands at the project site provide suitable habitat for this species during migration and wintering
Valley elderberry longhorn beetle (*Desmocerus californicus dimorphus*)	Federally Threatened (FT)	Larvae bore into the stems of elderberries, where they feed on the pith until pupation, after which they emerge as adult beetles the next spring. This species is completely dependent on its host elderberry shrubs
Western pond turtle (*Actinemys marmorata*)	California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) Species of Special Concern (SSC)	In addition to appropriate aquatic habitat, these turtles require an upland oviposition site in the vicinity of the aquatic habitat, often within 200 meters (656 feet). Nests are typically dug in grassy, open fields with soils that are high in clay or silt fraction. Egg-laying usually takes place between March and August. This species has moderate potential to occur on site in the riverine habitat and to use the associated upland habitat for nesting. The adjacent wetlands also provide suitable aquatic habitat for this species.
California legless lizard (*Anniella pulchra*)	CDFW SSC	This species may be found in sparsely vegetated areas in a variety of habitats, including beach dunes; chaparral; California sagebrush scrub; oak woodlands; pine forests; pine–oak woodland; sandy washes; and stream terraces with sycamores, cottonwoods,

Table 5
Special Status Species Known to Occur Within Project Area

Common Name (Scientific Name)	Status	Habitat
		or oaks (Morey 2000; Stebbins 2003; Holland and Goodman 1998).
Burrowing owl *(Athene cunicularia)*	CDFW SSC	Burrowing owls in the Central Valley region are typically found in annual and perennial grasslands, where vegetation height is short to allow for detection of predators; however, owl habitat may also include more vegetated areas if the canopy covers less than 30% of the ground surface.
Swainson's hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*)	State Threatened (ST)	This species forages in open grassland habitats, irrigated pastures, and agriculture fields and has adjusted to foraging in certain types of agricultural lands (primarily tomato and alfalfa crops).
Hardhead *(Mylopharodon conocephalus)*	CDFW SSC	The preferred habitat for hardhead consists of undisturbed larger, low to mid-elevation streams, and also lakes and reservoirs, with summer water temperatures in excess of 20°C (68°F) (Moyle 2002).
Steelhead – Central Valley DPS *(Oncorhynchus mykiss)*	CDFW SSC	Young steelhead rainbow trout spend the first 1 to 2 years in permanent streams and rivers. There are strong shifts in habitat with size and season. The smallest fish occur in riffles, intermediate-size fish inhabit runs, and large fish live in pools. Steelhead can spend from 1 to 3 years in freshwater prior to migration to the ocean.
Townsend's big-eared bat *(Corynorhinus townsendii)*	CDFW SSC	This species is primarily associated with mesic habitats characterized by coniferous and deciduous forests, although it also occurs in xeric areas (Kunz and Martin 1982). In California, this species was historically associated with limestone caves and lava tubes located in coastal lowlands, agricultural valleys, and hillsides with mixed vegetation; it occurs in all parts of California, with the exception of alpine and subalpine areas of the Sierra Nevada (Harris 2000).

Source: Appendix A

Mitigation Measure BIO-1: All construction workers shall receive worker environmental awareness training (WEAP) conducted by a qualified biologist or an environmentally trained foreman. WEAP may also be conducted through a video created by a qualified biologist

specifically for this project. WEAP shall instruct workers to recognize all special-status species potentially present within the project site and identify their habitat on or adjacent to the project site, identify sensitive habitats found on and adjacent to the project site and be aware of project boundaries so that impacts to these habitats are limited to within project boundaries, and the nature and purpose of protective measures including best management practices (BMPs) and other required mitigation measures.

Mitigation Measure BIO-2: If tree removal or construction activities begin during the nesting season (February 1 through August 31), a qualified biologist shall conduct pre-construction surveys for any raptor or other nesting migratory bird nests within or immediately adjacent to the project site no more than 14 days prior to the commencement of any construction activity or tree removal. The pre-construction surveys shall be conducted between February 1 and August 31, and shall follow accepted survey protocols for nesting birds. Trees within a 200-foot buffer of project activities shall be included in the surveys. If no active nests are identified, no further measures are required.

- If active nests are located in the work area or within the survey buffer, the biologist, in consultation with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), shall establish an appropriately sized buffer around the nest within which no work shall be allowed until the young have successfully fledged. Generally, a 50-foot buffer shall be placed around passerine nests and a 250-foot buffer shall be placed around raptor nests. If the qualified biologist determines that a smaller buffer zone is acceptable, the size of the buffer zone may be reduced upon approval by CDFW.
- If active burrowing owl burrow is identified during the preconstruction survey, the following avoidance setbacks and buffers shall be implemented in accordance with the CDFW's Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation (CDFW 2012):

Table 6
Burrowing Owl Setback Guidance

Location	Time of year	Level of Disturbance		
		Low	*Med*	*High*
Nesting sites	April 1 – Aug 15	200 m*	500 m	500 m
Nesting sites	Aug 16 – Oct 15	200 m	200 m	500 m
Nesting sites	Oct 16 – Mar 31	50 m	100 m	500 m

* meters

- If avoidance of burrows in infeasible, consultation with CDFW will be required to develop a Burrowing Owl Exclusion Plan for burrow exclusion and closure using one-way doors during the non-nesting season.

Mitigation Measure BIO-3: A biologist familiar with western pond turtle life history and habitat requirements shall conduct a preconstruction survey for active turtle nests in all areas of potential ground disturbance. If no active nesting sites are identified, then no further mitigation will be necessary. If active turtle nests are identified during the preconstruction survey, they will be identified with the use of high visibility flagging or fencing and shall be completely avoided by construction activities until such a time when the young hatch and make their way to water.

Mitigation Measure BIO-4: To prevent impacts to California legless lizard, a qualified biologist shall conduct a preconstruction survey for this species no more than 7 days prior to the start of construction activities. The survey shall consist of gently raking any loose soil, sand, or leaf litter with a wooden rake until all California legless lizards are found. Any California legless lizards found within the project area shall be relocated to similar habitat outside the area of impact.

Mitigation Measure BIO-5: To minimize potential impacts to anadromous fish, including Central Valley Steelhead and hardhead, the following measures shall be implemented:

- No construction will occur within the river column.
- Best management practices for work around or in water shall be implemented. These BMPs include, but are not limited to: placement of equipment maintenance and refueling stations and staging areas at least 20 meters from the top of bank of the river; measures for prevention and prompt clean-up of any spills; and appropriate erosion control methods, such as placement of straw wattles, to prevent sediment from entering the waterway.

Mitigation Measure BIO-6: A preconstruction bat survey shall be conducted by a biologist familiar with Townsend's big-eared bat biology. The survey shall be conducted prior to the active and maternity season for bat species (May 1 to August 31), and shall include all trees that are to be removed. This survey may be performed in conjunction with the nesting bird survey and the survey for California legless lizard, if timing is appropriate. If no sign of bat is observed, no further measures are necessary. If active bat roosts are observed, exclusion measures may be implemented in consultation with CDFW.

Mitigation Measure BIO-7: As stated above, twenty-two elderberry shrubs were found on and near the project site. One of these shrubs is located within the proposed pond area, and must be removed. Construction would occur within the buffer areas of all elderberry shrubs. For the protection of the federally-listed VELB, the following measures shall be implemented:

- An elderberry shrub mitigation plan that will meet the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (Service) minimum standards contained the 2017, "Framework for Assessing Impacts to the Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle (VELB: *Desmocerus californicus dimorphus*)" will be prepared for the proposed project. The plan will contain a discussion of site selection methods, suitability of sites for successful plant establihment, a planting plan, success standards, and a timeline for achieving these standards to document successful mitigation. A monitoring program to document the status of transplanted shrubs and evaluate the success criteria must also be developed. Furthermore, a reporting timeline must be developed for mitigation areas. Annual reports that present and analyze the data collected from the monitoring surveys must be prepared and submitted to the Service.

b. **Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated.** The proposed project calls for work that would impact 1.34 acres of riparian habitat and approximately 0.52 acre of valley oak woodland. The riparian vegetation associated with the Tuolumne River is a protected resource regulated under Section 1600 et seq. of the California Fish and Game Code and valley oak woodland is considered a sensitive plant community by the CDFW. Approximately 1.9 acres of wetland and associated riparian habitat would be created to offset the temporary loss of riparian vegetation.

However, removal of trees or shrubs within valley oak woodland habitat would be considered a significant impact. With implementation of the following measure, impacts would be reduced to less than significant.

Mitigation Measure BIO-9: To the extent feasible, ground-disturbing activities shall avoid sensitive natural communities and shall not occur within the dripline of valley oak trees.

c. **Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated.** The BTR prepared for the proposed project included a preliminary jurisdictional delineation of wetlands and non-wetland waters within the project site that may be subject to the jurisdiction of CDFW, pursuant to Sections 1600–1603 of the California Fish and Game Code; under the jurisdiction of ACOE, pursuant to Section 404 of the federal Clean Water Act; and under jurisdiction of the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), pursuant to Clean Water Act Section 401 and the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act (see Appendix A).

The results of the jurisdictional delineation performed by Dudek show that there are approximately 0.26 acres of jurisdictional wetlands and 506 linear feet of non-wetland waters on the project site composed of approximately 0.26 acres of ACOE- and RWQCB-jurisdictional wetlands and approximately 506 linear feet of Corps, RWQCB and CDFW-jurisdictional non-wetland waters of the United States (see Appendix A). The results of this delineation are preliminary until verified by the Sacramento District of the ACOE.

The Tuolumne River is considered a navigable water of the United States and therefore falls within the jurisdiction of ACOE and RWQCB. Furthermore, CDFW generally assumes jurisdiction of the bed and bank of stream courses, and has been known to assert jurisdiction to the limits of any associated riparian vegetation along stream courses. Therefore, the Tuolumne River is also within the jurisdiction of CDFW. In addition, the BTR found that the site supports several wetlands that would be classified as ACOE and RWQCB-jurisdictional wetlands due to the presence of hydric soils, hydrophytic vegetation, and wetland hydrology. These on-site wetlands total 1.33 acres (see Appendix A).

The proposed project consists of the removal of a 16-acre walnut orchard, and enhancement and establishment of a total of 1.9 acres of wetlands that would provide improved flood protection, improved access to an existing constructed pond, improved passive recreational access to the Tuolumne River, and completion of a pedestrian trail system through the park. Construction activities are expected to result in a total of approximately 0.38 acre of permanent fill in waters of the U.S. to enable 1.9 acres of wetland restoration and establishment; placement of three weir structures; placement of an elevated boardwalk at the existing ornamental pond; and installation of a pre-fabricated concrete boat ramp below the Ordinary High Water Mark (OHWM) of the Tuolumne River.

The proposed project would result in a permanent discharge of fill material into two wetland features on the project site, totaling 0.36 acres in size, in order to enhance and expand these wetland areas. The existing wetland features on site were the result of recent excavation activities on dry land that were initiated to source soil material for construction of a nearby soccer field. The enhanced and created wetlands would be designed and planted to enhance or establish: short and long-term surface water storage; retention of particulates; filtering and removal of elements and compounds; maintenance of aquatic plant and animal communities; subsurface water storage; moderation of groundwater flow and discharge; and dissipation of storm event energy in the floodplain within the park.

Positive drainage from the existing pond would be regulated via three proposed weir structures strategically located where the pond would interface with the expanded wetland area. The weir structures would be spaced apart to enable a regular regime of hydrology to the enhanced and expanded wetlands. The weirs would also be designed to enable permanent long term benefits to the floodway capacity. The construction of these weirs would require excavation of approximately 32.6 cubic yards of material in total from the area surrounding the wetlands, and therefore result in temporary impacts to wetlands. All disturbed areas would be revegetated with a native wetland seed mix.

Additionally, the proposed project would discharge approximately 10 cubic yards of material into the Tuolumne River for placement of a 100' long X 10' wide pre-fabricated concrete passive recreation boat ramp. The boat ramp would extend from top of bank to the OHWM of the river at approximately a 45 degree angle. It is anticipated the Project would permanently impact approximately 22 linear feet of Tuolumne River bank above the OHWM and temporarily impact approximately 35 linear feet of river bank above OHWM to facilitate installation of the boat ramp. Approximately 0.005 acre of stream would be temporarily disturbed below OHWM. A minor amount of grading work on the bed and bank of the river would be necessary for the placement of the pre-fabricated ramp structure. Most of the boat ramp will be located above the OHWM of the Tuolumne River. The boat ramp would be constructed during a time of year when flows are at their lowest (to avoid impacts to the stream and protect fish, and wildlife); the construction footprint would be greatly limited to the area proposed for placement of the ramp; and the ramp would be implemented from pre-fabricated forms to expedite the time needed to install.

The purpose of the proposed project is development of a river parkway, in accordance with the California River Parkways Act of 2004, that provides important recreational, open space, wildlife, flood management, water quality, and urban waterfront revitalization benefits. The constructed wetland area will enable multiple wetland benefits such as: expansion of floodway capacity along the lower Tuolumne River; reduction of agricultural encroachment; capture and filtration of pollutants from urban runoff; and establishment of a more natural area of lacustrine wetland habitat within the park. The unavoidable permanent impacts to waters of the U.S. associated with wetland enhancement and creation, the three weir structures, observation deck, and boat ramp will be minimized to the greatest extent practicable and will be limited to the minimum area necessary to construct the project. Erosion and sedimentation will be controlled to minimize inputs into waters of the United States during project construction. Best Management Practices (BMPs), such as silt fencing, straw wattles and hay bales, will be installed prior to construction and maintained until all disturbed areas have been stabilized to avoid and minimize erosion and sedimentation from the project site. All areas subject to temporary disturbance as a result of construction activities will be restored to pre-project conditions and stabilized as soon as practicable following construction to prevent erosion and sediment input into the Tuolumne River. Erosion control fabric (e.g., natural jute netting) and a seed mix of native/naturalized species will be applied to all areas of the channel bank that are temporarily disturbed by project construction activities to aid in stabilization and restoration of such areas. The species mix for restoration/stabilization of disturbed areas on the stream bank will be selected by a qualified biologist or restoration specialist and will be sourced from regionally appropriate sources.

Project impacts on waters of the United States are very minimal (0.38 acre) and would allow enhancement and establishment of approximately 1.9 acres of wetland waters. When completed, the overall effect of the Project is expected to have a net conservation and functional benefit on Tuolumne River and its floodplain.

d. **Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated.** The proposed project would result in an intensification of use at the project site, but would not result in the development of significant quantities of any previously undeveloped land that could serve as an important corridor or resting place for any migratory or resident species, with the exception of possible nesting birds, as discussed above. Nesting birds could be disturbed during construction and tree removal, but implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-2 would ensure that this potential impact would remain less than significant. In addition, a goal of the project is to increase habitat diversity and provide overwintering and stopover habitat for migratory birds in the constructed wetlands. This is anticipated to increase the overall use of the site as a migratory stopover and nursery site for various species.

e. **Less than Significant Impact.** The City of Ceres Municipal Code contains policies related to the protection of street trees; however, there are no specific protections outlined for developments consistent with the proposed project. The City of Ceres General Plan outlines a goal for the preservation and enhancement of open space lands and maintenance of natural resources (Goal 6.E, City of Ceres 1997). The proposed project includes enhancement of wetland and riparian habitat and would be consistent with this goal. In addition, the proposed project would offset the loss of orchard trees by planting native trees as part of the project.

f. **No Impact**. As indicated in the CDFW Regional Conservation Plan Map (CDFW 2017), the project site is not located within the plan area of any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan. Therefore, the project would not conflict with an applicable plan and there would be no impact.

V. CULTURAL RESOURCES Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in §15064.5?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?	☐	☒	☐	☐
c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	☐	☒	☐	☐
d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	☐	☒	☐	☐

A Cultural Resources Inventory Report for the River Bluff Lower Terrace Project was prepared for the proposed project by Dudek (see Appendix B) to satisfy the requirements of local regulatory conditions, CEQA, and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). The report included a Central California Information Center (CCIC) records search, Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) Sacred Lands File search and subsequent tribal outreach, and an intensive pedestrian survey. This report was used to complete this section and is included as Appendix B of this Initial Study.

Records Search

A records search was completed for the project including a one-half mile radius around the project area by staff at the CCIC at California State University Stanislaus on January 20, 2017.

The records search identified 9 previous studies which have been performed within the records search area; of these, one has intersected the project area (see Appendix B). This survey covered 100% of the current project area.

Previous cultural resources studies have identified four cultural resources within the records search area. Of these, no cultural resources are located within the project area. The previously recorded resources included two prehistoric sites, the historic Ceres Main Irrigation Canal, and a historic-era house structure which has been razed (see Appendix B).

Historical aerial photographs of the project area were available for the years 1967, 1998, 2002, 2005, 2009, 2010, and 2012 (NETR 2017). Based on the 1967 aerial images, the eastern portion of the project area was a cultivated field before becoming a walnut orchard. By 1998 the orchard is present. The wetlands located in the western portion of the project area are not present until 2009. No other changes were noted in the available aerial images and no historic structures were observed. Aerial images from 2009 on represent the current project conditions.

Historic topographic maps from 1916, 1954, 1965, 1971, 1978, and 1987 were inspected for possible historic structures or changes within the project area (see Appendix B). No structures are noted within any of the maps with the exception of 1954, which indicates an unimproved road along the east perimeter of the project area leading to an outbuilding on the north perimeter by the Tuolumne River. This road and structure do not appear in any other maps or aerial images. Based on review of these maps, the project area was historically within the corridor of the Tuolumne River. The terraced banks shown on USGS maps to be 100 ft above mean sea level (amsl), located south of the project area, appear to have represented the southern extent of this meandering river course. It is not until 1971 maps, where the East Modesto Road (upriver to the west) and current orchard area (in project area) also appear, that the river is shown to follow its present course. Based on this information, it is evident that the area inundated at the time of survey was an added terrace to support agricultural activities and would not likely have been present prior to historical modification of the natural river course.

Pedestrian Survey

An intensive pedestrian survey was completed by a qualified Dudek archeologist on February 14, 2017 and May 20, 2017, using standard archeological procedures and techniques. No cultural resources or materials were identified during the survey (see Appendix B).

Native American Consultation

The NAHC was contacted by Dudek on January 18, 2017 to request a search of the Sacred Lands File for the project area. The NAHC responded on January 25, 2017 indicating that the search failed to identify any Native American resources in the vicinity of the project and provided a list of individuals and organizations to contact that may have additional information. Letters were sent to each of the contacts to request information on resources in the area on March 6, 2017, and follow-up phone calls were made on March 7, 2017 to the NAHC-listed Tribal representatives. No responses have been received to date.

a. **Less than Significant.** A historical resource is defined by Public Resources Code § 21084.1 and CEQA Guidelines § 15064.5 as any resource listed or determined to be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places as well as some California State Landmarks and Points of Historical Interest. In addition, historical resources are evaluated

against the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) criteria prior to making a finding as to the project's impacts on historical resources. Generally, resources must be at least 50 years old to be considered for listing in the CRHR as a historical resource. There are no buildings on the project site at present, and no historical resources have been identified within the project area (see Appendix B). Based on prior and current cultural evaluations of the project area, no known historic resources are located within the proposed project area; therefore, the impact would be less than significant.

b. **Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated.** According to the Cultural Resources Inventory Report prepared for the project area, there are no known archeological resources on the project site (see Appendix B). It is unlikely that previously unknown cultural resources would be encountered during future site grading and construction. However, to ensure that impacts to cultural resources remain less than significant, should any such resources be encountered during project grading and construction, the project would be required to implement Mitigation Measure CR-1. With implementation of Mitigation Measure CR-1, impacts to archeological resources would be less than significant.

CR-1 Unanticipated Archeological Resources Discoveries

In the event that archaeological resources (sites, features, or artifacts) are exposed during construction activities for the proposed project, all earth-disturbing work occurring in the vicinity (generally within 100 feet of the find) shall immediately stop and the City notified. The City will retain a qualified archaeologist, meeting the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards, to evaluate the significance of the find and determine whether or not additional study is warranted. If the discovery proves significant under CEQA (14 CCR 15064.5(f); PRC Section 21082) or Section 106 of the NHPA (36 CFR 60.4), additional work such as preparation of an archeological treatment plan, testing, or data recovery may be warranted.

c. **Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated**. The Cultural Resources Inventory Report prepared for the project area describes that the ground surface of the project area has been previously disturbed by agricultural activities (see Appendix B). The project area is characterized by deposits of Quaternary alluvium, and is within the historic course of the Tuolumne River. It is unlikely that previously unknown paleontological resources or unique geologic features would be encountered during future site grading and construction. However, to ensure that impacts to paleontological resources and unique geologic features remain less than significant, should any such resources be encountered during project grading and construction, the project would be required to implement Mitigation Measure CR-2. With implementation of Mitigation Measure CR-2, impacts to paleontological resources and unique geologic features would be less than significant.

CR-2 Unanticipated Paleontological Resources Discoveries

Per state law, in the event that paleontological resources or unique geologic features are encountered during construction, all earthwork within a 50 meter radius of the find shall be stopped, the City of Ceres notified, and a paleontologist retained.

d. **Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated**. Although no evidence of human remains has been found on the project site, the potential to encounter human remains during project construction still exists. Per Section 7050.5 of the California Health and Safety Code, if human remains are discovered during project construction, no further work shall occur in the immediate

vicinity of the discovered remains until the County Coroner has made the necessary findings as to the origin of the remains. Furthermore, pursuant to California Public Resources Code Section 5097.98(b), remains shall be left in place and free from disturbance until recommendations for treatment have been made. As such, Mitigation Measure CR-2 has been incorporated into the project to ensure that potential impacts are less than significant by providing standard procedures in the event that human remains are encountered during project construction.

CR-3 Unanticipated Human Remain Discoveries

In accordance with Section 7050.5 of the California Health and Safety Code, if potential human remains are found earth-disturbing work in the vicinity (generally 100 feet is sufficient) should immediately halt and county coroner notified of the discovery. The coroner will provide a determination within 48 hours of notification. No further excavation or disturbance of the identified material, or any area reasonably suspected to overlie additional remains, shall occur until a determination has been made. If the county coroner determines that the remains are, or are believed to be, Native American, they shall notify the NAHC within 24 hours. In accordance with California Public Resources Code Section 5097.98, the NAHC must immediately notify those persons it believes to be the most likely descendent (MLD) from the deceased Native American. Within 48 hours of their notification, the MLD will recommend to the lead agency their preferred treatment of the remains and associated grave goods.

VI. GEOLOGY AND SOILS	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.	☐	☐	☒	☐
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	☐	☐	☒	☐
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	☐	☐	☒	☐
iv) Landslides?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	☐	☒	☐	☐
c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading,	☐	☐	☒	☐

VI. GEOLOGY AND SOILS	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significa nt Impact	No Impact
Would the project: subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?				
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?	☐	☐	☒	☐
e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?	☐	☐	☐	☒

a. **i) Less than Significant.** The nearest known active fault traces are located in the southwest corner of the County in the Ortigalita Fault Zone, approximately 27.6 miles from the project site. Portions of this fault zone are designated as an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone (ICF International 2016). However, due to the distance of the project site from this fault zone, the site is not located in an area that is greatly affected by these faults. The Stanislaus County General Plan indicates that the project site is located within an area of moderate earthquake hazard (ICF International 2016). Because the project site is not located within an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone, and no evidence of active faulting occurs within or near the project site, fault-line surface rupture would not be a hazard within the project area. In addition, the project does not include any buildings that could be impacted in the event of an earthquake. Impacts related to fault rupture potential would be less than significant.

ii) Less than Significant. The intensity of ground shaking depends on the distance from the earthquake epicenter to the site, the magnitude of the earthquake, site soil conditions, and the characteristics of the source. The nearest active fault is located approximately 27.6 miles from the project site, in the Ortigalita Fault Zone. Because the project site is not located in the proximity of active faults and would not construct any structures, the risk of loss, injury, or death involving seismic ground shaking would be low. Impacts would be considered less than significant.

iii) Less than Significant. Soil liquefaction most commonly occurs when ground shaking from an earthquake causes a sediment layer saturated with groundwater to lose strength and take on the characteristics of a fluid, thus becoming similar to quicksand. Liquefaction may also occur in the absence of a seismic event, when unconsolidated soil above a hardpan becomes saturated with water. Factors determining the liquefaction potential are the level and duration of seismic ground motions, the type and consistency of soils, and the depth to groundwater. Loose sands and peat deposits; uncompacted fill and other Holocene materials deposited by sedimentation in rivers and lakes (fluvial or alluvial deposits); and debris or eroded material (colluvial deposits) are the most susceptible to liquefaction. The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Soil Web Survey specifies that the project site's soil composition consists of Hanford sandy loam (HdmA), moderately deep over sand, 0 to 3 percent slopes; Grangeville very fine sandy loam (GmA), 0 to 1 percent slopes; and terrace escarpments (USDA 2016). These soils present moderate potential for liquefaction on the project site during ground shaking.

The proposed project does not include constructing any buildings that could be impacted if liquefaction were to occur. Construction of trails, ponds, pedestrian bridges, an overview dock, and a surface parking lot would not expose people to the hazards associated with liquefaction; therefore, the impact is considered less than significant.

iv. Less than Significant. The City's General Plan states that due to the generally flat topography of the City, the City does not face risk of landslides (City of Ceres 1997). The project site has a 0 to 3 percent slope (USDA 2016). As the project site is relatively flat, impacts related to landslides remain low. Therefore, a less than significant impact would occur.

b. **Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated**. Construction of the proposed project would require grading and excavation, which could contribute to soil erosion and loss of topsoil. An acceptable degree of soil stability can be achieved by the required incorporation of soil treatment programs (e.g., compaction, drainage control, lime treatment) in the excavation and construction plans to address site-specific soil conditions. The proposed project would comply with the City's Grading Ordinance, which includes specific standards for erosion control and control of dust, mud, and siltation, and with the City's Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), which includes implementation of stormwater runoff best management practices (BMPs). In addition, Mitigation Measure GEO-1 requires preparation of an erosion control plan, which would address management of erosion and sediment. Adherence to these requirements and implementation of Mitigation Measure GEO-1 would prevent substantial erosion and topsoil loss. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant with mitigation.

> **Mitigation Measure GEO-1:** An erosion control plan shall be developed for the project prior to construction to prevent soil erosion and sedimentation during construction. The erosion control plan shall address how the contractor will manage erosion and sediment, the general site and materials, and inspection and maintenance. Below are examples of the measures that could be incorporated into project construction to reduce soil erosion and protect water quality:
>
> - Erosion and sediment control measures shall be in effect and maintained by the contractor on a year-round basis until all disturbed areas are stabilized.
> - Stockpiled material shall be covered or watered daily to eliminate dust.
> - Fiber rolls or similar products shall be used to reduce sediment runoff from disturbed soils.
> - A stabilized construction entrance shall be maintained to minimize tracking of mud and dirt from construction vehicles onto public roads.
> - Storm drain inlets receiving stormwater runoff shall be equipped with inlet protection.

c. **Less than Significant**. Unstable geologic units or soils are characterized by materials lacking in sufficient integrity to support urban development (e.g., poorly consolidated fill). The project does not include the construction of any buildings that could be impacted by unstable soils including lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse. The impact would be less than significant.

d. **Less than Significant.** Expansive soils shrink and swell as a result of moisture change. These volume changes can result in damage over time to building foundations, underground utilities, and other subsurface facilities and infrastructure if they are not designed and constructed appropriately to resist the damage associated with changing soil conditions. As described above, NRCS soil survey data indicates that the project site is composed of six soil types: Hanford sandy

loam (HdmA), moderately deep over sand, 0 to 3 percent slopes; Grangeville very fine sandy loam (GmA), 0 to 1 percent slopes; and terrace escarpments (USDA 2016). As mentioned previously, the project does not include construction of any buildings that could be impacted by expansive soils. In addition, construction of the project would follow the Uniform Building Code as well as the City's LID guidelines and BMPs. Impacts would be less than significant.

e. **No Impact.** No septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems are proposed and the project would have no impact related to these types of wastewater disposal.

VII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Conflict with any applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	☐	☐	☒	☐

a., b. **Less than Significant**. In 2006, California enacted Assembly Bill 32, the Global Warming Solutions Act. AB 32 provided initial direction on creating a comprehensive multiyear program to limit California's GHG emissions at 1990 levels by 2020 and initiate the transformations required to achieve the state's long-range climate objectives. One specific requirement of AB 32 is for CARB to prepare a "scoping plan" for achieving the maximum technologically feasible and cost-effective GHG emission reductions by 2020 (Health and Safety Code, Section 38561(a)), and to update the plan at least once every 5 years.

In 2008, CARB approved the first scoping plan. The *Climate Change Scoping Plan: A Framework for Change* (Scoping Plan) included a mix of recommended strategies that combined direct regulations, market-based approaches, voluntary measures, policies, and other emission reduction programs calculated to meet the 2020 statewide GHG emission limit and initiate the transformations needed to achieve the state's long-range climate objectives. The Scoping Plan also identified local governments as essential partners in achieving California's goals to reduce GHG emissions because they have broad influence and, in some cases, exclusive authority over activities that contribute to significant direct and indirect GHG emissions through their planning and permitting processes, local ordinances, outreach and education efforts, and municipal operations. Specifically, the Scoping Plan encouraged local governments to adopt a reduction goal for municipal operations and for community emissions to reduce GHGs by approximately 15% from then levels (2008) by 2020. Many local governments developed community-scale local GHG reduction plans based on this Scoping Plan recommendation.

As described in the air quality discussion above, in August 2008, the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board adopted the Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP). The CCAP directed the District Air Pollution Control Officer to develop guidance to assist Lead Agencies, project proponents, permit applicants, and interested parties in assessing and reducing the impacts of project specific greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions on global climate change. In December 2009, the SJVAPCD adopted the Final Staff Report on Addressing Greenhouse Gas

Emissions Impacts under the California Environmental Quality Act (SJVAPCD 2009). This document provides guidance intended to streamline the process of determining whether a project would have significant GHG impacts. The methodology proposed by the SJVAPCD does not include specific GHG emissions thresholds, but instead relies on the use of performance based standards that would reduce GHG emission outputs by development projects. These standards, called Best Performance Standards (BPS), are project design elements associated with GHG emission reductions pre-quantified by the SJVAPCD that can be used to determine the significance of a project's GHG impacts. Projects implementing BPS that reduce project GHG emissions by 29%, consistent with GHG emission reduction targets in the AB 32 Scoping Plan, would be determined to have a less than significant individual and cumulative impact with regard to GHG emissions. The 2009 staff report did not include BPS developed specifically for recreational development projects similar to the proposed project, or for project construction.

Construction. Construction of the proposed project would result in GHG emissions, which are primarily associated with use of off-road construction equipment, on-road vendor (material delivery) trucks, and worker vehicles.

A detailed depiction of the construction schedule—including information regarding phasing, equipment utilized during each phase, vendor trucks, and worker vehicles—is included in Appendix C. The estimated project-generated GHG emissions from construction activities are shown in Table 5. These estimates were developed with CalEEMod using project schedule, equipment, and construction details.

Table 6
Estimated Annual Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Emission Source	CO_2e (MT/yr)
Construction	172.4797
Operational- Landscaping	0.0004
Total	**172.4801**

Source: Appendix C

CO_2e = carbon dioxide-equivalent; MT/year = metric tons per year

As discussed previously, the SJVAPCD has not established a quantified threshold for construction-phase project GHG emissions or BPS for recreational development projects or project construction activities. GHG emissions resulting from project construction would be short term in nature and limited, and primarily result from construction equipment exhaust. The amount of GHG emissions from project construction would occur during the 4-5 month construction period, and would not conflict with AB 32 reduction targets. Implementation of Mitigation Measure GHG-1 would further reduce project construction GHG emissions, and reduce impacts to less than significant.

Mitigation Measure GHG-1:

- Construction equipment will be maintained according to manufacturer's specifications.
- Construction vehicle idling time will be limited.

- To minimize dust emissions on unpaved roads and all project entry points, and to increase fuel efficiency of vehicles and reduce emissions, all vehicles driven in the construction area will be limited to 15 miles per hour.
- On road and off road vehicle tire pressures shall be maintained to manufacturer specifications.
- Tires shall be checked and reinflated at regular intervals.

Operation. Once operational, the proposed project would consist of trails, ponds, pedestrian bridges, an overview dock, and a small parking lot. Long-term operation of the proposed project would require minimal upkeep and maintenance. The main source of emissions from operation of the proposed project would include motor vehicle emissions generated by maintenance of the trail facilities. Maintenance activities would require less intensive activity (i.e., less vehicles and equipment operation) than assumed for the project's construction scenario. Accordingly, operational emissions are anticipated to be minimal and would be less than significant.

The Scoping Plan, approved by CARB on December 12, 2008, provides a framework for actions to reduce California's GHG emissions and requires CARB and other state agencies to adopt regulations and other initiatives to reduce GHGs. As such, the Scoping Plan is not directly applicable to specific projects. Relatedly, in the Final Statement of Reasons for the Amendments to the CEQA Guidelines, the CNRA observed that "[t]he [Scoping Plan] may not be appropriate for use in determining the significance of individual projects because it is conceptual at this stage and relies on the future development of regulations to implement the strategies identified in the Scoping Plan" (CNRA 2009). Under the Scoping Plan, however, there are several state regulatory measures aimed at the identification and reduction of GHG emissions. CARB and other state agencies have adopted many of the measures identified in the Scoping Plan. Most of these measures focus on area source emissions (e.g., energy usage, high-GWP GHGs in consumer products) and changes to the vehicle fleet (i.e., hybrid, electric, and more fuel-efficient vehicles) and associated fuels (e.g., low-carbon fuel standard), among others which may not be directly applicable to the project. However, to the extent that these regulations are applicable to the project, the project would comply will all regulations adopted in furtherance of the Scoping Plan to the extent required by law.

Regarding consistency with Senate Bill (SB) 32 (goal of reducing GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020), there are no established protocols or thresholds of significance for that future-year analysis. However, CARB forecasts that compliance with the current Scoping Plan puts the state on a trajectory of meeting these long-term GHG goals, although the specific path to compliance is unknown (CARB 2014).

Based on the preceding considerations, the project would not conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of GHGs, and no additional mitigation is required. The impact is less than significant.

VIII. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?	☐	☐	☐	☒
g) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒
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?	☐	☐	☒	☐

a., b. **Less than Significant.** During construction activities, a variety of hazardous substances and wastes would be used on the project site, including fuels for machinery and vehicles, cleaning solvents, paints, and storage containers. Provisions to properly manage hazardous substances and wastes during construction are typically included in construction specifications and are under the responsibility of the construction contractors. Adhering to applicable local, state and federal standards associated with hazardous materials would ensure that these impacts would be less than significant.

c. **Less than Significant.** No schools are located within 0.25 mile of the project site. The closest schools to the project site are Samuel Vaughn School, Virginia Parks Elementary, and Mae

Hensley Junior High School. Samuel Vaughn School is located approximately 0.8 mile from the project site. Virginia Parks Elementary School and Mae Hensley Junior High School are located over one mile from the project site.

Construction at the project site would involve the temporary use of hazardous and/or flammable materials, including diesel fuel, gasoline, and other oils and lubricants. The use, storage, transport, and disposal of these materials would comply with all existing local, state, and federal regulations, as described above. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

d. **No Impact.** A search of federal, state, and local databases regarding hazardous material releases and site cleanup lists was conducted for the project site (DTSC 2017). The project site is not included on a list of hazardous materials sites, and is not included on the Department of Toxic Substance Control's site cleanup list. The proposed project would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment and there would be no impact.

e. **No Impact.** The nearest airport to the project site is the Modesto City-County Airport (Harry Sham Field) which is located approximately 0.8 mile northwest of the project site. According to the Stanislaus County Airport Land Use Plan (Stanislaus County, 2004) the project site is located in Planning Area Boundary 3 which is titled, "Approach and Transitional Surfaces" and is defined as, "that area under the approach and take-off extensions and transitional surfaces as defined by the flight paths in use at the airport and Federal regulations" (Stanislaus County, 2004). The proposed project is compatible with the airport land use compatibility listing. The Stanislaus County Airport Land Use Plan includes an "airport safety zone" and shows the project site in Area 2 (Inner Safety Zone). The proposed project is compatible with the development standards for airport safety zone 2. Therefore, no impact would occur as a result of the proposed project.

f. **No Impact.** The project site is not located in the vicinity of a private airstrip; therefore, no impact would occur as a result of the proposed project.

g. **No Impact.** Due to the nature of the project, it would not interfere with any adopted emergency or evacuation plans. Therefore, the project would have no impact related to implementation of emergency plans.

h. **Less than Significant.** The City's General Plan states that threat from wildfire hazards is minimal in the City, although fire hazards still exist (City of Ceres 1997). The project site is located within a local responsibility area (LRA) and is not within or near a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ) as designated by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) (CAL FIRE 2007). Fire suppression services in the project area would continue to be provided by the Ceres Fire Department. Construction and operation of the proposed project is not anticipated to expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildfires. The proposed project would be subject to review by the City of Ceres for compliance with all applicable provisions contained within the California Fire Code. Because the project site is not within a VHFHSZ and because the proposed project would be required to conform with all applicable fire code regulations, the proposed project would not expose people or structures to a significant risk associated with wildland fires.

IX. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?	☐	☒	☐	☐
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)?	☐	☐	☒	☐
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?	☐	☒	☐	☐
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?	☐	☒	☐	☐
e) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?	☐	☐	☒	☐
f) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?	☐	☐	☒	☐
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
h) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures which would impede or redirect flood flows?	☐	☐	☐	☒
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
j) Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?	☐	☐	☐	☒

a. **Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated.** Project construction would require some earth-disturbing activities, including grading that could expose disturbed areas to rainfall and

storm water runoff. Accidental spills of construction-related contaminants (e.g., fuels and oils) could also occur during construction, thereby degrading water quality. Chapter 13.18 of the City's Municipal Code includes the Storm Water Management and Discharge Control Ordinance that is intended to protect water quality impacts during construction and operation of projects. Ordinance 2015-1030 § 1 (2015) of the municipal code sets forth measures that must be undertaken by any "person engaged in activities that may result in pollutants entering the storm water conveyance system" to protect water quality. These include requirements for projects with construction activities that involve soil disturbance to implement BMPs for erosion and sediment controls, soil stabilization, dewatering, source controls, pollution prevention measures, and prohibited discharges. Furthermore, Mitigation Measure GEO-1 requires preparation of an erosion control plan, which would reduce the amount of soil and sediment entering stormwater during grading activities. Implementation of Mitigation Measure GEO-1 and adherence to the City's Storm Water Management and Discharge Control Ordinance would ensure compliance with water quality standards and would reduce construction-related impacts on water quality to a less than significant level.

b. **Less than Significant.** The proposed project would involve removal of orchard remnants, construction and expansion of wetlands, installation of an irrigation system, and completion of a trail system. The project would also construct pedestrian bridges, a non-motorized boat launch, an overview dock, and a five space parking lot. The project does not include any uses that would require groundwater and the project site is not considered a significant recharge area. In addition, construction of project features would not create a significant amount of impervious surface area. The project would not require groundwater nor would it substantially interfere with groundwater recharge; therefore, the project would result in a less than significant impact.

c. **Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated**. As described above the proposed project would involve construction and expansion of wetlands, installation of an irrigation system, and completion of a trail system. The project would also construct pedestrian bridges, a non-motorized boat launch, an overview dock, and a five space parking lot. Construction of the proposed project could result in erosion if not properly controlled. However, implementation of Mitigation Measure GEO-2 would establish an erosion control plan that would ensure that the project does not significantly alter the existing drainage pattern of the project site by implementing erosion control measures and construction BMPs. Furthermore, the proposed project would adhere to applicable local regulations which require implementation of BMPs, and compliance with grading plan requirements designed to avoid erosion. After project construction, the proposed project would follow all regulations related to discharge of storm water pollutants from new developments, including the City's Storm Water Management and Discharge Control Ordinance. With compliance with these policies, the proposed project would not alter drainage patterns during operations.

d. **Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated**. As described above, construction of the proposed project could result in erosion if not properly controlled. However, implementation of Mitigation Measure GEO-2 would ensure that the project does not significantly alter drainage patterns of the site by implementing erosion control measures and construction BMPs. After project construction, the proposed project would comply with all regulations related to erosion control and discharge of storm water pollutants from new developments including the City's Storm Water Management and Discharge Control Ordinance. Therefore, the proposed project would not increase the rate of runoff in a manner that would result in substantial erosion or flooding on site or off site.

e. **Less than Significant**. The proposed project does not include the construction of any buildings that could increase the amount of storm water runoff. Construction of the trails, ponds, pedestrian bridges, overview dock, and five space parking lot would create a small amount of impervious surface area but it would not be large enough to contribute storm water that could exceed the capacity of a planned storm water drainage system or create a substantial amount of polluted runoff. Furthermore, the proposed pond expansion would act as a detention basin for stormwater, thereby reducing pollutants within runoff. Thus, there would be no impact.

f. **Less than Significant.** Increased runoff from the construction of impermeable surfaces on the project site could lower the quality of stormwater runoff and infiltrate groundwater. The major contributor of contaminants to runoff and infiltrating groundwater is the land surface over which the water passes. The project involves the construction of trails made of soil cement, expansion of ponds, pedestrian bridges and an overview dock consisting of precast concrete planks and a five space parking lot made of soil cement. The amount of impermeable surface area is minimal and runoff from the proposed project would not substantially degrade water quality. As described above, the proposed pond expansion would act as a stormwater detention basin that would reduce the rate of runoff and pollutants within runoff. Users of the trail would be limited to pedestrians and bicyclists. No motorized uses would be allowed on the trail with the exception of maintenance equipment. Thus, there would be limited opportunities for oil and various residues associated with motorized vehicles or equipment to be deposited on the trails. In addition, project construction would adhere to required BMPs designed to minimize sediments from entering stormwater associated with construction vehicles and construction activities. Impacts associated with the project's ability to degrade water quality would be less than significant.

g., h, i. **No Impact.** According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Flood Map Number 06099C0560E, dated September 26, 2008, the project site is located in Zone AE, which is within the 100-year flood plain (FEMA 2008). The proposed project does not include housing or other structures. There are no dams or levees in the vicinity of the project site. Therefore, the project would not expose people or structures to significant loss related to flooding. The proposed pedestrian bridges would be designed to handle flooding associated with a storm event. Because the project does not include any housing or future residents that could be impacted by flooding the project would result in no impact.

j. **No Impact**. The project site is physically removed from any large body of water and is not subject to inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow. The project would have no impact related to these water-related hazards.

X. LAND USE AND PLANNING	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a) Physically divide an established community?	☐	☐	☐	☒
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	☐	☐	☐	☒

X. LAND USE AND PLANNING	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
mitigating an environmental effect?				
c) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒

a. **No Impact.** The proposed project site is within a regional park and would not physically divide an established community; no impact would occur.

b. **No Impact.** Land use on the project site is regulated by the Land Use Element of the City of Ceres General Plan, Chapter 1 (Land Use and Community Design) including Figure 1-2 (Land Use Diagram) in the City of Ceres General Plan (City of Ceres 1997). Under the City of Ceres General Plan, the project site is designated as Parks (P) land use. The project site is zoned as "River Bluff Regional Park". The proposed project would not conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of the City of Ceres.

c. **No Impact**. As indicated in the CDFW Regional Conservation Plan Map (CDFW 2017), the project site is not located within the plan area of any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan. The proposed project would have no impact.

XI. MINERAL RESOURCES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒

a., b. **No Impact.** The California Department of Conservation's Division of Mining and Geology implements the Mineral Land Classification program, which divides land into four categories called Mineral Resource Zones (MRZs) based on the quality of geologic information available on a given geographic area and the estimated economic value of the resource (DOC 1998). The project site is classified as being within MRZ-3a, which describes areas that contain known mineral occurrences of undetermined mineral resource significance (DOC 1993). The City of Ceres General Plan does not cite any known mineral resources that would be valuable to the region and/or the residents of the state. The proposed project would not

interfere with future mineral resource recovery opportunities, and implementation of the proposed project would not result in a loss of availability of any known mineral resource. The proposed project would have no impact.

XII. NOISE	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
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?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Expose persons to or generate excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Create a substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d) Create a substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	☐	☒	☐	☐
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	☐	☐	☐	☒

The City's General Plan Health and Safety Element includes goals and policies that protect noise-sensitive uses from excessive noise. The General Plan emphasizes that new development must ensure that uses do not create excessive noise on adjacent properties, and development of noise-sensitive uses must consider existing sources of excessive noise and reduce exposure to high interior noise levels through noise-mitigating design. Policy 7.H.2 of the Health and Safety Element includes noise standards for noise generated by non-transportation sources as measured at the property line of lands with noise-sensitive uses. Table 6 presents these noise level performance standards.

Table 7
Noise Level Performance Standards
New Projects Affected by or Including Non-Transportation Sources

Noise Level Descriptor	Daytime (7 a.m. to 10 p.m.)	Nighttime (10 p.m. to 7 a.m.)
Hourly Leq, dB	55	45
Maximum level, dB	75	65

Source: City of Ceres 1997

Furthermore, Chapter 9.36 of the City's Municipal Code (Noise Ordinance) sets forth ordinances regarding noise generation. Ordinance 2005-941(2005) and Ordinance 75-439 (1975) of the municipal code includes a measure related to construction noise which prohibits:

"The erection (including excavating), demolition, alteration or repair of any building other than between the hours of seven o'clock (7:00) A.M. and eight o'clock (8:00) P.M., except that, by special permit issued by the Building Inspector or City Engineer, as the case may be, upon a determination that the public health and safety will not be impaired thereby, the erection, demolition, alteration or repair of any building or the excavation of streets and highways may be permitted within the hours of eight o'clock (8:00) P.M. and seven o'clock (7:00) A.M."

a., c. **Less than Significant.** The project site is located in parkland and surrounded by agricultural and riparian lands. Outside of the River Bluff Regional Park, surrounding land uses include the River Oak Golf Course, approximately 0.3 mile from the project site, the Gilton solid waste management facility, approximately 0.1 mile from the project site, and Samuel Vaughn Elementary School, approximately 0.7 mile from the project site. Residential uses are located approximately 0.3 mile to the south of the project site and approximately 0.7 mile west of the project site. The nearest noise-sensitive use is the residential area to the south of the project site. Buildings within this residential area are separated from the project site by existing River Bluff Regional Park fields and parking lots, and the two-lane East Hatch Road. The primary source of noise in the area is airplane traffic from Modesto City-County Airport (Harry Sham Airport) located approximately 0.8 mile northwest of the project site.

The proposed project would not substantially increase growth or traffic in the project area during project operation and would not create a substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project area. Project construction would create noise from the use of construction equipment and vehicles. Temporary construction activities would use conventional construction techniques and equipment that would not generate substantial levels of vibration or groundborne noise. Construction activities would include clearing of existing orchard remnants, grading, and construction of man-made wetlands, new paths and trails, a non-motorized boat launch, pedestrian boardwalks, an overview dock, plant restoration, vehicular access and a five space parking lot. The nearest noise-sensitive receptor is the residential area located approximately 1,575 feet to the south of the project site. Noise from construction would be temporary, occurring for approximately 4-5 months and would comply with the City's Noise Ordinance that permits construction to occur between 7:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. The actual noise levels during project construction would depend on equipment used, distance to the source of the noise, time of day, and type of construction. The Federal Highway Administration Roadway Construction Noise Model (RCNM) was used to estimate construction noise levels based on project phasing and equipment used. Table 7 summarizes peak noise levels by phase during project construction.

Table 8
Project Construction Noise Levels
at Nearest Sensitive Receptor

Phase	Estimated Noise Level (dBA*)
Site Preparation	54.2
Grading	55.5
Trenching	57.4
Excavation	46.8
Construction	48.1

As shown in Table 6, the General Plan specifies that the maximum acceptable noise level for new projects including non-transportation noise sources is 75 dB during the daytime and 65 dB during the nighttime, as measured from the property line of noise sensitive uses. Table 7 shows that project construction noise levels will reach 57.4 dBA at maximum during the trenching phase. This is considerably lower than the 65 dB noise standard. Therefore, construction noise impacts would be less than significant.

After construction is complete, noise from the proposed project would consist of noise from recreational users utilizing the trails, ponds, overview dock and parking lot. Consequently, noise would be limited to human voices – no motorized vehicles or boats would be permitted to use the trail or boat launch with the exception of maintenance vehicles. The noise created by unamplified human voices would not impact the nearest noise-sensitive receivers (residential land uses located approximately 1,575 feet away). Therefore, noise levels from operation of the proposed project would be **less than significant**.

b. **No Impact.** Project construction activities would require construction equipment and methods similar to those used in standard roadway construction. Construction of the proposed project is anticipated to take 4-5 months to complete. No equipment required for the project would result in exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels. Construction activities associated with the proposed project include site preparation, grading, trenching, excavation and trail, pond, and bridge construction. Project construction is not expected to involve principle sources for vibration generation, which include blasting and pile driving. Furthermore, the nearest sensitive receptors are located approximately 1,575 feet to the south of the project site. At this distance, any vibration from project construction activities would be barely detectable. Therefore, no impact would occur.

d. **Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated.** As discussed previously under item a, noise levels from construction activities would not exceed noise standards at nearby noise-sensitive land uses, because of the distance to the nearest receivers. Furthermore, with incorporation of *Mitigation Measure NOI-1*, construction noise would be reduced to the extent practicable, and temporary noise increases are anticipated to not be substantial. Therefore, the noise impact would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measure NOI-1: Prior to issuance of grading permits the following measures shall be incorporated by the City of Ceres as conditions on permits, as deemed necessary:

- Hours of construction would be limited to the hours of 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

- All construction equipment, fixed or mobile, shall be equipped with properly operating and maintained mufflers.
- Construction noise reduction methods, such as shutting off idling equipment, maximizing the distance between construction equipment staging areas and occupied sensitive receptor areas, and using electric air compressors and similar power tools rather than diesel equipment, shall be used.
- During construction, stationary construction equipment shall be placed such that noise is directed away from or shielded from sensitive noise receivers.
- During construction, stockpiling and vehicle staging areas shall be located far from noise-sensitive receptors.

e., f. **No Impact**. The project site is not located in the vicinity of a private airstrip so the project would not expose people working in the project area to excessive noise levels. The project is located within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport (Modesto City-County Airport -Harry Sham Airport), but with the exception of temporary construction noise, the project would not expose individuals working in the project area to excessive noise levels; therefore, no impact would occur.

XIII. POPULATION AND HOUSING	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
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)?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	☐	☐	☐	☒

a. **No Impact.** The proposed project does not include the construction of homes, businesses, or infrastructure that would increase population growth. Therefore, there would be no impact.

b. **No Impact.** The proposed project would not result in displacement of any existing housing, and would not necessitate construction of replacement housing elsewhere as a result of such a displacement. No impact would occur.

c. **No Impact.** Implementation of the proposed project would not result in the displacement of people or necessitate the construction of housing as a result of such a displacement. No impact would occur.

XIV. PUBLIC SERVICES

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a) Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, or a need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the following public services:				
Fire protection?	☐	☐	☒	☐
Police protection?	☐	☐	☒	☐
Schools	☐	☐	☒	☐
Parks	☐	☐	☒	☐
Other public facilities?	☐	☐	☒	☐

a. **Less than Significant**. The City of Ceres is served by the City of Ceres Fire Department's four fire stations. The nearest station to the project site is Station 4, located at 3101 Fowler Road, approximately 1.2 miles from the project site. The proposed project would not result in a substantial population increase that would create increased demand for fire protection services in the area.

Police protection would be provided by the Ceres Police Department. The proposed project is not anticipated to generate significant demand for police services that would result in the need for additional personnel, equipment, or police facilities.

Based on the description of the proposed project, existing emergency services are expected to be sufficient to meet the needs of the proposed project without the provision of new or expanded emergency service facilities.

The proposed project does not include any residential uses; therefore, the project would not result in a population increase that would require new schools to serve new City residents. Therefore, there would be no substantial increase in demand for school facilities.

The proposed project would not introduce a new population requiring access to parks or other public facilities or services or increasing demand for these services.

The proposed project does not include adding new residents and would not require an expansion of existing public services or construction of new public services facilities. For these reasons, the project would result in a less-than-significant impact on the County and City's public services.

XV. RECREATION

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might, have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐

a. **Less than Significant.** The proposed project would involve removal of orchard remnants, construction and expansion of wetlands, installation of an irrigation system, and completion of a trail system within River Bluff Regional Park. The project would also construct pedestrian bridges, a non-motorized boat launch, an overview dock, and a five space parking lot. The project does not include the addition of new residences that could increase the demand on existing neighborhood and regional parks. It is not anticipated that the proposed project would substantially increase the use of River Bluff Regional Park or would result in the physical deterioration of the park and its facilities. Therefore, impacts are considered less than significant.

b. **Less than Significant.** As described above, the proposed project would include the removal of orchard remnants, construction and expansion of wetlands, installation of an irrigation system, and completion of a trail system within River Bluff Regional Park. The project would also construct pedestrian bridges, a non-motorized boat launch, an overview dock, and a five space parking lot. The physical effects of construction and operation of the project on the environment have been evaluated in this document. Based on the analysis all potential impacts can be addressed with mitigation and reduced to less than significant.

XVI. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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?	☐	☐	☒	☐
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	☐	☐	☐	☒

XVI. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project: management agency for designated roads or highways?				
c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e) Result in inadequate emergency access?	☐	☐	☐	☒
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

a. **Less than Significant.** The project site is located on East Hatch Road on the lower terrace of River Bluff Regional Park in the City of Ceres. There are no bicycle facilities or transit facilities within the area and the project would not conflict with any applicable plans pertaining to bicycle, pedestrian, or transit access. Because the project would not involve growth-inducing expansion to East Hatch Road or the project site's surrounding area, the project would not result in a substantial increase in traffic to the project area.

Construction Period Impacts

Construction of the proposed project would require daily trips by construction workers. Most of the construction traffic, especially trucks and equipment vehicles, would be expected to travel via East Hatch Road. The addition of construction-related traffic may create temporary changes in traffic patterns at nearby intersections and roadways. Because construction traffic levels would typically be modest for a project of this size, and because affected intersections in the vicinity are currently operating well within acceptable levels, no adverse impacts on traffic operation due to construction activities are expected. The impact would be less than significant.

b. **No Impact**. The proposed project would not involve an increase in traffic or growth to the project site and thus would not cause an exceedance in level of service standards for the City of Ceres. The proposed project would not result in an increase in traffic at the project site or the surrounding area of the project site. According to the City of Ceres General Plan, a majority of Hatch Road in Ceres is considered a Class C expressway. For Class C expressways, major intersections are signalized with 55-65% of green time and these Class C expressways have 20% more capacity than arterial roadways with the same number of lanes (City of Ceres 1997). This expressway operates at a Level of Service (LOS) D and the proposed project would not degrade the LOS at any of the intersections. Therefore, the project would not conflict with any level of service standards and there would be no impact.

c. **No Impact.** The nearest airport to the project site is the Modesto City-County Airport (Harry Sham Field) which is located approximately 0.8 mile northwest of the project site. According to the Stanislaus County Airport Land Use Plan (Stanislaus County, 2004) the project site is located in Planning Area Boundary 3 which is titled, "Approach and Transitional Surfaces" and is defined as, "that area under the approach and take-off extensions and transitional surfaces as defined by the flight paths in use at the airport and Federal regulations" (Stanislaus County, 2004). The proposed project is compatible with the airport land use capability listing. The proposed project would not result in any change in, or impact to, air traffic patterns. No impact would occur.

d. **No Impact.** The proposed project would not substantially increase hazards due to any design features of the project. The proposed project does not have any elements that would result in an incompatible transportation use to the project site or the surrounding area. The project would not affect any road or cause road hazards, therefore there would be no impact.

e. **No Impact.** Emergency responders would be able to reach the project site via East Hatch Road, and would be able to pass through the entire site. Therefore, emergency access is considered to be adequate from a circulation perspective. Also, the project will be conducted in an isolated area and construction activities would not affect emergency access; no impact would occur.

f. **No Impact.** The project would not conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs regarding bicycle or pedestrian facilities. The proposed project would provide improved trail facilities within River Bluff Regional Park. Therefore, the project would have no adverse impacts on pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and no impact would occur.

XVII. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?	☐	☐	☐	☒
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Require or result in the construction of new stormwater drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?	☐	☐	☐	☒
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

XVII. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
f) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?	☐	☐	☒	☐
g) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	☐	☐	☒	☐

a., e. **No Impact**. Wastewater would not be produced by the proposed project and wastewater services would not be needed on the project site. The proposed project would have no impact on wastewater treatment facilities.

b., d. **No Impact.** As explained in threshold a., above, the proposed project would not require construction of a new or expanded wastewater treatment facility to serve the proposed project. The proposed project would not require any water service at the site and there would be no demand for any additional water supplies. Therefore, there would be no impact.

c. **Less than Significant.** The proposed project would not result in major changes to the drainage patterns on site. As such, the proposed project would continue to be adequately served by existing storm drains and drainage infrastructure, and would not require construction of additional facilities that could result in an adverse environmental impact. The impact would be less than significant.

f. **Less than Significant.** Solid waste generated by the proposed project would include construction debris and solid waste disposed of by visitors in provided trash receptacles. Solid waste disposal would comply with federal, state, and local regulations. Disposal would occur at acceptable landfills. The proposed project would not create a need for a new solid waste facility and the impacts would be considered less than significant.

g. **Less than Significant.** Project construction would generate solid waste in the form of building materials, asphalt, and general construction waste. The proposed project would comply with all federal, state, and local regulations in regards to solid waste. Therefore, the impact would be less than significant.

XVIII. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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	☐	☒	☐	☐

XVIII. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
history or prehistory?				
b) Does the project 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)?	☐	☒	☐	☐
c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	☐	☒	☐	☐

a., c. **Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated.** As described in the analysis presented in the preceding sections, with implementation of the mitigation measures identified herein, the proposed project would not 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; eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory; or otherwise cause substantial adverse effects on human beings through impacts on the aesthetic environment, geologic resources, hazards, land use, noise, traffic, or other elements of the environment.

b. **Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated.** The analysis provided in the preceding sections demonstrate that any incremental environmental effects related to the project would be negligible and would not contribute considerably to any cumulatively significant environmental impact. The potential environmental effects related to the proposed project as identified above would be mitigated to a less-than-significant level through implementation of the project measures and mitigation measures identified herein.

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APPENDIX A

California Emissions Estimator Model Results

River Bluff Lower Terrace

Stanislaus County, Annual

1.0 Project Characteristics

1.1 Land Usage

Land Uses	Size	Metric	Lot Acreage	Floor Surface Area	Population
City Park	16.00	Acre	16.00	696,960.00	0
Parking Lot	5.00	Space	0.05	2,000.00	0

1.2 Other Project Characteristics

Urbanization	Urban	**Wind Speed (m/s)**	2.2	**Precipitation Freq (Days)**	46
Climate Zone	3			**Operational Year**	2019
Utility Company	Turlock Irrigation District				
CO2 Intensity (lb/MWhr)	790	**CH4 Intensity (lb/MWhr)**	0.029	**N2O Intensity (lb/MWhr)**	0.006

1.3 User Entered Comments & Non-Default Data

Project Characteristics -

Land Use -

Construction Phase - Project construction phase lengths provided

Off-road Equipment - no phase

Off-road Equipment - Provided in PD

Off-road Equipment - Provided in PD

Off-road Equipment - provided in PD

Off-road Equipment - Provided in PD

Off-road Equipment - Provided in PD

Trips and VMT - 2 worker trips/day per equipment
Vendor trips from water truck

Vehicle Trips - No operational vehicle trips

Consumer Products - given

Grading - Imported and Exported Material assumed to be balanced

On-road Fugitive Dust - Roads are not 100% paved

Water And Wastewater - zero

Solid Waste - zero

Sequestration -

Construction Off-road Equipment Mitigation -

Off-road Equipment -

Energy Use - No lighting proposed

Land Use Change -

Table Name	Column Name	Default Value	New Value
tblConstDustMitigation	WaterUnpavedRoadVehicleSpeed	40	15
tblConstructionPhase	NumDays	300.00	150.00
tblConstructionPhase	NumDays	20.00	0.00
tblConstructionPhase	NumDays	30.00	90.00

River Bluff Lower Terrace - Stanislaus County, Annual

tblConstructionPhase	NumDays	10.00	120.00
tblConstructionPhase	NumDaysWeek	5.00	6.00
tblConstructionPhase	NumDaysWeek	5.00	6.00
tblConstructionPhase	NumDaysWeek	5.00	6.00
tblConstructionPhase	NumDaysWeek	5.00	6.00
tblConstructionPhase	NumDaysWeek	5.00	6.00
tblEnergyUse	LightingElect	0.35	0.00
tblGrading	AcresOfGrading	101.25	75.00
tblOffRoadEquipment	HorsePower	158.00	78.00
tblOffRoadEquipment	HorsePower	168.00	172.00
tblOffRoadEquipment	LoadFactor	0.38	0.48
tblOffRoadEquipment	LoadFactor	0.38	0.40
tblOffRoadEquipment	LoadFactor	0.40	0.42
tblOffRoadEquipment	LoadFactor	0.37	0.37
tblOffRoadEquipment	OffRoadEquipmentType		Skid Steer Loaders
tblOffRoadEquipment	OffRoadEquipmentUnitAmount	1.00	0.00
tblOffRoadEquipment	OffRoadEquipmentUnitAmount	1.00	0.00
tblOffRoadEquipment	OffRoadEquipmentUnitAmount	3.00	0.00
tblOffRoadEquipment	OffRoadEquipmentUnitAmount	2.00	0.00
tblOffRoadEquipment	OffRoadEquipmentUnitAmount	3.00	0.00
tblOffRoadEquipment	OffRoadEquipmentUnitAmount	1.00	0.00
tblOffRoadEquipment	OffRoadEquipmentUnitAmount	2.00	0.00
tblOffRoadEquipment	OffRoadEquipmentUnitAmount	1.00	0.00
tblOffRoadEquipment	OffRoadEquipmentUnitAmount	3.00	0.00
tblOffRoadEquipment	OffRoadEquipmentUnitAmount	2.00	1.00
tblOffRoadEquipment	OffRoadEquipmentUnitAmount	3.00	0.00
tblOffRoadEquipment	OffRoadEquipmentUnitAmount	2.00	1.00

tblOffRoadEquipment	OffRoadEquipmentUnitAmount	2.00	1.00
tblOffRoadEquipment	OffRoadEquipmentUnitAmount	4.00	1.00
tblOffRoadEquipment	OffRoadEquipmentUnitAmount	1.00	0.00
tblOffRoadEquipment	UsageHours	8.00	6.00
tblOffRoadEquipment	UsageHours	8.00	6.00
tblOffRoadEquipment	UsageHours	8.00	6.00
tblOffRoadEquipment	UsageHours	8.00	4.00
tblOffRoadEquipment	UsageHours	8.00	6.00
tblOnRoadDust	HaulingPercentPave	100.00	90.00
tblOnRoadDust	HaulingPercentPave	100.00	90.00
tblOnRoadDust	HaulingPercentPave	100.00	90.00
tblOnRoadDust	HaulingPercentPave	100.00	90.00
tblOnRoadDust	HaulingPercentPave	100.00	90.00
tblOnRoadDust	HaulingPercentPave	100.00	90.00
tblOnRoadDust	VendorPercentPave	100.00	90.00
tblOnRoadDust	VendorPercentPave	100.00	90.00
tblOnRoadDust	VendorPercentPave	100.00	90.00
tblOnRoadDust	VendorPercentPave	100.00	90.00
tblOnRoadDust	VendorPercentPave	100.00	90.00
tblOnRoadDust	VendorPercentPave	100.00	90.00
tblOnRoadDust	WorkerPercentPave	100.00	90.00
tblOnRoadDust	WorkerPercentPave	100.00	90.00
tblOnRoadDust	WorkerPercentPave	100.00	90.00
tblOnRoadDust	WorkerPercentPave	100.00	90.00
tblOnRoadDust	WorkerPercentPave	100.00	90.00
tblOnRoadDust	WorkerPercentPave	100.00	90.00
tblSolidWaste	SolidWasteGenerationRate	1.38	0.00

tblTripsAndVMT	VendorTripNumber	0.00	2.00
tblTripsAndVMT	VendorTripNumber	115.00	0.00
tblTripsAndVMT	WorkerTripNumber	3.00	2.00
tblTripsAndVMT	WorkerTripNumber	10.00	8.00
tblTripsAndVMT	WorkerTripNumber	3.00	2.00
tblTripsAndVMT	WorkerTripNumber	294.00	12.00
tblTripsAndVMT	WorkerTripNumber	8.00	6.00
tblVehicleTrips	ST_TR	22.75	0.00
tblVehicleTrips	SU_TR	16.74	0.00
tblVehicleTrips	WD_TR	1.89	0.00
tblWater	OutdoorWaterUseRate	19,063,701.59	0.00

2.0 Emissions Summary

2.1 Overall Construction

Unmitigated Construction

	ROG	NOx	CO	SO2	Fugitive PM10	Exhaust PM10	PM10 Total	Fugitive PM2.5	Exhaust PM2.5	PM2.5 Total	Bio- CO2	NBio- CO2	Total CO2	CH4	N2O	CO2e
Year	tons/yr										MT/yr					
2019	0.1411	1.4982	0.9754	1.9000e-003	2.4363	0.0693	2.5056	0.2456	0.0638	0.3094	0.0000	171.2308	171.2308	0.0500	0.0000	172.4797
Maximum	**0.1411**	**1.4982**	**0.9754**	**1.9000e-003**	**2.4363**	**0.0693**	**2.5056**	**0.2456**	**0.0638**	**0.3094**	**0.0000**	**171.2308**	**171.2308**	**0.0500**	**0.0000**	**172.4797**

Mitigated Construction

	ROG	NOx	CO	SO2	Fugitive PM10	Exhaust PM10	PM10 Total	Fugitive PM2.5	Exhaust PM2.5	PM2.5 Total	Bio- CO2	NBio- CO2	Total CO2	CH4	N2O	CO2e
Year	tons/yr										MT/yr					
2019	0.1411	1.4982	0.9754	1.9000e-003	1.4901	0.0693	1.5594	0.1508	0.0638	0.2146	0.0000	171.2307	171.2307	0.0500	0.0000	172.4795
Maximum	**0.1411**	**1.4982**	**0.9754**	**1.9000e-003**	**1.4901**	**0.0693**	**1.5594**	**0.1508**	**0.0638**	**0.2146**	**0.0000**	**171.2307**	**171.2307**	**0.0500**	**0.0000**	**172.4795**

	ROG	NOx	CO	SO2	Fugitive PM10	Exhaust PM10	PM10 Total	Fugitive PM2.5	Exhaust PM2.5	PM2.5 Total	Bio- CO2	NBio-CO2	Total CO2	CH4	N20	CO2e
Percent Reduction	**0.00**	**0.00**	**0.00**	**0.00**	**38.84**	**0.00**	**37.76**	**38.60**	**0.00**	**30.64**	**0.00**	**0.00**	**0.00**	**0.00**	**0.00**	**0.00**