

**SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA**



ITEM: 3.19
(ID # 18032)

MEETING DATE:
Tuesday, February 01, 2022

FROM : TLMA-TRANSPORTATION:

SUBJECT: TRANSPORTATION AND LAND MANAGEMENT AGENCY/TRANSPORTATION:
Adopt the Final Initial Study with Mitigated Negative Declaration and Approve the Thousand Palms Canyon Road Resurfacing Project; Approval of the Plans and Specifications and Authorization to Advertise for Bid for the Thousand Palms Canyon Road Resurfacing Project; District 4. [\$3,686,700 Total Cost - Local Funds 100%] (Clerk to Advertise)

RECOMMENDED MOTION: That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Adopt the Final Initial Study with Mitigation Negative Declaration for the Thousand Palms Canyon Road Resurfacing Project and adopt the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program for the project, based on the findings in the Initial Study and the conclusion that the project will not have a significant effect on the environment;
2. Approve the Thousand Palms Canyon Road Resurfacing Project;
3. Approve the plans and specifications for the construction of the Thousand Palms Canyon Road Resurfacing Project, in the Community of Thousand Palms;
4. Authorize the Clerk of the Board to advertise for bids to be received by the office of the Director of Transportation and Land Management at the Transportation Annex located at 3525 14th Street, Riverside, California 92501. All bids must be received up to the hour of 2:00 p.m., Wednesday, February 23, 2022 at which time bids will be opened; and
5. Direct the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors to file the Notice of Determination with the County Clerk for posting within five (5) working days.

ACTION:Policy, Clerk to Advertise


Mark Lancaster, Director of Transportation 1/11/2022

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

On motion of Supervisor Washington seconded by Supervisor Hewitt and duly carried, IT WAS ORDERED that the above matter is approved as recommended.

Ayes: Jeffries, Spiegel, Washington, and Hewitt
Nays: None
Absent: Perez
Date: February 1, 2022
xc: TLMA-Trans., COB, Recorder

Kecia R. Harper
Clerk of the Board

By: 
Deputy

**SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE,
STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

FINANCIAL DATA	Current Fiscal Year:	Next Fiscal Year:	Total Cost:	Ongoing Cost
COST	\$ 2,686,700	\$ 1,000,000	\$ 3,686,700	\$ 0
NET COUNTY COST	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
SOURCE OF FUNDS: Gas Tax/SB-1 (100%) There are no General Funds used in this project.			Budget Adjustment: No	
			For Fiscal Year: 21/22, 22/23	

C.E.O. RECOMMENDATION: Approve

BACKGROUND:

Summary

The County of Riverside Transportation Department is proposing to resurface approximately 4.2 miles of Thousand Palms Canyon Road from Ramon Road / Washington Street to Dillon Road in the Community of Thousand Palms of Riverside County.

Thousand Palms Canyon Road is classified as a collector road in the County of Riverside General Plan. Thousand Palms Canyon Road is a two-lane road that travels in the north-south directions and its existing pavement width is approximately 22-feet wide with 11-foot through lanes and a 1-foot paved shoulder.

The project scope includes pavement widening and resurfacing. Roadway resurfacing is needed due to the deteriorated pavement conditions. Mainly, the Thousand Palms Canyon Road Resurfacing Project will consist of grinding existing asphalt concrete in place (pulverize), mixing and compacting grindings with native soil, and overlaying the new base with new asphalt concrete.

The new pavement width will be 34 feet wide, with two 12-foot through lanes and 5-foot paved shoulders for bicycle use. The new width of the paved shoulders meets and exceed requirements for bicyclists.

A half-mile segment of Thousand Palms Canyon Road adjacent to the Coachella Valley Preserve will be widened by saw-cutting and removing existing pavement and sliver-paving a new section of asphalt on each side. A new right-turn pocket lane will be constructed at the Coachella Valley Preserve entrance, for traffic traveling southbound.

A new left-turn pocket and driveway will be constructed approximately one half-mile north of the Coachella Valley Preserve. Pavement width in the left-turn area will be 40 feet with two 10-foot through lanes, a 10-foot left-turn lane, and 5-foot paved shoulders.

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Additional improvements include constructing safety edge pavement end condition and shoulder backing to protect the outside edge of pavement, installing rumble strips to help alert drivers who may stray from the travel lanes, installing and removing roadside signs, placing of thermoplastic traffic striping, thermoplastic pavement markings, reflective markers, and other associated work.

On April 28, 2017, Senate Bill 1 (SB-1) was passed to improve the state's aging transportation infrastructure, particularly roads and bridges. Because of this, the County is now able to improve the condition of roads in need of resurfacing or reconstruction and has included them in the County Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Thousand Palms Canyon Road resurfacing project is one of Riverside County's priority projects approved for use of the new Gas Tax/SB-1 funds. Without SB-1 this needed road repair project would have been shelved until funding became available.

The submitted plans and specifications have been approved as to form by County Counsel.

The bid documents include the following bid schedule of work:

Base Bid Schedule: Thousand Palms Canyon Road Resurfacing

The Transportation Department will select the contractor based upon the lowest responsive and responsible bid for the sum of all bid schedules.

Project No. A7-0394

Environmental Findings

The preparation of the environmental documentation for this project is consistent with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The Transportation Department, as the CEQA Lead Agency, prepared an Initial Study (IS) with proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) to analyze the proposed Project's impacts to the environment.

The Draft IS/MND was circulated for a 30-day public review period from May 18, 2021 to June 21, 2021 and a virtual public meeting was held on June 10, 2021. Responses to public comments received have been incorporated into the Final IS/MND. Based on the study's findings, the Transportation Department has determined that the proposed Project will not have a significant effect on the environment because potential effects would be mitigated to a less than significant level through the incorporation of mitigation measures.

The adoption of the Final Initial Study with Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) and the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan (MMRP) will complete the CEQA environmental documentation for the project.

Impact on Citizens and Businesses

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The purpose of this project is to replace existing deteriorated pavement with new hot mix asphalt for the approximate 4.2 miles of Thousand Palms Canyon Road to provide the public with a smooth paved roadway that will improve the safety and efficiency of vehicular traffic.

The work is scheduled to begin spring 2022. The work will be phased to keep the road open during construction as much as possible and will take approximately three and a half months to complete.

SUPPLEMENTAL:

Additional Fiscal Information

The construction contract is estimated to cost approximately \$3,686,700. The County improvements will be funded with Gas Tax/SB-1 Funds.

There are no General Funds used in this project.

Contract History and Price Reasonableness

N/A

ATTACHMENTS:

Vicinity Map

Notice to Bidders

Notice of Determination – Thousand Palms Canyon Road Resurfacing Project

Final Initial Study / Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND)

Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan (MMRP)

Journal Voucher for California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) and County Clerk Fee

Specifications and Contract Documents Cover Page



Jason Farin, Principal Management Analyst 1/24/2022



Gregory V. Priamos, Director County Counsel 1/20/2022

Boydd, April

From: cob@rivco.org
Sent: Tuesday, February 1, 2022 3:26 AM
To: COB; ba4612442@gmail.com
Subject: Board comments web submission

CAUTION: This email originated externally from the **Riverside County** email system. **DO NOT** click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.



First Name: B
Last Name: Anderson
Address (Street, City and Zip): Rancho Mirage
Phone: 7603249637
Email: ba4612442@gmail.com
Agenda Date: 02/01/2022
Agenda Item # or Public Comment: 3.19
State your position below: Support
Comments: Consider the impacts on the environment and local residents when considering work contracts (Bids) for this Road project (local companies and travel times to locations)

Thank you for submitting your request to speak. The Clerk of the Board office has received your request and will be prepared to allow you to speak when your item is called. To attend the meeting, please call (669) 900-6833 and use Meeting ID # 864 4411 6015 . Password is 20220201 . You will be muted until your item is pulled and your name is called. Please dial in at 9:00 am am with the phone number you provided in the form so you can be identified during the meeting.

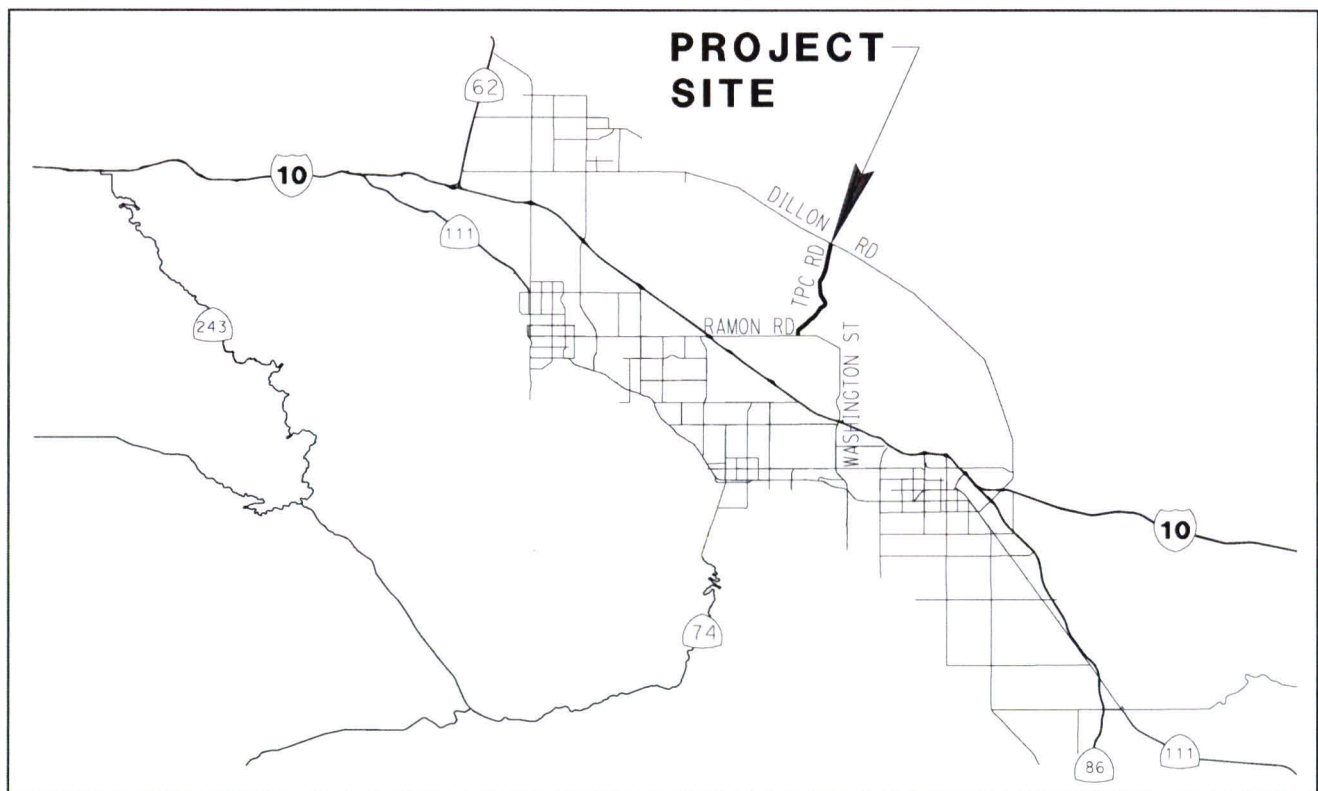
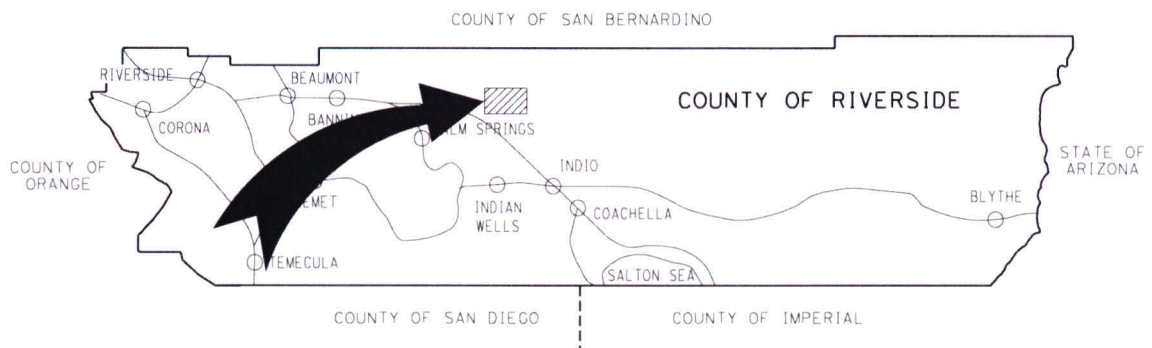
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE
TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT

**THOUSAND PALMS CANYON ROAD
RESURFACING PROJECT**

RAMON ROAD/ WASHINGTON STREET TO DILLON ROAD

COMMUNITY OF THOUSAND PALMS

PROJECT No. A7-0394



VICINITY MAP

FINAL
**INITIAL STUDY/MITIGATED NEGATIVE
DECLARATION**

**THOUSAND PALMS CANYON ROAD WIDENING PROJECT
RIVERSIDE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA**



Prepared for:

County of Riverside
3525 14th Street
Riverside California 92501

Prepared by:

LSA Associates, Inc.
3111 East Tahquitz Canyon Way, Suite 109
Palm Springs, California 92262
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Riverside County Project: WO No. A7-0394

LSA

October 2021

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Final Initial Study with Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration Project Information

Project Proponent:	Riverside County Transportation Department 3525 14 th Street Riverside, California 2501
Project Title:	Thousand Palms Canyon Road Widening Project
Project Location:	This project is located along Thousand Palms Canyon Road from Ramon Road/Washington Street heading north to Dillon Road, totaling approximately 4.71 miles. This project is just to the east of the unincorporated community of Thousand Palms in Riverside County, California.
Project Description:	<p>Thousand Palms Canyon Road is a north-south two-lane collector. Existing pavement width is approximately 22 feet wide with 11-foot through lanes and a 1-foot paved shoulder. A graded dirt shoulder of varying width bounded by dirt berms is located along both sides of the road. There is a half-mile segment of Thousand Palms Canyon Road adjacent to the Coachella Valley Preserve (Preserve) that is 32 feet wide, with 12-foot through lanes and 4-foot paved shoulders, with graded shoulders bounded by dirt berms. The entire area in the immediate vicinity is undeveloped.</p> <p>Most portions of Thousand Palms Canyon Road will be resurfaced by grinding existing pavement, mixing and compacting grindings with native soil, and overlaying the new base with new asphalt concrete. The new pavement width will be 34 feet wide, with two 12-foot through lanes and 5-foot paved shoulders. The half-mile segment of Thousand Palms Canyon Road adjacent to the Preserve will be widened by saw-cutting and removing existing pavement and sliver-paving a new section of asphalt feet on each side. A new right-turn pocket will be constructed at the Preserve entrance. A new left-turn pocket and driveway will be constructed approximately one half-mile north of the Preserve. Pavement width in the left-turn area will be 40 feet with two 10-foot through lanes, a 10-foot left-turn lane, and 5-foot paved shoulders.</p>
Findings:	Pursuant to the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the County of Riverside has determined that the proposed project would not have a significant effect of the environment. Following an Initial Study and assessment of possible adverse impacts, the proposed project was determined not to have a significant impact on the environment with the inclusion of mitigation measures, which reduces potential adverse impacts to less than significant levels. Therefore, the County of Riverside has prepared a Mitigated Negative Declaration with mitigation measures in accordance with the provisions of CEQA.
Mitigation Measures:	Refer to the Appendix A, the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan Checklist, of this Initial Study.

A copy of the Initial Study can be found at <https://rcprojects.org/thousand-palms>.

Mr. Mohamed Eissa, Associate Transportation Planner
Riverside County Transportation Department
3525 14th Street
Riverside, California 92501
Office: (951) 955-1506
MEissa@rivco.org

Signature:  Date: 10.5.2021
Mary Zambon
Environmental Project Manager, Environmental Compliance
Riverside County Transportation Department



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- A: MITIGATION MONITORING AND REPORTING PLAN CHECKLIST
- B: RESPONSES TO COMMENTS
- C: ERRATA SHEET

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AB	Assembly Bill
AQ	Air Quality
AQMP	Air Quality Management Plan
ARB	(California) Air Resources Board
ASR	Antenna Structure Registration
Basin	Salton Sea Air Basin
BMP	Best Management Practice
BSA	Biological Study Area
CAAQS	California Ambient Air Quality Standards
CalARP Program	California Accidental Release Prevention Program
CalEMA	California Emergency Management Agency
CalEPA	California Environmental Protection Agency
CAL FIRE	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
Caltrans	California Department of Transportation
CAP	Climate Action Plan
CAPCOA	California Air Pollution Control Officers Association
CBC	California Building Code
CBSC	California Building Standards Commission
CCAA	California Clean Air Act
CCR	California Code of Regulations
CDFW	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CERCLA	Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CGS	California Geological Survey
CH ₄	Methane
CHRIS	California Historical Resources Information System
CO	carbon monoxide
CO ₂	carbon dioxide

CO ₂ e	carbon dioxide equivalent
County	County of Riverside
CRA	Cultural Resources Assessment
CRHR	California Register of Historical Resources
CRMP	Cultural Resources Monitoring Plan
CVCC	Coachella Valley Conservation Commission
CVFTL	Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard
CVMSHCP	Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan
CVMV	Coachella Valley milkvetch
CWA	(Federal) Clean Water Act
dBA	A-weighted decibels
DOC	(California) Department of Conservation
DPR	Department of Parks and Recreation
DTSC	California Department of Toxic Substances and Control
EIC	Eastern Information Center
EIR	Environmental Impact Report
EO	Executive Order
ESA	Environmentally Sensitive Area
FAA	Federal Aviation Administration
FCAA	Federal Clean Air Act
FCC	Federal Communications Commission
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FIRM	Flood Insurance Rate Map
FMMP	Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program
FRA	Federal Responsibility Area
GCC	global climate change
GHG	greenhouse gas
GSA	Groundwater Sustainability Agency
IS	Initial Study
L _{max}	maximum instantaneous noise level
LOS	Level of Service

LRA	Local Responsibility Area
MBTA	Migratory Bird Treaty Act
MLD	Most Likely Descendant
MND	Mitigated Negative Declaration
MRZ	Mineral Resource Zone
MS4	Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System
MT	metric ton(s)
ND	Negative Declaration
N ₂ O	nitrous oxide
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NAHC	Native American Heritage Commission
NO ₂	nitrogen dioxide
NOI	Notice of Intent
NO _x	nitrogen oxides
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
O ₃	Ozone
OPR	(California) Office of Planning and Research
PM ₁₀	particulate matter less than 10 microns in diameter
PM _{2.5}	particulate matter less than 2.5 microns in diameter
PMP	Paleontological Mitigation Plan
PPV	peak particle velocity
PRC	Public Resources Code
PRD	Permit Registration Document
Preserve	Coachella Valley Preserve
RCEM	Roadway Construction Emissions Model
RCRA	Resource Conservation and Recovery Act
RCTD	Riverside County Transportation Department
RMP	Risk Management Plan
RoadMod	Roadway Construction Emissions Model

ROW	right-of-way
RPS	Renewables Portfolio Standard
RTP/SCS	Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Community Strategy
RWQCB	Regional Water Quality Control Board
SB	Senate Bill
SCAG	Southern California Association of Governments
SCAQMD	South Coast Air Quality Management District
SGMA	Sustainable Groundwater Management Act
SHMA	Seismic Hazards Mapping Act
SIP	State Implementation Plan
SLF	Sacred Land File
SMARA	Surface Mining and Reclamation Act
SMARTS	Stormwater Multiple Application and Report Tracking System
SVP	Society of Vertebrate Paleontology
SWFL	Southwestern willow flycatcher
SWPPP	Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan
SWRCB	State Water Resources Control Board
TCR	Tribal Cultural Resource
TMDL	Total Maximum Daily Load
TMP	Traffic Management Plan
USACE	United States Army Corps of Engineers
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USEPA	United States Environmental Protection Agency
USFWS	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
USGS	United States Geological Survey
UWMP	Urban Water Management Plan
VHFHSZ	Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone
VMT	Vehicle Miles Traveled
VOC	Volatile Organic Compound
XPI	Extended Phase I

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This Initial Study (IS) has evaluated each of the issues contained in the checklist provided in Section 3.0 of this document. The objective of this environmental document is to inform the Riverside County (County) decision-makers, representatives of other affected/responsible agencies, and other interested parties of the potential environmental effects that may be associated with the Thousand Palms Canyon Road Project (project). This IS serves as the environmental review of the proposed project, as required pursuant to Section 15367 of the *State of California Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA Guidelines)*, the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA); Public Resources Code (PRC) 21000, et seq.; and the State and local CEQA guidelines. The County of Riverside is the Lead Agency under CEQA. This IS was prepared to identify whether the proposed project will result in significant environmental effects.

The Initial Study is organized as follows:

- Section 1.0 Introduction and Purpose* provides a discussion of the IS's purpose, focus, and legal requirements.
- Section 2.0 Project Description* provides a detailed description of the proposed project.
- Section 3.0 Environmental Checklist* includes a checklist and accompanying analyses of the project's effect on the environment. For each environmental issue, the analysis identifies the level of project's environmental impact.
- Section 4.0 References* details the references cited throughout the document.
- Appendix A Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan Checklist* for those measures applied to this project to mitigate or avoid adverse effects on the environment.

1.2 PURPOSE OF THE INITIAL STUDY

If an IS prepared for a proposed project determines that it may produce significant effects on the environment, an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) shall be prepared. This further environmental review is required to address the significant environmental effects of the project and provide mitigation where feasible.

Pursuant to the provisions of CEQA and the State and local CEQA guidelines, the County is the Lead Agency and is charged with the responsibility of deciding whether or not to approve the proposed project. CEQA requires that the proposed project be reviewed to determine the environmental effects that would result if the project is approved and implemented. The County of Riverside (Lead Agency) has the responsibility for preparing the associated environmental document prior to consideration of the approval of the proposed project. The County has the authority to make decisions regarding discretionary actions relating to implementation of the proposed project.

This IS has been prepared in accordance with the relevant provisions of CEQA (California Public Resources Code Section 21000 et seq.); the *CEQA Guidelines*,¹ and the rules, regulations, and procedures for implementing CEQA. The objective of the Initial Study is to inform County decision-makers, representatives of other affected/responsible agencies, the public, and interested parties of the potential environmental consequences of the project. Upon completion of the IS, it was determined that mitigation would reduce project environmental impacts to levels below significance thresholds; therefore, an Environmental Impact Report would not be required and a Mitigated Negative Declaration would be the appropriate level of CEQA document.

As established in *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15063(c), the purposes of an IS are to:

- Provide the Lead Agency (County) with information to use as the basis for deciding whether to prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR), Negative Declaration (ND), or Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND);
- Enable an applicant or Lead Agency to modify a project, mitigating adverse impacts before an EIR is prepared, thereby enabling the project to qualify for an ND or MND;
- Assist in the preparation of an EIR, if one is required;
- Facilitate environmental assessment early in the design of a project;
- Provide a factual basis for finding in an ND or MND that a project will not have a significant effect on the environment;
- Eliminate unnecessary EIRs; and
- Determine whether a previously prepared EIR could be used with the project.

1.3 DETERMINATION

This Initial Study is based on an Environmental Checklist Form (Form), as suggested in Section 15063 (d) (3) of the *State CEQA Guidelines*. The Form is found in Section 3.1 of this IS. It contains a series of questions about the proposed project for each of the listed topic areas. The Form is used to evaluate whether or not there are any significant environmental effects associated with implementation of the proposed project.

Appendix A provides an explanation for each check mark on the Form. The Form and the accompanying evaluation of the responses provide the information and analysis upon which the County may make its determination as to whether or not an EIR may be required for the project.

An Initial Study has been prepared for this project; pending public review, the County expects to determine from this study that the proposed project would not have a significant effect on the environment for the following reasons:

1. The proposed project would have no impact on Aesthetics, Agricultural and Forestry Resources, Geology and Soils, Mineral Resources, Land Use and Planning, Population and Housing, and Recreation.

¹ California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3, Sections 15000 through 15387.

2. In addition, the proposed project would have less than significant impact on Air Quality, Energy, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Hydrology and Water Quality, Noise, Public Services, Transportation, Utilities and Service Systems, and Wildfire.
3. The proposed project would have less than significant impact with mitigation incorporated on Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Tribal Cultural Resources, and Mandatory Findings of Significance. Mitigation measures for impacts on these resource areas are as follows:

Biological Resources

- BIO-1: Pre-construction Le Conte's Thrasher Survey.** In order to avoid impacts to the Le Conte's thrasher, per the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP) during the nesting season (January 15 through August 31), prior to the start of construction activities, surveys shall be conducted by an acceptable biologist on the construction site and within 500 feet of the construction site, or to the property boundary if less than 500 feet. If nesting Le Conte's thrashers are found, a 500-foot Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA), or to the property boundary if less than 500 feet, shall be established around the nest site. The ESA shall be staked and flagged. No construction shall be permitted within the ESA during the breeding season of January 15 through August 31 or until the young have fledged.
- BIO-2: Pre-construction Burrowing Owl Survey.** A pre-construction burrowing owl survey would be conducted in all areas of suitable habitat within project limit using an accepted protocol. Prior to construction, a qualified biologist shall survey the construction area including a 500-foot buffer, or to the edge of the property if less than 500 feet, for burrows that could be used by burrowing owl. If a burrow is located, the biologist shall determine whether an owl is present in the burrow. If the burrow is determined to be occupied, the burrow shall be flagged and a 160-foot buffer during the non-breeding season or a 250-foot buffer during the breeding season or a buffer to the edge of the property boundary if less than 500 feet shall be established around the burrow. The buffer area shall be staked and flagged. No development activities shall be permitted within the buffer until the young are no longer dependent on the burrow.
- BIO-3:** Prior to commencement of construction activities for permanent impacts in jurisdictional features, the project shall obtain authorizations from the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) pursuant to *Procedures for Discharge for Discharges of Dredged or Fill Material to Waters of the State or State Water Resources Control Board Water Quality Order No. 2004-0004-DWQ* and from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) pursuant to Section 1602 of the California Fish and Game Code have been obtained.

The type, amount, and location of any required mitigation (including payment of fees or purchase of credits) shall be established by each regulatory agency during the review of any required authorization. As determined appropriate by each agency, the following shall be incorporated into required permit(s):

1. Off-site replacement and/or restoration of RWQCB jurisdictional "waters of the State" within the Colorado River Watershed at a ratio no less than 2:1 or within an adjacent watershed at a ratio no less than 2:1 for permanent impacts, and for any

temporary impacts to restore the impact area to pre-project conditions (i.e., pre-project contours and revegetate where applicable). Off-site mitigation may occur on land acquired for the purpose of in-perpetuity preservation, or through the purchase of mitigation credits at an agency-approved off-site mitigation bank.

2. Off-site replacement and/or restoration of CDFW jurisdictional streambed and associated riparian habitat within the Colorado River Watershed at a ratio no less than 2:1 or within an adjacent watershed at a ratio no less than 2:1 for permanent impacts, and for any temporary impacts to restore the impact area to pre-project conditions (i.e., pre-project contours and revegetate where applicable). Off-site mitigation may occur on land acquired for the purpose of in-perpetuity preservation, or through the purchase of mitigation credits at an agency-approved off-site mitigation bank.

BIO-4: Worker Environmental Awareness Program. A Worker Environmental Awareness Program (WEAP) shall be implemented for work crews by a qualified biologist(s) prior to the commencement of construction activities and prior to site access by workers. Training materials and briefings shall include but not be limited to, discussion of the Federal and California Endangered Species Acts, the CVMSHCP, the consequences of noncompliance with project permitting requirements, identification and values of special-status plant and wildlife species and sensitive natural plant community habitats, fire protection measures, and hazardous substance spill prevention and containment measures.

Cultural Resources

CUL-1: Cultural Resources Monitoring Plan. The Project Archaeologist, in consultation with the Monitoring Tribe(s), and the County shall develop a Cultural Resources Monitoring Plan (CRMP) to address the details, timing, and responsibility of all archaeological and cultural activities that will occur on the project site. Details in the CRMP shall include:

- Project grading and development scheduling.
- The coordination of a monitoring schedule as agreed upon by the Monitoring Tribe(s), the Project Archaeologist, and the County.
- The protocols and stipulations that the County, Monitoring Tribe(s), and Project Archaeologist shall follow in the event of inadvertent cultural resources discoveries, including any newly discovered cultural resources. They have the authority to stop all work within 60 feet of the find.

CUL-2: Train Construction Personnel. Prior to any grading, excavation, and/or other ground-disturbing activities on the project site, the Project Archaeologist and the Monitoring Tribe(s) shall conduct cultural resources sensitivity training for all construction personnel. Construction personnel shall be informed of the types of archaeological resources that may be encountered and of the proper procedures to be enacted in the event of an inadvertent discovery of archaeological resources or human remains. The County's construction manager shall ensure that construction personnel are made

available for and attend the training, and shall retain documentation demonstrating attendance.

CUL-3: Monitoring. All artifacts/cultural material discovered at the project site shall be inventoried and analyzed by the Project Archaeologist and Native American tribal monitor(s). If any cultural materials of Native American origin are discovered, all activities in the immediate vicinity of the find (within a 60-foot radius) shall stop. The Project Archaeologist and Native American tribal monitor(s) shall analyze the Native American cultural materials for identification as everyday life and/or religious or sacred items, cultural affiliation, temporal placement, and function, as deemed possible. The significance of Native American resources shall be evaluated in accordance with the provisions of CEQA and shall consider the religious beliefs, customs, and practices of the tribe(s). All items found in association with Native American human remains shall be considered grave goods or sacred in origin and subject to special handling.

CUL-4: Inadvertent Discoveries. In the event that Native American cultural resources are inadvertently discovered during the course of grading for this project, the following procedures shall be carried out for the treatment and disposition of the discoveries:

- **Curation:** The County shall relinquish ownership of all cultural resources. Native American cultural materials that cannot be avoided or relocated at the project site shall be prepared for curation. The Project Archaeologist, following consultation with the Monitoring Tribe(s), shall deliver the materials to a qualified repository in Riverside County that meets or exceeds federal standards per Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Title 36, Part 79, and that shall be made available to all qualified researchers and tribal representatives.
- **Temporary On-Site Curation and Storage:** During the course of construction, all discovered resources shall be secured on site in the mobile office. The removal of any cultural materials from the project site will need to be thoroughly inventoried, with Native American Tribal Monitor oversight of the process.
- **Treatment and Final Disposition:** The County shall relinquish ownership of all cultural resources, including sacred items, burial goods, and all cultural materials and nonhuman remains, as part of the required mitigation for impacts to cultural resources within the County right-of-way. The County shall relinquish the cultural materials through the following methods and provide the cultural materials to the Consulting Tribe(s):
 - For on-site reburial of the discovered items, this shall include measures and provisions to protect the future reburial area from any future impacts. Reburial shall not occur until all cataloguing and basic recordation have been completed.

CUL-5: Reporting. The Project Archaeologist shall prepare a final archaeological report within 60 days of project completion. The report shall follow CRMP Guidelines and County requirements and shall include at a minimum: a discussion of monitoring methods and techniques used; the results of the monitoring program, including any cultural materials recovered; an inventory of any resources recovered; updated State Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) forms, if any, and any other site(s) identified; final disposition of

the resources; and any additional recommendations. A final copy shall be submitted to the County, the Eastern Information Center, and the Monitoring Tribe(s).

CUL-6: Discovery of Human Remains. In the event human remains are encountered, State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 states that no further disturbance shall occur and halt all work within 60 feet until the County Coroner has made a determination of origin and disposition pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 5097.98. The County Coroner must be notified of the find immediately. If the remains are determined to be Native American, the County Coroner will notify the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC), which will determine and notify a Most Likely Descendant (MLD). The archaeologist who discovered the remains will contact the County so that they may work with the MLD to inspect the site of the discovery. The MLD shall complete the inspection within 48 hours of notification by the NAHC. The MLD will have the opportunity to offer recommendations for the disposition of the remains.

Tribal Cultural Resources

TCR-1: Tribal Monitoring. At least 30 days prior to the commencement of ground-disturbing activity, a Riverside County consultant shall provide a Native American Monitoring Agreement with the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians to the County for review and approval.

TCR-2: Treatment and Final Disposition of Cultural Resources. Any archaeological resource unearthed during construction activities shall be evaluated by the Qualified Archaeologist and Native American Monitor(s). If the resource is determined to be Native American in origin, any such resource (including sacred items, burial goods, and all archaeological artifacts and non-human remains) shall be addressed through one or more of the following methods:

- Preservation in place by accommodating on-site reburial of the discovered items with the consulting Native American tribe(s). This shall include measures and provisions to protect the future reburial area from any future impacts. Reburial shall not occur until all cataloging and recordation efforts have been completed.
- A curation agreement with an appropriate qualified repository within Riverside County that meets federal standards per 36 CFR Part 79. The collections and associated records shall be transferred, including title, to an appropriate curation facility within Riverside County, to be accompanied by payment of the fees necessary for permanent curation.
- If more than one Native American Tribe or band is involved with the project, consensus needs to be reached amongst all Tribes involved regarding the repository. If consensus cannot be reached, the County of Riverside will select an appropriate qualified repository within Riverside County that meets federal standards per 36 CFR 79.

TCR-3: Discovery of Human Remains. In the event that human remains (or remains that may be human) are discovered within the construction areas, all activity within 60 feet of the find shall be immediately halted. Any discovery of human remains shall be immediately

reported by the Qualified Archaeologist and Native American monitor(s) to the County Coroner. If the human remains are determined to be Native American, the County Coroner shall notify the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC), who shall appoint a Most Likely Descendant (MLD) in accordance with California Public Resources Code 5097.98.

The discovery of any Native American human remains and/or funerary objects shall be kept confidential and secure to prevent any further disturbance. In the case where discovered human remains cannot be fully documented and recovered on the same day, the remains and associated funerary objects, sacred objects and/or objects of cultural patrimony shall be covered with an opaque material or placed in opaque cloth bags. A physical barrier (e.g., metal plate, concrete slab that can be moved by heavy equipment) shall be placed over the excavation opening to protect the remains until examination by the MLD can occur. If this type of protective barrier is not available, a 24-hour guard shall be posted outside of working hours.

The MLD shall complete his or her inspection and make recommendations or preferences for treatment within 48 hours of being granted access to the site. The MLD shall identify and direct the most appropriate means of treating the human remains and any associated funerary object(s). As determined through consultation with the County, the MLD shall make recommendations that allow the burial to remain in situ and protected.

Once complete, a final report of all activities associated with or resulting from the discovery of human remains shall be submitted to the NAHC.

1.4 PUBLIC REVIEW OF THE INITIAL STUDY

The Lead Agency for the IS for the proposed project is the County. Any questions about the preparation of this IS, its assumptions, or its conclusions should be referred to the following:

Mr. Mohamed Eissa, Associate Transportation Planner
Riverside County Transportation Department
3525 14th Street
Riverside, California 92501
Office: (951) 955-1506
MEissa@rivco.org

A 30-day public circulation period will begin Tuesday, May 18, 2021, and ends Monday, June 21, 2021. A virtual public meeting for this project will be held on Thursday, June 10, 2021, from 5:00 p.m. until 7 p.m. Written comments relating to this IS should be addressed to Mr. Mohamed Eissa at the email address shown above.

An electronic copy of the Initial Study and its appendix may also be viewed online at the following site: <https://rcprojects.org/thousand-palms>.

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2.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

2.1 PROJECT LOCATION

The Riverside County Transportation Department (RCTD) proposes to widen and resurface Thousand Palms Canyon Road from Ramon Road/Washington Street to Dillon Road, totaling approximately 4.71 miles. This project is just to the east of the unincorporated community of Thousand Palms in Riverside County, California.

Located 10 miles east of Palm Springs and north of Interstate 10, the Coachella Valley Nature Preserve (Preserve) encompasses approximately 20,000 acres. It contains the last undisturbed watershed in the Coachella Valley and the sources of water-carried and windborne sand. The Coachella Valley Nature Preserve (Figure 1) is adjacent to the project and the project is within the Thousand Palms and Indio Hills/Joshua Tree National Park Linkage Conservation area. The Preserve is a model of cooperation among federal, State, and private conservation efforts for managing sensitive natural areas. It consists of three separate preserves set aside for conservation in a landmark Habitat Conservation Plan signed in 1986. These are the Whitewater Floodplain Preserve, the Edom Hill/Willow Hole Preserve, and the Thousand Palms Preserve.

The project lies south of Dillon Road and north of Ramon Road as shown on the United States Geological Survey (USGS) *Myoma and East Deception Canyon, California* and *Whitewater, California* 7.5-minute topographic quadrangles in Sections 25 and 36 of Township 3 South, Range 6 East, and Sections 1, 12, 13, and 14 of Township 4 South, Range 6 East (Figure 2).

For thousands of years, particles of sand from the San Bernardino Mountains and Indio Hills washed into the Coachella Valley, forming a system of dunes. Today, these dunes are part of the Coachella Valley Nature Preserve (Preserve) and contain several palm oases, formed because San Andreas Fault lines allow water flowing underground to rise to the surface. The spectacular Thousand Palms Oasis includes a mile-long trail that winds past pools and native vegetation includes creosote bush, burrobush, smoke tree, and desert lavender, part of this area's unique habitat for wildlife.

The Preserve straddles the Indio Hills and the San Andreas Fault. The floor of the Preserve is composed of alluvial fans and isolated terraces of desert pavement dissected by wash areas in the north, along with extensive sand fields and dunes. The persistent northwesterly winds in the Coachella Valley move the finer particles and sands from the alluvial fans south of the Indio Hills into the ever-changing sand dunes.

2.2 PROJECT BACKGROUND

Thousand Palms Canyon Road is located just to the east of Thousand Palms and runs between Ramon Road/Washington Street on the south and Dillon Road to the north. There are no homes or businesses located on or near the road. This road is convenient and popular for those living in the Desert Hot Springs general area and traveling to and from the Palm Desert and the Thousand Palms area of Coachella Valley. Also, it is the only road with access to the Coachella Valley Nature Preserve.

This new RCTD project entails pavement widening and resurfacing of the entire existing road.

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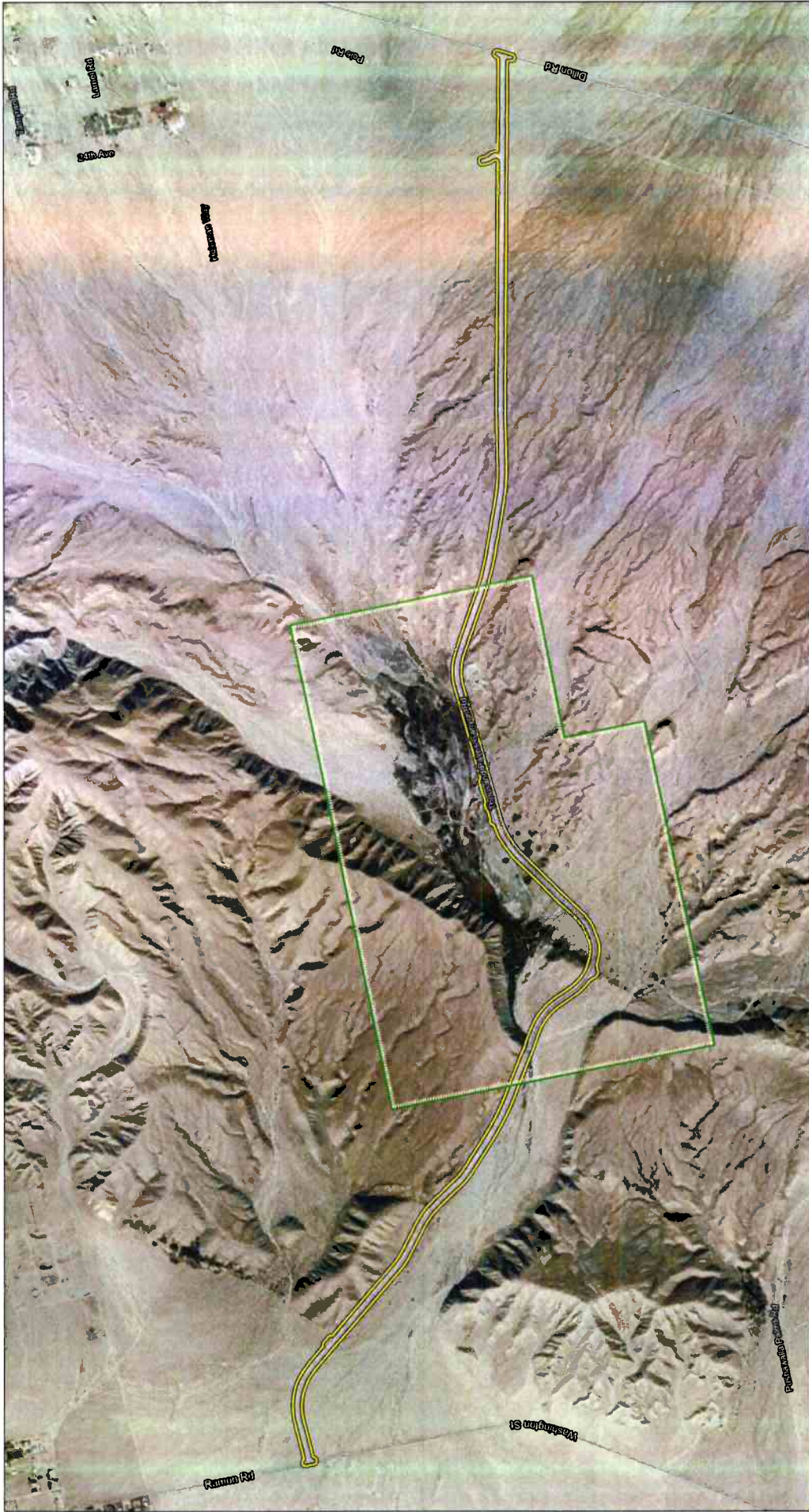


FIGURE 1

LSA

LEGEND

- Biological Study Area
- Coachella Valley Preserve



SOURCE: Google Earth (2018), California Protected Areas Database (CPAD)
 (MCT1580107653\MXD\CoachellaValleyPreserve.mxd 9/4/2020)

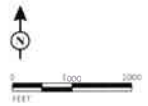
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FIGURE 2

LSA

LEGEND
 Project Location



SOURCE: USGS 7.5' Quad - East Deception Canyon (1988) and Mojave (1978), CA
 I:\RC\11902_07\GIS\MXD\RegionalProjectLocation_USGS.mxd (2/25/2020)

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2.3 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The RCTD proposes to widen and resurface Thousand Palms Canyon Road, between Ramon Road/ Washington Street and Dillon Road, in the Thousand Palms area of Riverside County. Thousand Palms Canyon Road is a 2-lane north-south collector and is approximately 4.71 miles long.

Existing pavement width of the roadway is approximately 22 feet wide with 11-foot through lanes and a 1-foot paved shoulder. There is graded dirt shoulder of varying width along both sides of the road bounded by dirt berms. There is a half-mile segment of Thousand Palms Canyon Road adjacent to the Coachella Valley Nature Preserve that is 32 feet wide, with 12-foot through lanes and 4-foot paved shoulders, with graded shoulders bounded by dirt berms. The area in the immediate vicinity of the roadway is undeveloped.

The project scope includes pavement widening and resurfacing, constructing turn pockets, constructing Safety Edge pavement end condition, installing rumble strips, widening paved shoulders, grading dirt shoulders, grading dirt berms, installing and removing signs, applying traffic striping and thermoplastic pavement markings, and adding a Class II bike lane.²

Most portions of Thousand Palms Canyon Road will be resurfaced by grinding existing pavement to a depth of 0.6 foot, mixing and compacting grindings with native soil, and overlaying the new base with 0.4 foot of new asphalt concrete. The new pavement width will be 34 feet wide, with two 12-foot through lanes and 5-foot paved shoulders. The half-mile segment of Thousand Palms Canyon Road adjacent to the Preserve will be widened by saw-cutting and removing existing pavement to a depth of 0.4 foot and sliver-paving a new 0.4-foot deep section of asphalt by 2 feet on each side. A new right-turn pocket will be constructed at the Preserve entrance. A new left-turn pocket and driveway for McCallum Grove will be constructed approximately one half-mile north of the Preserve. Pavement width in the left-turn area will be 40 feet with two 10-foot through lanes, a 10-foot left-turn lane, and 5-foot paved shoulders. Maximum depth of disturbance for road construction activities is 0.6 foot. For sign removal and installation, depth of disturbance will be 2.5 feet. For potholing of utilities, maximum depth of disturbance will be 3 feet.

2.4 REQUIRED PERMITS AND APPROVALS

Permits, approvals or agreements from the agencies and organizations listed in Table A would be required prior to the commencement of project activities:

Table A: Required Permits and Approvals

Agency	Permit/Action
Colorado River Basin Regional Water Quality Control Board	Enrollment in State Board General Order 2004-0004-DWQ to regulate the discharge of fill to waters of the State under Porter-Cologne
California Department of Fish and Wildlife	California Fish and Game Code Section 1602 Streambed Alteration Agreement
State Water Resources Control Board	Notice of Intent to Comply with General Construction Activity National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit

² A Class II Bike Lane is defined as a portion of the roadway or highway that has been designated by striping, signage, and pavement markings for the preference or exclusive use of bicyclists.

2.5 DOCUMENTS INCORPORATED BY REFERENCE

Various technical reports have been prepared to assess specific issues that may result from the construction and operation of the proposed project. As relevant, information from these technical reports has been incorporated into the IS. The following technical reports were used in preparing this IS:

- *Biological Resources Assessment and Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan Consistency Analysis, Thousand Palms Canyon Road Widening Project, Riverside, California* (April 2020).
- *Jurisdictional Delineation Report, Thousand Palms Canyon Road Widening Project, Riverside County, California* (February 2020).

3.0 ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

3.1 ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST FORM

Project Title: Thousand Palms Canyon Road Widening Project

Lead Agency: County of Riverside
Name and Address: 3525 14th Street
Riverside, California 92501

Contact Person: Mohamed Eissa
Phone Number: (951) 955-1506
Email Address: MEissa@rivco.org

Project Location: Riverside County, just to the east of Thousand Palms, California

Project Sponsor's Name: County of Riverside
Address: 3525 14th Street
Riverside, California 92501

General Plan Designation: Surrounding land use consists of mostly of vacant, open space. The General Plan land use is (OD-CH) Open Space-Conservation Habitat (i.e., the Coachella Valley Nature Preserve). The northern portion of the project, adjacent to Dillion Road is (OS-RUR) Open Space-Rural.

Zoning: Most of the surrounding area is under Conservation Habitat or (N-A) Natural Assets. The remaining area is Zoned (R-A-1 ¼) Single Family Dwellings.

Description of Project: The Riverside County Transportation Department proposes to widen and resurface Thousand Palms Canyon Road (approximately 4.71 miles) between Ramon Road/Washington Street and Dillon Road near the community of Thousand Palms, California. In addition, bike lanes will be added to the road during the reconstruction effort.

Surrounding Land Uses and Setting: The proposed project is located in an area clear of any existing residential, commercial, or agricultural land uses. It is surrounded by vacant land. The roadway traverses the Coachella Valley Nature Preserve located approximately in the middle of the project.

Other Public Agencies Whose Approval Is Required: Refer to Table A in Section 2.5

Have California Native American tribes traditionally and culturally affiliated with the project area requested consultation pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21080.3.1? If so, has consultation begun?

Yes. Refer to Checklist Section 3.1.7.

Note: Conducting consultation early in the CEQA process allows tribal governments, lead agencies, and project proponents to discuss the level of environmental review, identify and address potential adverse impacts to tribal cultural resources, and reduce the potential for delay and conflict in the environmental review process. (Refer to Public Resources Code Section 21083.3.2.) Information may also be available from the California Native American Heritage Commission's Sacred Lands File per Public Resources Code Section 5097.96 and the California Historical Resources Information System administered by the California Office of Historic Preservation. Please also note that Public Resources Code Section 21082.3(c) contains provisions specific to confidentiality.

3.2 ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, with Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated, as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

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

3.3 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
Mary Zambon
Environmental Project Manager, Environmental Compliance
Riverside County Transportation Department

Date

3.4 EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

1. A brief explanation is required for all answers except “No Impact” answers that are adequately supported by the information sources a Lead Agency cites in the parentheses following each question. A “No Impact” answer is adequately supported if the referenced information sources show that the impact simply does not apply to projects like the one involved (e.g., the project falls outside a fault rupture zone). A “No Impact” answer should be explained where it is based on project-specific factors as well as general standards (e.g., the project will not expose sensitive receptors to pollutants, based on a project-specific screening analysis).
2. All answers must take account of the whole action involved, including off site as well as on site, cumulative as well as project-level, indirect and direct, and construction and operational impacts.
3. Once the Lead Agency has determined that a particular physical impact may occur, then the checklist answers must indicate whether the impact is potentially significant, less than significant with mitigation, or less than significant. “Potentially Significant Impact” is appropriate if there is substantial evidence that an effect may be significant. If there are one or more “Potentially Significant Impact” entries when the determination is made, an EIR is required.
4. “Negative Declaration: Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated” applies where the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from “Potentially Significant Impact” to a “Less Significant Impact.” The Lead Agency must describe the mitigation measures, and briefly explain how they reduce the effect to a less than significant level.
5. Earlier analysis may be used where, pursuant to the tiering, program EIR, or other CEQA process, an effect has been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or negative declaration. Section 15063 (c) (3) (d). In this case, a brief discussion should identify the following:
 - (a) Earlier Analysis Used. Identify and state where they are available for review.
 - (b) Impacts Adequately Addressed. Identify which effects from the above checklist were within the scope of and adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and state whether such effects were addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis.
 - (c) Mitigation Measures. For effects that are “Less than Significant with Mitigation Measures Incorporated,” describe the mitigation measures that were incorporated or refined from the earlier document and the extent to which they address site-specific conditions for the project.
6. Lead Agencies are encouraged to incorporate into the checklist references to information sources for potential impacts (e.g., general plans and zoning ordinances). Reference to a previously prepared or outside document should, where appropriate, include a reference to the page or pages where the statement is substantiated.
7. Supporting Information Sources: A source list should be attached, and other sources used or individuals contacted should be cited in the discussion.
8. The analysis of each issue should identify:
 - (a) The significance criteria or threshold used to evaluate each question; and
 - (b) The mitigation measure identified, if any, to reduce the impact to less than significance.

3.5 ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

This section is intended to provide evidence to substantiate the conclusions set forth in the Environmental Checklist. The section will discuss whether or not the proposed project would result in significant environmental impacts.

I. Aesthetics

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b. Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a State scenic highway	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c. Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from a publicly accessible vantage point) If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d. Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Source(s): Field visits; County of Riverside General Plan; County of Riverside, Transportation Department, Thousand Palms Canyon Road, Widening and Resurfacing Plans; Cultural Resource Assessment for the Riverside County Transportation Department’s Thousand Palms Canyon Road Widening and Resurfacing Project, Riverside County, California (March 2020); and California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), Officially Designated State Scenic Highways and Historic Parkways.

Regulatory Setting

State Scenic Highways Program

The Caltrans Landscape Architecture Program administers the Scenic Highway Program contained in the Streets and Highways Code, Sections 260–263. The purpose of the program is to protect and enhance the natural scenic beauty of California highways and adjacent corridors through special classifications. State Highways are classified as either Officially Listed or Eligible. A highway may be designated scenic based on the visibility of the natural landscape to travelers, the scenic quality of the landscape, and the extent to which development intrudes upon the traveler’s enjoyment of the view.

According to Caltrans’ California Scenic Highway Mapping System, there are no Officially Listed scenic highways in or around this location (<https://dot.ca.gov/programs/design/lap-landscape-architecture-and-community-livability/lap-liv-i-scenic-highways>).

Riverside County Scenic Corridors

The Riverside County General Plan addresses scenic corridors and highways. Riverside County contains abundant natural visual resources, including low-lying valleys, mountain ranges, rock formations, rivers, and lakes. These features are often enjoyed via Riverside County's many roadways. Due to the visual significance of many of these areas, several roadways have been officially recognized as either Eligible or Designated State or County Scenic Highways. These roadways are depicted in the Circulation Element as well as within each of the 19 area plans, where applicable. In this case, the County Eligible Scenic Corridors are shown in the Western Coachella Valley Area Plan.

Relevant Riverside County Policies

- LU 14.1 Preserve and protect outstanding scenic vistas and visual features for the enjoyment of the traveling public. (AI 32, 79)
- LU 14.2 Incorporate riding, hiking, and bicycle trails and other compatible public recreational facilities within scenic corridors. (AI 33, 41)

According to the Western Coachella Valley Area Plan, although Dillon Road at the northern terminus of the project is a County Eligible scenic corridor, Thousand Palms Canyon Road is not listed as such (https://planning.rctlma.org/Portals/14/genplan/2019/ap/WCVAP_121019.pdf).

Findings of Fact

For Questions a, b, c, and d: No Impact.

A scenic vista can be categorized as either containing a panoramic view or a focal view. Panoramic views are typically associated with publicly-accessible vantage points that provide a sweeping geographic orientation not commonly available (for example, skylines, valleys, mountain ranges, or large bodies of water). Focal views are typically associated with views of natural landforms, public art/signs, and visually important structures, such as historic buildings.

The project improvements will be constructed within the existing roadway right-of-way and on the same alignment as the existing roadway. The widening of the roadway would not result in additional lanes being added to the roadway. The roadway will remain two lanes. The project would result in a two-lane road (one lane in each direction with one left-turn pocket) with medians, a paved shoulder, and the addition of a Class II bike lane in each direction. The areas immediately surrounding the project site include vacant land with no private structures within approximately a mile in either direction. The Coachella Valley Nature Preserve located half way between Dillon Road and Ramon Road contains a parking area and hiking trails among the palms. In addition, just north of the Preserve Welcome Center are two buildings which are used as part of the Preserve.

The proposed project would include at-grade roadway improvements similar to existing conditions. Vertical elements such as utility poles and stop signs currently exist within the project area; therefore, the proposed project would not introduce new visual intrusions and does not contain elements that would result in obstruction of views to an extent that is any

greater in magnitude than the existing condition. The proposed project would not result in additional vertical visual elements that would affect views within the project area or a scenic vista. Therefore, no impact is related to this issue and no mitigation is proposed.

Per Caltrans,³ the project is not located on or near a designated or eligible scenic highway. Per the Riverside County General Plan, Thousand Palms Canyon Road is not a County Eligible Scenic Corridor.⁴

The Cultural Resources Assessment (CRA) identified five properties within the project area as being historic-period properties. However, these properties were determined to not be significant historic resources due to a variety of factors, including structural changes to historic-period properties, a lack of association with historical figures or events, or commonality of the architectural or artistic attributes associated with the properties. Regardless, there is no impact because there are no State scenic highways.

The project area is located in an area with views of the Little San Bernardino Mountains, Indio Hills and the Coachella Valley Preserve. The project improvements will take place entirely within the existing roadway right-of-way and on the same alignment as the existing roadway. The proposed project would not substantially degrade the existing visual character of the site as the project consists only of improvements and a slight widening of the pavement of an existing roadway.

Short-term, temporary visual impacts may occur during the construction phase of the project. Temporary construction impacts would include the presence of construction equipment and materials, temporary structures, contractor staging areas, dust, potential night lighting, hauling of materials, and detour signs. Construction impacts would cease following completion of the project and disturbed areas would be restored to their pre-disturbance condition; therefore, implementation of the project would not result in a permanent, long-term impact on the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings. Visual mitigation for the construction period would not be considered necessary due to the temporary nature of these impacts and limit in scale of the temporary impacts.

Implementation of the proposed project would result in the improvement and widening of an existing roadway. Traffic signs and light and glare from vehicles already exist within the project site. Signs used during the construction period would only be temporary. The project does not add any permanent lighting to the project area although some temporary lighting may be utilized during construction. The proposed project would not introduce a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect daytime or nighttime views in the area. Therefore, no impact is related to this issue and no mitigation is proposed.

³ http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LandArch/16_livability/scenic_highways/index.htm, site accessed August 31, 2020.

⁴ https://planning.rctima.org/Portals/14/genplan/2019/ap/WCVAP_121019.pdf, site accessed March 29, 2021.

II. Agricultural 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b. Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c. Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code Section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code Section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code Section 51104(g))?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d. Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e. Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Sources: Field visits, California Department of Conservation Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) of Section 65570 of the California Government Code; the 2016 Riverside County Important Farmland Map (California Department of Conservation 2016a); Williamson Act records search.

Regulatory Setting

California Department of Conservation Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program

The California Department of Conservation (DOC) manages the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) to assess the location, quality, and quantity of agricultural lands and conversion of these lands over time. In each county, the land is analyzed for soil and irrigation quality, and the highest quality land is designated as Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance. Based on the results of these analyses, the DOC issues maps every two years with the use of a computer mapping system, aerial imagery, public review, and field reconnaissance.

Williamson Act

The Williamson Act, also known as the California Land Conservation Act of 1965, enables local governments and private landowners to enter into contracts that restrict specific parcels of land to agricultural or related open space use. As a result, landowners receive reduced property tax assessments because they are based upon farming and open space uses rather than market value.

Findings of Fact

For Questions a, b, c, d, and e: No Impact

Based on the 2016 Riverside County Important Farmland Map (California Department of Conservation 2016a), the area where this project is located is "Other Land." This is "Land not included in any other mapping category. Common examples include low density rural developments, brush, timber, wetland, and riparian areas not suitable for livestock grazing, confined livestock, poultry, or aquaculture facilities, strip mines, borrow pits, and water bodies smaller than 40 acres. Vacant and nonagricultural land surrounded on all sides by urban development and greater than 40 acres is mapped as other land." Therefore, given that the project area lands do not fall into the listed categories per State and County records, there is no impact to Prime, Unique or Farmland of Statewide Importance and no mitigation is proposed.

The proposed road improvement project would not conflict with existing zoning for agricultural uses because no lands adjacent to the project are used for agricultural purposes. Williamson Act⁵ contracts restrict development of contract lands. The contracts typically limit land use in contract lands to agriculture, recreation, and open space unless otherwise stated in the contract. The properties associated with the project site are not in the Williamson Act Conservation Contract database (California Department of Conservation 2016b).

The proposed project would not conflict with existing zoning of forest or timberland because no such lands are within the project area. The County does not identify any parcels within the project limits zoned for forest land or timberland. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with or cause rezoning of forest land or timberland.

The Thousand Palms Canyon Road Project would not affect any existing agricultural operations or result in a conversion of land use within the project vicinity to or from agricultural use. Therefore, no impact would occur and no mitigation is proposed.

⁵ The Williamson Act is a procedure authorized under State law to preserve agricultural lands as well as open space. Property owners entering into a Williamson Act contract receive a reduction in property taxes in return for agreeing to protect the land's open space or agricultural values.

III. Air Quality

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b. 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Source(s): South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD), 2016 Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP), National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS), California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS), Federal Clean Air Act, CEQA Air Quality Handbook, County of Riverside 2015 General Plan, Southern California Association of Government’s 2016–2040 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS), SCAQMD Rule 403, SCAQMD’s CEQA Air Quality Handbook (1993), SCAQMD’s Air Quality Significance Thresholds (March 2015), Roadway Construction Emissions Model (RoadMod), Version 9.0.0 (SMAQMD n.d.), SCAQMD’s standard construction practices (Rules 402 and 403), California Vehicle Code Section 23114, Brief of Amicus Curiae by the SCAQMD (April 6, 2015), SCAQMD’s 2012 Air Quality Management Plan, California Air Resources Board (1986), Department of Conservation Division of Mines and Geology, *A General Location Guide for Ultramafic Rocks in California – Areas More Likely to Contain Naturally Occurring Asbestos Report* (August 2000).

Enclosed in this section are Tables B and C with the typical SCAQMD Air Quality (AQ) Best Management Practices (BMPs) for the Coachella Valley. There are no construction impacts for the proposed project; however, the attached control measures would be the standard air quality measures for controlling construction fugitive dust emissions.

Regulatory Setting

United States Environmental Protection Agency and the Federal Clean Air Act

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) implements national air quality programs at the federal level. USEPA air quality mandates are drawn primarily from the Federal Clean Air Act (FCAA), which was enacted in 1963. The FCAA was amended in 1970, 1977, and 1990.

California Air Resources Board and the California Clean Air Act

The California Air Resources Board (ARB) is the agency responsible for the coordination and oversight of State and local air pollution control programs in California and for implementing the California Clean Air Act (CCAA), adopted in 1988. The CCAA requires that all air districts in the State achieve and maintain the CAAQS by the earliest practical date. The CCAA specifies that districts

should focus on reducing the emissions from transportation and air-wide emission sources, and provides districts with the authority to regulate indirect sources.

Other ARB duties include monitoring air quality, establishing CAAQS, determining and updating area designations and maps, and setting emissions standards for mobile sources, consumer products, small utility engines, and off-road vehicles. ARB's Diesel Risk Reduction Plan⁶ is intended to reduce diesel particulate matter emissions and associated health risks substantially through introduction of ultra-low-sulfur diesel fuel—a step already implemented—and cleaner-burning diesel engines.

Because of the robust evidence relating proximity to roadways and a range of non-cancer and cancer health effects, ARB also created guidance for avoiding air quality conflicts in land use planning in its *Air Quality and Land Use Handbook: A Community Health Perspective* (2005).⁷ In its guidance, ARB advises that new sensitive uses (e.g., residences, schools, daycare centers, playgrounds, and hospitals) not be located within 500 feet of a freeway or urban roads carrying 100,000 vehicles per day, or within 1,000 feet of a distribution center (warehouse) that accommodates more than 100 trucks or more than 90 refrigerator trucks per day. The *Air Quality and Land Use Handbook* specifically states that these recommendations are advisory and acknowledges that land use agencies must balance other considerations, including housing and transportation needs, economic development priorities, and other quality of life issues.

South Coast Air Quality Management District

The South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) was created to ensure regional and local compliance with the Federal Clean Air Act and to implement the state air quality program. The proposed project is within the Salton Sea Air Basin (Basin), administered by the SCAQMD and the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), and falls under the 2016 Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP).⁸

Riverside County General Plan

The Riverside County General Plan incorporates and complies with regulations from the SCAQMD and SCAG. The project area lies within the Salton Sea Air Basin, which is managed jointly by these agencies. The County's General Plan includes the following goals and policies related to air quality that are applicable to the proposed Project:

- AQ 1.4 Coordinate with the SCAQMD and MDAQMD to ensure that all elements of air quality plans regarding reduction of air pollutant emissions are being enforced. (AI 111)
- AQ 1.5 Establish and implement air quality, land use and circulation measures that improve not only the County's environment but the entire region. (AI 111)

⁶ California Air Resources Board (CARB). 2000. *Risk Reduction Plan to Reduce Particulate Matter Emissions from Diesel-Fueled Engines and Vehicles*. Prepared by the Stationary Source Division and Mobile Source Control Division. October. Website: www.arb.ca.gov/diesel/documents/rrpFinal.pdf (accessed January 2019).

⁷ California Environmental Protection Agency and California Air Resources Board. 2005. *Air Quality and Land Use Handbook: A Community Health Perspective*. April. Website: www.arb.ca.gov/ch/handbook.pdf (accessed January 2019).

⁸ County of Riverside. 2015. *Riverside County General Plan 2015*. <https://planning.rctlma.org/General-Plan-Zoning/General-Plan> (accessed December 2020).

- AQ 9.1 Cooperate with local, regional, State and federal jurisdictions to reduce vehicle miles traveled and motor vehicle emissions through job creation. (AI 18)
- AQ 9.2 Attain performance goals and/or Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) reductions which are consistent with SCAG's Growth Management Plan. (AI 26)
- AQ 14.4 Preserve transportation corridors with high demand potential or regional significance for future expansion to meet project demand. (AI 53)

Findings of Fact

a) *Would the project conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?*

No Impact. The project site is located in the Thousand Palms area, which is within the Salton Sea Air Basin (Basin). The Basin includes the desert portions of Imperial, Riverside, and San Bernardino Counties. Air quality within the northern desert portion of the Basin is under the jurisdiction of the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD). SCAQMD adopted the 2016 Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP) in March 2017 to manage air quality in the Basin.

The main purpose of an AQMP is to describe air pollution control strategies to be taken by a city, county, or region classified as a nonattainment area. A nonattainment area is considered to have worse air quality than the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) and/or the California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS), as defined in the Federal Clean Air Act. The Basin is in nonattainment for the federal and State standards for ozone (O₃) and particulate matter less than 2.5 microns in diameter (PM_{2.5}). In addition, the Basin is in nonattainment for the State particulate matter less than 10 microns in diameter (PM₁₀) standard and in attainment/maintenance for the federal PM₁₀, carbon monoxide (CO), and nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) standards.

Consistency with the 2016 AQMP for the Basin would be achieved if a project is consistent with the goals, objectives, and assumptions in the respective plan to achieve the federal and State air quality standards. Per the SCAQMD *CEQA Air Quality Handbook* (April 1993), there are two main indicators of a project's consistency with the applicable AQMP: (1) whether the project would increase the frequency or severity of existing air quality violations, cause or contribute to new violations, or delay timely attainment of air quality standards or the interim emission reductions specified in the 2016 AQMP; and (2) whether the project would exceed the 2016 AQMP's assumptions for 2040 or yearly increments based on the year of project buildout and construction phasing. For the proposed project to be consistent with the AQMP, its construction emissions should not exceed the SCAQMD daily threshold or cause a significant impact on air quality. Additionally, if feasible control measures are implemented and are shown to reduce the impact level to less than significant, a project may be deemed consistent with the AQMP.

The purpose of the proposed project is to improve the road conditions for current traffic and add bike lanes onto the improved roadway. The roadway is designated as a collector road in the Western Coachella Valley Area Plan under the County's General Plan Circulation Element.

In the case of the 2016 AQMP, three sources of data form the basis for the projections of air pollutant emissions: the County of Riverside 2015 General Plan population and employment

forecasts, Southern California Association of Governments’ (SCAG’s) regional growth forecast, and SCAG’s 2016–2040 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS). The RTP/SCS also provides socioeconomic forecast projections of regional population growth. The proposed project would improve a segment of Thousand Palms Canyon Road to enhance the mobility and safety for drivers and bicyclists within the project area. As such, the project would not result in a change in land use for the existing project site. The proposed project would be consistent with the types, intensity, and patterns of land use envisioned for the site vicinity in the RTP/SCS.

The AQMP also contains air pollutant reduction strategies and demonstrates that the applicable ambient air quality standards can be achieved within the time frames required under federal law. Growth projections from local general plans adopted by cities in the SCAQMD are provided to SCAG, which develops regional growth forecasts that are used to develop future air quality forecasts for the AQMP. Development consistent with the growth projections in the General Plan is considered to be consistent with the AQMP. As discussed above, the proposed project would not alter the General Plan land use designation for the project site. Therefore, the proposed project meets this AQMP consistency criterion.

Tables B and C are two brief tables with the typical SCAQMD AQ BMP for the Coachella Valley. There are no construction impacts for the proposed project that require air quality-related mitigation; however, the attached control measures would be the standard air quality measures for controlling construction fugitive dust emissions. For any projects in Coachella Valley, SCAQMD Rule 403 requires that “**best available control measures**” be utilized whenever a dust-generating activity occurs in the Basin. These measures are listed in Table B and Table C of Rule 403 below. It is important to note that all applicable measures from Tables B and C should be implemented to achieve the required PM₁₀ emissions reductions.

Table B: Required Best Available Control Measures (SCAQMD Rule 403)

Control Measure		Guidance
Backfilling		
01-1	Stabilize backfill material when not actively handling; and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mix backfill soil with water prior to moving Dedicate water truck or high capacity hose to backfilling equipment Empty loader bucket slowly so that no dust plumes are generated Minimize drop height from loader bucket
01-2	Stabilize backfill material during handling; and	
01-3	Stabilize soil at completion of activity.	
Clearing and Grubbing		
02-1	Maintain stability of soil through pre-watering of site prior to clearing and grubbing; and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain live perennial vegetation where possible Apply water in sufficient quantity to prevent generation of dust plumes
02-2	Stabilize soil during clearing and grubbing activities; and	
02-3	Stabilize soil immediately after clearing and grubbing activities.	

Table B: Required Best Available Control Measures (SCAQMD Rule 403)

Control Measure		Guidance
Clearing Forms		
03-1	Use water spray to clear forms; or	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of high pressure air to clear forms may cause exceedance of Rule requirements
03-2	Use sweeping and water spray to clear forms; or	
03-3	Use vacuum system to clear forms.	
Crushing		
04-1	Stabilize surface soils prior to operation of support equipment; and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow permit conditions for crushing equipment Pre-water material prior to loading into crusher Monitor crusher emissions opacity Apply water to crushed material to prevent dust plumes
04-2	Stabilize material after crushing.	
Cut and Fill		
05-1	Pre-water soils prior to cut and fill activities; and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For large sites, pre-water with sprinklers or water trucks and allow time for penetration Use water trucks/pulls to water soils to depth of cut prior to subsequent cuts
05-2	Stabilize soil during and after cut and fill activities.	
Demolition – Mechanical/Manual		
06-1	Stabilize wind erodible surfaces to reduce dust; and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply water in sufficient quantities to prevent the generation of visible dust plumes
06-2	Stabilize surface soil where support equipment and vehicles will operate; and	
06-3	Stabilize loose soil and demolition debris; and	
06-4	Comply with AQMD Rule 1403.	
Disturbed Soil		
07-1	Stabilize disturbed soil throughout the construction site; and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limit vehicular traffic and disturbances on soils where possible If interior block walls are planned, install as early as possible Apply water or a stabilizing agent in sufficient quantities to prevent the generation of visible dust plumes
07-02	Stabilize disturbed soil between structures	
Earthmoving Activities		
08-1	Pre-apply water to depth of proposed cuts; and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grade each project phase separately, timed to coincide with construction phase Upwind fencing can prevent material movement on site Apply water or a stabilizing agent in sufficient quantities to prevent the generation of visible dust plumes
08-2	Re-apply water as necessary to maintain soils in a damp condition and to ensure that visible emissions do not exceed 100 feet in any direction; and	
08-3	Stabilize soils once earthmoving activities are complete.	

Table B: Required Best Available Control Measures (SCAQMD Rule 403)

Control Measure		Guidance
Importing/Exporting of Bulk Materials		
09-1	Stabilize material while loading to reduce fugitive dust emissions; and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use tarps or other suitable enclosures on haul trucks • Check belly-dump truck seals regularly and remove any trapped rocks to prevent spillage • Comply with track-out prevention/mitigation requirements • Provide water while loading and unloading to reduce visible dust plumes
09-2	Maintain at least six inches of freeboard on haul vehicles; and	
09-3	Stabilize material while transporting to reduce fugitive dust emissions; and	
09-4	Stabilize material while unloading to reduce fugitive dust emissions; and	
09-5	Comply with Vehicle Code Section 23114.	
Landscaping		
10-1	Stabilize soils, materials, slopes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply water to materials to stabilize materials in a crusted condition • Maintain effective cover over materials • Stabilize sloping surfaces using soil binders until vegetation or groundcover can effectively stabilize the slopes • Hydroseed prior to rain season
Road Shoulder Maintenance		
11-1	Apply water to unpaved shoulders prior to clearing; and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installation of curbing and/or paving of road shoulders can reduce recurring maintenance costs • Use of chemical dust suppressants can inhibit vegetation growth and reduce future road shoulder maintenance costs
11-2	Apply chemical dust suppressants and/or washed gravel to maintain a stabilized surface after completing road shoulder maintenance.	
Screening		
12-1	Pre-water material prior to screening; and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dedicate water truck or high capacity hose to screening operation • Drop material through the screen slowly and minimize drop height • Install wind barrier with a porosity of no more than 50% upwind of screen to the height of the drop point
12-2	Limit fugitive dust emissions to opacity and plume length standards; and	
12-3	Stabilize material immediately after screening.	
Staging Areas		
13-1	Stabilize staging areas during use; and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limit size of staging area • Limit vehicle speeds to 15 miles per hour • Limit number and size of staging area entrances/exits
13-2	Stabilize staging area soils at project completion.	
Stockpiles/Bulk Material Handling		
14-1	Stabilize stockpiled materials.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add or remove material from the downwind portion of the storage pile • Maintain storage piles to avoid steep sides or faces
14-2	Stockpiles within 100 yards of off-site occupied buildings must not be greater than eight feet in height; or must have a road bladed to the top to allow water truck access or must have an operational water irrigation system that is capable of complete stockpile coverage.	

Table B: Required Best Available Control Measures (SCAQMD Rule 403)

Control Measure		Guidance
Traffic Areas for Construction Activities		
15-1	Stabilize all off-road traffic and parking areas; and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply gravel/paving to all haul routes as soon as possible to all future roadway areas Barriers can be used to ensure vehicles are only used on established parking areas/haul routes
15-2	Stabilize all haul routes; and	
15-3	Direct construction traffic over established haul routes.	
Trenching		
16-1	Stabilize surface soils where trencher or excavator and support equipment will operate; and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre-watering of soils prior to trenching is an effective preventive measure. For deep trenching activities, pre-trench to 18 inches soak soils via the pre-trench and resuming trenching Washing mud and soils from equipment at the conclusion of trenching activities can prevent crusting and drying of soil on equipment
16.2	Stabilize soils at the completion of trenching activities.	
Truck Loading		
17-1	Pre-water material prior to loading; and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Empty loader bucket such that no visible dust plumes are created Ensure that the loader bucket is close to the truck to minimize drop height while loading
17.2	Ensure that freeboard exceeds six inches (CVC 23114)	
Turf Overseeding		
18-1	Apply sufficient water immediately prior to conducting turf vacuuming activities to meet opacity and plume length standards; and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Haul waste material immediately off site
18-2	Cover haul vehicles prior to exiting the site.	
Unpaved Roads/Parking Lots		
19-1	Stabilize soils to meet the applicable performance standards; and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Restricting vehicular access to established unpaved travel paths and parking lots can reduce stabilization requirements
19-2	Limit vehicular travel to established unpaved roads (haul routes) and unpaved parking lots.	
Vacant Land		
20-1	In instances where vacant lots are 0.10 acre or larger and have a cumulative area of 500 square feet or more that are driven over and/or used by motor vehicles and/or off-road vehicles, prevent motor vehicle and/or off-road vehicle trespassing, parking and/or access by installing barriers, curbs, fences, gates, posts, signs, shrubs, trees or other effective control measures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify a dust control supervisor that is employed by or contracted with the property owner or developer, is on the site or available on-site within 30 minutes during working hours, has the authority to expeditiously employ sufficient dust mitigation measures to ensure compliance with all Rule requirements, and has completed the AQMD Fugitive Dust Control Class and has been issued a valid Certificate of Completion for the class; and Notify the SCAQMD Executive Officer in writing within 30 days after the site no longer qualifies as a large operation.

Table C: Fugitive Dust Control Actions (SCAQMD Rule 403)

Fugitive Dust Source Category Control Actions	
Earthmoving (except construction cutting and filling areas, and mining operations)	
(1a)	Maintain soil moisture content at a minimum of 12 percent, as determined by the ASTM [American Society for Testing and Materials] method D2216, or other equivalent method approved by the Executive Officer, the California Air Resources Board, and the U.S. EPA. Two soil moisture evaluations must be conducted during the first three hours of active operations during a calendar day, and two such evaluations each subsequent four-hour period of active operations; OR
(1a-1)	For any earthmoving which is more than 100 feet from all property lines, conduct watering as necessary to prevent visible dust emissions from exceeding 100 feet in length in any direction.
Earthmoving: Construction fill areas	
(1b)	Maintain soil moisture content at a minimum of 12 percent, as determined by ASTM method D2216, or other equivalent method approved by the Executive Officer, the California Air Resources Board, and the U.S. EPA. For areas which have an optimum moisture content for compaction of less than 12 percent, as determined by ASTM Method 1557 or other equivalent method approved by the Executive Officer and the California Air Resources Board and the U.S. EPA, complete the compaction process as expeditiously as possible after achieving at least 70 percent of the optimum soil moisture content. Two soil moisture evaluations must be conducted during the first three hours of active operations during a calendar day, and two such evaluations during each subsequent four-hour period of active operations.
Earthmoving: Construction cut areas and mining operations	
(1c)	Conduct watering as necessary to prevent visible emissions from extending more than 100 feet beyond the active cut or mining area unless the area is inaccessible to watering vehicles due to slope conditions or other safety factors.
Disturbed surface areas (except completed grading areas)	
(2a/b)	Apply dust suppression in sufficient quantity and frequency to maintain a stabilized surface. Any areas which cannot be stabilized, as evidenced by wind driven fugitive dust must have an application of water at least twice per day to at least 80 percent of the unstabilized area.
Disturbed Surface Areas: Completed Grading Areas	
(2c)	Apply chemical stabilizers within five working days of grading completion; OR
(2d)	Take actions (3a) or (3c) specified for inactive disturbed surface areas.
Inactive Disturbed Surface Areas	
(3a)	Apply water to at least 80 percent of all inactive disturbed surface areas on a daily basis when there is evidence of wind driven fugitive dust, excluding any areas which are inaccessible to watering vehicles due to excessive slope or other safety conditions; OR
(3b)	Apply dust suppressants in sufficient quantity and frequency to maintain a stabilized surface; OR
(3c)	Establish vegetative groundcover within 21 days after active operations have ceased. Groundcover must be of sufficient density to expose less than 30 percent of unstabilized ground within 90 days of planting, and at all times thereafter; OR
(3d)	Utilize any combination of control actions (3a), (3b), and (3c) such that, in total, these actions apply to all inactive disturbed surface areas.
Unpaved Roads	
(4a)	Water all roads used for any vehicular traffic at least once per every two hours of active operations [3 times per normal 8 hour work day]; OR
(4b)	Water all roads used for any vehicular traffic once daily and restrict vehicle speeds to 15 miles per hour; OR
(4c)	Apply a chemical stabilizer to all unpaved road surfaces in sufficient quantity and frequency to maintain a stabilized surface.
Open Storage Piles	
(5a)	Apply chemical stabilizers; OR
(5b)	Apply water to at least 80 percent of the surface area of all open storage piles on a daily basis when there is

Table C: Fugitive Dust Control Actions (SCAQMD Rule 403)

Fugitive Dust Source Category Control Actions	
(5c)	evidence of wind driven fugitive dust; OR Install temporary coverings; OR
(5d)	Install a three-sided enclosure with walls no more than 50 percent porosity which extend, at the minimum, to the top of the pile. This option may only be used at aggregate-related plants or at center manufacturing facilities.
All Categories	
(6a)	Any other control measures approved by the Executive Officer and the U.S. EPA as equivalent to the methods specified in Table 2 may be used.

In conclusion, the determination of 2016 AQMP consistency is primarily concerned with the long-term influence of a project on air quality in the Basin. The proposed project would not result in a long-term impact on the region’s ability to meet State and federal air quality standards. Also, the proposed project would be consistent with the goals and policies of the 2016 AQMP for control of fugitive dust (e.g., SCAQMD Rule 403). Therefore, the proposed project is consistent with the regional AQMP and no impact would occur. No mitigation is proposed.

b) Would the project 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?

Less Than Significant Impact. The 2019 *State CEQA Guidelines* indicate that a significant impact would occur if the project would result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is nonattainment under an applicable federal or State ambient air quality standard. Specific criteria for determining whether the potential air quality impacts of a project are significant are set forth in the SCAQMD’s *CEQA Air Quality Handbook* (1993). The criteria include emission thresholds, compliance with State and national air quality standards, and conformity with the existing State Implementation Plan (SIP) or consistency with the current AQMP. Table D presents a summary of the specific criteria contained in the SCAQMD’s *Air Quality Significance Thresholds* (March 2015).

Table D: SCAQMD Significance Thresholds (lbs/day)

Air Pollutant	Construction Phase	Operational Phase
ROCs	75	55
CO	550	550
NOx	100	55
SOx	150	150
PM ₁₀	150	150
PM _{2.5}	55	55

Source: SCAQMD. *Air Quality Significance Thresholds* (April 2019).

CO = carbon monoxide

lbs/day = pounds per day

NOx = nitrogen oxides

PM_{2.5} = particulate matter less than 2.5 microns in diameter

PM₁₀ = particulate matter less than 10 microns in diameter

ROCs = reactive organic compounds

SCAQMD = South Coast Air Quality Management District

SOx = sulfur oxides

Projects in the Basin with emissions that exceed any of the mass daily emission thresholds in Table D would be considered significant by the SCAQMD.

Construction Emissions. Air quality impacts would occur during demolition and construction of the proposed project due to soil disturbance and equipment exhaust. Major sources of emissions that would occur during grubbing/land clearing, grading/excavation drainage/utilities/sub-grading, and paving/construction include (1) exhaust emissions from construction vehicles; (2) equipment and fugitive dust generated by vehicles and equipment traveling over exposed surfaces; and (3) disturbances from compacting and paving.

Peak daily and annual emissions were analyzed using the Roadway Construction Emissions Model (RoadMod), Version 9.0.0 (SMAQMD n.d.). See Table E. Project-specific information provided by the project engineer was used where available, including details and the construction schedule. The following major construction equipment is anticipated to be used:

- Pulverizing Operations: Pulverizing machine, skip loader, roller (wheel drum), grader, and water truck.
- Grinding Operations: Grinder, dump truck, street sweeper, and water truck.
- Paving Operations: Paver, Roller (Drum), Dump Truck, Skip Loader, and Water Truck
- Pavement Delineations: Truck (paint traffic stripe) and utility truck for thermoplastic pavement markings.

The size of the equipment is to be selected by the contractor.

Table E: Peak Daily Construction Emissions (lbs/day)

Peak Construction Emissions	ROG	NOx	CO	SO ₂	PM ₁₀ (total)	PM _{2.5} (total)
Grubbing/Land Clearing	1.71	13.90	12.38	0.03	20.42	4.51
Grading/Excavation	6.29	50.93	54.35	0.12	21.69	5.63
Drainage/Utilities/Sub-Grading	3.90	33.79	30.14	0.07	21.03	5.07
Paving/Construction	2.13	21.63	15.92	0.05	0.66	0.54
Highest Peak Daily Emissions	6.29	50.93	54.35	0.12	21.69	5.63
SCAQMD Construction Emissions Threshold	75.0	100.0	550.0	150.0	150.0	55.0
Exceed Significance?	No	No	No	No	No	No

Source: Compiled by LSA (March 2020).

CO = carbon monoxide
lbs/day = pounds per day

NOx = nitrogen oxide

PM_{2.5} = particulate matter less than 2.5 microns in diameter

PM₁₀ = particulate matter less than 10 microns in diameter

ROG = reactive organic gases

SCAQMD = South Coast Air Quality Management District

SO₂ = sulfur dioxide

For the purpose of the air quality analysis, these equipment types were analyzed as a worst-case scenario. Also, the construction is anticipated to start in 2021 and the estimated duration is 40 working days (approximately 2 months).

As Table E shows, construction equipment/vehicle emissions during construction would not exceed any of the SCAQMD daily emissions thresholds. Therefore, the project's short-term emissions impact would be less than significant. No mitigation is proposed.

The project is required to comply with other regional rules that assist in reducing short-term air pollutant emissions. Adherence to the standard control measures is required for all development activity within the Basin. These compliance measures include, but are not limited to the following:

- **SCAQMD Rule 403:** Rule 403 requires that fugitive dust be controlled with best-available control measures so that the presence of such dust does not remain visible in the atmosphere beyond the property line of the emission source. In addition, SCAQMD Rule 403 requires implementation of dust suppression techniques to prevent fugitive dust from creating a nuisance off site. Applicable dust suppression techniques from Rule 403 are summarized below. Implementation of these dust suppression techniques can reduce the fugitive dust generation (and thus, the PM₁₀ component). Compliance with these rules would reduce impacts on nearby sensitive receptors (SCAQMD Rule 403). The applicable Rule 403 measures include:
 - Apply nontoxic chemical soil stabilizers according to manufacturers' specifications to all inactive construction areas (previously graded areas inactive for 10 days or more).
 - Water active sites at least twice daily (locations where grading is to occur will be thoroughly watered prior to earthmoving).
 - Cover all trucks hauling dirt, sand, soil, or other loose materials, or maintain at least 0.6 meter (2 feet) of freeboard (vertical space between the top of the load and top of the trailer) in accordance with the requirements of California Vehicle Code Section 23114.
 - Pave construction access roads at least 30 meters (100 feet) onto the site from the main road.
 - Reduce traffic speeds on all unpaved roads to 15 mph or less.
- **SCAQMD Rule 403.1:** Supplemental Fugitive Dust Control Requirements for Coachella Valley Sources: is a supplemental rule to Rule 403 and is applicable to man-made sources of fugitive dust in Coachella Valley. The purpose of this rule is to reduce fugitive dust and resulting PM₁₀ emissions from man-made sources in the Coachella Valley. Rule 403.1 requires a Fugitive Dust Control Plan approved by SCAQMD or an authorized local government agency prior to initiating any construction/ earth-moving activity. These requirements are only applicable to construction projects with 5,000 or more square feet of surface area disturbance.
- **SCAQMD Rule 431.2:** Rule 431.2 limits the release of SO₂ into the atmosphere from the burning of fuel.
- **SCAQMD Rules 1186 and 1186.1:** Rules 1186 and 1186.1 relate to PM₁₀ emissions reductions from paved/unpaved roads and use of lower polluting street sweepers, respectively, to reduce the release of criteria pollutant emissions into the atmosphere during construction.

- **ARB In-Use Off-Road Diesel Vehicle Regulation:** The California Air Resources Board (ARB) has adopted a regulation to reduce diesel particulate matter (DPM) and nitrogen oxide (NOx) emissions from in-use (existing) off-road heavy-duty diesel vehicles in California. Such vehicles are used in construction, mining, and industrial operations. The appropriate standard measures are as follows:
 - The project applicants are required to implement, by contract specifications, that all heavy-duty, diesel-powered construction equipment used at the project site during the following phases be powered by ARB-certified Tier 3 engines or higher and install a minimum of Level 1 diesel particulate filter on all equipment exhaust system. Contract specifications shall be included in project construction documents, which shall be reviewed by the County prior to issuance of a grading permit. This measure applies to all construction phases.
 - The project applicants are required to implement, by contract specifications, that construction equipment engines be maintained in good condition and in proper tune per the manufacturer's specification for the duration of construction. Contract specifications shall be included in project construction documents, which shall be reviewed by the County to issuance of a grading permit.
- **California Code of Regulations, Title 13, Division 3, Chapter 1, Article 4.5, Section 2025:** The purpose of this regulation is to reduce emissions of DPM, NOx, and other criteria pollutants from in-use diesel-fueled vehicles. It applies to any person, business, federal government agency, school district, or school transportation provider that owns or operates, leases, or rents affected vehicles that operate in California.

The best available control measures, as specified in SCAQMD Rule 403, are required for any project in the Basin. As detailed in Table E, project-related construction emissions would not exceed SCAQMD's significance thresholds for construction activities. As such, no significant air quality impacts would occur from the construction phase of the proposed project.

Long-Term Regional Vehicle Emission Impact. The proposed project involves improvements to the Thousand Palms Canyon Road and includes adding bike lanes on both sides of the road within the project area. The proposed project would not construct or permit the construction of any trip-generating land uses (residential, commercial, industrial, etc.). In addition, the roadway would remain a two lane roadway which would not facilitate additional traffic. Therefore, the project would cause no long-term change in regional vehicle air emission than would occur with the existing roadway. As no changes in emissions for the operations phase of the project would occur, no significant air quality impacts would occur. No mitigation is proposed.

c) *Would the project expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?*

Less Than Significant Impact. Sensitive receptors include residences, schools, hospitals, and similar uses that are sensitive to adverse air quality. None of these sensitive receptors are within proximity of ¼ mile (or 1,350 feet) to the road construction area.

Project implementation may expose surrounding sensitive receptors to airborne particulates, as well as a small quantity of construction equipment pollutants (i.e., diesel-fueled vehicles and

equipment). However, the construction contractors would be required to comply with the SCAQMD's standard construction practices (Rules 402 and 403) by implementing measures to reduce or eliminate emissions. Rule 402 requires implementation of dust suppression techniques to prevent fugitive dust from creating a nuisance off site. Rule 403 requires that fugitive dust be controlled with best available control measures so that the presence of such dust does not remain visible in the atmosphere beyond the property line of the emission source. Some of the applicable dust suppression techniques from Rule 403 are summarized as follows:

- Apply nontoxic chemical soil stabilizers according to manufacturers' specifications to all inactive construction areas (previously graded areas inactive for 10 days or more).
- Water active sites at least twice daily (locations where grading is to occur will be thoroughly watered prior to earthmoving).
- All trucks hauling demolished material, dirt, sand, soil, or other loose materials are to be covered or should maintain at least 2 feet of freeboard in accordance with the requirements of California Vehicle Code Section 23114 (freeboard means vertical space between the top of the load and top of the trailer).

Therefore, sensitive receptors are not expected to be exposed to substantial pollutant concentrations during construction or operation and impacts are considered less than significant. No mitigation is proposed.

Air Quality Health Impacts. Adverse health effects induced by criteria pollutant emissions are highly dependent on a multitude of interconnected variables (e.g., cumulative concentrations, local meteorology and atmospheric conditions, and the number and character of exposed individual [e.g., age, gender]). In particular, ozone precursor's volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and nitrogen oxides (NOx) affect air quality on a regional scale. Health effects related to ozone are therefore the product of emissions generated by numerous sources throughout a region. Existing models have limited sensitivity to small changes in criteria pollutant concentrations, and, as such, translating project-generated criteria pollutants to specific health effects or additional days of nonattainment would produce meaningless results. In other words, the project's less than significant increases in regional air pollution from criteria air pollutants would have nominal or negligible impacts on human health.

Further, as noted in the Brief of Amicus Curiae by the SCAQMD (April 6, 2015), the SCAQMD acknowledged it would be extremely difficult, if not impossible to quantify health impacts of criteria pollutants for various reasons including modeling limitations as well as where in the atmosphere air pollutants interact and form.

The SCAQMD acknowledges that health effects quantification from ozone, as an example, is correlated with the increases in ambient level of ozone in the air (concentration) that an individual person breathes. SCAQMD's Brief of Amicus Curiae states that it would take a large amount of additional emissions to cause a modeled increase in ambient ozone levels over the entire region. The SCAQMD states that based on its own modeling in the SCAQMD's 2012 Air Quality Management Plan, a reduction of 432 tons (864,000 pounds) per day of NOx and a reduction of 187 tons (374,000 pounds) per day of VOCs would reduce ozone levels at highest

monitored site by only nine parts per billion. As such, the SCAQMD concludes that it is not currently possible to accurately quantify ozone-related health impacts caused by NOx or Volatile Organic Compound (VOC) emissions from relatively small projects (defined as projects with regional scope) due to photochemistry and regional model limitations. Thus, as the project would not exceed SCAQMD thresholds for construction and would not generate operational air pollutant emissions, the project would not create health impacts related to air quality.

Naturally Occurring Asbestos. Asbestos is a term used for several types of naturally occurring fibrous minerals that are a human health hazard when airborne. The most common type of asbestos is chrysotile, but other types such as tremolite and actinolite are also found in California. Asbestos is classified as a known human carcinogen by State, federal, and international agencies and was identified as a toxic air contaminant by the California Air Resources Board in 1986.

Asbestos can be released from serpentine and ultramafic rocks when the rock is broken or crushed. At the point of release, the asbestos fibers may become airborne, causing air quality and human health hazards. These rocks have been commonly used for unpaved gravel roads, landscaping, fill projects, and other improvement projects in some localities. Asbestos may be released to the atmosphere due to vehicular traffic on unpaved roads, during grading for development projects, and at quarry operations. All of these activities may have the effect of releasing potentially harmful asbestos into the air. Natural weathering and erosion processes can act on asbestos bearing rock and make it easier for asbestos fibers to become airborne if such rock is disturbed. According to the Department of Conservation Division of Mines and Geology, *A General Location Guide for Ultramafic Rocks in California – Areas More Likely to Contain Naturally Occurring Asbestos Report* (August 2000), serpentine and ultramafic rocks are not known to occur within the project area. As a result, there would be no impact.

Therefore, sensitive receptors are not expected to be exposed to substantial pollutant concentrations during construction or operation, and impacts are considered less than significant. No mitigation is proposed.

d) *Would the project result in other emissions such as those leading to odors adversely affecting a substantial number of people?*

No Impact. SCAQMD's *CEQA Air Quality Handbook* (1993) identifies various secondary significance criteria related to odorous air contaminants. Substantial odor-generating sources include land uses such as agricultural activities, feedlots, wastewater treatment facilities, landfills, or heavy manufacturing uses. Pursuant to SCAQMD Rule 402, these sources shall include a quantitative assessment of potential odors and meteorological conditions. The proposed project does not include any such uses or activities that would result in potentially significant odor impacts. Some objectionable odors may emanate from the operation of diesel-powered construction equipment and the laying down of asphalt during construction of the proposed project. However, these odors would be limited to the construction period and would disperse quickly; therefore, these odors would not be considered a significant impact.

The proposed project consists of road improvement and adding bike lanes, the operation of which would not produce objectionable odors once constructed. Therefore, no impacts related to other emissions, such as those leading to odors from the proposed project, would occur and no mitigation is proposed.

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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, and regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c. Have a substantial adverse effect on State or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Source(s): Field visits, Biological Resources Assessment and CVMSHCP Consistency Analysis (LSA 2020), CVMSHCP, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) pursuant Section 404 of the Federal Clean Water Act (CWA), California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) Natural Diversity Data Base. RareFind, Online Edition, Version 5.2.14.

Regulatory Setting

Federal and Special-Status Species

Individual plant and animal species listed as Rare, Threatened, or Endangered under State and Federal Endangered Species Acts are considered “special-status species.” Federal and State endangered species legislation has provided the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) with a mechanism for conserving and protecting plant and animal species of limited distribution and/or low or declining populations. Permits may be required from both the USFWS and CDFW if activities associated with a proposed project would result in the “take” of a species listed as threatened or endangered. To “take” a listed species, as defined by the State, is “to hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill, or attempt to hunt, pursue, catch, capture or kill” said species. “Take” is more broadly defined by the Federal Endangered Species Act to include inflicting harm upon a listed species.

In addition to species listed under State and Federal Endangered Species Acts, Section 15380(b) and (c) of the *State CEQA Guidelines* provide that all potential rare or sensitive species, or habitats capable of supporting rare species, are considered for environmental review. These may include plant species of concern in the State listed by the California Native Plant Society and CDFW listed “Species of Special Concern.”

Sensitive Habitats

Wetland and riparian habitats are considered to be sensitive habitats, and are protected under various Federal, State, and local regulations. These habitats are generally subject to regulation, protection, or consideration by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), CDFW, and/or the USFWS pursuant to Sections 303, 304, and 404 of the Federal Clean Water Act and the State of California Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act. Wetland and riparian habitats are also subject to the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit program under Section 402 of the Clean Water Act, which regulates discharge into waters of the United States.

Migratory Bird Treaty Act

Under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA), the killing, possessing, or trading of migratory birds is prohibited unless exempt by regulations prescribed by the Secretary of the Interior. The MBTA prohibits the possession of protected bird species and their nests, regardless of whether nests are active.⁹

Birds of prey, such as owls and hawks, are protected in California under provisions of the State Fish and Game Code, which states that it is “unlawful to take, possess, or destroy any birds in the order Falconiformes or Strigiformes (birds of prey) or to take, possess, or destroy the nest or eggs of any such bird except as otherwise provided by this code or any regulation adopted pursuant thereto.” Construction disturbance during the breeding season could result in the incidental loss of fertile eggs or nestlings, or otherwise lead to nest abandonment. Disturbance that causes nest abandonment and/or loss of reproductive effort is considered “taking” by the CDFW.

California Department of Fish and Game Code 3503

California Department of Fish and Game Code 3503 stipulates that it is unlawful to take, possess, or needlessly destroy the nest or eggs of any bird, except as otherwise provided by this code or any regulation made pursuant thereto.

Coachella Valley Association of Governments: Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP)

The project is located within the Coachella Valley Preserve, which is within the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP). Specifically, the project lies within the Thousand Palms Conservation Area and the Indio Hills/Joshua Tree National Park Linkage Conservation Area of the CVMSHCP.

⁹ An active nest is defined as having eggs or young.

Riverside County General Plan

The Riverside County General Plan includes the proposed project area. The General Plan plans to conserve between 200,000 and 250,000 acres of land through land use designations. These conservation lands are incorporated into the General Plan incorporation of and consistency with the CVMSHCP. The County's General Plan includes the following goals and policies related to biological resources that are applicable to the proposed Project:

- OS 17.3 Enforce the provisions of applicable MSHCPs and implement related Riverside County policies when developing transportation or other infrastructure projects that have been designated as covered activities in the applicable MSHCP.
- OS 18.1 Preserve multi-species habitat resources in the County of Riverside through the enforcement of the provisions of applicable MSHCPs and through implementing related Riverside County policies.

Findings of Fact

- a) ***Would the project have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or indirectly or through habitat modification, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?***

Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated.

Threatened and Endangered Species. The project is located within the Coachella Valley Preserve, which is within the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP). Specifically, the project lies within the Thousand Palms Conservation Area and the Indio Hills/Joshua Tree National Park Linkage Conservation Area of the CVMSHCP.

One federally listed endangered plant species was identified during the literature search as potentially present in the project vicinity:

- Coachella Valley milkvetch (*Astragalus lentiginosus* var. *coachellae* [CVMV]): Federally listed endangered and CVMSHCP covered species.

Three federally and State listed wildlife species were identified during the literature search as potentially present in the project vicinity:

- Desert pupfish (*Cyprinodon macularius*): Federally and State listed endangered and CVMSHCP covered species;
- Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard (*Uma inornata* [CVFTL]): Federally listed threatened, State-listed endangered, and CVMSHCP covered species; and
- Southwestern willow flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii extimus* [SWFL]): Federally and State-listed endangered and CVMSHCP covered species.

The Biological Study Area (BSA) was created to encompass the proposed project footprint and typical habitats in the immediate project vicinity that may be directly or indirectly affected by

the proposed project. The BSA includes Thousand Palms Canyon Road, associated right-of-way, proposed construction staging areas, all permanent and temporary impact areas related to the project and extends to 50 feet east and west of the project's limits of disturbance (Figure 3). The majority of the BSA is located within the Coachella Valley Preserve. Additionally, the BSA lies entirely within the planning boundaries of the CVMSHCP. Specifically, the BSA lies within the Thousand Palms Conservation Area and the Indio Hills/Joshua Tree National Park Linkage Conservation Area.

Habitat within the BSA is considered unsuitable for desert pupfish, CVFTL, and SWFL. Although CVMV was not found to be present within the BSA, high quality habitat for CVMV was observed within the BSA at the time of the field survey. CVMV is a covered species under the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP). Through participation in the CVMSHCP, the project would mitigate for any impacts to CVMV.

Nonlisted Special-Status Species. The 17 special-interest species identified in the *Biological Resources Assessment and CVMSHCP Consistency Analysis* (LSA 2020) as having a low to high probability of occurrence in the BSA have limited population distribution in Southern California and development is further reducing their ranges and numbers. These species have no official State or federal protection status, but they merit consideration under CEQA. The project is anticipated to have a less than significant effect on these non-listed special-interest species. These species are:

- Abrams' spurge (*Euphorbia abramsiana*);
- Arizona spurge (*Euphorbia arizonica*);
- Flat-seeded spurge (*Euphorbia platysperma*);
- Narrow-leaf sandpaper plant (*Petalonyx linearis*);
- Mecca aster (*Xylorhiza cognate*);
- Cheeseweed moth lacewing (*Oliarces clara*);
- Flat-tailed horned lizard (*Phrynosoma mcalli*);
- Burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*);
- Prairie falcon (nesting) (*Falco mexicanus*);
- Loggerhead shrike (nesting) (*Lanius ludovicianus*);
- Le Conte's thrasher (*Toxostoma lecontei*);
- Pallid San Diego pocket mouse (*Chaetodipus fallax pallidus*);
- Palm Springs pocket mouse (*Perognathus longimembris bangsii*); and
- Palm Springs round-tailed ground squirrel (*Xerospermophilus tereticaudus chlorus*).

CVMSHCP-designated Other Conserved habitat for burrowing owl and Le Conte's thrasher is present within the BSA.

Nesting birds (e.g. burrowing owl and Le Conte’s thrasher) are protected by California Fish and Game Code Sections 3503, 3503.5, and 3800, and by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) (16 USC 703–711). These laws regulate the take, possession, or destruction of the nest or eggs of any migratory bird or bird of prey.

To ensure compliance with California Fish and Game Code, and to avoid potential impacts to nesting birds, it is recommended that the vegetation removal activities be conducted outside the general bird nesting season (January 15 through August 31) (refer to Mitigation Measure BIO-1 and BIO-2, below). If vegetation cannot be removed outside the bird nesting season, a pre-construction nesting bird survey by a qualified biologist is required prior to vegetation removal.

Critical Habitat. The southern portion of the project lies within mapped federally designated Critical Habitat for CVFTL (USFWS, 45 FR: 63812). The CVFTL is a Covered Species under the CVMSHCP, Take Authorization is provided through the permits issued in conjunction with the CVMSHCP Implementation Agreement. Through participation in the CVMSHCP, the project would not adversely affect CVFTL critical habitat. The CVMSHCP Conservation Area for this project is shown in Figure 3.

The project would result in a less than significant impact to non-listed species through the implementation of Mitigation Measures BIO-1 and BIO-2.

b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

No Impact. Vegetation within the BSA is best described as *Larrea tridentata* Shrubland Alliance (Creosote Bush Shrubland) (Sawyer et al. 2009). Dominant species include creosote bush, white bur-sage (*Ambrosia dumosa*), and brittle bush (*Encelia farinosa*). Other natural communities observed within the BSA include *Atriplex polycarpa* Shrubland Alliance (Allscale Shrubland); *Suaeda moquinii* Shrubland Alliance (Bush Seepweed Shrubland); *Prosopis glandulosa* Shrubland Alliance (Mesquite thickets); and *Washingtonia filifera* Woodland Alliance (California fan palm oasis) (Sawyer et al. 2009). Figure 4 shows the vegetation and land use within the BSA. *Prosopis glandulosa* Shrubland Alliance (Mesquite thickets), and *Washingtonia filifera* Woodland Alliance (California fan palm oasis) are the only two sensitive natural communities present within the BSA. Although riparian habitat is present within the BSA, the County will only be working within the right-of-way (ROW) and no impacts to riparian habitat will occur. Vegetation associated with the sensitive communities will not be removed. Any vegetation that may be removed within County ROW will not be suitable nesting or foraging habitat for sensitive species. Because the project would be constructed entirely within the County ROW, the project would not affect these sensitive communities and the project would result in no impacts to natural communities.

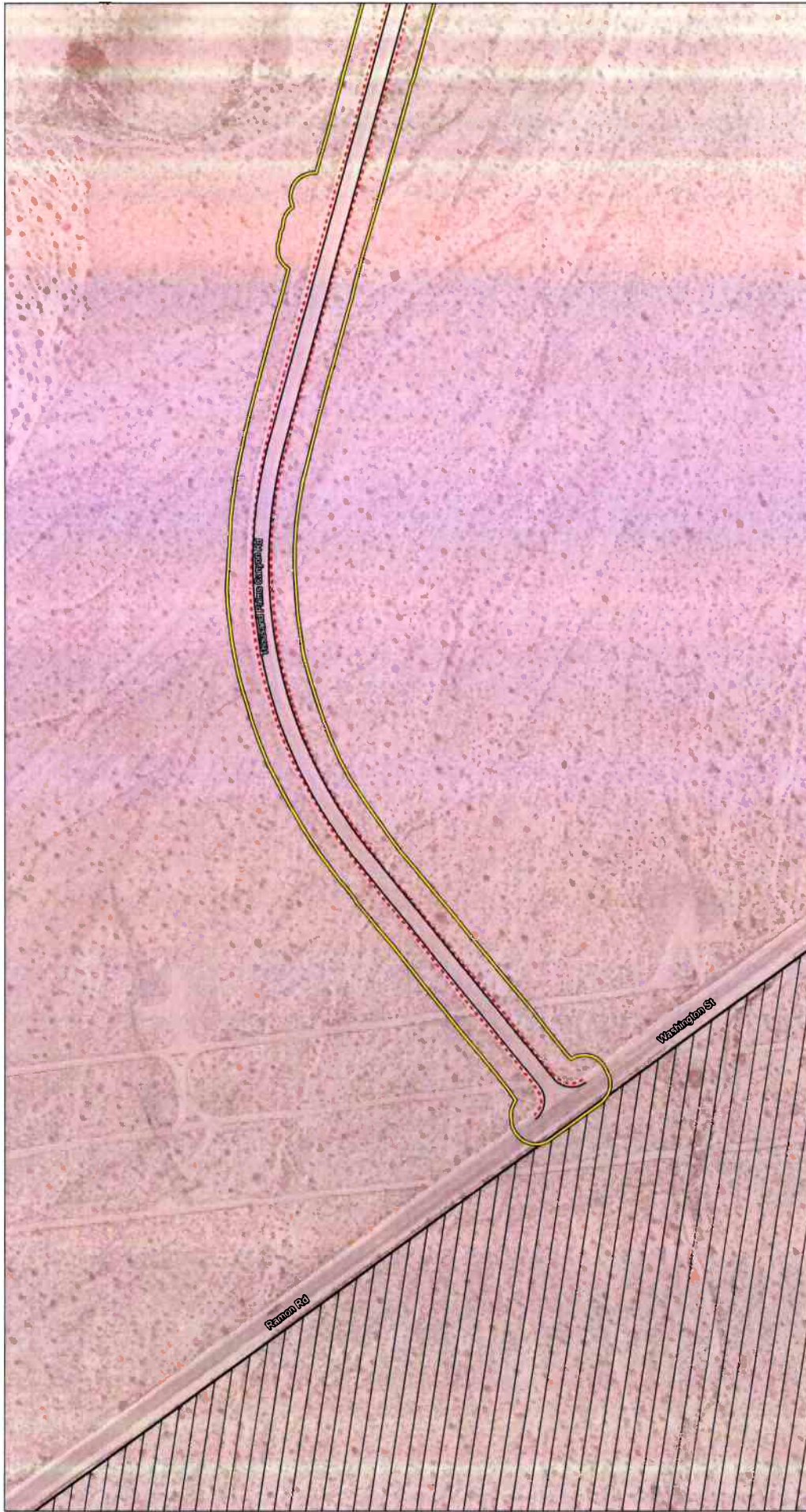
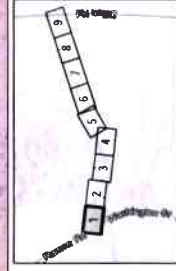


FIGURE 3
Sheet 1 of 9



Thousand Palms Canyon Road Widening Project
Critical Habitat

LEGEND

- Biological Study Area
- Edge of Proposed Roadway
- Cut and Fill
- Critical Habitat**
 - Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard
 - Coachella Valley milk vetch



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SOURCE: Google Earth (2018), US Fish and Wildlife Service (6/2020)
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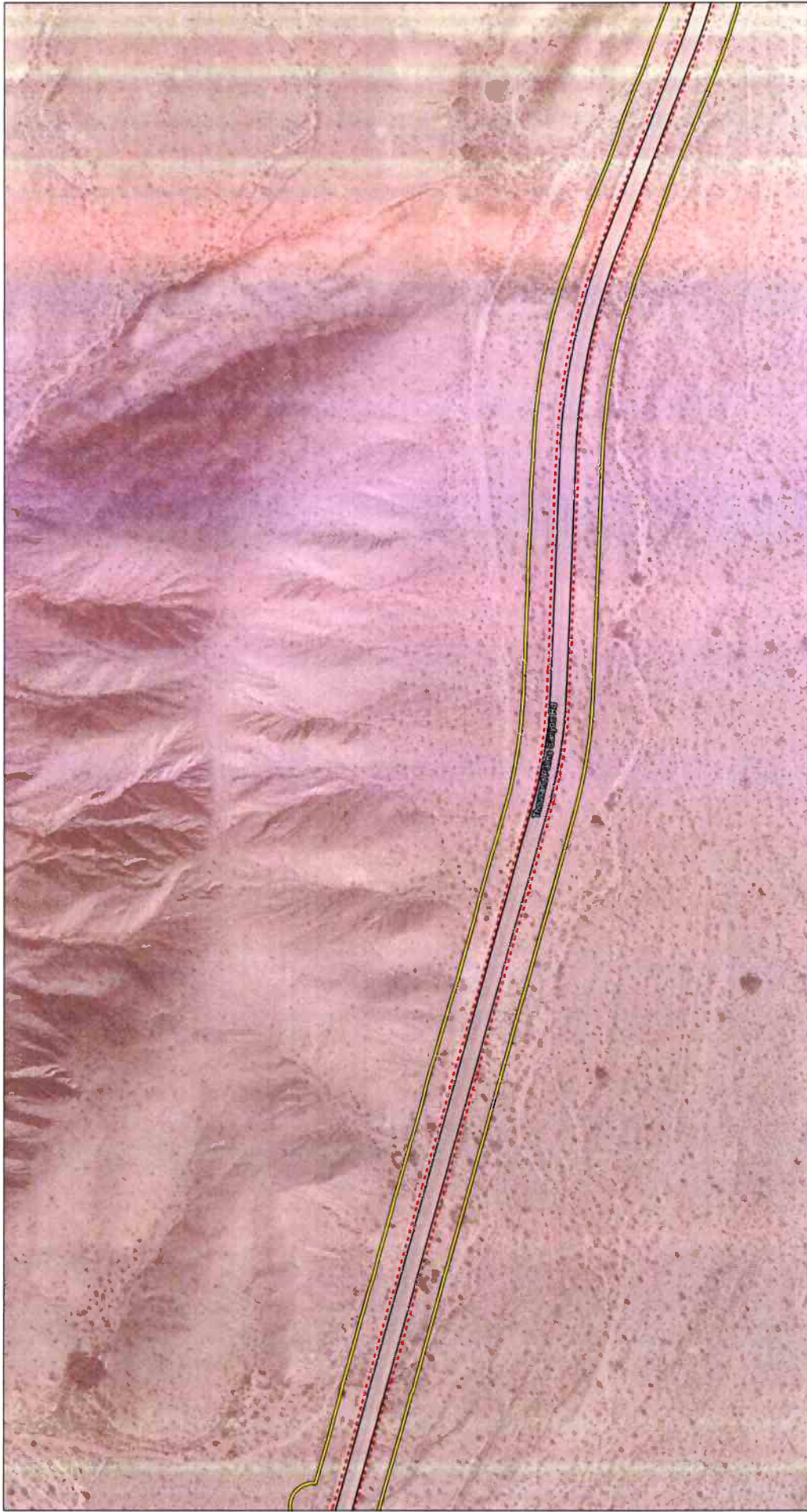
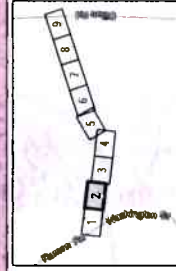


FIGURE 3
Sheet 2 of 9



LSA

LEGEND

- Biological Study Area
- Proposed Improvements
- Edge of Proposed Roadway
- Cut and Fill

Critical Habitat

- Coachella Valley Fringe-toed Lizard

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SOURCE: Google Earth (2018); US Fish and Wildlife Service (6/2020)
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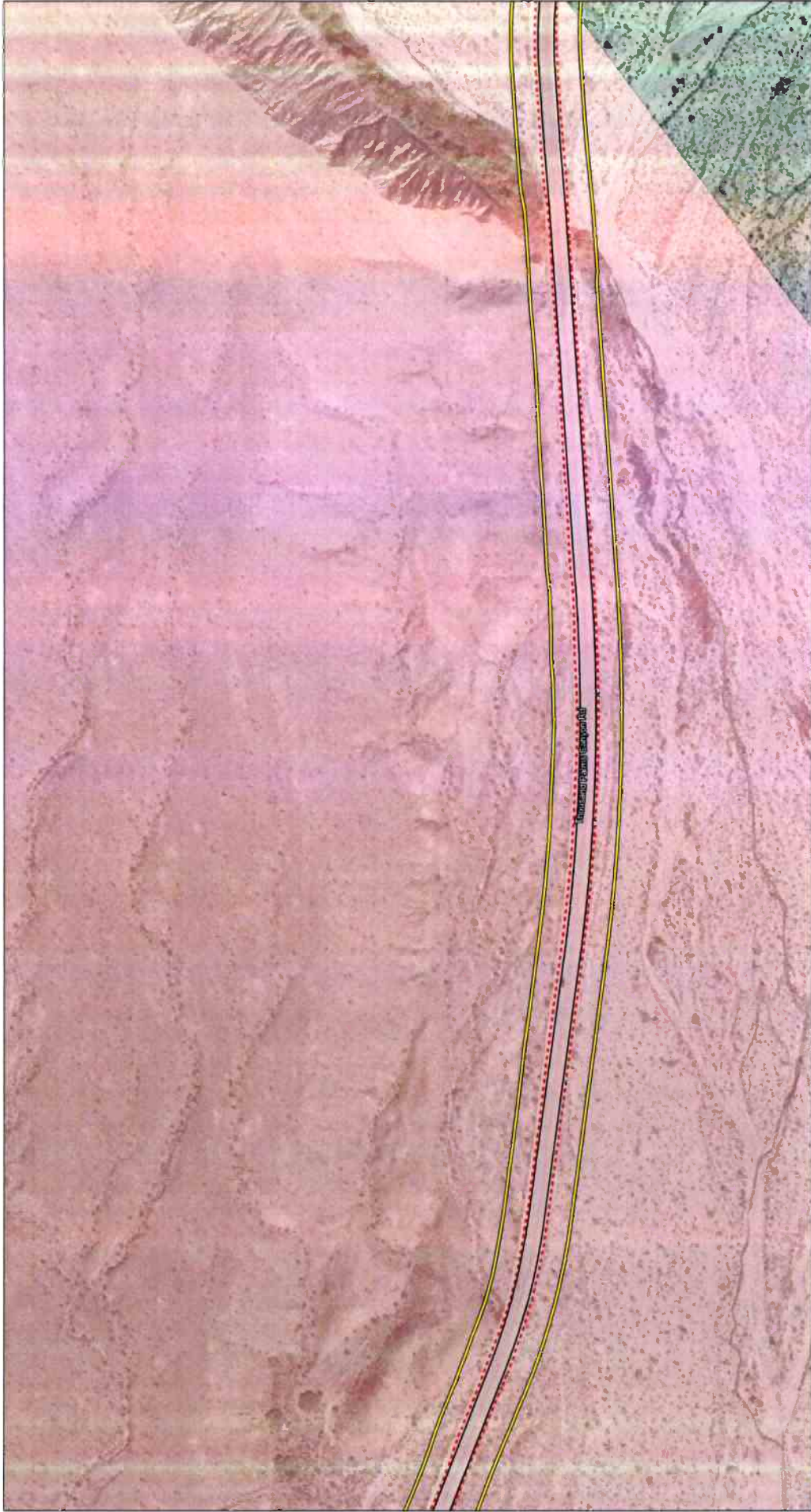
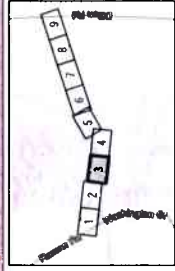


FIGURE 3
Sheet 3 of 9



LSA

LEGEND

- Biological Study Area
- Proposed Improvements
- Edge of Proposed Roadway
- Cut and Fill

Critical Habitat
Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard

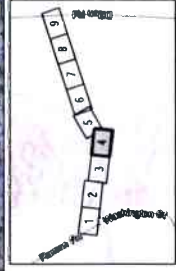
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SOURCE: Google Earth (2018), US Fish and Wildlife Service (6/2020)
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FIGURE 3
Sheet 4 of 9



LSA

LEGEND

- Biological Study Area
- Critical Habitat
- Proposed Improvements
- Edge of Proposed Roadway
- Cut and Fill

Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard

Critical Habitat

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SOURCE: Google Earth (2018), US Fish and Wildlife Service (6/2020)
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FIGURE 3
Sheet 5 of 9

LSA

LEGEND

- Biological Study Area
- Proposed Improvements
- Edge of Proposed Roadway
- Cut and Fill

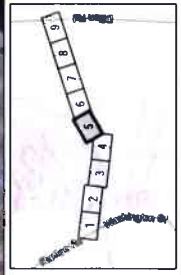
Critical Habitat

- Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard

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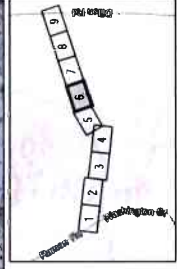
Thousand Palms Canyon Road Widening Project
Critical Habitat



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FIGURE 3
Sheet 6 of 9



LEGEND

-  Biological Study Area
-  Proposed Improvements
-  Edge of Proposed Roadway
-  Cut and Fill

Critical Habitat
Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard

LSA



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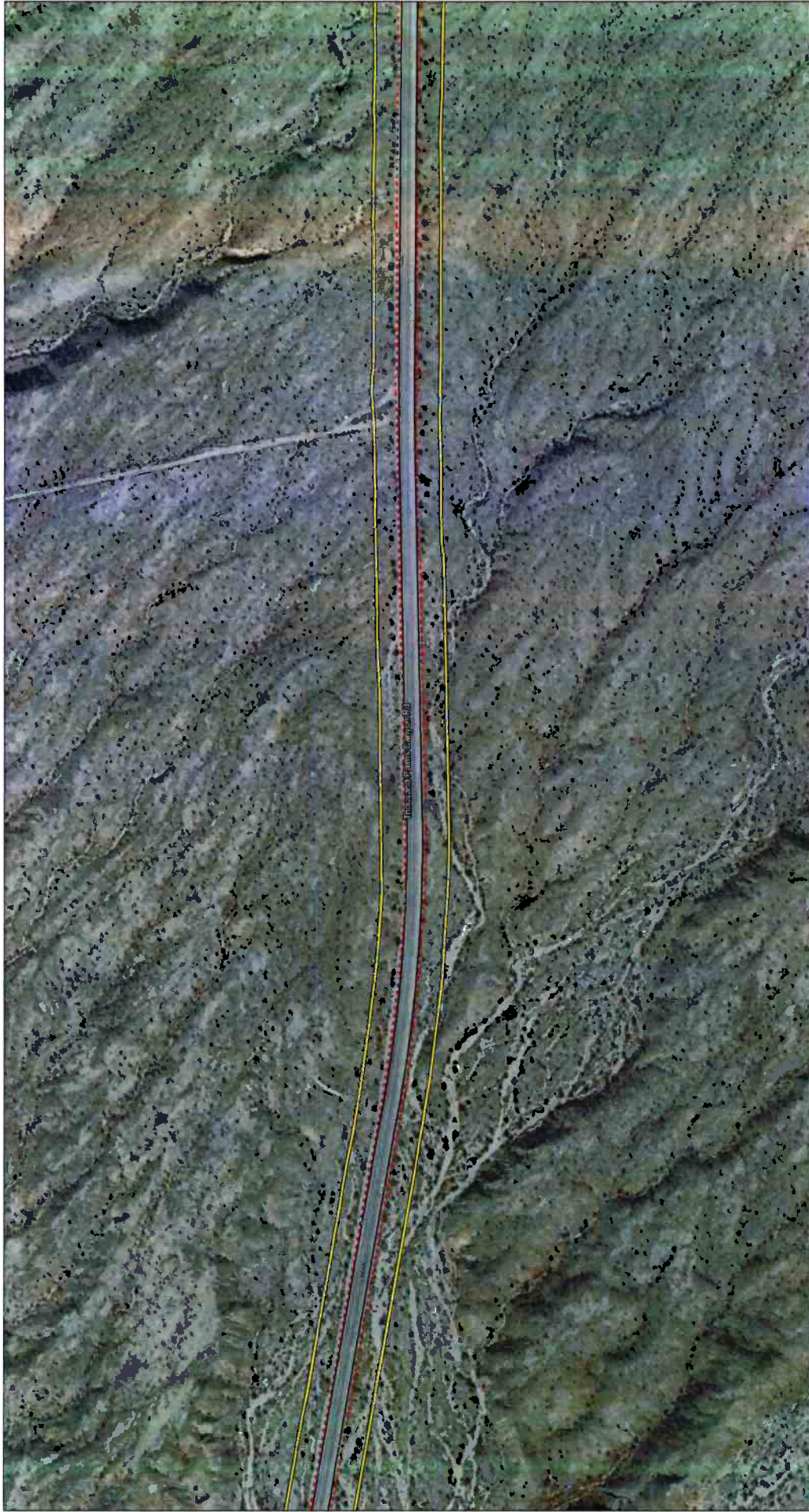
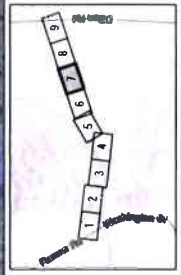


FIGURE 3
Sheet 7 of 9



LEGEND

- Biological Study Area
- Proposed Improvements
- Edge of Proposed Roadway
- Cut and Fill

Critical Habitat

- Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard

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SOURCE: Google Earth (2018), US Fish and Wildlife Service (6/2020)
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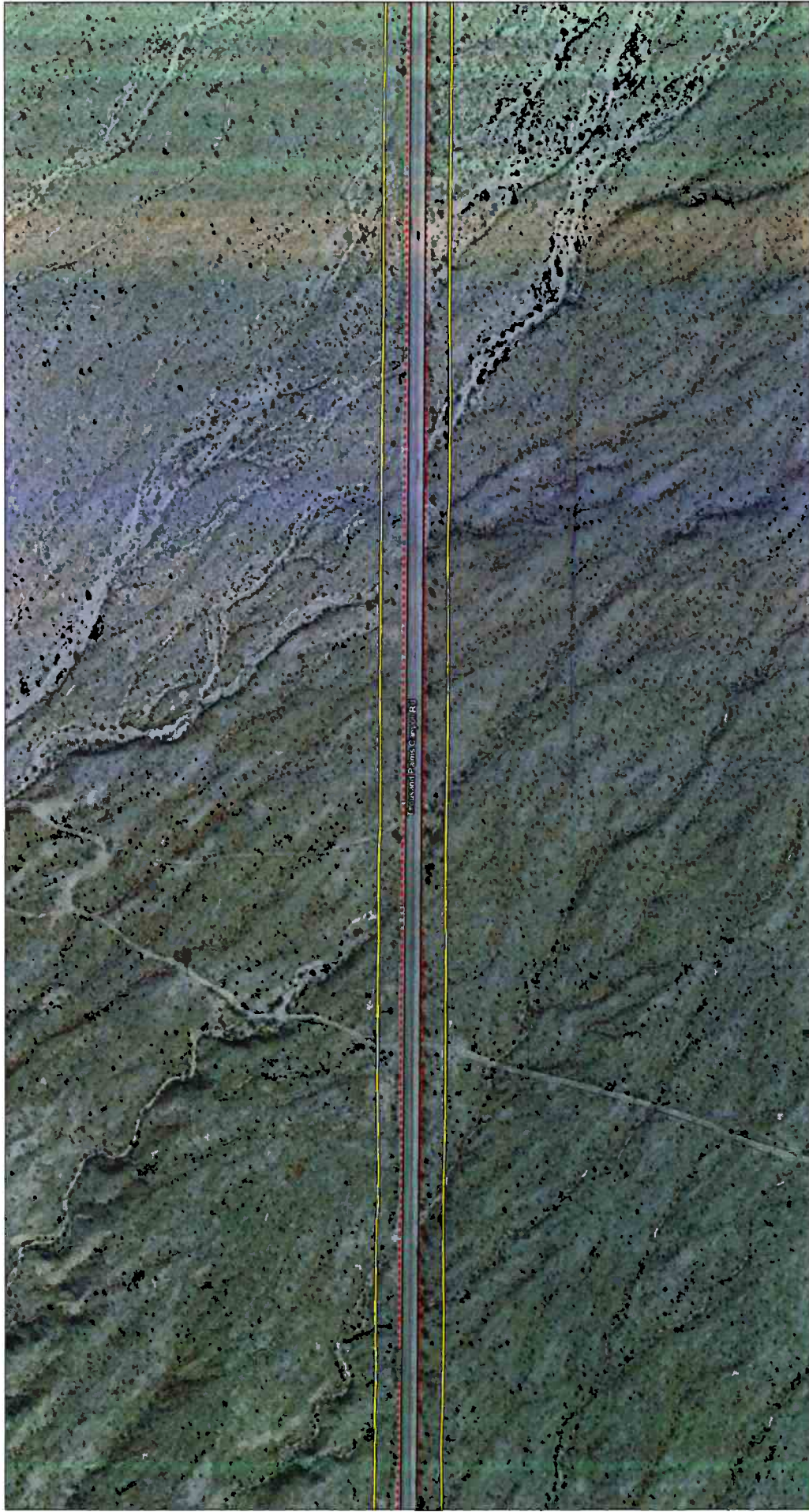
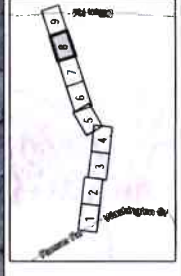


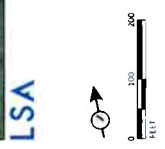
FIGURE 3
Sheet 8 of 9



LEGEND

- Biological Study Area
- Proposed Improvements
- Edge of Proposed Roadway
- Cut and Fill

Critical Habitat
Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard

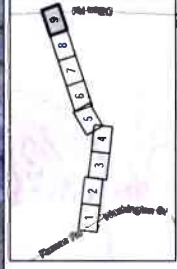


SOURCE: Google Earth (2018); US Fish and Wildlife Service (6/2020)
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FIGURE 3
Sheet 9 of 9



LEGEND

- Biological Study Area
- Proposed Improvements
- Edge of Proposed Roadway
- Cut and Fill

Critical Habitat
Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard

LSA



SOURCE: Google Earth (2018), US Fish and Wildlife Service (6/2020)
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LSA

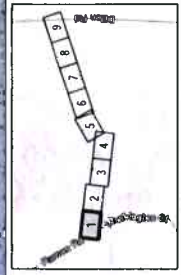
LEGEND

- Biological Study Area
- California Fan Palm Oasis
- Creosote Bush Scrub
- Disturbed/Developed
- Allscale Scrub
- Bush Sheepweed Scrub
- Mesquite Thickets



SOURCE: Google Earth (2018)
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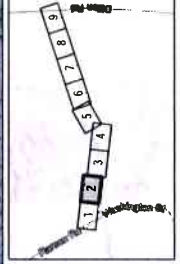
FIGURE 4
 Sheet 1 of 9



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FIGURE 4
Sheet 2 of 9



Thousand Palms Canyon Road Widening Project
Vegetation and Land Use

- LEGEND**
- Biological Study Area
 - California Fan Palm Oasis
 - Creosote Bush Scrub
 - Allscale Scrub
 - Disturbed/Developed
 - Bush Sheepweed Scrub
 - Mesquite Thickets

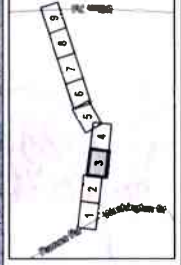
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SOURCE: Google Earth (2018)
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FIGURE 4
Sheet 3 of 9



Thousand Palms Canyon Road Widening Project
Vegetation and Land Use

- LEGEND
- Biological Study Area
 - Vegetation
 - Creosote Bush Scrub
 - Disturbed/Developed
 - Riparian/Wetlands

LSA

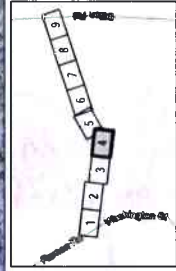
SOURCE: Google Earth (2018)

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FIGURE 4
Sheet 4 of 9



- LEGEND**
- Biological Study Area
 - California Fan Palm Oasis
 - Creosote Bush Scrub
 - Disturbed/Developed
 - Aikscale Scrub
 - Bush Scaepweed Scrub
 - Mesquite Thickets

LSA

0 100 200
111'

SOURCE: Google Earth (2018)

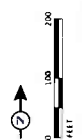
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LSA

- LEGEND**
- Biological Study Area
 - California Fan Palm Oasis
 - Creosote Bush Scrub
 - Allscale Scrub
 - Disturbed/Developed
 - Bush Seepweed Scrub
 - Mesquite Thickets



SOURCE: Google Earth (2018)

PROJECT: 074655\X40\BAA_Vegetation Land Use.mxd (4/17/2020)

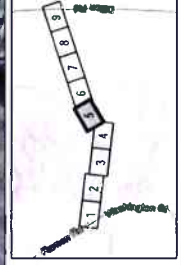


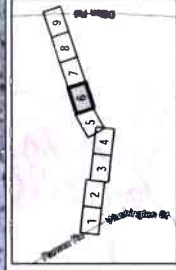
FIGURE 4
Sheet 5 of 9

Thousand Palms Canyon Road Widening Project
Vegetation and Land Use

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FIGURE 4
Sheet 6 of 9



Thousand Palms Canyon Road Widening Project
Vegetation and Land Use

- LEGEND**
- Biological Study Area
 - California Fan Palm Oasis
 - Creosote Bush Scrub
 - Allscale Scrub
 - Disturbed/Developed
 - Bush Scaepweed Scrub
 - Mesquite Thickets

LSA

0 100 200
FEET

SOURCE: Google Earth (2018)
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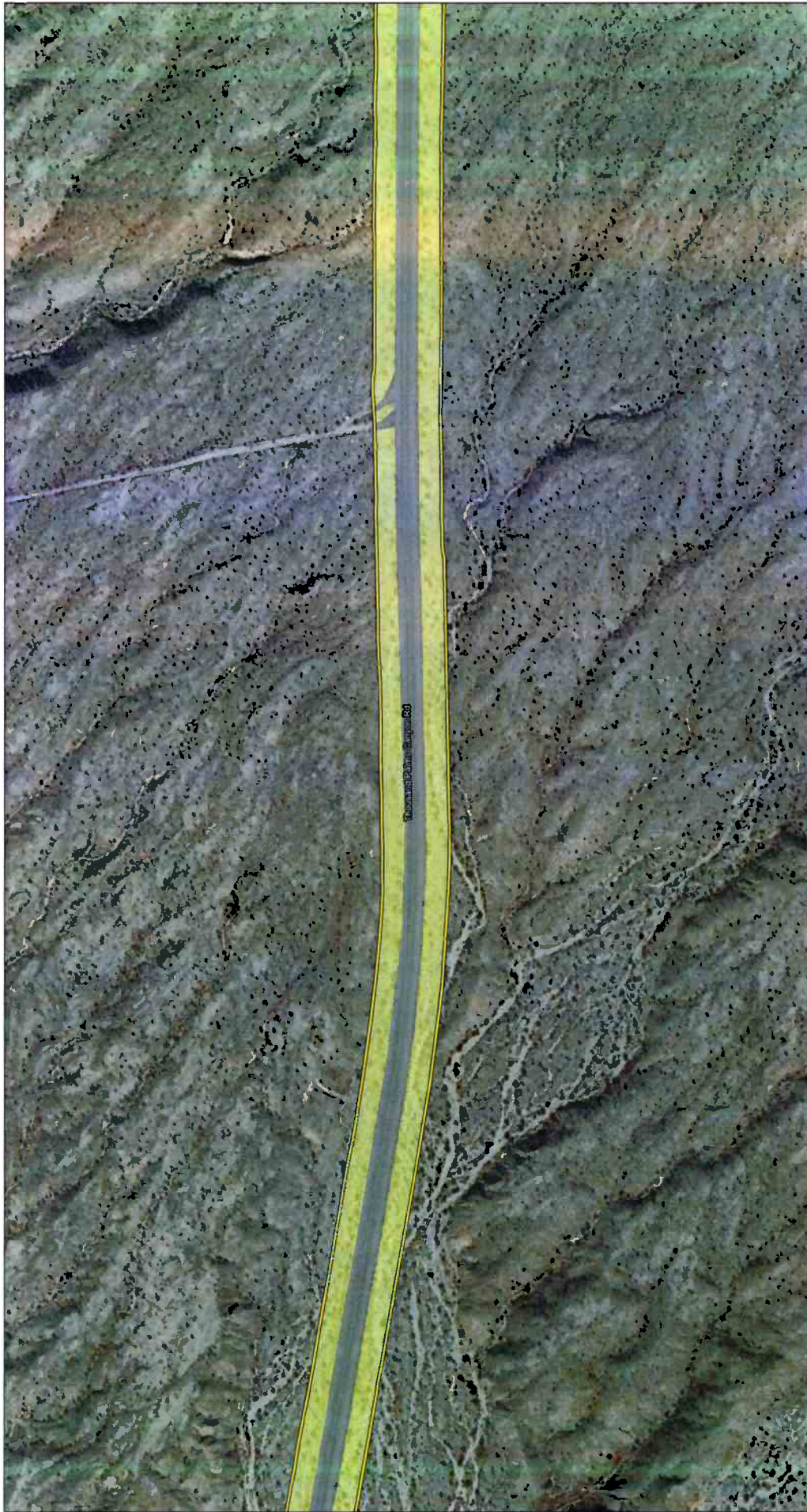
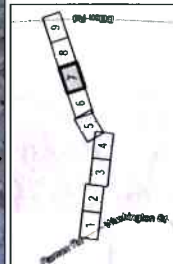


FIGURE 4
Sheet 7 of 9



Thousand Palms Canyon Road Widening Project
Vegetation and Land Use

- LEGEND**
- Biological Study Area
 - California Fan Palm Oasis
 - Creosote Bush Scrub
 - Disturbed/Developed
 - Allscale Scrub
 - Bush Sheepweed Scrub
 - Mesquite Thickets

LSA

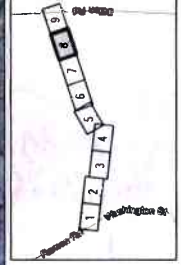
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FEET

SOURCE: Google Earth (2018)
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FIGURE 4
Sheet 8 of 9



Thousand Palms Canyon Road Widening Project
Vegetation and Land Use

- LEGEND**
- Biological Study Area
 - California Fan Palm Oasis
 - Creosote Bush Scrub
 - Allscale Scrub
 - Disturbed/Developed
 - Bush Scaevola Scrub
 - Mesquite Thickets

LSA

0 100 200
feet

111°

111°

SOURCE: Google Earth (2018)
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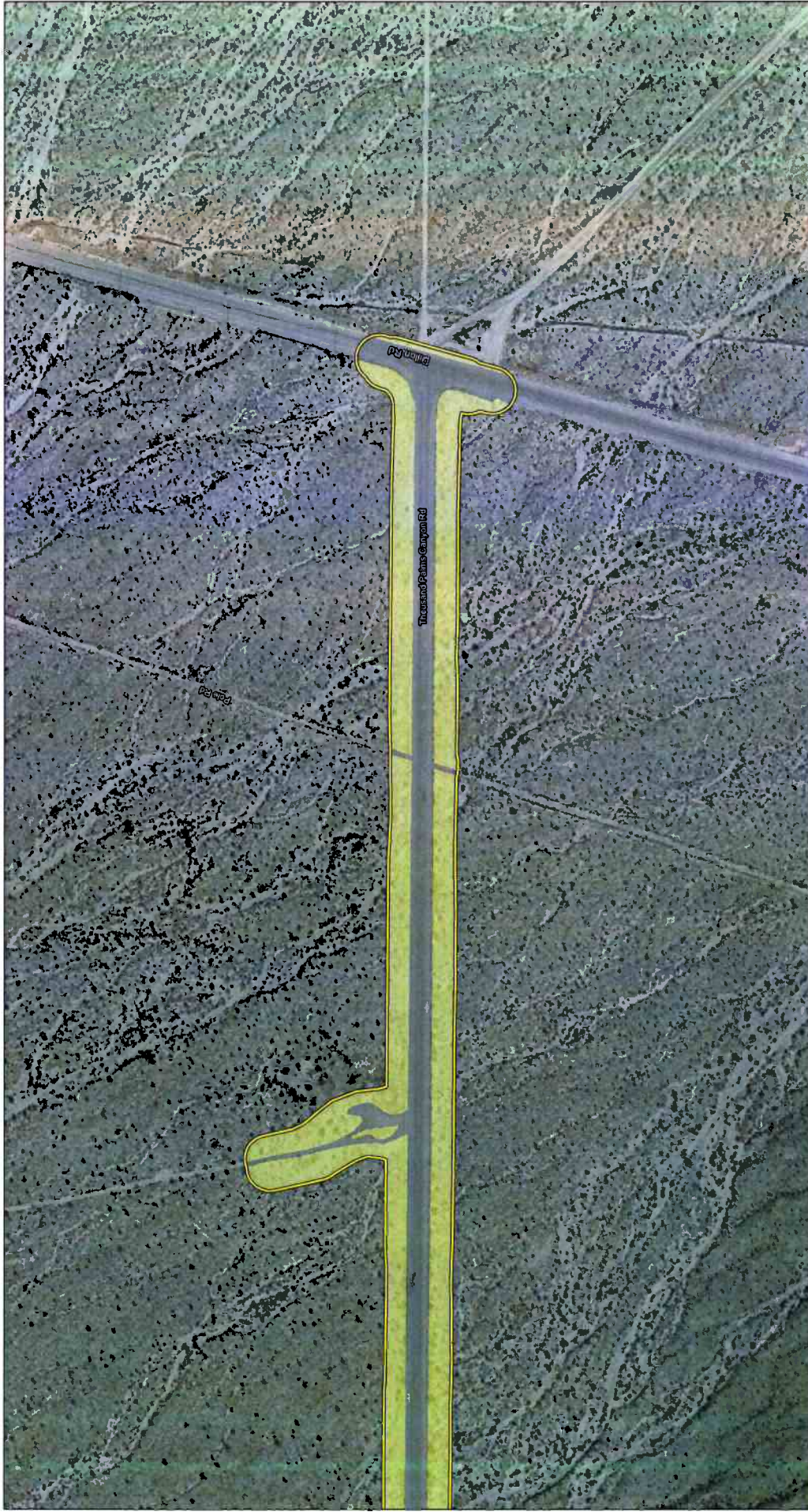
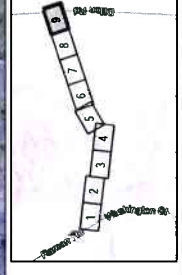


FIGURE 4
Sheet 9 of 9



- LEGEND**
- Biological Study Area
 - California Fan Palm Oasis
 - Creosote Bush Scrub
 - Disturbed/Developed
 - Allscale Scrub
 - Bush Sweepweed Scrub
 - Mesquite Thickets

LSA

0 100 200
FEET

SOURCE: Google Earth (2018)
PROJECT: 027GIS\MKD\BBA_Vegetation_Land Use.mxd (6/17/2020)

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Additionally, the southern portion of the project lies within mapped federally designated Critical Habitat for the federally listed threatened and State-listed endangered Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard (CVFTL) (USFWS, 45 FR: 63812). The CVFTL is a Covered Species under the CVMShCP, Take Authorization is provided through the permits issued in conjunction with the CVMShCP Implementation Agreement. Through participation in the CVMShCP, the project would not adversely affect CVFTL critical habitat. Therefore, the project would result in a less than significant impact to natural communities and no mitigation is proposed.

The USACE regulates discharges of dredged or fill material into waters of the United States. These waters include wetlands and non-wetland bodies of water that meet specific criteria, including a direct or indirect connection to interstate commerce. The USACE regulatory jurisdiction pursuant to Section 404 of the CWA is founded on a connection, or nexus, between the water body in question and interstate commerce. This connection may be direct (through a tributary system linking a stream channel with traditional navigable waters used in interstate or foreign commerce), or it may be indirect (through a nexus identified in the USACE regulations). In order to be considered a jurisdictional wetland under Section 404, an area must possess three wetland characteristics, each with its unique set of mandatory wetland criteria: hydrophytic vegetation, hydric soils, and wetland hydrology.

The CDFW, under Sections 1600 through 1616 of the California Fish and Game Code, regulates alterations to lakes, rivers, and streams (defined by the presence of a channel bed and banks, and at least an intermittent flow of water) where fish or wildlife resources may be adversely affected.

The RWQCB is responsible for the administration of Section 401 of the CWA. Typically, the areas subject to jurisdiction of the RWQCB coincide with those of the USACE (i.e., waters of the U.S., including any wetlands). The RWQCB may also assert authority over “waters of the State” under waste discharge requirements pursuant to the Porter-Cologne Act (Act), which is defined under the Act as “any surface water or groundwater, including saline waters, within the boundaries of the state.”

Based on the results of the jurisdictional delineation, the BSA does not contain potential wetland or non-wetland waters of the United States subject to the regulatory authority of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) pursuant to Section 404 of the Federal Clean Water Act (CWA). However, the BSA does contain approximately 4.35 acres of potential streambed and 0.24 acre of riparian vegetation subject to the regulatory authority of California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). Drainage 1 and the ephemeral drainages within the BSA may be subject to the State’s Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act.

The project will not affect CDFW riparian habitat; however, the project is anticipated to permanently affect approximately ~~0.015~~ 0.014 acre of CDFW streambed. The project will not result in temporary effects to and temporarily affect approximately ~~0.012~~ 0.012 acre of CDFW streambed. Therefore, with implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-03, as detailed below, the project would result in a less than significant impact to riparian resources.

- c) Have adverse effect on State or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?**

Less Than Significant Impact. Based on the results of the jurisdictional delineation, the BSA does not contain potential wetland or non-wetland waters of the United States subject to the regulatory authority of the USACE pursuant Section 404 of the CWA. However, it does contain approximately 4.35 acres of potential streambed and 0.24 acre of riparian vegetation subject to the regulatory authority of CDFW and the project is anticipated to permanently affect approximately ~~0.015~~ 0.014 acre of CDFW streambed; therefore, it is subject to the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act.

The project will not affect CDFW riparian habitat. Therefore, the project would result in a less than significant impact to riparian resources with no mitigation proposed.

Under Section b, the CDFW Streambed Alteration Agreement is discussed.

- d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native or resident migratory wildlife corridors, or impeded the use of native wildlife nursery sites?**

Less Than Significant Impact. Wildlife movement and habitat fragmentation are important issues in assessing effects to wildlife. Habitat fragmentation occurs when a proposed action results in a single, unified habitat area being divided into two or more areas such that the division isolates the two new areas from each other. Isolation of habitat occurs when wildlife cannot move freely from one portion of the habitat to another or from one habitat type to another. An example is the fragmentation of habitats within and around “checkerboard” residential development. Habitat fragmentation can also occur when a portion of one or more habitats is converted into another habitat, as when scrub habitats are converted into annual grassland habitat because of frequent burning.

Local wildlife movement may be temporarily disrupted during any vegetation removal associated with construction, but this effect would be localized and short term. Therefore, the project would result in a less than significant impact to wildlife movement with no mitigation required.

- e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?**

No Impact. The proposed project would not conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources. Per Riverside County Ordinance 559, “No person shall remove any living native tree on any parcel or property greater than one-half acre in size, located in an area above 5,000 feet in elevation and within the unincorporated area of the County of Riverside, without first obtaining a permit to do so.” The project will not impact any native trees above 5,000 feet. Further, through participation in the CVMSHCP, the project would not conflict with any local policies or ordinances; therefore, no mitigation is proposed.

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?

No Impact. The CVMSHCP is a comprehensive, multi-jurisdictional habitat conservation plan focusing on the conservation of species and their associated habitats in the Coachella Valley region of Riverside County. The overall goal of the CVMSHCP is to maintain and enhance biological diversity and ecosystem processes within the region while allowing for future economic growth. As described in the *Biological Resources Assessment and CVMSHCP Consistency Analysis* (LSA April 2020), the project lies within the Thousand Palms and Indio Hills/Joshua Tree National Park Linkage Conservation Areas of the CVMSHCP. The project is subject to the requirements of the CVMSHCP and there is no impact on the plan.

Mitigation pertaining to the Entire Biological Resources Section

BIO-1: Pre-construction Le Conte's Thrasher Survey. In order to avoid impacts to the Le Conte's thrasher, per the CVMSHCP during the nesting season (January 15 through August 31), prior to the start of construction activities, surveys shall be conducted by an acceptable biologist on the construction site and within 500 feet of the construction site, or to the property boundary if less than 500 feet. If nesting Le Conte's thrashers are found, a 500-foot Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA), or to the property boundary if less than 500 feet, shall be established around the nest site. The ESA shall be staked and flagged. No construction shall be permitted within the ESA during the breeding season of January 15 through August 31 or until the young have fledged.

BIO-2: Pre-construction Burrowing Owl Survey. A pre-construction burrowing owl survey would be conducted in all areas of suitable habitat within project limit using an accepted protocol. Prior to construction, a qualified biologist shall survey the construction area including a 500-foot buffer, or to the edge of the property if less than 500 feet, for burrows that could be used by burrowing owl. If a burrow is located, the biologist shall determine whether an owl is present in the burrow. If the burrow is determined to be occupied, the burrow shall be flagged and a 160-foot buffer during the non-breeding season or a 250-foot buffer during the breeding season or a buffer to the edge of the property boundary if less than 500 feet shall be established around the burrow. The buffer area shall be staked and flagged. No development activities shall be permitted within the buffer until the young are no longer dependent on the burrow.

BIO-3: Prior to commencement of construction activities for permanent impacts in jurisdictional features, the project shall obtain authorizations from the RWQCB pursuant to *Procedures for Discharge for Discharges of Dredged or Fill Material to Waters of the State or State Water Resources Control Board Water Quality Order No. 2004-0004-DWQ* and from the CDFW pursuant to Section 1602 of the California Fish and Game Code have been obtained.

The type, amount, and location of any required mitigation (including payment of fees or purchase of credits) shall be established by each regulatory agency during the review of any required authorization. As determined appropriate by each agency, the following shall be incorporated into required permit(s):

1. Off-site replacement and/or restoration of RWQCB jurisdictional “waters of the State” within the Colorado River Watershed at a ratio no less than 2:1 or within an adjacent watershed at a ratio no less than 2:1 for permanent impacts, and for any temporary impacts to restore the impact area to pre-project conditions (i.e., pre-project contours and revegetate where applicable). Off-site mitigation may occur on land acquired for the purpose of in-perpetuity preservation, or through the purchase of mitigation credits at an agency-approved off-site mitigation bank.
2. Off-site replacement and/or restoration of CDFW jurisdictional streambed and associated riparian habitat within the Colorado River Watershed at a ratio no less than 2:1 or within an adjacent watershed at a ratio no less than 2:1 for permanent impacts, and for any temporary impacts to restore the impact area to pre-project conditions (i.e., pre-project contours and revegetate where applicable). Off-site mitigation may occur on land acquired for the purpose of in-perpetuity preservation, or through the purchase of mitigation credits at an agency-approved off-site mitigation bank.

BIO-4: Worker Environmental Awareness Program. A Worker Environmental Awareness Program (WEAP) shall be implemented for work crews by a qualified biologist(s) prior to the commencement of construction activities and prior to site access by workers. Training materials and briefings shall include but not be limited to, discussion of the Federal and California Endangered Species Acts, the CVMSHCP, the consequences of noncompliance with project permitting requirements, identification and values of special-status plant and wildlife species and sensitive natural plant community habitats, fire protection measures, and hazardous substance spill prevention and containment measures.

V. Cultural Resources

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to §15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Source(s): Eastern Information Center (EIC) of the California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS), Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Title 36, Part 79, 36 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 79, Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC), Cultural Resource Assessment

Note: The discussion of Native American consultation and Tribal Cultural Resources is addressed separately (refer to Checklist Question 8).

Regulatory Setting

National Register of Historic Places (NRHP)

The National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) lists the historic significance and the eligibility for qualifying for such significance for a building, structure, or other site. Significance eligibility is determined based on the quality and integrity of the resource and its association to American history, architecture, and culture. The resources must also possess one or more of the following characteristics:

1. It is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad pattern of our history; or
2. It is associated with the lives of persons significant to our past; or
3. It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
4. It yields, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR)

The California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) operates similarly to the NRHP with almost the same structure for determining significance eligibility for potential historical resources. Generally, a resource is eligible for historical status under CRHR if it is greater than 50 years old as well as meets one or more of the following criteria:

1. It is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history, or the cultural heritage of California or the United States.
2. It is associated with the lives of persons important to local, California, or national history.

3. It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master or important creative individual, or possesses high artistic values.
4. Has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, California or the nation.

Public Resources Code Section 5097.5

California PRC Section 5097.5(a) mandates that one cannot, “knowingly and willfully” excavate, remove, or destroy any “historic or prehistoric ruins, burial grounds, archaeological or vertebrate paleontological site,” or “any other archaeological, paleontological or historical feature, situated on public lands, except with the express permission of the public agency having jurisdiction over the lands.” PRC Section 5097.5(b) defines public lands as those that are owned by or under the jurisdiction of any state or public authority or agency.

Riverside County General Plan

The County’s General Plan includes the following goals and policies related to cultural that are applicable to the proposed Project:

- OS 19.1 Cultural resources (both prehistoric and historic) are a valued part of the history of the County of Riverside.
- OS 19.5 Exercise sensitivity and respect for human remains from both prehistoric and historic time periods and comply with all applicable laws concerning such remains.

Findings of Fact

a) *Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to § 15064.5 (From California Environmental Quality Act: Determining the Significance of Impacts to Archaeological and Historical Resources)?*

No Impact. A literature and records search was conducted for the proposed project at the Eastern Information Center (EIC) of the California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS) at the University of California, Riverside. This search indicates 22 previous cultural resource investigations and 26 cultural resources documented within 1 mile of the Thousand Palms Canyon Road Project area. Four of the 26 previously identified cultural resources are located within or immediately adjacent to the project area, including a prehistoric trail segment (CA-RIV-531), prehistoric village site (CA-RIV-56), prehistoric isolate (33-012245), and a segment of historic-period Dillon Road (33-008410).

A review of historical maps indicates that the Thousand Palms Canyon Road was utilized as a wagon road leading to the Thousand Palms Oasis during the 1920s. By the 1930s, the existing dirt road was well traveled by campers in automobiles. At this time, the dirt road that was passable by automobile ended at the Thousand Palms Oasis. Beyond that point, the canyon route that led up and met Dillon Highway (now Dillon Road), was only a dirt trail. In the early 1950s, Riverside County built a new, gravel road and rerouted the existing dirt road around the Thousand Palms Oasis. The entire road was paved in 1961.

The project does not require the acquisition of right-of-way. The proposed widening will be within the existing alignment of Thousand Palms Canyon Road. Upon completion, the proposed project will serve a similar use, will be constructed within the same alignment and within the existing right-of-way, and will not remove or alter any historical features; therefore, there is no impact to historic resources and no mitigation is proposed.

b) *Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to § 15064.5?*

Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. An intensive pedestrian survey of the project area was conducted on December 10 and 11, 2019. An attempt was made to re-identify the previously recorded cultural resources located within or adjacent to the project area. Three of the cultural resources (CA-RIV-53T, CA-RIV-56, 33-012245) could not be identified. However, Dillon Highway (33-008410) was confirmed to be in the same condition as originally recorded.

Archaeological resources were located within or near the proposed project during the records search and through archaeological field surveys. The majority of the Project area is within the ROW of the modern Thousand Palms Canyon Road. None of the mapped soil series in the Project area has a buried A (Ab) horizon and all the soils lack well-developed A and B soil horizons. The depth for roadway construction is 3 feet below ground surface (bgs). These construction-related activities are unlikely to affect intact and significant buried archaeological resources because of the lack of well-developed soils within the Project area. However, a portion of the Project area (approximately 1.2 miles) is located within the recorded boundaries of prehistoric site CA-RIV-56. While no artifacts associated with CA-RIV-56 were observed within the Project area during AE's survey, no survey of the full extent of the site has been conducted to date. In addition, an accurate site map has never been prepared for CA-RIV-56, and the exact extent of the site boundary remains undetermined.

Therefore, archaeological monitoring is recommended for the portion of the Project within CA-RIV-56 not previously subjected to Extended Phase I (XPI) studies.

Mitigation Measures CUL-1 through CUL-6 have been identified to reduce potential impacts associated with such an inadvertent discovery to a less than significant level. For Measures CUL-1 through CUL-6, in the event that potentially significant archaeological materials are encountered during monitoring of construction, all work shall be halted in the vicinity of the discovery until the discovery has been assessed for significance and integrity of the find. If intact and significant archaeological remains are encountered, the impacts of the project must be mitigated appropriately. Any such discoveries, and subsequent evaluation and treatment, should be documented in a cultural resource report, which would be submitted to the EIC for archival purposes.

c) *Would the project disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?*

Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. Based on the archival research, there is no evidence that the project area has been used for human burials. No evidence of

human burials was observed during the pedestrian surveys of the project area. Due to the lack of formal cemeteries or informal burial plots within project area, there is a low potential that human remains would be uncovered during grading and other construction activities.

In the unlikely event human remains are discovered, compliance with State law (Health and Safety Code § 7050.5) (HSC § 7050.5) would be required. These requirements state that no further disturbance shall occur until the County Coroner has made the necessary findings as to origin. Further, pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 5097.98 (b), remains shall be left in place and free from disturbance until a final decision as to the treatment and their disposition has been made.

Human remains from other ethnic/cultural groups with recognized historical associations to the project area shall also be subject to consultation between appropriate representatives from that group and the County. Mitigation CUL-6 has been identified to reduce potential impacts associated with such an inadvertent discovery to a less than significant level.

Mitigation pertaining to the Entire Cultural Resources Section:

CUL-1: Cultural Resources Monitoring Plan. The Project Archaeologist, in consultation with the Monitoring Tribe(s), and the County shall develop a Cultural Resources Monitoring Plan (CRMP) to address the details, timing, and responsibility of all archaeological and cultural activities that will occur on the project site. Details in the CRMP shall include:

- Project grading and development scheduling.
- The coordination of a monitoring schedule as agreed upon by the Monitoring Tribe(s), the Project Archaeologist, and the County.
- The protocols and stipulations that the County, Monitoring Tribe(s), and Project Archaeologist shall follow in the event of inadvertent cultural resources discoveries, including any newly discovered cultural resources. They have the authority to stop all work within 60 feet of the find.

CUL-2: Train Construction Personnel. Prior to any grading, excavation, and/or other ground-disturbing activities on the project site, the Project Archaeologist and the Monitoring Tribe(s) shall conduct cultural resources sensitivity training for all construction personnel. Construction personnel shall be informed of the types of archaeological resources that may be encountered and of the proper procedures to be enacted in the event of an inadvertent discovery of archaeological resources or human remains. The County's construction manager shall ensure that construction personnel are made available for and attend the training, and shall retain documentation demonstrating attendance.

CUL-3: Monitoring. All artifacts/cultural material discovered at the project site shall be inventoried and analyzed by the Project Archaeologist and Native American tribal monitor(s). If any cultural materials of Native American origin are discovered, all activities in the immediate vicinity of the find (within a 60-foot radius) shall stop. The Project Archaeologist and Native American tribal monitor(s) shall analyze the Native American cultural materials for identification as everyday life and/or religious or sacred

items, cultural affiliation, temporal placement, and function, as deemed possible. The significance of Native American resources shall be evaluated in accordance with the provisions of CEQA and shall consider the religious beliefs, customs, and practices of the tribe(s). All items found in association with Native American human remains shall be considered grave goods or sacred in origin and subject to special handling.

CUL-4: Inadvertent Discoveries. In the event that Native American cultural resources are inadvertently discovered during the course of grading for this project, the following procedures shall be carried out for the treatment and disposition of the discoveries:

- **Curation:** The County shall relinquish ownership of all cultural resources. Native American cultural materials that cannot be avoided or relocated at the project site shall be prepared for curation. The Project Archaeologist, following consultation with the Monitoring Tribe(s), shall deliver the materials to a qualified repository in Riverside County that meets or exceeds federal standards per Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Title 36, Part 79, and that shall be made available to all qualified researchers and tribal representatives.
- **Temporary On-Site Curation and Storage:** During the course of construction, all discovered resources shall be secured on site in the mobile office. The removal of any cultural materials from the project site will need to be thoroughly inventoried, with Native American Tribal Monitor oversight of the process.
- **Treatment and Final Disposition:** The County shall relinquish ownership of all cultural resources, including sacred items, burial goods, and all cultural materials and nonhuman remains, as part of the required mitigation for impacts to cultural resources within the County right-of-way. The County shall relinquish the cultural materials through the following method and provide the cultural materials to the Consulting Tribe(s):
 - For on-site reburial of the discovered items this shall include measures and provisions to protect the future reburial area from any future impacts. Reburial shall not occur until all cataloguing and basic recordation have been completed.

CUL-5: Reporting. The Project Archaeologist shall prepare a final archaeological report within 60 days of project completion. The report shall follow Cultural Resource Management Plan (CRMP) Guidelines and County requirements and shall include at a minimum: a discussion of monitoring methods and techniques used; the results of the monitoring program, including any cultural materials recovered; an inventory of any resources recovered; updated State Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) forms, if any, and any other site(s) identified; final disposition of the resources; and any additional recommendations. A final copy shall be submitted to the County, the Eastern Information Center, and the Monitoring Tribe(s).

CUL-6: Discovery of Human Remains. In the event human remains are encountered, State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 states that no further disturbance shall occur and halt all work within 60 feet until the County Coroner has made a determination of origin and disposition pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 5097.98. The County Coroner must be notified of the find immediately. If the remains are determined to be

Native American, the County Coroner will notify the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC), which will determine and notify a Most Likely Descendant (MLD). The archaeologist who discovered the remains will contact the County so that they may work with the MLD to inspect the site of the discovery. The MLD shall complete the inspection within 48 hours of notification by the NAHC. The MLD will have the opportunity to offer recommendations for the disposition of the remains.

VI. Energy

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Result in a potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Source(s): California Assembly Bill (AB) 32 (2006), California Air Resources Board (ARB), County of Riverside Climate Action Plan (CAP) Update (November 2019).

Regulatory Setting

USEPA establishes energy standards at the federal level. USEPA also establishes fuel efficiency standards for automobiles and other modes of transportation.

Renewables Portfolio Standard Program

Established in 2002 under Senate Bill 1078, California established its Renewables Portfolio Standard (RPS) Program, which was accelerated in 2006 under Senate Bill 107. The RPS required 20 percent of electricity sales to be served by renewable energy sources by 2010. In 2008, Executive Order S-14-08 was signed into law requiring retail sellers of electricity to serve 33 percent of their load with renewable energy by 2020. In October 2015, Senate Bill (SB) 350 was enacted to codify California's climate and clean energy goals. SB 350 requires retail sellers of electricity and publicly owned utilities to procure 50 percent of their electricity from renewable sources by 2030.¹⁰

California Building Code

The State of California provides a minimum standard for building design and construction standards through Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR), known as the California Building Code (CBC). The CBC is updated every three years, and the current 2016 CBC went into effect in January 2017. Compliance with Title 24 is mandatory at the time new building permits are issued by local governments. Generally, the CBC is adopted on a jurisdiction-by-jurisdiction basis, subject to further modification based on local conditions.

The California Building Standards Commission (CBSC) adopted Part 11 of the Title 24 Building Energy Efficiency Standards (also referred to as the California Green Building Standards Code, or CALGreen) in 2010 as part of the State's efforts to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and reducing energy consumption from residential and nonresidential buildings. CALGreen code covers the following five categories: (1) planning and design, (2) energy efficiency, (3) water efficiency and conservation, (4) material conservation and resource efficiency, and (5) indoor environmental quality.

¹⁰ California Energy Commission. Renewable Portfolio Standard. Website: <https://www.energy.ca.gov/portfolio/> (accessed February 12, 2019).

Findings of Fact

a) *Would the project result in a potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction?*

Less Than Significant Impact. The proposed project would include improvements to the Thousand Palms Canyon Road. Consumption of energy resources would occur during construction. Heavy-duty construction equipment associated with demolition and construction activities for construction would rely on diesel fuel, as would vendor trucks involved in delivery of materials to the project site. Construction workers would travel to and from the project site throughout the duration of construction. It is assumed in this analysis that construction workers would travel to and from the site in gasoline-powered light-duty vehicles.

Heavy-duty construction equipment of various types would be used during each phase of project construction. The RoadMod provided a default list of the equipment and operating hour usage for each phase of construction. The project’s construction equipment is estimated to operate a total combined 7,445 hours for a 2-month period.

Fuel consumption from construction equipment was estimated by converting the total carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions from each construction phase to gallons using the conversion factors for CO₂ to gallons of gasoline or diesel. Construction is anticipated to occur in 2021. The conversion factor for gasoline is 8.78 kilograms per metric ton CO₂ per gallon, and the conversion factor for diesel is 10.21 kilograms per metric ton of CO₂ per gallon.¹¹

Table F shows the estimated diesel fuel usage from construction equipment.

Table F: Construction Equipment Diesel Demand

Phase	Piece of Equipment	Equipment CO ₂ (MT)	Kg/CO ₂ /Gallon	Gallons
Grubbing/Land Clearing	13	4.13	10.21	404.51
Grading/Excavation	25	76.65	10.21	7,507.35
Drainage/Utilities/Subgrade	20	30.15	10.21	2,952.99
Paving	17	7.57	10.21	741.43
Total				11,606.27

Source: Compiled by LSA Associates, Inc. (January 2021). kg/CO₂/Gallon (The Climate Registry 2020).

Notes: CO₂ = carbon dioxide; MT = metric ton; kg = kilogram.

Fuel consumption from worker- and vendor-truck trips are estimated by converting the total CO₂ emissions from each construction phase to gallons using the conversion factors for CO₂ to gallons of gasoline or diesel. A total of approximately 192 worker vehicle trips and 35 haul truck trips would occur at the proposed project site. Worker vehicles are assumed to be gasoline and vendor vehicles are assumed to be diesel. Tables G and H provide calculations for daily worker- and vendor-truck fuel consumption for a 2-month maintenance period.

¹¹ The Climate Registry. 2020 default emission factors. <https://www.theclimateregistry.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/The-Climate-Registry-2020-Default-Emission-Factor-Document.pdf>.

Table G: Construction Worker Gasoline Demand

Phase	VMT/day	Vehicle MT CO ₂	Kg/CO ₂ /Gallon	Gallons
Grubbing/Land Clearing	680	0.94	8.78	107.06
Grading/Excavation	1,280	7.98	8.78	908.88
Drainage/Utilities/Subgrade	1,000	4.15	8.78	472.67
Paving	880	1.83	8.78	208.43
Total				1,697.04

Source: Compiled by LSA Associates, Inc. (January 2021). kg/CO₂/Gallon (The Climate Registry 2020)

Notes: CO₂ = carbon dioxide; MT = metric ton; kg = kilogram.

Table H: Construction Vendor and Haul Truck Diesel Demand

Phase	Vendor Trips/day	Total Haul Truck VMT/period	Vehicle MT CO ₂	Kg/CO ₂ /Gallon	Gallons
Grubbing/Land Clearing	1	40	0.33	10.21	32.32
Grading/Excavation	7	220	7.38	10.21	722.82
Drainage/Utilities/Subgrade	4	130	2.91	10.21	285.01
Paving	7	220	2.46	10.21	240.94
Total					1,281.10

Source: Compiled by LSA Associates, Inc. (January 2021). kg/CO₂/Gallon (The Climate Registry 2020)

Notes: CO₂ = carbon dioxide; MT = metric ton; kg = kilogram.

In summary, construction of the project is conservatively anticipated to consume 1,697 gallons of gasoline and 12,887 gallons of diesel (including equipment and haul/vendor trucks), which would be consumed over approximately two months. By comparison, California’s consumption of petroleum is approximately 74.8 million gallons per day. Based on these assumptions, approximately 32.9 billion gallons of petroleum would be consumed in California over the course of the construction period.¹² Limiting construction equipment idling would ensure energy use is efficient and not wasteful or unnecessary during project construction. As such, the proposed project would result in a less than significant impact and no mitigation is proposed.

b) Would the project conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy resources or energy efficiency?

No Impact. California Assembly Bill (AB) 32 in 2006, required the ARB develop a climate change scoping plan that included directives for local governments to reduce GHG emissions associated with land use 15 percent below baseline levels by 2020. The County adopted its first CAP in 2015 that included GHG inventories of communitywide and municipal sources using the baseline data for the year 2008. The 2015 CAP included the GHG reduction target of 15 percent below 2008 levels by 2020. The inventory baseline year 2008, was established as a starting point against which other inventories may be compared and targets may be set, and was the earliest year with a full emissions inventory. As recommended in the AB 32 Scoping Plan, the County had set a target to reduce emissions back to 1990 levels by the year 2020. Based on the County’s socioeconomic growth projections pursuant to the 2015 General Plan Update, this target was

¹² U.S. Energy Information Administration. 2020. California Profile Data <https://www.eia.gov/state/data.php?sid=CA#ConsumptionExpenditures>.

calculated as a 15 percent decrease from 2008 levels by 2020 and was determined sufficient for the County to meet the AB 32 target. The most recent inventory has the most relevant data for planning purposes, whereas multiple inventory years provide context and may help identify trends or anomalies in the community emissions.

According to the *County of Riverside Climate Action Plan (CAP) Update* (November 2019), the County committed to planning sustainably for the future while ensuring a livable, equitable, and economically vibrant community. Planning sustainably included “acknowledging the local role in climate change and the ways in which the County can mitigate the GHG emissions resulting from the County’s growth and development in different economic sectors. By using energy more efficiently, harnessing renewable energy to power buildings, recycling waste, and enhancing access to sustainable transportation modes, Riverside County can keep dollars in its local economy, create new green jobs, and improve the community’s health, safety, and welfare in addition to addressing climate change.”

The County has implemented a number of sustainability and conservation efforts and seeks to continue those efforts through local planning and partnerships. The CAP update integrates the County’s past and current efforts with its future efforts to grow and thrive sustainably. Moreover, this project does not conflict with the CAP and it is not a capacity-increasing project. There are no impacts and no mitigation is proposed.

GHG emissions associated with the project would occur over the short term from construction activities, consisting primarily of emissions from equipment and vehicle exhaust. The calculation presented in Table I under the Greenhouse Gas Emissions section of this report, includes construction emissions in terms of annual carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂e) GHG emissions.

VII. Geology and Soils

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

Source(s): United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Society of Vertebrate Paleontology (SVP), Paleontological Mitigation Plan (PMP), Riverside County General Plan, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Web Soil Survey (www.websoilsurvey.sc.egov.usda.gov).

Regulatory Setting

Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act Following the 1971 San Fernando earthquake, the State legislature passed the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning (AP) Act, which regulates developments near known active faults due to hazards associated with surface ruptures. Pursuant to the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act, development areas in or near the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone require evaluation for potential surface ruptures in order to ensure public safety.

Seismic Hazards Mapping Act

The State legislature passed the Seismic Hazards Mapping Act (SHMA) to ensure public safety in regard to the effects of strong ground shaking, liquefaction, landslides, and other seismic hazards.

Pursuant to the SHMA, the California Geological Survey (CGS) has established a statewide mapping program for cities and counties to aid in identifying areas subject to these seismic hazards.

California Public Resources Code Section 5097.5

Section 5097.5 of the California Public Resources Code prohibits the excavation, removal, destruction, or tampering with any paleontological resources situated on public lands, except with the express permission of a public agency with jurisdiction over the lands.

Findings of Fact for Questions a, b, c, d, e, f: No Impact

The project site is in a seismically active region. The San Andreas Fault runs through the project site (Figure 5). Since the project traverses the San Andreas Fault there is the potential for the fault to rupture and displace the roadway; however, this is an existing condition that cannot be mitigated. The roadway improvements would not exacerbate the existing condition nor will it add additional traffic to the road. The proposed project would not result in the construction of habitable structures.

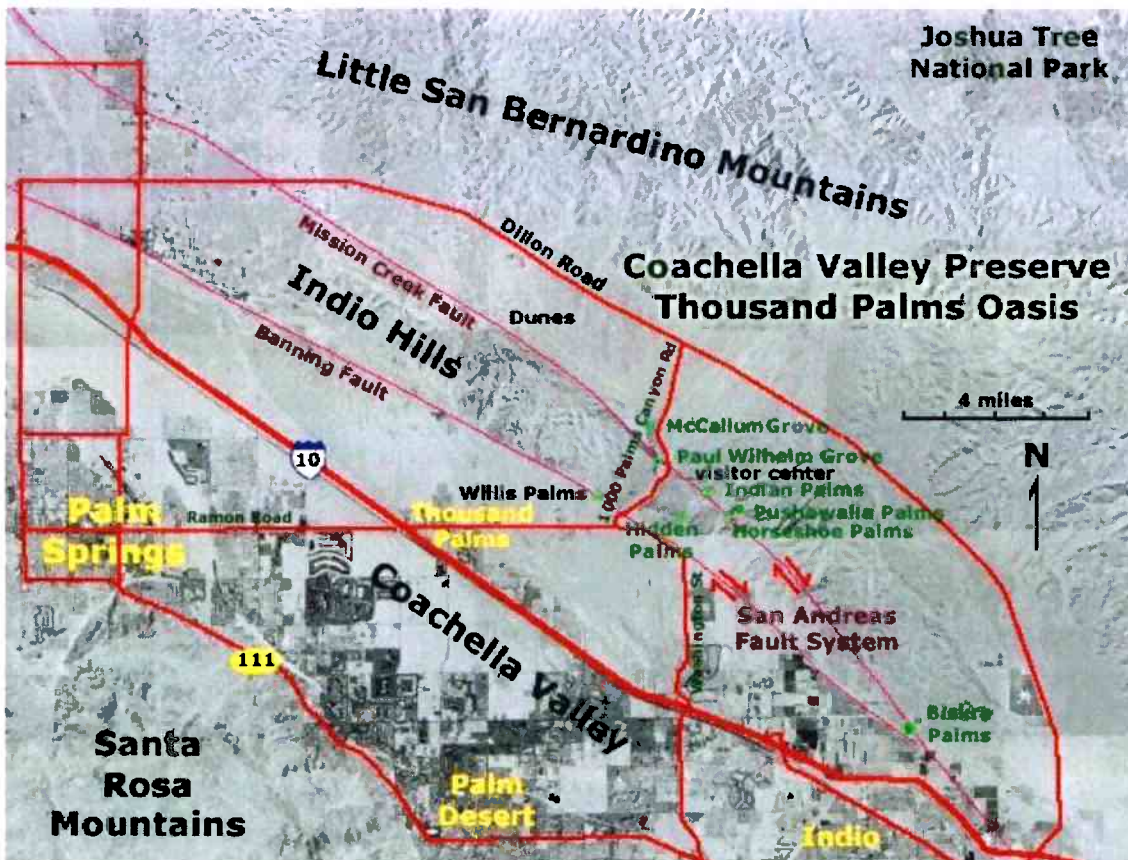


Figure 5: Map showing fault lines running through the Coachella Valley Preserve

Faults in the project area are believed to be able to produce earthquakes with magnitudes greater than 7.0. Depending on soil conditions and location within the site, the computed ground motion (i.e., peak ground acceleration) in the project area could reach or exceed 0.67g (the acceleration due to Earth's gravity, equivalent to g-force), which could cause significant damage to dwellings and structures not designed to withstand earthquakes.

Liquefaction involves a sudden loss in strength of a saturated, cohesionless soil (e.g., predominantly sand, low-plasticity silts, or sand/silt mixtures) caused by cyclic loading such as an earthquake. This results in temporary transformation of the soil to a fluid mass. Typically, liquefaction occurs in areas where groundwater is less than about 60 feet from the surface and where the soils are composed predominantly of poorly consolidated fine sands, silty sands, and nonplastic silts.

No habitable structures that could be affected by liquefaction are proposed as part of the project. The risk for liquefaction in the project area would typically be higher than normal due to the presence of loose and sandy soils; however, the groundwater is over 200 feet deep. Therefore, no impact would occur and no mitigation is proposed.

A review of topographic maps, geologic maps, and aerial photographs did not reveal evidence of existing or ancient landslides. The natural slopes appear to be globally stable by visual inspection and do not exhibit signs of surficial instability. Therefore, because natural slopes in the area are globally stable, no special precautions or restrictions during operation of the proposed project would be required. As the proposed project is not expected to be exposed to a landslide hazard, no impact related to this issue would occur and no mitigation is proposed.

According to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Web Soil Survey (www.websoilsurvey.sc.egov.usda.gov) soils in the project area include Dello loamy fine sand, 0 to 2 percent slopes, Grangeville loamy fine sand, drained, 0 to 5 percent slopes; Grangeville fine sandy loam, poorly drained, saline-alkali; Riverwash; Tujunga loamy sand, channeled, 0 to 8 percent slopes; Tujunga gravelly loamy sand, 0 to 8 percent slopes; and Vista coarse sandy loam, 15 to 35 percent slopes, eroded. The soils in the project area are characterized by moderate erodibility. Soils are classified by the USDA NRCS into four hydrologic soil groups based on the soil's runoff potential. "Hydrologic soil group" is a term that represents a group of soils having similar runoff potential under similar storm and cover conditions. Soil properties that influence runoff potential are those that influence the minimum rate of infiltration for bare soil after prolonged wetting. The unconsolidated sediments in drainages are generally susceptible to erosion.

The proposed project would require replacement of some surface soils with concrete and pavement. A Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) will be prepared and implemented prior to construction as required by the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES).¹³ Operators of regulated construction sites are required to develop SWPPPs; to implement sediment, erosion, and pollution prevention control measures; and to obtain

¹³ General Permit for Storm Water Discharges Associated with Construction and Land Disturbance Activities [CGP], Order 2009-0009-DWQ, as amended by 2010-0014-DWQ and 2012-0006-DWQ; NPDES No. CAS000002).

coverage under the CGP. The construction SWPPP would identify the specific Best Management Practices (BMPs) to be implemented during construction so as not to cause or contribute to an exceedance of any applicable water quality standard included in the Colorado River Basin Regional Water Quality Control Board (Colorado River Basin RWQCB) Basin Plan. These construction BMPs would be designed to meet the technology requirement stipulated in the CGP. Implementation of State and local requirements would result in no impact.

Liquefaction would normally be a potential hazard in the project area due to the soil composition but the risk of liquefaction is diminished by virtue of groundwater depth as noted above. Lateral spreading refers to ground or slope deformation due to the presence of weak or liquefiable soils in the subsurface combined with strong seismic shaking. Soft soils in the project area render the project susceptible to lateral spreading. However, appropriate design and construction standards would be followed and the project would not increase this risk over existing conditions, so there would be no impact.

Subsidence is the sudden sinking or gradual downward settling of the earth's surface with little or no horizontal motion. Subsidence is caused by a variety of activities, which include (but are not limited to) withdrawal of groundwater, pumping of oil and gas from underground, collapse of underground mines, liquefaction, and hydrocompaction. The proposed project does not include the withdrawal of groundwater or other resources from underground sources.

Settlement ("seismic compaction") of loose to medium-dense, clean, dry sands can occur during seismic shaking. Due to shallow and sporadic loose to medium-dense zones of limited thickness, seismic compaction settlements are considered a negligible hazard. Adherence to specific design recommendations would ensure that no impacts related to on-site or off-site lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse would occur.

Expansive soils generally have a significant amount of clay particles, which can give up water (shrink) or take on water (swell). The change in volume exerts stress on buildings and other loads placed on these soils. The extent of shrink/swell is influenced by the amount and kind of clay in the soil. The occurrence of these soils is often associated with geologic units having marginal stability. The distribution of expansive soils can be widely dispersed, and they can occur in hillside areas as well as low-lying alluvial basins. The USDA identifies the soils in the project area as potentially expansive; however, since this project would not create substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property, no impact would occur and no mitigation is proposed.

The proposed project is a road improvement project that does not have a septic or alternative waste disposal system component. Therefore, alternative wastewater disposal systems would not be utilized and no impact related to this issue would occur.

The project area is not identified as containing unique paleontological resources; therefore, no impact is associated with this topic.

VIII. 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Source(s): Global climate change (GCC), California Office of Planning and Research (OPR), California Air Pollution Control Officers Association (CAPCOA), State’s Assembly Bill (AB) 32, County of Riverside Climate Action Plan (CAP) Update (November 2019).

Regulatory Setting

Federal Clean Air Act

USEPA is responsible for implementing the FCAA, which was enacted in 1963. The FCAA was amended in 1970, 1977, and 1990. Under the FCAA, USEPA has the authority to regulate GHG emissions and prescribe actions to potentially reduce those emissions.

California Global Warming Solutions Act

The California Global Warming Solutions Act (also referred to as Assembly Bill [AB] 32) established a statewide GHG emissions cap for 2020, adopted reporting rules for significant sources of GHG, and adopted the Climate Change Scoping Plan, which itself identifies how GHG emissions reductions will be achieved.

In 2016, SB 32 was enacted, which amended the California Global Warming Solutions Act. SB 32 required the California Air Resources Board to ensure that GHG emissions are reduced to 40 percent below the 1990 level by 2030. ARB subsequently updated its Climate Change Scoping Plan in 2017 to express the 2030 statewide target in terms of million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (MMT of CO₂e). Based on the emissions reductions directed by SB 32, the annual 2030 statewide target emissions level for California is 260 MMT of CO₂e.

Senate Bill 375-Redesigning Communities to Reduce Greenhouse Gases

SB 375, also known as the Sustainable Communities Strategy and Climate Protection Act, was enacted in September 2008. SB 375 builds on the foundation of AB 32 by requiring ARB to develop regional GHG emissions reduction targets for passenger vehicle and light-truck sectors for 2020 and 2035 as compared to 2005 levels.

South Coast Air Quality Management District

The South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) was created to ensure regional and local compliance with the Federal Clean Air Act and to implement the state air quality program. The

proposed project is within the Salton Sea Air Basin, administered by the SCAQMD and SCAG, and falls under the 2016 Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP).¹⁴

Riverside County General Plan

The Riverside County General Plan incorporates and complies with regulations from the SCAQMD and SCAG. The project area lies within the Salton Sea Air Basin, which is managed jointly by these agencies.

Technical Background

Global climate change (GCC) describes alterations in weather features (e.g., temperature, wind patterns, precipitation, and storms) that occur across the Earth as a whole. Global temperatures are modulated by naturally occurring components in the atmosphere (e.g., water vapor, carbon dioxide [CO₂], methane [CH₄], and nitrous dioxide [N₂O]) that capture heat radiated from the Earth's surface, which in turn warms the atmosphere. This natural phenomenon is known as the "greenhouse effect." That said, excessive human-generated greenhouse gas (GHG)¹⁵ emissions can and are altering the global climate.

The CEQA statutes, OPR guidelines, and the changes to the *State CEQA Guidelines* do not currently prescribe specific quantitative thresholds of significance or a particular methodology for conducting an impact analysis related to GHG effects on global climate. Rather, as with most environmental topics, significance criteria are left to the judgment and discretion of the Lead Agency, which, in this case, is the County of Riverside.

Currently, there is no statewide GHG emissions threshold that has been used to determine the potential GHG emissions impacts of a project. Threshold and threshold methodology are still being developed and revised by air quality districts in the State. Therefore, this environmental issue remains unsettled and must be evaluated on a case-by-case basis until the SCAQMD adopts significance thresholds and a GHG emissions impact methodology.

Individual GHGs have varying global warming potentials and atmospheric lifetimes. Because it is not possible to tie specific GHG emissions to actual changes in climate, this evaluation focuses on the project's emission of GHGs. Carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂e) is a consistent methodology for comparing GHG emissions because it normalizes various GHGs to the same metric. GHG emissions are typically measured in terms of metric tons of "CO₂ equivalents." Therefore, for the purpose of this technical analysis, the concept of CO₂e is used to describe how much GCC a given type and amount of GHG may cause, using the functionally equivalent amount or concentration of CO₂ as the reference.

¹⁴ County of Riverside. 2015. Riverside County General Plan 2015. <https://planning.rctlma.org/General-Plan-Zoning/General-Plan> (accessed December 2020).

¹⁵ The principal GHGs of concern contributing to the greenhouse effect are CO₂, CH₄, N₂O, hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons, and sulfur hexafluoride. Water vapor is the largest naturally occurring GHG; however, it is not identified as an anthropogenic constituent of concern.

Findings of Fact

a) Would the project generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?

Less Than Significant Impact.

Construction GHG Emissions. GHG emissions associated with the project would occur over the short term from construction activities, consisting primarily of emissions from equipment and vehicle exhaust. The calculation presented below includes construction emissions in terms of annual CO₂e GHG emissions.

Construction activities produce combustion emissions from various sources such as grubbing/land clearing, grading/excavation, drainage/sub-grading, paving, construction equipment hauling materials to and from the site, and motor vehicles transporting the construction crew. Changes were made to the Roadway Construction Emissions Model (RCEM) to include 6 trucks to haul soil away from the site and 12 trucks to import asphalt materials onto the site. Exhaust emissions from on-site construction activities would vary daily as construction activity levels change during the two months of construction. Table I presents the annual construction emissions based on the RCEM emission estimates. Results indicate that project implementation would generate approximately 525 metric tons (MT) of CO₂e. Per SCAQMD guidance, due to the long-term nature of GHGs in the atmosphere, instead of determining the significance of construction emissions alone, the total construction emissions are amortized over 30 years (an estimate of the life of the project) and included in the operations analysis. To amortize the emissions over the life of the project, the SCAQMD recommends calculating the total GHG emissions for the construction activities and dividing that total by a 30-year project life. Amortized over 30 years, the total construction emissions would generate approximately 17.5 MT of CO₂e per year. Screening thresholds have been published by the California Air Pollution Control Officers Association (CAPCOA) for determining the need for additional analysis and mitigation for GHG-related impacts under CEQA.

Table I: Project Construction Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Emissions	Pollutant Emissions			
	CO ₂ T/yr	CH ₄ T/yr	N ₂ O T/yr	CO ₂ e MT/yr
Total Project Emissions	570	0.15	0.15	525.0
Amortized Emissions	19.0	0.0	0.0	17.5

Source: Compiled by LSA (August 2018).

Note: Numbers in table may not appear to total correctly due to rounding of numbers.

CH₄ = methane

T/yr = tons per year

CO₂ = carbon dioxide

MT/yr = metric tons per year

CO₂e = carbon dioxide equivalent

N₂O = nitrous oxide

Operational GHG Emissions. The project involves minor road widening, bicycle lanes (striped) and roadway shoulders. Most of the GHG reduction required to achieve the State’s AB 32 goals is from vehicle emissions that are outside the jurisdiction and control of the County, such as measures by the California Air Resources Board to improve vehicle emissions. GHG emission reductions for the automobile mode of travel will come from the State’s regulations in terms of

cleaner vehicle technologies, lower-carbon fuels, and reduction of vehicle miles traveled. The project is not adding additional lanes to the roadway and the vehicular traffic on the roadway would not exceed the capacity of the two-lane roadway. The project also includes bicycle lanes which provides the opportunity for alternative means of transportation that does not include the emissions of greenhouse gases. The project's impacts on long-term GHG emissions is less than significant and no mitigation is proposed.

b) Would the project conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?

No Impact. The County of Riverside has recently developed a Climate Action Plan (CAP), which includes a countywide, long-range transportation plan to meet the County's future mobility needs and reduce GHG emissions. One of the main strategies in the CAP to reduce GHG emissions is to make the County's transportation system more efficient. The CAP defines performance-based goals, policies, and strategies to achieve the County's future land use development projects and multimodal transportation system. As indicated above, the project would generate negligible operational GHG emissions. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with the provisions of AB 32, the County's CAP, the SCAQMD 2016 AQMP, or any other State or regional plan, policy, or regulation of an agency adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions. No mitigation is proposed.

IX. 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d. Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e. For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f. Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
g. Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Source(s): Field visits, California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE).

Regulatory Setting

Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Notification to the FAA is required for the construction of any tower or the alteration of an antenna structure that is registered with the Commission’s Antenna Structure Registration (ASR) system. Generally, towers that meet certain height and location requirements (e.g., are more than 200 feet above ground level and/or are located within proximity of an airport) require notice with the FAA and ASR system and must register with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). A final determination of “no hazard” is required from the FAA prior to any construction or alteration of facilities.

California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA)

CalEPA was formed in 1991 to preserve and protect the environment and to ensure public health and safety in relation to environmental laws and regulations. CalEPA manages the State’s natural resources in a cohesive, cabinet-based system. Additionally, CalEPA implements the Unified Program, which ensures consistency in regard to the administrative and enforcement actions related to hazardous waste and materials.

Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA)

The RCRA of 1976 authorized USEPA to control hazardous waste from “cradle-to-grave,” which includes the generation, transportation, treatment, storage, and disposal of hazardous waste. Additionally, RCRA established regulations for managing non-hazardous solid wastes. In 1986, amendments to RCRA provided authority to USEPA to manage environmental problems that could result from underground tanks storing petroleum and other hazardous substances.

Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA)

Commonly known as Superfund, the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 established regulations concerning closed and abandoned hazardous waste sites. Additionally, it provided regulations regarding liability for closed and abandoned hazardous waste sites and established a trust fund for cleanup when no liability is found.

California Department of Toxic Substances and Control (DTSC)

The DTSC is a sub-department under CalEPA and manages the federal hazardous waste program within the State. The DTSC regulates the lifecycle of hazardous waste and sets goals for reducing hazardous waste production. The program follows federal and State law to ensure hazardous waste managers correctly handle, store, transport, dispose of, reduce, and clean waste, and are equipped in the event of an emergency.

Government Code §65962.5 (Cortese List)

CalEPA is required by Section 65962.5 of the Government Code to develop and update a list of hazardous waste and substances sites, known as the Cortese List. The State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) and DTSC identify hazardous substance release sites included on the Cortese List, which is used by State and local agencies to ensure CEQA compliance.

California Building Code

The State of California provides a minimum standard for building design construction standards through Title 24 of the CCR through the CBC, which is located in Part 2 of Title 24. The CBC is updated every three years, and the current 2016 CBC went into effect in January 2017. It is generally adopted on a jurisdiction-by-jurisdiction basis, subject to further modification based on local conditions. City building officials monitor commercial and residential building plans to ensure compliance with fire safety standards within the CBC.

California Fire Code

The California Fire Code includes regulations for emergency planning, fire service features, fire protection systems, hazardous materials, fire flow requirements, and fire hydrant locations and distribution. Several fire safety requirements include installation of sprinklers in all high-rise buildings; the establishment of fire resistance standards for fire doors, building materials, and particular types of construction; and the clearance of debris and vegetation within a prescribed distance from occupied structures in wildlife hazard areas.

California Emergency Management Agency (CalEMA)

CalEMA was consolidated as part of the Governor's Office on January 1, 2009, merging the former Governor's Office of Emergency Services with the existing Governor's Office of Homeland Security. CalEMA coordinates all State agency response to major disasters so to provide support and hazard mitigation efforts for local governments. The agency also ensures the State has the appropriate resources and plans in order to respond in the event of all natural and human-induced emergencies and disasters.

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)

CAL FIRE maps the predicted threat of fire within all of California. CAL FIRE categorizes this threat based on factors including fuel availability, topography, fire history, and climate. These threats are ranked on a threshold from no fire threat, moderate, high, and very high fire threat. The 2012 Strategic Fire Plan for California was generated by CAL FIRE to provide guidelines and objectives in order to account for associated fire impacts.

California Accidental Release Prevention (CalARP) Program

The California Accidental Release Prevention Program (CalARP Program) aims to prevent accidental releases of regulated hazardous materials that represent a potential hazard beyond property boundaries. Facilities that are required to participate in the CalARP Program use or store specified quantities of toxic and flammable substances (hazardous materials) that can have off-site consequences if accidentally released. A Risk Management Plan (RMP) is required for such facilities. The intents of the RMP are to provide basic information that may be used by first responders in order to prevent or mitigate damage to the public health and safety and to the environment from a release or threatened release of a hazardous material, and to satisfy federal and State Community Right-to-Know laws.

Findings of Fact

a) Would the project create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?

Less Than Significant Impact. Construction activities associated with the proposed project would use a limited amount of hazardous and flammable substances (e.g., fuels and oils) typical during heavy equipment operation for road construction. The amount of hazardous chemicals present during construction should be limited and would be in compliance with existing government regulations. The potential for the release of hazardous materials during project construction is low, and even if a release would occur, it would not result in a significant hazard to the public, surrounding land uses, or environment, due to the small quantities of these materials associated with road construction. Therefore, potential impacts from the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials during road construction of the project would be less than significant, and no mitigation is proposed.

The act of regulating the transport of hazardous materials on State highways is governed by the United States Department of Transportation, as described in Title 49 (Subtitle B, Chapter 1) of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) and by Title 13 (Chapter 2, Division 6) of the CCR. The

State Office of Hazardous Materials Safety enforces regulations for the safe transportation of hazardous materials. It is likely that hazardous materials such as fuels, lubricants, or solvents will be transported to, stored and/or used during the period of construction. The volume of any such material transported to the project is limited to that required for road construction activities. Use of these substances is typical for construction activities and would be handled, stored, and disposed of in accordance with existing regulations and in accordance with the SWPPP and would not pose a significant hazard to the public or environment.

In addition, such materials would be contained, stored, and used in accordance with manufacturers' instructions and handled in compliance with applicable standards and regulations. Any associated risk would be adequately reduced to a less than significant level through compliance with these standards and regulations. Further, the Hazardous Materials Release Response Plan and Inventory Law of 1985 requires that businesses that use, handle, or store hazardous materials to prepare an inventory of hazardous substances on the premises. As stated previously, the plan would be required to include an inventory of hazardous materials, addressing the proper storage, handling, and disposal of hazardous materials; and dictating spill response and notification requirements. The project would be subject to compliance with this regulation, as well as additional applicable State and local regulations intended to manage the transport, storage, manufacture, and disposal of hazardous materials.

Upon completion of the proposed road construction, no ongoing or routine transport of hazardous materials to the site would be required. Again, during construction there is a limited risk of accidental release of hazardous material such as gasoline, oil, or other fluids used in the operation and maintenance of construction equipment. Any hazardous waste produced on site would be subject to requirements associated with accumulation time limits, proper storage locations and containers, and proper labeling.

Therefore, potential impacts from the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials resulting from operation of the project would be less than significant and no mitigation is proposed.

b) *Would the project 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?*

Less Than Significant Impact. In the event that unknown hazardous materials are discovered on site during project construction, the construction contractor would be required to comply with a Site Management Plan (SMP), Removal Action Plan (RAP), or equivalent document developed and approved prior to the commencement of grading activities. Thus, the project would have proper measures in place and detailed actions that would be implemented if a release of hazardous materials takes place into the environment; therefore, impacts related to reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment would be reduced to less than significant with no mitigation proposed.

For Questions c, d, e, f, and g: No Impact

There is no existing or proposed school within a quarter-mile of the Thousand Palms Canyon Road Project. Pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5, the Hazardous Waste and Substances Sites List has been compiled by the California Environmental Protection Agency Hazardous Materials Data Management Program. The California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) compiles information from subsets of the following databases to make up the Cortese List.¹⁶

- 1) The DTSC list of contaminated or potentially contaminated hazardous waste sites listed in the California Sites database; and
- 2) The California State Water Resources Control Board listing of leaking underground storage tanks is included; and
- 3) The California Integrated Waste Management Board list of sanitary landfills that have evidence of groundwater contamination or known migration of hazardous materials (AB 3750).

The Cortese list shows no sites that would represent a significant hazard to the public or environment at the project location.

The closest airports to the project area are the Palm Springs International Airport and Bermuda Dunes Airport, which are respectively located approximately 9.7 miles west and 5.1 miles southeast of the project. The project area is not within the planning areas of the Riverside County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan for the Palm Springs International Airport and Bermuda Dunes Airport.¹⁷ In addition, the proposed project is not located in the vicinity of a private airstrip. Also, the proposed project is a transportation project and would not involve the introduction of residential or employment uses in the project. Due to the distance of these airports from the project site, implementation of the proposed project would not result in a safety hazard or generate excessive noise for people residing or working in the area.

The proposed project would be designed, constructed, and maintained in accordance with applicable standards associated with vehicular access, resulting in the provision of adequate vehicular access that will provide for adequate emergency access and evacuation. The project will have a traffic management plan to direct traffic through the construction area, including emergency vehicles. The contractor will coordinate ahead of time with emergency responders and hospitals in the area. Activities that may temporarily restrict vehicular traffic would be required to implement adequate and appropriate measures to facilitate the passage of persons and vehicles through/around any required road closures.

¹⁶ *Hazardous Waste and Substances Site List (Cortese)*. California Department of Toxic Substances Control. [https://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/search?cmd=search&reporttype=CORTESE&site_type=CSITES,OPEN,FUDS,CLOSE&status=ACT,BKLG,COM,COLUR&reporttitle=HAZARDOUS+WASTE+AND+SUBSTANCES+SITE+LIST+\(CORTESE\)](https://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/search?cmd=search&reporttype=CORTESE&site_type=CSITES,OPEN,FUDS,CLOSE&status=ACT,BKLG,COM,COLUR&reporttitle=HAZARDOUS+WASTE+AND+SUBSTANCES+SITE+LIST+(CORTESE)).

¹⁷ Riverside County Airport Land Use Commission. 2004. Riverside County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan. October 14.

According to CAL FIRE Local Responsibility Area map for Western Riverside County, the project site is identified as being within a "Non-Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone." Therefore, the proposed project would not directly or indirectly expose people or structures to new increased wildland fire risks. No impact would occur and no mitigation is proposed.

X. Hydrology and Water Quality

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

Source(s): Colorado River Basin Water Quality Control Plan (Basin Plan; updated August 2017); Federal Emergency Management Agency Flood Map Service; Riverside County General Plan

A Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) would detail the BMPs to be implemented during construction. Construction BMPs would include, but not be limited to, Erosion Control and Sediment Control BMPs designed to minimize the erosion and retain sediment on site, and Good Housekeeping BMPs to prevent spills, leaks, and discharge of construction debris and waste into receiving waters.

Regulatory Setting

Federal Clean Water Act

USEPA adopted the CWA in 1977 to set a framework for establishing regulations to protect the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the nation's waters. The National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) under Section 402(p) of the CWA aims to reduce the direct discharge of pollutants into waterways and manage additional pollution runoff. Section 303(d) of the CWA requires that each state identify "impaired" water bodies or segments of water bodies that do not meet at least one of the listed state water-quality standards. When the water body or segment is listed as impaired, the state institutes a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) for the pollutant found to be creating the impairment. The TMDL is the maximum amount of a pollutant that a water body can receive and still meet water-quality standards, and is usually calculated based on the total amount

of allowable loads generated by a single pollutant deriving from all of its originating point and non-point sources. The Section 303(d) list identifies water bodies that will need to establish a TMDL in the future in order to abide by water-quality standards. Pursuant to Section 303(d), the RWQCB has identified impaired water bodies within its authority as well as the associated pollutants causing the impairment.

National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System

As described above, the NPDES was established under the CWA so to regulate municipal, industrial, and storm water discharges to the surface waters of the United States, including discharges from municipal separate storm sewer systems (MS4s). All entities that discharge pollutants into an identified waterbody of the United States are required to obtain a NPDES permit.

National Flood Insurance Program

The National Flood Insurance Program exists under the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) so to distinguish and evaluate flood hazards. FEMA generated Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) identify the location of these potential flooding hazards and help plan for the correct land use and floodplain development within those locations. Information for FIRMs is generated by Flood Insurance Studies. Special Flood Hazard Areas are distinguished via FIRMs. The current FIRM No. 06085C0263H (May 18, 2009) and FIRM No. 06085C0264H (May 18, 2009) show that the project site is located in Zone D, Area of Undetermined Flood Hazard, which is not considered a Special Flood Hazard Area.

Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act

California adopted the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Act in 1969, giving the SWRCB and RWQCBs the authority over State water rights and policies in relation to managing and enforcing water quality. The regional boards adopt Water Quality Control Plans (Basin Plans) that outline their region's water quality conditions and standards as well as beneficial uses of the region's ground and surface water.

Statewide Construction General Permit

Construction projects or activities that are one acre or more must obtain a General Permit for Storm Water Discharges Associated with Construction and Land Disturbance Activities, or a Construction General Permit from the SWRCB. Prior to construction, the Project Applicant must submit an online Permit Registration Document (PRD) to the Stormwater Multiple Application and Report Tracking System (SMARTS) website. The PRDs include a Notice of Intent (NOI), Risk Assessment, Post-Construction Calculations, a Site Map, the Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), a signed certification by the Project Applicant, and the first annual fee. Applicants are also required develop Best Management Practices (BMPs) in accordance with the development of a SWPPP. The SWPPP maps the boundaries of the project site, identifying the existing and proposed structures and roads within the vicinity of the site, as well as storm water collection and discharge points and drainage patterns. These BMPs should address strategies to prevent soil erosion and the proper treatment and discharge of other pollutants generated by construction, which could contaminate waterways on or near the site. A SWPPP must also include a visual chemical monitoring program of nonvisible pollutants and a sediment-monitoring program.

Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA)

SGMA of 2014 is a comprehensive three-bill package that was signed into California state law by Governor Jerry Brown in September 2014. The SGMA that provides a framework for sustainable management of groundwater supplies by local authorities, with a limited role for State intervention only if necessary to protect the resource. The plan is intended to ensure a reliable groundwater water supply for California for years to come.

The SGMA requires the formation of local Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs) that must assess conditions in their local water basins and adopt locally based management plans. The SGMA requires that GSAs implement plans and achieve long-term groundwater sustainability within 20 years of implementation of the SGMA.

GSAs responsible for high- and medium-priority basins must adopt groundwater sustainability plans or an alternative to a groundwater sustainability plan within five to seven years of implementation of the SGMA, depending on whether the basin is in critical overdraft. Agencies may adopt a single plan covering an entire basin or combine a number of plans created by multiple agencies. Plans must include a physical description of the basin, including groundwater levels, groundwater quality, subsidence, information on groundwater-surface water interaction, data on historical and projected water demands and supplies, monitoring and management provisions, and a description of how the plan will affect other plans, including city and county general plans.

Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan

The Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) to be developed for the project will address potential storm water runoff from construction. SWPPP guidelines provide best management practices (BMPs) and applicable ordinances for storm water management and drainage.

Findings of Fact

For Questions a and b: No Impact

The Colorado River RWQCB adopted the Colorado River Basin Water Quality Control Plan (Basin Plan; updated August 2017), which sets water quality standards for all ground and surface waters within the project's region.

Depths of groundwater near the project site are reported to be approximately 220 at grade to 236 feet below the existing ground surface.¹⁸ Two Five groundwater wells located near the project site were identified. The first well is approximately ½ mile to the west of the intersection on Thousand Palms Canyon Road and Dillion Road (State Well Number: 03S06E25Q001S, Site Code: 338762N1163082W001, in the Desert Hot Springs Groundwater Basin). This well has not been active since approximately mid-2019. The second well is approximately 1 mile from the intersection of Ramon Road and Thousand Palms Canyon Road (State Well Number: 04S06E22C001S, Site Code: 338165N1163457W001, in the Indio Groundwater Basin). There are three wells on the Coachella Valley Preserve property. One of the wells (28281 Thousand Palms Canyon Road) has a depth-to-water of approximately 30 feet. Another (29200 Thousand Palms

¹⁸ Groundwater depth data were gathered from the nearest wells to the project site from the California Department of Water Resources Data website <http://wdl.water.ca.gov/waterdatalibrary/>.

Canyon Road) has a depth to water of zero (0) feet or surface level. The last well (28400 Thousand Palms Canyon Road) has a depth-to-water of about 23 feet. Project construction activities would not include excavation extending to the groundwater table in the immediate vicinity of wells; depth for construction will normally be less than four feet. Therefore, construction activities do not have the potential to directly affect groundwater quality. However, pollutants in storm water are generally removed by soil through absorption as water infiltrates. In areas of deep groundwater, there is more absorption potential and, as a result, less potential for pollutants to reach groundwater. Due to the depth of the groundwater at the project site and standard construction procedures that follow the water quality control plan, there is not a direct path for pollutants to reach groundwater in the project area.

The proposed project is a roadway improvement project. Implementation of the project would not require the withdrawal of groundwater and, therefore, would not result in the direct lowering of the local groundwater table. Within the Coachella Valley, groundwater replenishment through direct precipitation is negligible due to the small amount of annual rainfall on the valley floor. The proposed project would not substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede substantial groundwater management of the Coachella Valley Groundwater Basin. Therefore, no impacts associated with this issue would occur and no mitigation is proposed.

c) *Would the project substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:*

i) Result in substantial erosion or siltation on or off site?

Less Than Significant Impact. During the project construction activities, soil would be disturbed and drainage patterns could be temporarily altered. The project would not alter the course of a stream or river; however, it would increase impervious surface area on the project site through the addition of pavement or travel lanes and paving existing roadway shoulders which could increase runoff peak flow during a storm event.

Additionally, the project would be required to obtain the following permits:

- From the Colorado River Basin Regional Water Quality Control Board, Enrollment in State Board General Order 2004-0004-DWQ to regulate the discharge of fill to waters of the State under Porter-Cologne.
- From the State Water Resources Control Board, Notice of Intent to Comply with General Construction Activity National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit.
- From the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, California Fish and Game Code Section 1602 Streambed Alteration Agreement for impacts to CDFW riparian streambed.

Once operational, the on-site impervious surface areas of the project would not be prone to erosion or siltation and, therefore, would not contribute to substantial on-site or off-site erosion or siltation. The project also requires the development of Best Management Practices (BMPs) in accordance with the associated development of a SWPPP. The SWPPP

maps the boundaries of the project site, identifying the existing structures and roads within the vicinity of the site, as well as storm water collection and discharge points and drainage patterns. Compliance with standard regulatory measures results in a less than significant impact related to erosion and siltation.

ii) *Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on or off site?*

Less Than Significant Impact. Project construction activities would temporarily alter the on-site drainage pattern, potentially compact on-site soils, and may temporarily increase the potential for flooding compared to existing conditions. The majority of Thousand Palms Canyon Road is on a slight slope to the south; however, proper management of storm water during the project construction period would reduce impacts associated with on-site or off-site flooding to less than significant. The SWPPP should discuss potential surface runoff that could cause flooding on or off site and mitigate potential runoff through the use of BMPs.

iii) *Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned storm water drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?*

No Impact. There are no storm drains within the project area. The project involves improvements to the existing road. Furthermore, the project would not provide additional sources of polluted runoff. A SWPPP will detail the BMPs to be implemented during construction. Construction BMPs would include, but not be limited to, Erosion Control and Sediment Control BMPs designed to minimize the erosion and retain sediment on site, and Good Housekeeping BMPs to prevent spills, leaks, and discharge of construction debris and waste into receiving waters. No impact and no mitigation is proposed.

For Questions d and e: No Impact

According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency Flood Map Service, the project site is partially in a Zone AO Area of Minimal Flood Hazard. The project site is too far inland to be inundated by a tsunami. ~~Additionally, the project site is not near any bodies of water and, therefore, would not be inundated by seiche.~~ There are several bodies of water near the project site including two ponds and one stream. The ponds are located in the Thousand Palms Oasis and the McCallum Oasis. Fault springs at these oases and Willis Oasis create surface runoff, streams, and ponds. However, construction would not affect these features and the ponds are of adequate distance to preclude inundation by seiche. The project would not risk release of pollutants due to project inundation. The project would comply with the Colorado River Basin Water Quality Control Plan and would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of said plan. No impact would occur and no mitigation is proposed.

XI. 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b. Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Source(s): Field visit, Riverside County General Plan.

Regulatory Setting

There are no federal and/or State regulations related to land use and planning that are applicable to the proposed project.

Riverside County General Plan

The County’s General Plan includes the following goals and policies related to land use that are applicable to the proposed Project:

- LU 1.5 The County of Riverside shall participate in regional efforts to address issues of mobility, transportation, traffic congestion, economic development, air and water quality, watershed and habitat management with cities, local and regional agencies, stakeholders, Indian nations, and surrounding jurisdictions. (AI 4, 16)

Findings of Fact

For Questions a and b: No Impact.

The proposed project is a roadway improvement project that would not physically divide an established community because it is an existing roadway that would be improved and widened in order to continue to serve the nearby communities. No acquisition of property is required to implement the roadway improvements. Overall, the roadway is surrounded by vacant land, with the exception of the Coachella Valley Nature Preserve and two former residences used by the Preserve as offices/storage. The proposed project is consistent with the County’s General Plan Circulation Element and does not conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project. There would be no impact.

XII. 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b. Result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Source(s): Field visit, Riverside County General Plan

Regulatory Setting

Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1974

The California Department of Conservation, Geological Survey (CGS), and the California State Mining and Geology Board are required by the Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1974 (SMARA) to categorize lands into four Aggregate and Mineral Resource Zones (MRZs), described below. These MRZs classify lands that contain significant regional or statewide mineral deposits. Lead Agencies are mandated by the State to include MRZs into their General Plans.

Areas are classified on the basis of geologic factors without regard to existing land use and land ownership. The areas are categorized into four MRZs:

MRZ-1: An area where adequate information indicates that no significant mineral deposits are present, or where it is judged that little likelihood exists for their presence.

MRZ-2: An area where adequate information indicates that significant mineral deposits are present, or where it is judged that a high likelihood exists for their presence.

MRZ-3: An area containing mineral deposits, the significance of which cannot be evaluated.

MRZ-4: An area where available information is inadequate for assignment to any other MRZ zone.

Of the four categories, lands classified as MRZ-2 are of the greatest importance because such areas are underlain by demonstrated mineral resources or are located where geologic data indicate that significant measured or indicated resources are present. MRZ-2 areas are designated by the State Mining and Geology Board as being "regionally significant." Such designations require that a Lead Agency make land use decisions involving designated areas in accordance with its mineral resource management policies and that it consider the importance of the mineral resource to the region or the State as a whole, not just to the Lead Agency's jurisdiction.

Findings of Fact***For Questions a and b: No Impact.***

The proposed project is a roadway improvement project and would continue to operate as it currently does in its existing condition. According to the Riverside County General Plan, the project site is not designated as an area with known significant mineral resource value. Implementation of the proposed project would not result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of high value to the region and the residents of the State, nor would it result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site. Therefore, no impacts would occur and no mitigation is proposed.

XIII. Noise

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project result in:				
a. Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Source(s): Road Construction Emissions Model (version 9.0.0), FHWA Highway Construction Noise Handbook, (2006), County of Riverside Code, Section 9.52.020, Caltrans Transportation and Construction Vibration Guidance Manual, Riverside County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan.

Regulatory Setting

There are no federal and/or State regulations related to noise that are applicable to the proposed project.

Findings of Fact

Noise-sensitive receptors include residences, schools, hospitals, and similar uses. Sensitivity to noise increases during the evening and at night. There are no noise-sensitive land uses near the project because areas adjacent to the project is vacant land, except for the two former residences which are owned by the Preserve and used for offices/storage. Non-noise-sensitive land uses in the project area include one property for office uses associated with the Coachella Valley Preserve. The existing noise environment in the project area is influenced by traffic noise on Thousand Palms Canyon Road.

For noise and vibration, there are no operational BMPs or standard measures for this project because there are no operational noise and vibration impacts. Paving of Thousand Palms Canyon Road, vehicular traffic related to construction, and project construction activities are considered short-term temporary impacts and not long-term operations of Thousand Palms Canyon Road. Although temporary construction noise impacts are considered less than significant, this section provides standard measures to further minimize construction noise.

- a) **Would the project result in generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?**

Less Than Significant Impact.

Temporary Impacts. Section 9.52.020(b) of the County Code exempts noise from capital improvement project of a governmental agency. In addition, Section 9.52.020(h) in the County Code exempts private construction projects located one-quarter of a mile or more from an inhabited dwelling. Also, Section 9.52.020(i) in the County Code limits private construction project located within one-quarter mile from an inhabited dwelling provided that construction does not occur between the hours of 6:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. during the months of June through September and between the hours of 6:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. during the months of October through May.

Two types of short-term noise impacts could occur during construction of the proposed project. First, construction crew commutes and the transport of construction equipment and materials to the site for the proposed project would incrementally increase noise levels on access roads leading to the site. Although there would be a relatively high single event noise exposure potential causing intermittent noise nuisance, passing trucks at 50 feet would generate up to a maximum of 84 A-weighted decibels (dBA) shown in Table J. Based on the Road Construction Emissions Model (version 9.0.0) in the air quality analysis, the grading/excavation phase would generate the most trips out of all of the construction phases, at 66 vehicles per hour or 150 vehicles per day. Thousand Palms Canyon Road would be used to access the project site. The existing hourly/daily traffic volumes on Thousand Palms Canyon Road is estimated to be 400/4,000. Construction-related traffic would increase traffic noise levels by up to 0.7 dBA on Thousand Palms Canyon Road. A noise level increase of less than 3 dBA would not be perceptible to the human ear in an outdoor environment. Therefore, short-term construction-related impacts associated with worker commute and equipment transport to the project site would be less than significant.

Table J: Typical Construction Equipment Noise Levels

Equipment Description	Acoustical Usage Factor ¹	Maximum Noise Level (L _{max}) at 50 feet ²
Backhoe	40	80
Compactor (ground)	20	80
Compressor	40	80
Crane	16	85
Dozer	40	85
Dump Truck	40	84
Excavator	40	85
Flatbed Truck	40	84
Forklift	20	85
Front-End Loader	40	80
Grader	40	85
Impact Pile Driver	20	95

Table J: Typical Construction Equipment Noise Levels

Equipment Description	Acoustical Usage Factor ¹	Maximum Noise Level (L _{max}) at 50 feet ²
Jackhammer	20	85
Pickup Truck	40	55
Pneumatic Tools	50	85
Pump	50	77
Rock Drill	20	85
Roller	20	85
Scraper	40	85
Tractor	40	84
Welder	40	73

Source: FHWA Highway Construction Noise Handbook, Table 9.1 (FHWA 2006).

Note: The noise levels reported in this table are rounded to the nearest whole number.

¹ Usage factor is the percentage of time during a construction noise operation that a piece of construction equipment is operating at full power.

² Maximum noise levels were developed based on Spec 721.560 from the CA/T program to be consistent with the City of Boston, Massachusetts, Noise Code for the “Big Dig” project.

CA/T = Central Artery/Tunnel

L_{max} = maximum instantaneous noise level

FHWA = United States Federal Highway Administration

The second type of short-term noise impact is related to noise generated during grubbing/land clearing, grading/excavation, drainage/utilities, and paving on site. Construction performed in various sequential phases would change the character of the noise generated on site. Therefore, the noise levels vary as construction progresses. Despite the variety in the type and size of construction equipment, similarities in the dominant noise sources and patterns of operation allow construction-related noise ranges to be categorized by work phase. Table J lists the maximum noise levels (L_{max}) recommended for noise impact assessments for typical construction equipment included in the *FHWA Highway Construction Noise Handbook*,¹⁹ based on a distance of 50 feet between the equipment and a noise receptor.

Typical maximum noise levels range up to 88 dBA L_{max} at 50 feet during the noisiest construction phases. The grading and excavation of the project site, tends to generate the highest noise levels because the noisiest construction equipment is the earthmoving equipment. Earthmoving equipment includes excavating machinery such as backfillers, bulldozers, draglines, and front-end loaders. Earthmoving and compacting equipment includes compactors, scrapers, and graders.

Project construction is expected to require the use of scrapers, excavators, and water trucks/pickup trucks on the project site. Based on the information in Table J, the maximum noise level generated by each scraper is assumed to be 85 dBA L_{max} at 50 feet from the scraper. Each excavator would also generate 85 dBA L_{max} at 50 feet. The maximum noise level generated by water trucks/pickup trucks is approximately 55 dBA L_{max} at 50 feet from these vehicles. Each doubling of the sound sources with equal strength increases the noise level by 3 dBA. Assuming

¹⁹ United States Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). 2006. *FHWA Highway Construction Noise Handbook*. Roadway Construction Noise Model, FHWA HEP-06-015. DOT-VNTSC-FHWA-06-02. NTIS No. PB2006-109012. August.

that each piece of construction equipment operates at some distance from the other equipment, the worst-case combined noise level during this phase of construction would be 88 dBA L_{max} at a distance of 50 feet from the active construction area.

Land uses adjacent to the project construction area are primarily vacant land except for two properties used for offices/storage for the Coachella Valley Preserve approximately 80 feet from the project construction area. These properties may be subject to short-term noise reaching 88 dBA L_{max} . Although the noise generated by project construction activities would be higher than the ambient noise levels and would result in a temporary increase in the ambient noise levels, construction noise would stop once project construction is completed. Noise generated by project construction activities is exempt based on Section 9.52.020(b) of the County Code because proposed project is a capital improvement project of a governmental agency. Although noise generated by project construction activities are exempt, construction activities should be limited to the hours specified in Section 9.52.020(i) in the County Code. The implementation of construction hour limits and standard conditions for construction listed below would minimize construction noise. Therefore, noise generated from project construction activities would be less than significant. No mitigation measures are proposed.

- The construction contractor shall limit construction activities to between the hours of 6:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. during the months of June through September and 6:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. during the months of October through May. No construction activities shall be permitted outside these hours.
- During all project site excavation and grading, the project contractors shall equip all construction equipment, fixed or mobile, with properly operating and maintained mufflers consistent with manufacturers' standards.
- The construction contractor shall locate equipment staging in areas that will create the greatest distance between construction-related noise sources and most noise-sensitive receptors nearest the project site during all project construction.
- The construction contractor shall place all stationary construction equipment so that the emitted noise is directed away from the sensitive receptors nearest the project site.

Operational Impacts. The existing Thousand Palms Canyon Road pavement width is approximately 22 feet with 11-foot through lanes and a 1-foot paved shoulder. Also, there is a half-mile segment of Thousand Palms Canyon Road adjacent to the Coachella Valley Nature Preserve that is 32 feet wide with 12-foot through lanes and 4-foot paved shoulders. The proposed improvements would increase the width of Thousand Palms Canyon Road to 34 feet with 12-foot through lanes and 5-foot paved shoulders. Although the width of Thousand Palms Canyon Road would increase by up to 12 feet, vehicle travel lanes would only be shifted by up to 1 foot closer to adjacent land uses. Therefore, project-related traffic noise increase would be minimal (less than 3 dBA) to negligible. A noise level increase of less than 3 dBA would not be perceptible to the human ear in an outdoor environment. Therefore, traffic noise impacts on off-site land uses would be considered less than significant and no mitigation measures are proposed.

b) Would the project result in generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?

Less Than Significant Impact.

Temporary Impacts. Vibration generated by construction equipment can result in varying degrees of ground vibration, depending on the equipment. The operation of construction equipment causes ground vibrations that spread through the ground and diminish in strength with distance. Buildings on soil near an active construction area respond to these vibrations, which range from imperceptible to low rumbling sounds with perceptible vibrations and slight damage at the highest vibration levels. Typically, construction-related vibration does not reach vibration levels that would result in damage to nearby structures.

The *Caltrans Transportation and Construction Vibration Guidance Manual*²⁰ shows that the vibration damage threshold for continuous/frequent intermittent sources is 0.25 peak-particle velocity (PPV) (inches per second [in/sec]) for historic and old buildings. The *Manual* shows the vibration annoyance potential criteria to be barely perceptible at 0.01 PPV (in/sec), distinctly perceptible at 0.04 PPV (in/sec), and strongly perceptible at 0.10 PPV (in/sec) for continuous/frequent intermittent sources. These thresholds were used to evaluate the potential for short-term construction-related groundborne vibration during construction of the proposed project.

Bulldozers and loaded trucks used for construction of the proposed project would generate the highest groundborne vibration levels. Based on the *Caltrans Transportation and Construction Vibration Guidance Manual*, a large bulldozer and loaded trucks would generate vibration levels of 0.089 PPV (in/sec) and 0.076 PPV (in/sec), respectively, when measured at 25 feet. Based on the worst-case condition, the closest structure from the project construction boundary is approximately 80 feet. At this distance, the closest structure would experience a vibration level of up to 0.016 PPV (in/sec). This vibration level would be the barely perceptible and would not exceed the damage threshold of 0.25 PPV (in/sec) for historic and old buildings. Therefore, short-term construction impacts related to groundborne vibration would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are proposed.

Operational Impacts. Once operational, the proposed project would not generate any additional traffic, and regional traffic trips are expected to remain the same. Roads are not typically major sources of groundborne noise or vibration. Groundborne vibration is mostly associated with passenger vehicles and trucks traveling on roads with poor conditions (e.g., potholes, bumps, expansion joints, or other discontinuities in the road surface). Although the project would install rumble strips that would generate groundborne vibration when vehicles travel over them, passenger vehicles and trucks would not travel over rumble strips under normal conditions. Vibration effects of passenger vehicles and trucks (e.g., rattling of windows) are almost always a result of airborne noise. The proposed project would include new asphalt pavement with proper maintenance. As a result, there would be no potholes, bumps, or other discontinuities in the road surface that would generate groundborne vibration or noise impacts

²⁰ California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). 2013. *Transportation and Construction Vibration Guidance Manual*. September. Website: <https://dot.ca.gov/-/media/dot-media/programs/environmental-analysis/documents/env/tcvgm-apr2020-a11y.pdf> (accessed April 2020).

from vehicular traffic traveling on Thousand Palms Canyon Road. Therefore, groundborne vibration and noise impacts generated by vehicles traveling through the project corridor would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are proposed.

- c) For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 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?***

No Impact. The closest airports to the project area are the Palm Springs International Airport and Bermuda Dunes Airport, which are respectively located approximately 9.7 miles west and 5.1 miles southeast of the project. The project area is not within the planning areas of the Riverside County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan for the Palm Springs International Airport and Bermuda Dunes Airport.²¹ In addition, the proposed project is not located in the vicinity of a private airstrip. Also, the proposed project is a transportation project and would not involve the introduction of residential or employment uses in the project area. Therefore, the project would not expose people residing or working in the project vicinity to aviation-related excessive noise levels and no impacts would occur.

²¹ Riverside County Airport Land Use Commission. 2004. Riverside County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan. October 14.

XIV. Population and Housing

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

Source(s): Field visit

Regulatory Setting

There are no federal and/or State regulations related to population and housing that are applicable to the proposed project.

Findings of Fact

For Questions a and b: No Impact

Implementation of the proposed road improvement project would result in the improvement and widening of Thousand Palms Canyon Road. The purpose of the proposed project is to comprehensively improve the function of the existing corridor. Unlike the development of a residential, commercial, or industrial use, the project would not induce growth.

The construction of the proposed project would create short-term construction jobs; however, these short-term positions are anticipated to be filled by workers who, for the most part, already reside in the Coachella Valley area. Construction of the proposed project would not generate a permanent increase in population within the project area. Infrastructure, including roads and electricity, already exists around the project site. Because the proposed project would improve an existing roadway, it would not induce indirect growth above that which is planned for or that currently exists.

Furthermore, the proposed project would increase an existing roadway by 12 feet in width. The improvement project is adjacent to existing vacant land and the Coachella Valley Preserve and does not require the acquisition of additional right of way. Therefore, displacement of housing and residents would not occur and no mitigation is proposed.

XV. Public Services

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:				
i. Fire protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ii. Police protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iii. Schools?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
iv. Parks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
v. Other public facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Source(s): Field visit; County of Riverside General Plan Circulation Element

Regulatory Setting

California Fire Code

The California Fire Code exists within Part 9 of the California Building Code, and includes measures for emergency planning preparation and safety. Examples of fire safety requirements include installation of sprinklers in all high-rise buildings; the establishment of fire resistance standards for fire doors, building materials, and particular types of construction; and the clearance of debris and vegetation within a prescribed distance from occupied structures in wildlife hazard areas.

California Government Code Sections 65995 to 65998 (School Facilities)

California Government Code Section 65996 exists to offset a project’s impact on school facilities by paying a fee to the associated school district prior to receiving a building permit. The school district is therefore responsible for implementing specific methods for mitigating school impacts under the Government Code. Pursuant to California Government Code Section 65995, payment of school impact fees is considered to be full mitigation for reducing impacts on school facilities that would result from implementation of a project.

Findings of Fact

For Questions i, ii, and iv: Fire Protection, Police Protection, and Parks: Less Than Significant Impact

The proposed project is a roadway improvement project and does not include the construction of structures or features or changes in operation that would increase demand on fire or police protection services for the project site or area. This project would not increase capacity; it would be constructed with the same number of traffic lanes as the existing roadway but with lanes to accommodate current roadway standards and improve circulation. The project does not include

occupied buildings, nor does it include any residential, commercial, or other uses although there are multiple occupied structures, including recreational vehicles, nearby on Coachella Valley Preserve property. The project will not increase demand for fire/police/sheriff services or cause fire/police/sheriff staffing, facilities, or equipment to operate at a deficient level of service since no direct increase in population would occur. However, traffic delays may occur that could intermittently affect general access to the Preserve (a park) and fire/police response along the project alignment during construction. A Traffic Management Plan (TRA-1) to address traffic detours during construction will be prepared, reviewed, and approved by the Riverside County Transportation Department as standard compliance, as is the case with all County road construction projects, including coordination by the contractor with emergency response teams. Because of this standard practice, project impacts on the Preserve and to fire and police would be less than significant.

For Questions iii and iv: Schools and Other Public Facilities: No Impact.

The proposed project will not include building residential units that would house school-aged children. Since there is no increase in school-aged or general population associated with the proposed project, no new demand on existing schools would occur. Therefore, the proposed project would not increase the demand for school services and no new school facilities would be required. No impacts would occur with respect to school services and no mitigation is proposed. This project does not include a residential component that would result in an increase in population that would use public facilities such as libraries or hospital services. Since there is no increase in population associated with the proposed project, no new demand on public facilities would occur. In the absence of any direct or indirect population increase, no impact would occur. Since there is no increase in population associated with the proposed project, no new demand on public facilities such as libraries and hospital services would occur.

XVI. Recreation

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b. Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Source(s): Field Visit

Regulatory Setting

There are no federal or State regulations related to recreational resources that are applicable to the proposed project.

Findings of Fact

For Questions a and b: No Impact

The proposed project is a roadway improvement project and does not include a residential, commercial or office/business component that would result in an increase in population. Since there is no increase in population associated with the proposed project, no new demand on existing park or recreational facilities would occur. Therefore, the proposed project would not increase the use of existing neighborhood or regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated. No impact would occur and no mitigation is proposed.

XVII. Transportation

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b. Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, Subdivision (b)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c. Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d. Result in inadequate emergency access?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Source(s): County of Riverside General Plan Circulation Element; Western Coachella Valley Area Plan

Regulatory Setting

Senate Bill 743

On September 27, 2013, Governor Jerry Brown signed SB 743 into law and started a process that changes the methodology of a transportation impact analysis as part of CEQA requirements. SB 743 directed the California Office of Planning and Research (OPR) to establish new CEQA guidance for jurisdictions that removes the Level of Service (LOS) method, which focuses on automobile vehicle delay and other similar measures of vehicular capacity or traffic congestion, from CEQA transportation analysis. Rather, Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT), or other measures that promote “the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, the development of multimodal transportation networks, and a diversity of land uses,” are now be used as the basis for determining significant transportation impacts in the State.

State CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, Subdivision (b)

In January 2018, the OPR submitted a proposal for comprehensive updates to the *State CEQA Guidelines* to the California Natural Resources Agency. The submittal included proposed updates related to the analysis of GHG emissions and energy and transportation impacts pursuant to SB 743, and wildfires, as well as revisions to Section 15126.2(a) in response to the California Supreme Court’s decision in *California Building Industry Association v. Bay Area Air Quality Management District* (2015) 62 Cal. 4th 369. On December 28, 2018, the updated *State CEQA Guidelines* went into effect.

As part of the update to the *State CEQA Guidelines*, Section 15064.3 was added and codifies that project-related transportation impacts are typically best measured by evaluating the project’s VMT. Specifically, subdivision (b) focuses on specific criteria related to transportation analysis and is divided into four subdivisions: (1) land use projects, (2) transportation projects, (3), qualitative analysis, and (4) methodology. Subdivision (b)(1) provides guidance on determining the significance of transportation impacts of land use projects using VMT; projects located within 0.5 mile of transit

should be considered to have a less than significant impact. Subdivision (b)(2) addresses VMT associated with transportation projects and states that projects that reduce VMT, such as pedestrian, bicycle, and transit projects, should be presumed to have a less than significant impact. Subdivision (b)(3) acknowledges that Lead Agencies may not be able to quantitatively estimate VMT for every project type; in these cases, a qualitative analysis may be used. Subdivision (b)(4) stipulates that Lead Agencies have the discretion to formulate a methodology that would appropriately analyze a project's VMT.

Findings of Fact

For Questions a, b and c: No Impact

The proposed project is a roadway improvement project and does not include trip-generating uses (residential, commercial, industrial, etc.). The proposed project would not conflict with any of the policies identified by the County of Riverside General Plan or the Western Coachella Valley Area Plan. The proposed bike lanes, which are a component of the project, are consistent with the designation of the route as regionally significant for this transportation mode per the Coachella Valley Association of Governments Active Transportation Plan (2017).²² The proposed project would not conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation.

The project would not result in additional vehicle miles traveled above and beyond what is already considered in the County of Riverside General Plan because the project does not increase vehicle capacity. The proposed project is consistent with *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15064.3(b). The proposed project includes pavement widening and the addition of bicycle lanes to an existing roadway that does not include new geometric design features or incompatible uses. Therefore, the proposed project would not create an increase in hazards due to a geometric design feature but would improve the roadway for use by drivers and cyclists. No impacts would occur and no mitigation is proposed.

d) Result in inadequate emergency access?

Less Than Significant Impact. The proposed project would be required to be designed, constructed, and maintained to provide for adequate emergency access and evacuation. Construction activities, which may temporarily restrict vehicular traffic, would be required to implement adequate and appropriate measures to facilitate the passage of persons and vehicles through/around any required road closures. However, these temporary impacts would be substantially minimized through the implementation of a Traffic Management Plan as identified in **Avoidance Measure TRA-1**. Adherence to **Avoidance Measure TRA-1** would reduce potential impacts related to this issue to a less than significant level.

Avoidance Measure for Transportation:

TRA-1: A detailed Traffic Management Plan (TMP) shall be prepared during the construction bid phase of the project and approved by the Riverside County

²² Coachella Valley Association of Governments Active Transportation Plan. 2017. https://www.cvag.org/library/pdf_files/trans/Transportation_Documents/CVAG%20ATP%202016-06-20%20rev2017-06-07.pdf.

Transportation Department. The objective of the TMP is to minimize the potential impacts that construction activities may have on the safety of traveling public, construction personnel, and emergency services providers.

XVIII. Tribal Cultural Resources

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code Section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:				
i. Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code Section 5020.1(k)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
ii. A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1? In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Source(s): California Register of Historic Places, California Assembly Bill (AB) 52 (2015), Cultural Resource Assessment for the Riverside County Transportation Department’s Thousand Palms Canyon Road Widening and Resurfacing Project (2020)

Regulatory Setting

Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC)

In 1976, the California State Government passed AB 4239, creating the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC). The NAHC is responsible for identifying and categorizing Native American cultural resources as well as preventing damages to designated sacred sites and associated artifacts and remains. Legislation passed in 1982 authorized the NAHC to identify a Most Likely Descendant (MLD) when Native American remains are found outside of any place other than a designated cemetery. An MLD has the authority to make recommendations in regards to the treatment and disposition of the discovered remains.

The Native American Historic Resource Protection Act

The Native American Historic Resource Protection Act, or Assembly Bill (AB 52), defines guidelines for reducing conflicts between Native Americans and development projects and activities. Projects are subject to AB 52 if a notice of preparation for an EIR is filed or a notice of intent to adopt a Negative or Mitigated Negative Declaration is filed on or after July 1, 2016. “Tribal cultural resources” (TCR) are protected under CEQA and are defined as a site, feature, place, cultural landscape (must include the size and scope of landscape), sacred place, and object with a cultural value to a California Native American tribe that is either included or eligible for inclusion in the

California Register, or included in a local register of historical resources. At the lead agency's discretion, a resource can be treated as a TCR if a Native American Tribe provides substantial evidence. Additionally, AB 52 allows tribes to engage in consultation with lead agencies and sets guidelines for such consultation.

Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5

Section 7050.5 of the California Health and Safety Code protects Native American burials, remains, and associated grave artifacts in the event that they are discovered in any location other than a designated cemetery. The Code mandates the immediate stop of excavation in the site as well as any adjacent or overlying area where the remains or associated item is found, and provides for the sensitive disposition of those remains. Should remains be discovered, the County Coroner must determine that the remains are not subject to the provisions of Section 27491 of the Government Code or any other related provisions of law concerning investigation of the circumstances, manner and cause of any death, and the recommendations concerning the treatment and disposition of the human remains have been made to the person responsible for the excavation, or designee, in the manner provided in Section 5097.98 of the Public Resources Code. The County Coroner shall make the determination within two working days from the time the person responsible for the excavation, or designee, notifies the County Coroner of the discovery or recognition of the human remains. If the County Coroner identifies the remains to be of Native American origin, or has reason to believe that the remains are those of Native American origin, the County Coroner must contact the California NAHC within 24 hours. The NAHC representative will then alert a Native American MLD to conduct an inspection of the site and to determine the following course of treatment and action. Additionally, *State CEQA Guidelines* Section 15064.5 sets forth a procedure if human remains are found on land outside of federal jurisdiction.

Findings of Fact

a) *Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:*

i) *Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1 (k)?*

No Impact. There are no sites listed or deemed to be eligible for listing in the CRHR²³ or listed in a local register of historical resources where the Thousand Palms Canyon Road Project is located. The proposed project does not meet any of the CRHR criteria and the project site does not qualify as a "historical resource" as defined by CEQA. Therefore, the proposed project would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in Section 15064.5 of the *State CEQA Guidelines*.

ii) *A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public*

²³ California Office of Historic Preservation, Riverside County (https://ohp.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=21452), April 2020.

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

Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. California Assembly Bill (AB) 52 was enacted on July 1, 2015. AB 52 added a new requirement for Native American consultation under CEQA and recognized a new cultural resource type, the tribal cultural resource.

Applied EarthWorks, Inc. contacted the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) for a review of its Sacred Lands File (SLF), to determine if any known Native American cultural properties (e.g., traditional use or gathering areas, places of religious or sacred activity) are present within or adjacent to the project area. The NAHC responded on November 5, 2019, stating the SLF search was completed with negative results. The NAHC provided a list of Native American individuals and organizations to be contacted to elicit information and/or concerns regarding cultural resource issues related to the proposed project, if any. Results of the NAHC SLF search and Native American contact list were turned over to the RCTD to assist with its government-to-government consultation requirements under AB 52.

On January 15, 2020, RCTD mailed the initial AB 52 notification letters to nine Native American tribes with interests in the project area. Copies of the letters, the list of contacts, and received responses are included in the *Cultural Resource Assessment for the Riverside County Transportation Department's Thousand Palms Canyon Road Widening and Resurfacing Project*. Four tribal representatives provided responses as logged in the Cultural Resource Assessment (2020). Summaries of responses received are:

- As a result of the AB 52 notification, the Aqua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians responded on February 11, 2020, and requested formal consultation with RCTD, copies of any cultural resource documentation (report and site records) generated in connection with the project, and the presence of an approved Cultural Resource Monitor during any ground-disturbing activities.
- The Cabazon Band of Mission Indians responded on January 28, 2020, and stated the project area is located outside of the Tribe's current reservation boundaries and the Tribe has no specific information about the project area.
- The San Manuel Band of Mission Indians responded on January 23, 2020, and stated the project area is located outside of the Tribe's current reservation boundaries, as such, the Tribe will not be requesting consulting party status with the lead agency or requesting to participate in the scoping, development, and/or review of documents created pursuant to legal and regulatory mandates.
- The Morongo Band of Mission Indians deferred to the Aqua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians per correspondence on February 11, 2020, and prior telephone conversations.

As a result of the consultation Mitigation Measures TCR-1 through TCR-3 were agreed upon by the County and the Aqua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians to reduce any potential impacts to less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

TCR-1: Tribal Monitoring: At least 30 days prior to the commencement of ground-disturbing activity, a Riverside County consultant shall provide a Native American Monitoring Agreement with the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians.

TCR-2: Treatment and Final Disposition of Cultural Resources: Any archaeological resource unearthed during construction activities shall be evaluated by the Qualified Archaeologist and Native American Monitor(s). If the resource is determined to be Native American in origin, any such resource (including sacred items, burial goods, and all archaeological artifacts and non-human remains) shall be addressed through one or more of the following methods:

- Preservation in place by accommodating on-site reburial of the discovered items with the consulting Native American tribe(s). This shall include measures and provisions to protect the future reburial area from any future impacts. Reburial shall not occur until all cataloging and recordation efforts have been completed.
- A curation agreement with an appropriate qualified repository within Riverside County that meets federal standards per 36 CFR Part 79. The collections and associated records shall be transferred, including title, to an appropriate curation facility within Riverside County, to be accompanied by payment of the fees necessary for permanent curation.
- If more than one Native American Tribe or band is involved with the project, consensus needs to be reached amongst all Tribes involved regarding the repository. If consensus cannot be reached, the County of Riverside will select an appropriate qualified repository within Riverside County that meets federal standards per 36 CFR 79.

TCR-3: Discovery of Human Remains: In the event that human remains (or remains that may be human) are discovered within the construction areas, all activity within 60 feet of the find shall be immediately halted. Any discovery of human remains shall be immediately reported by the Qualified Archaeologist and Native American monitor(s) to the County Coroner. If the human remains are determined to be Native American, the County Coroner shall notify the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC), who shall appoint a Most Likely Descendant (MLD) in accordance with California Public Resources Code 5097.98.

The discovery of any Native American human remains and/or funerary objects shall be kept confidential and secure to prevent any further disturbance. In the case where discovered human remains cannot be fully documented and recovered on the same day, the remains and associated funerary objects, sacred objects and/or objects of cultural patrimony shall be covered with an opaque material or placed in opaque cloth bags. A physical barrier (e.g., metal plate, concrete slab that can be moved by heavy equipment) shall be placed over the excavation opening to protect the remains until examination by the MLD can occur. If this type of protective barrier is not available, a 24-hour guard shall be posted outside of working hours.

The MLD shall complete his or her inspection and make recommendations or preferences for treatment within 48 hours of being granted access to the site. The MLD shall identify and direct the most appropriate means of treating the human remains and any associated funerary object(s). As determined through consultation with the County, the MLD shall make recommendations that allow the burial to remain in situ and protected.

Once complete, a final report of all activities associated with or resulting from the discovery of human remains shall be submitted to the NAHC.

XIX. Utilities and Service Systems

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

Source(s): California Solid Waste Reuse and Recycling Access Act of 1991

Regulatory Setting

California Urban Water Management Planning Act

Under the California Water Code and Urban Water Management Planning Act of 1983, all California urban water suppliers are required to prepare and adopt an Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP) every five years, which promotes water conservation and efficiency measures. Urban water suppliers that serve more than 3,000 customers or are supplying more than 3,000 acre-feet of water annually are subject to this Act. This Act requires that the total project water use be compared to water supply sources over the next 20 years in five-year increments. Planning must occur for all drought years and must include a water recycling analysis that incorporates a description of the wastewater collection and treatment system, outlining existing and potential recycled water uses. In September 2014, the Act was amended by SB 1420, which now requires urban water suppliers to provide descriptions of their water demand management measures and similar information.

State Updated Model Landscape Ordinance

The State Updated Model Landscape Ordinance requires the adoption of landscape water conservation ordinances or the adoption of a different ordinance that is at least as stringent as the updated Model Ordinance. The City adopted Water Efficient Landscaping Standards for new and Rehabilitated Landscaping in 2013, as well as the revised SJMC Chapter 15.11.

Water Conservation Act of 2009

The Water Conservation Act of 2009 (SB X7-7) requires all water suppliers to increase water use efficiency by reducing per capita urban water use by 20 percent by December 31, 2020. This bill also set a goal for the State of reducing per capita water use by at least 10 percent by December 31, 2015.

California Integrated Waste Management Act (AB 939)

AB 939 established the California Integrated Waste Management Board under CalRecycle, which required all counties within California to prepare integrated waste management plans. Additionally, it changed the focus of solid waste management from landfill to diversion strategies (e.g., source reduction, recycling, and composting), and required all municipalities to divert 25 percent of their solid waste from landfill disposal by January 1, 1995, and 50 percent by 2000.

Findings of Fact

For Questions a, b, c, d, and e: No Impact

The nearest utilities to the project site are electrical power lines located on the west side of the road, outside of the area where road improvements would occur. The project does not include relocation or disruption of public or private utilities. Moreover, the project does not include uses that require expanded water, wastewater, drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities. There are no utilities within the roadway right of way that would be impacted by the pavement widening. Although there are no utilities identified that would be impacted, the construction contractor for the project shall notify utility service providers in the unlikely event of disruption or damage of unidentified services through standard construction procedures.

On-site water usage would be generally limited to the application of water on ground disturbance areas to control dust during construction. This roadway improvement project would continue to operate as it currently does in its existing condition. The proposed project does not include the development of uses that require additional potable or treated water, or connection to existing potable/treated water systems. No new demand on existing water or wastewater facilities would occur; therefore, the project would not require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater facilities or the expansion of existing facilities.

This roadway improvement project does not include a residential, industrial, or commercial component. Since the proposed project does not include the construction or operation of any structure or facility that would permanently increase the generation of wastewater, no new or expanded wastewater facilities or services would be required. Similarly, the proposed project would generate minimal solid waste, if any, during construction and no solid waste would be generated during operation of the roadway. There is adequate capacity at multiple landfills to accommodate any construction waste generated by the proposed project. The proposed project would be required to comply with all federal, State, and local regulations related to solid waste. Furthermore, the proposed project would comply with all standards related to solid waste diversion, reduction, and recycling during project construction, including applicable elements of AB 1327, Chapter 18 (California Solid Waste Reuse and Recycling Access Act of 1991). Adherence

to these solid waste requirements and standards would ensure no impact to statutes and regulations and as described above there would be no impact to other utilities and service systems.

XX. Wildfire

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

Source(s): California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE).

Regulatory Setting

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)

CAL FIRE publishes maps that predict the threat of fire for each county within the State. Local Responsibility Areas and State or Federal Responsibility Areas are classified as either very high fire hazard severity zones (VHFHSZ) or non-VHFHSZ based on factors including fuel availability, topography, fire history, and climate. The 2012 Strategic Fire Plan for California was generated by CAL FIRE to provide guidelines and objectives in order to account for associated fire impacts.

California Fire Code

The California Fire Code includes regulations for emergency planning, fire service features, fire protection systems, hazardous materials, fire flow requirements, and fire hydrant locations and distribution. Several fire safety requirements include installation of sprinklers in all high-rise buildings; the establishment of fire resistance standards for fire doors, building materials, and particular types of construction; and the clearance of debris and vegetation within a prescribed distance from occupied structures in wildlife hazard areas.

California Emergency Management Agency (CalEMA)

CalEMA was consolidated as part of the Governor’s Office on January 1, 2009, merging the former Governor’s Office of Emergency Services with the existing Governor’s Office of Homeland Security. CalEMA coordinates all State agency response to major disasters to provide support and hazard mitigation efforts for local governments. The agency also ensures the State has the appropriate resources and plans in order to respond in the event of all natural and human-induced emergencies and disasters.

Executive Order N-05-19

On January 9, 2019, Governor Gavin Newsom announced an Executive Order (EO) that requires CAL FIRE and other State agencies to compile policy and regulatory recommendations concerning wildfire mitigation, emphasizing environmental sustainability and public health. The EO requires the incorporation of socioeconomic analysis when conducting risk management of wildfires and mandates that agencies identify geographic areas with populations that are more vulnerable to the impacts of wildfires.

Western Coachella Valley Area Plan

The area plan contains information consistent with CAL FIRE and has the following policy, which, in turn, per the General Plan Safety Element, calls for implementation of a coordination program with fire protection and emergency service providers to reassess fire hazards after wildfire events and to adjust fire prevention and suppression needs, as necessary.²⁴

- WCVAP 25.1 Protect life and property from wildfire hazards through adherence to the Fire Hazards section of the General Plan Safety Element.²⁵

Findings of Fact

According to CAL FIRE, the project area has three different areas designated as fire hazard areas. The southern portion of the project site is within a Federal Responsibility Area (FRA).²⁶ The middle portion of the project site, mostly around the Coachella Valley Preserve, is within a Local Responsibility Area (LRA)²⁷ Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ). The northern portion of the project site is within an FRA, but also within a VHFHSZ in the area nearest to Dillion Road.

For Questions a, b, c, and d: No Impact

During project construction, no complete road closures are anticipated and the majority of construction activities will occur with the road open to through traffic. Short-term lane closures could occur affecting local traffic; however, none would substantially impair adopted emergency response plans or emergency evacuation plans in the area and no impact would occur.

The project site is on an existing road with ~~no three~~ nearby residences on the Coachella Valley Preserve property; therefore, ~~no few~~ local ~~population residents~~ would be subject to wildfire-related pollutant concentrations. The Coachella Valley Preserve, and two buildings just to the north of the Preserve center, are the only structures in the vicinity. Spark arresters are standard on contemporary construction equipment, which would avoid and minimize the risk of accidental construction-induced wildfire. The project site and surrounding areas are on flat to slightly sloping terrain with the surrounding area exemplified by typical desert landscape (i.e., rocks, desert soil, sparse vegetation, and palm tree oases within the Coachella Valley Preserve approximately 300 feet from the project alignment). While the middle project area is identified

²⁴ https://planning.rctlma.org/Portals/14/genplan/2019/elements/Ch06_Safety_080619.pdf, accessed March 29, 2021.

²⁵ https://planning.rctlma.org/Portals/14/genplan/2019/ap/WCVAP_121019.pdf, accessed March 29, 2021.

²⁶ Federal Responsibility Area (FRA) are areas for which the Federal Agencies are responsible for wildland fire protection under various federal laws.

²⁷ "Local Responsibility Areas" (LRA) are lands for which a local government agency is responsible for all fire protection.

as a VHFHSZ, implementation of the project, in itself, would not expose construction workers or the preserve visitors to additional wildfire risk or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire. Spark arresters are standard on contemporary construction equipment, which would avoid and minimize the risk of accidental construction-induced wildfire. Furthermore, given the project's proximity to urbanized areas, there are multiple fire stations within response distance, the closest of which is on Robert Road, less than 15 minutes from the farthest extreme of the project area.

The area surrounding the project site is not occupied by any residential units, commercial uses, other roadways, or utilities other than electric lines to the west of the project site. Implementation of the proposed project would not include new infrastructure or the relocation of existing infrastructure that may exacerbate fire risk.

The project site is slightly sloped starting at Dillion Road all the way down to Ramon Road. Storm water would continue to flow downslope and the improved roadway would not change any of the existing patterns of runoff. The proposed project would not alter slopes or drainage patterns in a manner that would expose people or structures to significant risks. No impact would occur and no mitigation is proposed.

XXI. 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 substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c. Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Findings of Fact

- 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 history or prehistory?**

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. The project, through design and best management practices along with compliance with the CVMSHCP, would have a less than significant impact on the environment. A pre-construction burrowing owl survey would be required in the Conservation Areas, using an accepted protocol as in Mitigation Measure BIO-2, that would ensure proper handling of this resource and that the range of this species would not be restricted. Mitigation Measure BIO-1 would prevent impacts to the Le Conte's thrasher and other nesting birds during the nesting season (January 15 through August 31) with surveys conducted by an acceptable biologist, prior to the start of construction activities, on the construction site and within 500 feet of the construction site or to the property boundary if less than 500 feet.

In order to address the designation, responsibilities, and participation of Native American tribal monitors during excavation and other ground-disturbing activities within undisturbed native soils and construction scheduling please note the discussion of Mitigation Measures CUL-1 through CUL-6 and TCR-1 through TCR-3.

- b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerate" 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.)

No Impact. As stated in the Air Quality, Greenhouse Gas, and Transportation discussions above, the project would not produce any trip-generating structures (residential, commercial, industrial, etc.). As noted in this report, the entire road is in a semi-remote area of Riverside County with only the Coachella Valley Preserve located approximately in the middle length of the entire road. There are no recent, current, or foreseeable projects in the area that would contribute to the effects of this project or vice versa in a manner that would be cumulatively considerable. The project does not induce growth by itself or in a cumulative effect with other projects in the region. No impact is identified and no mitigation is proposed.

c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?

Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. As stated previously, the proposed project would have no impact with respect to Aesthetics, Agricultural and Forestry Resources, Geology and Soils, Mineral Resources, Land Use and Planning, Population and Housing, and Recreation. Additionally, the proposed project would have less than significant impact with respect to Air Quality, Energy, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Hydrology and Water Quality, Noise, Public Services, Transportation, Utilities and Service Systems, and Wildfire. Finally, the proposed project would have less than significant impact with mitigation incorporated with respect to Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, and Tribal Cultural Resources. Based on the project description and the preceding responses, development of the proposed project would not cause substantial adverse effects to human beings because all potentially significant impacts of the proposed project would be reduced to a less than significant level through the implementation of mitigation measures discussed, including to Tribal Cultural Resources and other issues that may indirectly affect human beings.

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APPENDIX A

MITIGATION MONITORING AND REPORTING PLAN CHECKLIST

This Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan has been prepared for use in implementing mitigation for the:

Thousand Palms Canyon Road Widening Project

The program has been prepared in compliance with State law and the IS prepared for the project by the County of Riverside.

CEQA requires the adoption of a reporting or monitoring program for those measures placed on a project to mitigate or avoid adverse effects on the environment (Public Resource Code Section 21081.6). The law states that the reporting or monitoring program shall be designed to ensure compliance during project implementation.

The monitoring program contains the following elements:

1. The mitigation measures are recorded with the action and procedure necessary to ensure compliance. In some instances, one action may be used to verify implementation of several mitigation measures.
2. A procedure for compliance and verification has been outlined for each action necessary. This procedure designates who will take action, what action will be taken and when, and to whom and when compliance will be reported.
3. The program has been designed to be flexible. As monitoring progresses, changes to compliance procedures may be necessary based on recommendations by those responsible for the program. As changes are made, new monitoring compliance procedures and records will be developed and incorporated into the program.

This Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan includes mitigation identified in the IS.

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Project File Name: Thousand Palms Canyon Road Widening Project **Applicant:** County of Riverside, California
Prepared by: LSA **Date:** _____

Mitigation Measure No./Implementing Action	Responsible for Monitoring	Monitoring Frequency	Timing of Verification	Method of Verification	Verified Date/Initials	Sanctions for Noncompliance
Air Quality						
The following are the typical SCAQMD Air Quality Best Management Practices for the Coachella Valley. There are no construction impacts for the proposed project; however, these control measures would be the standard air quality measures for controlling construction fugitive dust emissions.						
Backfilling						
01-1 Stabilize backfill material when not actively handling; and	County or designee	Daily during backfill operations	Daily during backfill operations	Inspections		Issuance of Stop Work Orders
01-2 Stabilize backfill material during handling; and						
01-3 Stabilize soil at completion of activity.						
Clearing and Grubbing						
02-1 Maintain stability of soil through pre-watering of site prior to clearing and grubbing; and	County or designee	Daily during clearing and grubbing operations	Daily during clearing and grubbing operations	Inspections		Issuance of Stop Work Orders
02-2 Stabilize soil during clearing and grubbing activities; and						
02-3 Stabilize soil immediately after clearing and grubbing activities.						

Mitigation Measure No./Implementing Action		Responsible for Monitoring	Monitoring Frequency	Timing of Verification	Method of Verification	Verified Date/Initials	Sanctions for Noncompliance
Clearing Forms							
03-1	Use water spray to clear forms; or	County or designee	Daily while clearing forms	Daily while clearing forms	Inspections		Issuance of Stop Work Orders
03-2	Use of high pressure air to clear forms may cause exceedance of Rule requirements						
03-3	Use vacuum system to clear forms.						
Crushing							
04-1	Stabilize surface soils prior to operation of support equipment; and	County or designee	Daily while crushing	Daily while crushing	Inspections		Issuance of Stop Work Orders
04-2	Stabilize material after crushing.						
Cut and Fill							
05-1	Pre-water soils prior to cut and fill activities; and	County or designee	Daily during cut and fill operations	Daily during cut and fill operations	Inspections		Issuance of Stop Work Orders
05-2	Stabilize soil during and after cut and fill activities.						

Mitigation Measure No./Implementing Action	Responsible for Monitoring	Monitoring Frequency	Timing of Verification	Method of Verification	Verified Date/Initials	Sanctions for Noncompliance
<p>Demolition – Mechanical/Manual</p> <p>06-1 Stabilize wind erodible surfaces to reduce dust; and</p> <p>06-2 Stabilize surface soil where support equipment and vehicles will operate; and</p> <p>06-3 Stabilize loose soil and demolition debris; and</p> <p>06-4 Comply with AQMD Rule 1403.</p>	County or designee	Daily during Demolition	Daily during Demolition	Inspections		Issuance of Stop Work Orders
<p>Disturbed Soil</p> <p>07-1 Stabilize disturbed soil throughout the construction site; and</p> <p>07-02 Stabilize disturbed soil between structures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limit vehicular traffic and disturbances on soils where possible If interior block walls are planned, install as early as possible Apply water or a stabilizing agent in sufficient quantities to prevent the generation of visible dust plumes 	County or designee	Daily whenever disturbed soils are present	Daily whenever disturbed soils are present	Inspections		Issuance of Stop Work Orders

Mitigation Measure No./Implementing Action		Responsible for Monitoring	Monitoring Frequency	Timing of Verification	Method of Verification	Verified Date/Initials	Sanctions for Noncompliance
Earthmoving Activities 08-1 Pre-apply water to depth of proposed cuts; and 08-2 Re-apply water as necessary to maintain soils in a damp condition and to ensure that visible emissions do not exceed 100 feet in any direction; and 08-3 Stabilize soils once earthmoving activities are complete.		County or designee	Daily during earthmoving activities	Daily during earthmoving activities	Inspections		Issuance of Stop Work Orders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grade each project phase separately, timed to coincide with construction phase Upwind fencing can prevent material movement on site Apply water or a stabilizing agent in sufficient quantities to prevent the generation of visible dust plumes 							
Importing/Exporting of Bulk Materials 09-1 Stabilize material while loading to reduce fugitive dust emissions; and 09-2 Maintain at least six inches of freeboard on haul vehicles; and 09-3 Stabilize material while transporting to reduce fugitive dust emissions; and 09-4 Stabilize material while unloading to reduce fugitive dust emissions; and 09-5 Comply with Vehicle Code Section 23114.		County or designee	Daily during Importing or Exporting	Daily during Importing or Exporting	Inspections		Issuance of Stop Work Orders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use tarps or other suitable enclosures on haul trucks Check belly-dump truck seals regularly and remove any trapped rocks to prevent spillage Comply with track-out prevention/mitigation requirements Provide water while loading and unloading to reduce visible dust plumes 							

Mitigation Measure No./Implementing Action		Responsible for Monitoring	Monitoring Frequency	Timing of Verification	Method of Verification	Verified Date/Initials	Sanctions for Noncompliance
Landscaping							
10-1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stabilize soils, materials, slopes. Apply water to materials to stabilize materials in a crusted condition Maintain effective cover over materials Stabilize sloping surfaces using soil binders until vegetation or groundcover can effectively stabilize the slopes Hydroseed prior to rain season 	County or designee	Daily during landscaping	Daily during landscaping	Inspections		Issuance of Stop Work Orders
Road Shoulder Maintenance							
11-1	Apply water to unpaved shoulders prior to clearing; and	County or designee	Daily during Road Shoulder Maintenance	Daily during Road Shoulder Maintenance	Inspections		Issuance of Stop Work Orders
11-2	Apply chemical dust suppressants and/or washed gravel to maintain a stabilized surface after completing road shoulder maintenance.						
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Installation of curbing and/or paving of road shoulders can reduce recurring maintenance costs Use of chemical dust suppressants can inhibit vegetation growth and reduce future road shoulder maintenance costs 						

Mitigation Measure No./Implementing Action		Responsible for Monitoring	Monitoring Frequency	Timing of Verification	Method of Verification	Verified Date/Initials	Sanctions for Noncompliance	
Screening		County or designee	Daily during screening	Daily during screening	Inspections		Issuance of Stop Work Orders	
12-1	Pre-water material prior to screening; and							• Dedicate water truck or high capacity hose to screening operation
12-2	Limit fugitive dust emissions to opacity and plume length standards; and							• Drop material through the screen slowly and minimize drop height
12-3	Stabilize material immediately after screening.	• Install wind barrier with a porosity of no more than 50% upwind of screen to the height of the drop point						
Staging Areas		County or designee	Daily while using staging areas	Daily while using staging areas	Inspections		Issuance of Stop Work Orders	
13-1	Stabilize staging areas during use; and							• Limit size of staging area
13-2	Stabilize staging area soils at project completion.	• Limit vehicle speeds to 15 miles per hour	• Limit number and size of staging area entrances/exits					
Stockpiles/Bulk Material Handling		County or designee	Daily during construction	Daily during construction	Inspections		Issuance of Stop Work Orders	
14-1	Stabilize stockpiled materials.							• Add or remove material from the downwind portion of the storage pile
14-2	Stockpiles within 100 yards of off-site occupied buildings must not be greater than eight feet in height; or must have a road bladed to the top to allow water truck access or must have an operational water irrigation system that is capable of complete stockpile coverage.	• Maintain storage piles to avoid steep sides or faces						

Mitigation Measure No./Implementing Action		Responsible for Monitoring	Monitoring Frequency	Timing of Verification	Method of Verification	Verified Date/Initials	Sanctions for Noncompliance
Traffic Areas for Construction Activities		County or designee	Daily during construction	Daily during construction	Inspections		Issuance of Stop Work Orders
15-1	Stabilize all off-road traffic and parking areas; and						
15-2	Stabilize all haul routes; and						
15-3	Direct construction traffic over established haul routes.						
Trenching		County or designee	During all Trenching operations	During all Trenching operations	Inspections		Issuance of Stop Work Orders
16-1	Stabilize surface soils where trencher or excavator and support equipment will operate; and						
16.2	Stabilize soils at the completion of trenching activities.						
Truck Loading		County or designee	During all Truck Loading Operations	During all Truck Loading Operations	Inspections		Issuance of Stop Work Orders
17-1	Pre-water material prior to loading; and						
17.2	Ensure that freeboard exceeds six inches (CVC 23114)						

Mitigation Measure No./Implementing Action	Responsible for Monitoring	Monitoring Frequency	Timing of Verification	Method of Verification	Verified Date/Initials	Sanctions for Noncompliance
<p>Turf Overseeding</p> <p>18-1 Apply sufficient water immediately prior to conducting turf vacuuming activities to meet opacity and plume length standards; and</p> <p>18-2 Cover haul vehicles prior to exiting the site.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Haul waste material immediately off site 	N/A For activities at this site location	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A
<p>Unpaved Roads/Parking Lots</p> <p>19-1 Stabilize soils to meet the applicable performance standards; and</p> <p>19-2 Limit vehicular travel to established unpaved roads (haul routes) and unpaved parking lots.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Restricting vehicular access to established unpaved travel paths and parking lots can reduce stabilization requirements 	County or designee	During appropriate times	During appropriate times	Inspections		Issuance or compliance requirements
<p>Vacant Land</p> <p>20-1 In instances where vacant lots are 0.10 acre or larger and have a cumulative area of 500 square feet or more that are driven over and/or used by motor vehicles and/or off-road vehicles, prevent motor vehicle and/or off-road vehicle trespassing, parking and/or access by installing barriers, curbs, fences, gates, posts, signs, shrubs,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify a dust control supervisor that is employed by or contracted with the property owner or developer, is on the site or available on-site within 30 minutes during working hours, has the authority to expeditiously employ sufficient dust mitigation measures to ensure compliance with all Rule requirements, and has completed the AQMD Fugitive Dust Control Class and has been issued a valid 	County or designee	Daily during construction	Daily	Inspections		Issuance of Stop Work Orders

Mitigation Measure No./Implementing Action	Responsible for Monitoring	Monitoring Frequency	Timing of Verification	Method of Verification	Verified Date/Initials	Sanctions for Noncompliance
<p>trees or other effective control measures.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Certificate of Completion for the class; and Notify the SCAQMD Executive Officer in writing within 30 days after the site no longer qualifies as a large operation. 						
Fugitive Dust Source Category Control Actions						
Earthmoving (except construction cutting and filling areas, and mining operations)						
(1a) Maintain soil moisture content at a minimum of 12 percent, as determined by the ASTM [American Society for Testing and Materials] method D2216, or other equivalent method approved by the Executive Officer, the California Air Resources Board, and the U.S. EPA. Two soil moisture evaluations must be conducted during the first three hours of active operations during a calendar day, and two such evaluations each subsequent four-hour period of active operations; OR (1a-1) For any earthmoving which is more than 100 feet from all property lines, conduct watering as necessary to prevent visible dust emissions from exceeding 100 feet in length in any direction.	County or designee	Daily during construction	Each day	Inspections		Issuance of Stop Work Orders
Earthmoving: Construction fill areas						
(1b) Maintain soil moisture content at a minimum of 12 percent, as determined by ASTM method D2216, or other equivalent method approved by the Executive Officer, the California Air Resources Board, and the U.S. EPA. For areas which have an optimum moisture content for compaction of less than 12 percent, as determined by ASTM Method 1557 or other equivalent method approved by the Executive Officer and the California Air Resources Board and the U.S. EPA, complete the compaction process as expeditiously as possible after achieving at least 70	County or designee	Daily during construction	Each day	Inspections		Issuance of Stop Work Orders

Mitigation Measure No./Implementing Action	Responsible for Monitoring	Monitoring Frequency	Timing of Verification	Method of Verification	Verified Date/Initials	Sanctions for Noncompliance
percent of the optimum soil moisture content. Two soil moisture evaluations must be conducted during the first three hours of active operations during a calendar day, and two such evaluations during each subsequent four-hour period of active operations.						
Earthmoving: Construction cut areas and mining operations	County or designee	Daily during construction	Each day	Inspections		Issuance of Stop Work Orders
(1c) Conduct watering as necessary to prevent visible emissions from extending more than 100 feet beyond the active cut or mining area unless the area is inaccessible to watering vehicles due to slope conditions or other safety factors.						
Disturbed surface areas (except completed grading areas)	County or designee	Daily	Each day	Inspections		Issuance of Stop Work Orders
(2a/b) Apply dust suppression in sufficient quantity and frequency to maintain a stabilized surface. Any areas which cannot be stabilized, as evidenced by wind driven fugitive dust must have an application of water at least twice per day to at least 80 percent of the unstabilized area.						
Disturbed Surface Areas: Completed Grading Areas	County or designee	Within 5 working days prior to grading completion	During application timeframe	Inspections		Issuance of Stop Work Orders
(2c) Apply chemical stabilizers within five working days of grading completion; OR						
(2d) Take actions (3a) or (3c) specified for inactive disturbed surface areas.						
Inactive Disturbed Surface Areas	County or designee	Daily with evidence of wind driven dust	Daily with evidence of wind driven dust	Inspections		Issuance of a Stop Work Order

Mitigation Measure No./Implementing Action	Responsible for Monitoring	Monitoring Frequency	Timing of Verification	Method of Verification	Verified Date/Initials	Sanctions for Noncompliance
<p>(3a) Apply water to at least 80 percent of all inactive disturbed surface areas on a daily basis when there is evidence of wind driven fugitive dust, excluding any areas which are inaccessible to watering vehicles due to excessive slope or other safety conditions; OR</p> <p>(3b) Apply dust suppressants in sufficient quantity and frequency to maintain a stabilized surface; OR</p> <p>(3c) Establish vegetative groundcover within 21 days after active operations have ceased. Groundcover must be of sufficient density to expose less than 30 percent of unstabilized ground within 90 days of planting, and at all times thereafter; OR</p> <p>(3d) Utilize any combination of control actions (3a), (3b), and (3c) such that, in total, these actions apply to all inactive disturbed surface areas.</p>						
Unpaved Roads						
(4a) Water all roads used for any vehicular traffic at least once per every two hours of active operations [3 times per normal 8 hour work day]; OR	County or designee	During construction	During construction	Inspections		Issuance of a Stop Work Order
(4b) Water all roads used for any vehicular traffic once daily and restrict vehicle speeds to 15 miles per hour; OR						
(4c) Apply a chemical stabilizer to all unpaved road surfaces in sufficient quantity and frequency to maintain a stabilized surface.						
Open Storage Piles						
(5a) Apply chemical stabilizers; OR	County or designee	During construction	During construction	Inspections		Issuance of a Stop Work Order
(5b) Apply water to at least 80 percent of the surface area of all open storage piles on a daily basis when there is evidence of wind driven fugitive dust; OR						
(5c) Install temporary coverings; OR						
(5d) Install a three-sided enclosure with walls no more than 50 percent porosity which extend, at the minimum, to the top of the pile. This option may only be used at aggregate-related plants or at center manufacturing facilities.						

Mitigation Measure No./Implementing Action	Responsible for Monitoring	Monitoring Frequency	Timing of Verification	Method of Verification	Verified Date/Initials	Sanctions for Noncompliance
<p>All Categories</p> <p>(6a) Any other control measures approved by the Executive Officer and the U.S. EPA as equivalent to the methods specified in Table 2 may be used.</p>	County or designee	During construction	During construction	Inspections		Issuance of a Stop Work Order
Biological Resources						
<p>BIO-1: Pre-construction Le Conte's Thrasher Survey. In order to avoid impacts to the Le Conte's thrasher and other nesting birds, per the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP) during the nesting season (January 15 through August 31), prior to the start of construction activities, surveys shall be conducted by an acceptable biologist on the construction site and within 500 feet of the construction site, or to the property boundary if less than 500 feet. If nesting Le Conte's thrashers are found, a 500-foot Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA), or to the property boundary if less than 500 feet, shall be established around the nest site. The ESA shall be staked and flagged. No construction shall be permitted within the ESA during the breeding season of January 15 through August 31 or until the young have fledged.</p>	County or designee	Prior to construction	Prior to construction	On-site inspection or survey		Issuance of a Stop Work Order
<p>BIO-2: Pre-construction Burrowing Owl Survey. A pre-construction burrowing owl survey would be conducted in all areas of suitable habitat within project limit using an accepted protocol. Prior to construction, a qualified biologist shall survey the construction area including a 500-foot buffer, or to the edge of the property if less than 500 feet, for burrows that could be used by burrowing owl. If a burrow is located, the biologist shall determine whether an owl is present in the burrow. If the burrow is determined to be occupied, the burrow shall be flagged and a 160-foot buffer during the non-breeding season or a 250-foot buffer during the breeding season or a buffer to the edge of the property boundary if less than 500 feet shall be established around the burrow. The buffer area shall be staked and flagged. No development activities shall be permitted within the buffer until the young are no longer dependent on the burrow.</p>	County or designee	Prior to construction	Prior to issuance of demolition permits	Survey results		Issuance of a Stop Work Order
<p>BIO-3: Prior to commencement of construction activities for permanent impacts in jurisdictional features, the project shall obtain authorizations from the Regional Water Quality Control Board</p>	County or designee	Prior to construction	Prior to construction	On-site inspection or survey		Issuance of a Stop Work Order

Mitigation Measure No./Implementing Action	Responsible for Monitoring	Monitoring Frequency	Timing of Verification	Method of Verification	Verified Date/Initials	Sanctions for Noncompliance
<p>(RWQCB) pursuant to <i>Procedures for Discharge for Discharges of Dredged or Fill Material to Waters of the State or State Water Resources Control Board Water Quality Order No. 2004-0004-DWQ</i> and from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) pursuant to Section 1602 of the California Fish and Game Code have been obtained.</p> <p>The type, amount, and location of any required mitigation (including payment of fees or purchase of credits) shall be established by each regulatory agency during the review of any required authorization. As determined appropriate by each agency, the following shall be incorporated into required permit(s):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Off-site replacement and/or restoration of RWQCB jurisdictional "waters of the State" within the Colorado River Watershed at a ratio no less than 2:1 or within an adjacent watershed at a ratio no less than 2:1 for permanent impacts, and for any temporary impacts to restore the impact area to pre-project conditions (i.e., pre-project contours and revegetate where applicable). Off-site mitigation may occur on land acquired for the purpose of in-perpetuity preservation, or through the purchase of mitigation credits at an agency-approved off-site mitigation bank. Off-site replacement and/or restoration of CDFW jurisdictional streambed and associated riparian habitat within the Colorado River Watershed at a ratio no less than 2:1 or within an adjacent watershed at a ratio no less than 2:1 for permanent impacts, and for any temporary impacts to restore the impact area to pre-project conditions (i.e., pre-project contours and revegetate where applicable). Off-site mitigation may occur on land acquired for the purpose of in-perpetuity preservation, or through the purchase of mitigation credits at an agency-approved off-site mitigation bank. <p>BIO-4: Worker Environmental Awareness Program. A Worker Environmental Awareness Program (WEAP) shall be implemented for work crews by a qualified biologist(s) prior to the commencement of construction activities and prior to site access by workers. Training materials and briefings shall include but not be limited to, discussion of</p>	A Qualified Biologist from County or Designee	Once prior to construction	Once prior to construction	Inspection during WEAP training session		Issuance of a Stop Work Order

Mitigation Measure No./Implementing Action	Responsible for Monitoring	Monitoring Frequency	Timing of Verification	Method of Verification	Verified Date/Initials	Sanctions for Noncompliance
<p>the Federal and California Endangered Species Acts, the CVMISHCP, the consequences of noncompliance with project permitting requirements, identification and values of special-status plant and wildlife species and sensitive natural plant community habitats, fire protection measures, and hazardous substance spill prevention and containment measures.</p> <p>Cultural Resources</p> <p>CUL-1: Cultural Resources Monitoring Plan. The Project Archaeologist, in consultation with the Monitoring Tribe(s), and the County shall develop a Cultural Resources Monitoring Plan (CRMP) to address the details, timing, and responsibility of all archaeological and cultural activities that will occur on the project site. Details in the CRMP shall include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project grading and development scheduling. • The coordination of a monitoring schedule as agreed upon by the Monitoring Tribe(s), the Project Archaeologist, and the County. • The protocols and stipulations that the County, Monitoring Tribe(s), and Project Archaeologist shall follow in the event of inadvertent cultural resources discoveries, including any newly discovered cultural resources. They shall have the authority to stop and redirect excavation in order to evaluate the significance of any archaeological resources discovered within 60 feet of the find. <p>CUL-2: Train Construction Personnel. Prior to any grading, excavation, and/or other ground-disturbing activities on the project site, the Project Archaeologist and the Monitoring Tribe(s) shall conduct cultural resources sensitivity training for all construction personnel. Construction personnel shall be informed of the types of archaeological resources that may be encountered and of the proper procedures to be enacted in the event of an inadvertent discovery of archaeological resources or human remains. The County's construction manager shall ensure that construction personnel are made available for and attend the training, and shall retain documentation demonstrating attendance.</p> <p>CUL-3: All artifacts/cultural material discovered at the project site shall be inventoried and analyzed by the Project Archaeologist and Native American tribal monitor(s), if any cultural materials of Native American</p>	County or designee	During construction	During construction	Inspection or survey		Issuance of a Stop Work Order
<p>CUL-2: Train Construction Personnel. Prior to any grading, excavation, and/or other ground-disturbing activities on the project site, the Project Archaeologist and the Monitoring Tribe(s) shall conduct cultural resources sensitivity training for all construction personnel. Construction personnel shall be informed of the types of archaeological resources that may be encountered and of the proper procedures to be enacted in the event of an inadvertent discovery of archaeological resources or human remains. The County's construction manager shall ensure that construction personnel are made available for and attend the training, and shall retain documentation demonstrating attendance.</p> <p>CUL-3: All artifacts/cultural material discovered at the project site shall be inventoried and analyzed by the Project Archaeologist and Native American tribal monitor(s), if any cultural materials of Native American</p>	County or designee	During construction	During construction	Inspection or survey		Issuance of a Stop Work Order

Mitigation Measure No./Implementing Action	Responsible for Monitoring	Monitoring Frequency	Timing of Verification	Method of Verification	Verified Date/Initials	Sanctions for Noncompliance
<p>origin are discovered, all activities in the immediate vicinity of the find (within a 60-foot radius) shall stop. The Project Archaeologist and Native American tribal monitor(s) shall analyze the Native American cultural materials for identification as everyday life and/or religious or sacred items, cultural affiliation, temporal placement, and function, as deemed possible. The significance of Native American resources shall be evaluated in accordance with the provisions of CEQA and shall consider the religious beliefs, customs, and practices of the tribe(s). All items found in association with Native American human remains shall be considered grave goods or sacred in origin and subject to special handling.</p> <p>CUL-4: In the event that Native American cultural resources are inadvertently discovered during the course of grading for this project, the following procedures shall be carried out for the treatment and disposition of the discoveries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curation: The County shall relinquish ownership of all cultural resources. Native American cultural materials that cannot be avoided or relocated at the project site shall be prepared for curation. The Project Archaeologist, following consultation with the Monitoring Tribe(s), shall deliver the materials to a qualified repository in Riverside County that meets or exceeds federal standards per Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Title 36, Part 79, and that shall be made available to all qualified researchers and tribal representatives. • Temporary On-Site Curation and Storage: During the course of construction, all discovered resources shall be temporarily curated in a secure location on site. The removal of any cultural materials from the project site will need to be thoroughly inventoried, with Native American Tribal Monitor oversight of the process. • Treatment and Final Disposition: The County shall relinquish ownership of all cultural resources, including sacred items, burial goods, and all cultural materials and nonhuman remains, as part of the required mitigation for impacts to cultural resources within the County right-of-way. The County shall relinquish the cultural materials through the following methods and provide the cultural materials to the Consulting Tribe(s): 	County or designee	During construction	During construction	Inspection or survey		Issuance of a Stop Work Order

Mitigation Measure No./Implementing Action	Responsible for Monitoring	Monitoring Frequency	Timing of Verification	Method of Verification	Verified Date/Initials	Sanctions for Noncompliance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For on-site reburial of the discovered items this shall include measures and provisions to protect the future reburial area from any future impacts. Reburial shall not occur until all cataloguing and basic recordation have been completed. <p>CUL-5: Reporting. The Project Archaeologist shall prepare a final archaeological report within 60 days of project completion. The report shall follow Cultural Resources Management Plan (CRMP) Guidelines and County requirements and shall include at a minimum: a discussion of monitoring methods and techniques used; the results of the monitoring program, including any cultural materials recovered; an inventory of any resources recovered; updated State Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) forms, if any, and any other site(s) identified; final disposition of the resources; and any additional recommendations. A final copy shall be submitted to the County, the Eastern Information Center, and the Monitoring Tribe(s).</p> <p>CUL-6: In the event human remains are encountered, State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 states that no further disturbance shall occur and halt all work within 60 feet until the County Coroner has made a determination of origin and disposition pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 5097.98. The County Coroner must be notified of the find immediately. If the remains are determined to be Native American, the County Coroner will notify the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC), which will determine and notify a Most Likely Descendant (MLD). The archaeologist who discovered the remains will contact the County so that they may work with the MLD to inspect the site of the discovery. The MLD shall complete the inspection within 48 hours of notification by the NAHC. The MLD will have the opportunity to offer recommendations for the disposition of the remains.</p>	County or designee	During construction	During construction	Inspection or survey		Issuance of a Stop Work Order
<p>Hydrology and Water Quality</p> <p>Less than significant. No mitigation required.</p> <p>A Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) would detail the BMPs to be implemented during construction. Construction BMPs would include, but not be limited to, Erosion Control and Sediment Control BMPs designed to minimize the erosion and retain sediment on</p>	County or designee	Daily during construction	Daily during construction	Inspection or survey		Issuance of a Stop Work Order

Mitigation Measure No./Implementing Action	Responsible for Monitoring	Monitoring Frequency	Timing of Verification	Method of Verification	Verified Date/Initials	Sanctions for Noncompliance
<p>site, and Good Housekeeping BMPs to prevent spills, leaks, and discharge of construction debris and waste into receiving waters.</p> <p>Noise</p> <p>Less than significant. No mitigation required.</p> <p>For noise and vibration, there are no operational Best Management Plans (BMPs) or standard measures for this project because there are no operational noise and vibration impacts. Also, there are no temporary construction vibration impacts. Although temporary construction noise impacts are considered less than significant, the noise section provides standard conditions to further minimize construction noise.</p>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Transportation						
<p>Avoidance Measure: TRA-1. A detailed Traffic Management Plan shall be prepared during the construction bid phase of the project and approved by the Riverside County Transportation Department. The objective of the Stage Construction, Traffic Control, and Detours Plan is to minimize the potential impacts that construction activities may have on the traveling public and emergency services providers. Preparation of the plan shall be coordinated with the emergency services providers in the project vicinity to minimize response delays resulting from traffic delays, temporary lane closures, and detours during project construction.</p>	County or designee	During construction	During construction	Inspection or survey		Issuance of a Stop Work Order
Tribal Cultural Resources						
<p>TCR-1: Tribal Monitoring. At least 30 days prior to the commencement of ground-disturbing activity, a Riverside County Consultant shall provide a Native American Monitoring Agreement with the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians to the County for review and approval.</p>	County or designee	30 days prior to construction	30 days prior to construction	Inspection or survey		Issuance of Work Order Not to Begin
<p>TCR-2: Treatment and Final Disposition of Cultural Resources. Any archaeological resource unearthed during construction activities shall be evaluated by the Qualified Archaeologist and Native American Monitor(s). If the resource is determined to be Native American in origin, any such resource (including sacred items, burial goods, and all</p>	County or designee	Daily during construction	Daily during construction	Inspection or survey		Issuance of a Stop Work Order

Mitigation Measure No./Implementing Action	Responsible for Monitoring	Monitoring Frequency	Timing of Verification	Method of Verification	Verified Date/Initials	Sanctions for Noncompliance
<p>archaeological artifacts and non-human remains) shall be addressed through one or more of the following methods:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preservation in place by accommodating on-site reburial of the discovered items with the consulting Native American tribe(s). This shall include measures and provisions to protect the future reburial area from any future impacts. Reburial shall not occur until all cataloging and recordation efforts have been completed. • A curation agreement with an appropriate qualified repository within Riverside County that meets federal standards per 36 CFR Part 79. The collections and associated records shall be transferred, including title, to an appropriate curation facility within Riverside County, to be accompanied by payment of the fees necessary for permanent curation. • If more than one Native American Tribe or band is involved with the project, consensus needs to be reached amongst all Tribes involved regarding the repository. If consensus cannot be reached, the County of Riverside will select an appropriate qualified repository within Riverside County that meets federal standards per 36 CFR 79. 						
<p>TCR-3: Discovery of Human Remains. In the event that human remains (or remains that may be human) are discovered within the construction areas, all activity within 100 feet of the find shall be immediately halted. Any discovery of human remains shall be immediately reported by the Qualified Archaeologist and Native American monitor(s) to the County Coroner. If the human remains are determined to be Native American, the County Coroner shall notify the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC), who shall appoint a Most Likely Descendant (MLD) in accordance with California Public Resources Code 5097.98.</p> <p>The discovery of any Native American human remains and/or funerary objects shall be kept confidential and secure to prevent any further disturbance. In the case where discovered human remains cannot be fully documented and recovered on the same day, the remains and associated funerary objects, sacred objects and/or objects of cultural patrimony shall be covered with an opaque material or placed in opaque cloth bags. A physical barrier (e.g., metal plate, concrete slab</p>	County or designee	Daily during construction and all activities occurring within 100 feet shall STOP when human remains found	Daily during construction	Inspection or survey		Issuance of a Stop Work Order.

Mitigation Measure No./Implementing Action	Responsible for Monitoring	Monitoring Frequency	Timing of Verification	Method of Verification	Verified Date/Initials	Sanctions for Noncompliance
<p>that can be moved by heavy equipment) shall be placed over the excavation opening to protect the remains until examination by the MLD can occur. If this type of protective barrier is not available, a 24-hour guard shall be posted outside of working hours.</p> <p>The MLD shall complete his or her inspection and make recommendations or preferences for treatment within 48 hours of being granted access to the site. The MLD shall identify and direct the most appropriate means of treating the human remains and any associated funerary object(s). As determined through consultation with the County, the MLD shall make recommendations that allow the burial to remain in situ and protected.</p> <p>Once complete, a final report of all activities associated with or resulting from the discovery of human remains shall be submitted to the NAHC.</p>						

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APPENDIX B: RESPONSES TO COMMENTS

INTRODUCTION

Riverside County Transportation Department (RCTD) has evaluated the comments received on the Draft Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) during the 30-day public review period for the Thousand Palms Canyon Road Widening Project (Project), which began on May 18 and ended on June 21, 2021, and has prepared written responses to these comments. This Appendix (Appendix B) contains copies of the comments received associated with the public review process and provides written responses for each of these comments.

Any changes to the text of the Draft IS/MND that resulted during the public review process are presented in Appendix C (Errata) of this Final IS/MND. None of the changes to the Draft IS/MND text represents significant new information, as defined by the *California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines* Section 15088.5, and the conclusion of the Draft IS/MND regarding significant impacts and mitigation measures remains unchanged.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

During the 30-day public review period for the Project, RCTD held one Virtual Public Meeting and invited the public, including public agencies, organizations, local residents, and interested persons to attend the meeting to make oral or written comments on the Draft IS/MND. The public hearing was held on June 10, 2021, from 5:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. No questions were raised and no comments were made during the hearing.

COMMENTS RECEIVED ON DRAFT INITIAL STUDY/MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

During the public review period, RCTD received 10 comment letters/emails from agencies, organizations, and individuals. The following table lists the commenting parties along with a correspondence date.

LETTER/EMAILS	COMMENTER	DATE OF COMMENT
Email #1	Dan Christopherson	June 18, 2021
Email #2	Arthur Steele	June 15, 2021
Email #3	Patrick Charlson	May 19, 2021
Email #4	Thomas Kohn	May 28, 2021
Email #5	Quechan Historic Preservation Officer	May 18, 2021
Email #6	San Manuel Band of Mission Indians	May 18, 2021
Email #7	Desert Bicycle Club	June 16, 2021
Email #8	John Pettis	June 15, 2021
Letter #1	Inland Empire Biking Alliance	May 19, 2021
Email #9	Ginny Short, Coachella Valley Preserve	June 12, 2021

COMMENTS AND RESPONSES TO COMMENTS

This section includes all written comments on the Draft IS/MND that RCTD received and the responses to those comments. Responses are prepared for those comments that address the sufficiency of the environmental document regarding the adequate disclosure of environmental impacts and methods to avoid, minimize, or mitigate those impacts. This section is formatted so that the respective comment correspondences are followed immediately by the corresponding responses. The comment number provided in the right margin of the letter corresponds to the responses provided.

Comment Email #1

Email from Dan Christopherson on Friday, June 18, 2021

To the Riverside County Transportation Department:

**Widening and Resurface
Thousand Palms Canyon Road From
Ramon Rd./Washington St. to Dillion Rd.**

We support this project. It will make this road much safer for all types of transportation, including motor vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians.

We are winter residents of Rancho Mirage.

Vicki Leimback and Dan Christopherson
44 Sierra Madre Way
Rancho Mirage, CA 92270

~~~~~

1-1

**Response to Email #1: Dan Christopherson, Friday, June 18, 2021**

**Response 1-1**

This email expresses support for the Project and does not raise issues related to the Draft IS/MND. Thank you for taking the time to comment.

**Comment Email #2**

*Email from Arthur Steele on Tuesday, June 15, 2021*

It is my understanding that there is a proposal to repave and widen this road. As an avid cyclist, I ride up or down this road frequently, always thankful that I make it safely to the end.

The pavement is badly broken up the entire way except for the segment near the Oasis. Even more dangerous is the fast moving traffic with no shoulder or bike lane for a biker to safely ride separated from cars. We use this road frequently to access the north part of the valley, especially Dillon Road, which takes us to Desert Hot Springs or Indio.

A repaved road surface and striped bike lanes would be a great asset for the vulnerable road users in the cycling community.

~~~~~

2-1

Response to Email #2: Arthur Steele on Tuesday, June 15, 2021

Response 2-1

This email expresses support for the Project and does not raise issues related to the Draft IS/MND. Thank you for taking the time to comment.

Comment Email #3

Email from Patrick Charlson on Wednesday, May 19, 2021

Hi, just wondering if you have planned for bike lane on the thousand palms resurfacing.

A five foot paved shoulder does not work very well for bike lanes. Bike lanes need to be marked, painted and signed for the safety of the riders. If I am not mistaken if there is any federal funding being used on this job, legal bikes must be included.

Thanks Patrick Charlson Sent from my iPad

~~~~~

3-1

### Response to Email #3: Patrick Charlson on Wednesday, May 19, 2021

#### Response 3-1

Project design includes Class II Bike Lanes, which are defined as a portion of the roadway or highway that has been designated by striping, signage, and pavement markings for the preference or exclusive use of bicyclists. The proposed bike lanes are consistent with the designation of the route as regionally significant for this transportation mode per the Coachella Valley Association of Governments Active Transportation Plan (2017) and will meet American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials standards. The project also includes striping, signage, and pavement markings. Thank you for taking the time to comment.

**Comment Email #4**

Email from Thomas Kohn on Friday, May 28, 2021

Are comments still open for the Thousand Palms Canyon Road?

Please provide a link to a comments page.

Please provide a link to the Scope of Work, Request for Bids, and/or Environmental Impact Statement.

4-1

I am concerned that the statements "The project scope includes pavement widening and resurfacing, ... installing rumble strips, widening paved shoulders, ... and adding a Class II bike lane. New pavement width will be 34 feet wide, with two 12-foot through lanes and 5-foot paved shoulders, for most portions of the project." do not provide adequate pavement for the intended Class II bike lane(s).

4-2

This road sees daily bicycle traffic by 20 to 250 riders, depending on the season. Its roughness presents a challenge for the downhill portion from the preserve to Ramon Road. Its narrowness and large numbers of parked cars at the preserve entrance present safety issues.

Thomas Kohn  
Palm Springs CA

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Response to Email #4: Thomas Kohn on Friday, May 28, 2021

Response 4-1

See this web page for publicly available information: <https://rcprojects.org/thousand-palms>. The project is in the environmental review phase and requests for bids have not been issued yet. For clarification, this environmental document is an Initial Study / Mitigated Negative Declaration, not an Environmental Impact Statement. Please contact RCTD's Project Manager, Mohamed Eissa, at MEissa@rivco.org for additional information.

Response 4-2

Project design includes Class II Bike Lanes, which are defined as a portion of the roadway or highway that has been designated by striping, signage, and pavement markings for the preference or exclusive use of bicyclists. The proposed bike lanes are consistent with the designation of the route as regionally significant for this transportation mode per the Coachella Valley Association of Governments Active Transportation Plan (2017) and will meet American Association of State

Highway and Transportation Officials standards, including striping, signage, and pavement markings.
Thank you for taking the time to comment.

Comment Email #5

Quechan Historic Preservation Officer on Tuesday, May 18, 2021

This email is to inform you that we have no comments on this project. We defer to the more local Tribes and support their decisions on the project.

5-1

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**Response to Email #5: Quechan Historic Preservation Officer on Tuesday, May 18, 2021**

**Response 5-1**

This email indicates no comments on this Project. No issues related to the Draft IS/MND are raised and the Quechan Historic Preservation Officer defers to other Tribes. Thank you for taking the time to comment.



**Comment Email #6**

Email from Ryan Nordness, the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians on Tuesday, May 18, 2021

Dear Mohamed,

Thank you for contacting the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians (SMBMI) regarding the above-referenced project. SMBMI appreciates the opportunity to review the project documentation, which was received by the Cultural Resources Management Department on May 18, 2021. The proposed project is located outside of Serrano ancestral territory and, as such, SMBMI will not be requesting to receive consulting party status with the lead agency or to participate in the scoping, development, or review of documents created pursuant to legal and regulatory mandates.

Kind regards,

Ryan Nordness  
Cultural Resource Analyst  
San Manuel Band of Mission Indians

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Response to Email #6: Ryan Nordness, the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians on Tuesday, May 18, 2021

Response 6-1

This email indicates that the Tribe has no comments on this Project and does not raise issues related to the Draft IS/MND. Thank you for taking the time to comment.

6-1

Comment Email #7

Email from Tom Niccum, 2021–2022 Desert Bicycle Club on Wednesday, June 16, 2021

Mohamed Eissa
Riverside County Transportation Department
3525 14th Street
Riverside, California 92501

Dear Mr. Eisaa,

I'm writing on behalf of the 250 members of the Desert Bicycle Club regarding the proposed Thousand palms Canyon Road Widening project.

We would like to express our strongest support for this project. We use this road segment often, and is one of our favorite rides! We would love to see the widening and bike land addition move forward - it would enhance our usage of the segment tremendously.

Thank you for your consideration. Don't hesitate to reach out if you need anything to support this project.

Best regards,

Tom Niccum
2021-2022 President
Desert Bicycle Club
Tom@cycleclub.com

~~~~~

7-1

**Response to Email #7: Tom Niccum, 2021-2022 Desert Bicycle on Wednesday, June 16, 2021**

**Response 7-1**

This email indicates support for this Project and does not raise issues related to the Draft IS/MND. Thank you for taking the time to comment.

## Comment Email #8

*Email from John Pettis on Tuesday, June 15, 2021*

Please widen road make it safer for cyclist

Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone

~~~~~

8-1

Response to Email #8: John Pettis on June 15, 2021

Response 8-1

The revised roadway will be wider with 5-foot bike lanes added. The project design includes Class II Bike Lanes, which are defined as a portion of the roadway or highway that has been designated by striping, signage, and pavement markings for the preference or exclusive use of bicyclists. The proposed bike lanes are consistent with the designation of the route as regionally significant for this transportation mode per the Coachella Valley Association of Governments Active Transportation Plan (2017) and will meet American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials standards, including striping, signage, and pavement markings. Thank you for taking the time to comment.

Letter #1 dated Wednesday, May 19, 2021

Letter from the Inland Empire Biking Alliance:

19 May 2021

Mr. Mohamed Eissa, Associate Transportation Planner
Riverside County Transportation Department 3525
14th Street Riverside, CA 92501

Submitted via email Re: Thousand Palms Canyon Road Widening Mitigated Negative Declaration (SCH #2021050392)

Dear Mr. Eissa,

I am writing on behalf of the Inland Empire Biking Alliance in response to the Mitigated Negative Declaration (SCH #2021050392) for the Thousand Palms Canyon Road Widening project (“Project”). After reviewing the available documents, there are several concerns of how this Project will impact bicyclists that remain unaddressed by the studies and reviews which have been conducted. These issues are detailed below.

The first concern is for the width of the proposed Class II bike lanes that would be included by the Project. Based on the information provided in the Project Description and Transportation section of the MND, the Project would provide for repaving of the existing road surface along with the addition of paved shoulders rumble strips, and Class II bike lanes. However, as proposed, the five-foot Class II bike lanes would not be compliant with the California MUTCD which indicates in Section 9C.04 Markings for Bicycle Lanes that the minimum width for Class II bike lanes is six feet in areas where the posted speed limit is greater than 40 MPH. Based on Google Streetview imagery, the Project area is currently signed for 55 MPH, well beyond what triggers the requirement for the additional foot.

L1-1

A related concern is for the planned rumble strips. No details are provided of how they would be installed, but their presence can be a hazard for bicyclists and reduces the usable area of the shoulder/bike lanes. Thus, it is imperative that the rumble strips be installed in a manner which does not encroach into the usable space for bicyclists as defined in the CA MUTCD. Furthermore, we would like to ensure that bike-friendly rumble strips are used which provide gaps for bicyclists to be able to transition into or out of the bike lanes/shoulder as necessary to make left turns, avoid hazards, etc. We strongly recommend that the guidance from the Adventure Cycling Association (which will be provided alongside this letter) be used for the purpose of designing and installing the rumble strips for this segment.

L1-2

Adventure Cycling Association (2021). Solutions for making rumble strips safer for cyclists: Best practices for transportation decision makers. Missoula, MT

Finally, per the project description in the documents, the intention is to widen the travel lanes from 11 to 12 feet. However, wider lanes tend to foster faster speeds and with the speed limit already 55

L1-3

MPH, it has the potential to lead to the speed limit being required to be raised due to a speed survey. Given that there also is not enough space for the bike lanes as is set forth in the CA MUTCD, we would like to see the travel lanes maintained at 11 feet and the extra foot of width be provided for the bike lane and to provide shy space from the rumble strips. Doing so would help control speeds as well as ensure that bicyclists have the proper separation space available.

L1-3

In summary, we see three major issues with this project which are all interrelated. The proposed rumble strips, Class II bike lanes, and shoulder expansion provide the opportunity to either improve or impair biking conditions along Thousand Palms Canyon Road. Which outcome is realized depends on seemingly minor details with the width of the facility, so we are hopeful that this project is able to realize the improvements, not impairments. If there are any further comments or questions, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Sincerely, Marven E. Norman, Executive Director

About IEBA The Inland Empire Biking Alliance is exists to make the Inland Empire a better place for people from all rolls of life. From the children just learning how to ride to the mountain bikers to those headed back and forth to work, school, or their preferred shopping center and beyond, we believe that everyone deserves a safe and convenient place to ride.

~~~~~

### Response to letter dated Wednesday, May 19, 2021

#### Response L1-1: Bike Lane Width

A concern is raised that bicycle lanes on roads with posted speeds greater than 40 miles per hour should be constructed to a minimum of 6 feet in width according to Section 9C.04 of the California Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). This section of the MUTCD provides guidance specifically for bicycle lane treatment at intersections; it is not necessarily applicable for longitudinal design of bicycle lanes along a corridor. RCTD follows the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) guidelines for bicycle lane width design guidance. According to AASHTO, the minimum bike lane width is 4 feet when applied to roads with no curb and gutter. The project proposes a 5-foot bike lane width, which exceeds the minimum design standard, and will not include construction of curb and gutter.

#### Response L1-2: Rumble Strips

RCTD will design rumble strips per Caltrans 2018 Standard Plan A40C. Rumble strips will be constructed under the proposed white right edgeline to provide earlier warning to vehicles drifting out of travel lane, and to maximize the clear shoulder space available to bicyclists. Gaps in the rumble strips shall be provided in advance of left-turn lanes to allow access for bicyclists.

**Response L1-3: Vehicle Lane Width**

Increased speeds are often the result of repaving the roadway surface rather than the increasing the width of travel lanes. RCTD uses a standard 12-foot vehicular lane width that provides desirable clearances between vehicles traveling in opposite directions on two-lane, high-speed roads in rural areas. Prevailing speed is one factor used to determine speed limits; RCTD considers prevailing speeds and other factors. The posted speed on Thousand Palms Canyon Road is unlikely to increase. RCTD will monitor traffic conditions after construction of the Project to determine if traffic calming measures are needed.

Thank you for your interest in improving safety in the County of Riverside and taking the time to comment.

Comment Email #9

Email from Ginny Short, Coachella Valley Preserve on Saturday, June 12, 2021

Dear Mr. Eissa,

My name is Ginny Short and I am the Preserve Manager for the Coachella Valley Preserve. I was not able to attend the public meeting, but wanted to submit the following comments on the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration for the above named project.

- 1) Page 1-3 and 1-4; pages 3-67 and 3-68: If there is mitigation for impacts to water, would like it to occur on site, not off-site. | 9-1
- 2) Page 3-125/126. Please make sure that any required biological surveys are done with my specific authorization on CNLM property. There are no thrashers or burrowing owl owls anywhere along this corridor, so I will not likely permit anyone to be on CNLM property to do those surveys. | 9-2
- 3) Archeological surveys will be permitted on land adjacent to the project owned by CNLM, but the County or its agents or contractors must notify me before such surveys are conducted. | 9-3
- 4) Page 3-1 Zoning: What part of the project area is zoned for single family homes (R-A-1/1/4)? To my knowledge all of the adjacent land in BLM or CNLM land. | 9-4
- 5) Figure 4: Vegetation and Land Use. I take exception to the classifications shown here. The "Allscale scrub" on this figure is actually riparian/wetlands with willows, reeds and cottonwoods dominant. The area designated as "California Fan Palm Oasis" is not fan palm oasis, but riparian/wetlands with dominant willows, reeds and cottonwoods. Yes, there are palms here too, but it is primarily riparian/wetland. | 9-5
- 6) Thus page 3-65/66. I disagree. There are wetlands and riparian areas next to the river that runs under the road. There is a perennial river here. It runs under the road. | 9-6
- 7) Page 3-71. I can show you what we believe to be remnants of the prehistoric trails that run next to 1000 Palms Canyon Road if you like. It is not within the project area, but adjacent to it. | 9-7
- 8) Page 3-95. Ground water wells. We have three wells on the Coachella Valley Preserve Property. One of the wells (28281 Thousand Palms Canyon Road) has a depth-to-water of about 30 feet. One of the wells (29200 Thousand Palms Canyon Road) has a depth to water of Zero (0) feet. The third well (28400 Thousand Palms Canyon Road) has a depth-to-water of about 23 feet. | 9-8
- 9) Page 3-97: I disagree. There are several significant bodies of water near the project site. There are two lakes and one river. The Thousand Palms Oasis and McCallum Oasis contain significant lakes, there are significant fault springs at McCallum, 1000 Palms and Willis Oases creating either surface runoff (Willis) and a river (1000 Palms) and lakes (1000 Palms and McCallum). I doubt if there would be significant impact, and not likely any seiche but the comment that the project is "not near any bodies of water" is not true. This should be taken into account. | 9-9

10) Page 3-108 and 3-109. Keep in mind that there are four occupied buildings on the Coachella Valley Preserve. There is an RV site at 28400 Thousand Palms Canyon Road and a residential inholding at that same location that is used as the family vacation home. It is usually occupied by the extended family. A third RV is located seasonally at 29200 Thousand Palms Canyon Road. The building at 28281 is an office and is also "occupied."

9-10

11) Page 3-110. Keep in mind that people park on the side of the road to access the Preserve. Our parking lot is not large enough to hold all the visitors most of the year. Will they still be able to park on the side of the road? Not sure how the widening will affect this. Will it decrease the available parking?

9-11

12) 3-123 As stated before, there are three residences on the Coachella Valley Preserve. There are two buildings plus the third which is off the road and beyond those buildings.

9-12

I trust that your office will continue to work with me on this project, as it will impact me, my staff and visitors during construction. Please don't hesitate to reach out to me with questions, comments and concerns.

Regards,

Ginny Short, M.S., M.F.A.  
Preserve Manager  
Coachella Valley  
760-343-1234  
[gshort@cnlm.org](mailto:gshort@cnlm.org)

~~~~~

Response to Email #9: Ginny Short on Saturday, June 12, 2021

Response 9-1

RCTD intends to seek mitigation off site for minimal impacts to waters. However, if CDFW will not accept off-site mitigation (ILF), on-site mitigation may be necessary. Anticipated impacts: 0.014 acre of permanent and no temporary to CDFW streambed.

Response 9-2

Pre-construction burrowing owl surveys would be conducted entirely within the road ROW as previous surveys have. All biological resources surveys associated with completion of this IS/MND have been conducted.

Response 9-3

An archaeological survey was completed as a part of the cultural resources assessment. No additional survey on land adjacent to the project owned by CNLM land is needed at this time. However, if survey is required on land adjacent to the project on CNLM owned land in the future, coordination and notification to the CNLM will occur.

Response 9-4

The area directly north of Dillon Road and the Thousand Palms Canyon Road intersection has a rural residential land use designation (Sky Valley District) in the General Plan and corresponding rural residential zoning designation.

Response 9-5

This appears to reference the area on Figure 4: Sheet 3 of 9, which was revised per Ginny Short's observations as agreed upon by the consulting biologist and included in the errata.

Response 9-6

True. The comment seems to be referring to the USACE language. The CDFW language captures the small amount of wetland/riparian that will be affected by the project. The discussion in the IS/MND follows the USACE and CDFW descriptions of jurisdiction. The waters are isolated and do not fall under USACE jurisdiction. However, the waters do fall under CDFW jurisdiction.

Response 9-7

Thank you for the offer to show RCTD archaeological features. Resources adjacent to the project area were addressed in the technical report and recommendations made for monitoring within the project area. Construction will take place within the existing road right-of-way. There is no need to revise the IS/MND as it is preferred to avoid identifying archaeological resources in public documents.

Response 9-8

Thank you for the information about the three wells located on the Coachella Valley Preserve property. The response to *Section X. Hydrology and Water Quality* items a) and b) has been revised according to this information and included it in the errata appendix.

Response 9-9

Language is provided in the errata appendix to acknowledge bodies of water.

Response 9-10

The CEQA analysis is related to impacts on fire/police/park service where new development would potentially stretch those services. There would be no impact on provision of those services from

reconstruction of a road. However, language in the errata appendix acknowledges the existing dwellings.

Response 9-11

The widening will increase pavement width by 1 foot on both sides of the road near the entrance of the Preserve. Vehicles are currently allowed to park on the shoulder except for a couple of locations. At this time, installation of additional "No Parking" signs is not planned; the area will be closely monitored to consider parking by visitors to the Preserve and bicycle usage.

Response 9-12

Although the conclusion remains the same, the errata acknowledges the residences on the Preserve site as a clarification to the statement in the IS that there are "no nearby residences." Thank you for your comment and clarification of the setting.

APPENDIX C: ERRATA SHEET

The following items are herewith clarified and corrected (note corrected text in underline and strikethrough).

Errata in the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration

Number	Reference	Published Draft IS/MND Text	Clarification of or Correction to Draft IS/MND	Reason for Clarification or Correction
1	Sheet 3 of Figure 4	"Allscale Scrub" and "California Fan Palm Oasis" in the legend	Correction: The legend on this sheet should include "Riparian/Wetlands" and the areas shown on the figure as Allscale Scrub and California Fan Palm Oasis should both be designated Riparian/Wetlands.	Field observation by a reviewer and concurrence by project biologist.
2	Pages 3-65 and 3-66	"0.015 acre" in reference to permanent streambed effects and for temporary effects: "... and temporarily affect approximately 0.012 acre of CDFW streambed."	Correction: <u>"0.014 acre of CDFW streambed. The project will not result in temporary effects to CDFW streambed."</u>	Calculations were refined based on CAD information
3	Page 3-95	Depths of groundwater near the project site are reported to be approximately 220 to 236 feet below the existing ground surface. ¹ Two groundwater wells located near the project site were identified. The first well is approximately ½ mile to the west of the intersection on Thousand Palms Canyon Road and Dillion Road (State Well Number: 03S06E25Q0015, Site Code: 338762N1163082W001, in the Desert Hot Springs Groundwater Basin). This well has not been active since approximately mid-2019. The second well is approximately 1 mile from the intersection of Ramon Road and Thousand Palms Canyon Road (State Well Number: 04S06E22C0015, Site Code: 338165N1163457W001, in the Indio Groundwater Basin). Project construction activities would not include excavation extending to the groundwater table; depth for construction will normally be less than four feet.	Correction: Depths of groundwater near the project site are reported to be approximately <u>220 at grade to 236 feet</u> below the existing ground surface. ² <u>Two Five</u> groundwater wells located near the project site were identified. The first well is approximately ½ mile to the west of the intersection on Thousand Palms Canyon Road and Dillion Road (State Well Number: 03S06E25Q0015, Site Code: 338762N1163082W001, in the Desert Hot Springs Groundwater Basin). This well has not been active since approximately mid-2019. The second well is approximately 1 mile from the intersection of Ramon Road and Thousand Palms Canyon Road (State Well Number: 04S06E22C0015, Site Code: 338165N1163457W001, in the Indio Groundwater Basin). <u>There are three wells on the Coachella Valley Preserve property. One of the wells (28281 Thousand Palms Canyon Road) has a depth-to-water of approximately 30 feet. Another (29200 Thousand Palms Canyon Road) has a</u>	Additional information provided through public comment.

1 [Original footnote text] Groundwater depth data were gathered from the nearest wells to the project site from the California Department of Water Resources Data website <http://wdl.water.ca.gov/waterdatalibrary/>.

2 [Revised footnote text] Groundwater depth data were gathered from the nearest wells to the project site from the California Department of Water Resources Data website <http://wdl.water.ca.gov/waterdatalibrary/> and from [Coachella Valley Preserve staff](http://wdl.water.ca.gov/waterdatalibrary/).

Errata in the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration

Number	Reference	Published Draft IS/MND Text	Clarification of or Correction to Draft IS/MND	Reason for Clarification or Correction
4	Page 3-97	Therefore, construction activities do not have the potential to directly affect groundwater quality.	depth to water of zero (0) feet or surface level. <u>The last well (28400 Thousand Palms Canyon Road) has a depth-to-water of about 23 feet.</u> Project construction activities would not include excavation extending to the groundwater table <u>in the immediate vicinity of wells;</u> depth for construction will normally be less than four feet. Therefore, construction activities do not have the potential to directly affect groundwater quality.	
5	Page 3-108	Additionally, the project site is not near any bodies of water and, therefore, would not be inundated by seiche.	Correction: <u>There are several bodies of water near the project site including two ponds and one stream. The ponds are located in the Thousand Palms Oasis and the McCallum Oasis. Fault springs at these oases and Willis Oasis create surface runoff, streams, and ponds. However, construction would not affect these features and the ponds are of adequate distance to preclude inundation by seiche. Additionally, the project site is not near any bodies of water and, therefore, would not be inundated by seiche.</u>	Observation by commenter.
6	Page 3-123	The project does not include occupied buildings, nor does it include any residential, commercial, or other uses.	Clarification: <u>The project does not include occupied buildings, nor does it include any residential, commercial, or other uses although there are multiple occupied structures, including recreational vehicles, nearby on Coachella Valley Preserve property.</u>	Observation by commenter.
6	Page 3-123	The project site is on an existing road with no nearby residences; therefore, no local population would be subject to wildfire-related pollutant concentrations. The Coachella Valley Preserve, and two buildings just to the north of the Preserve center, are the only structures in the vicinity.	Correction: <u>The project site is on an existing road with three nearby residences on the Coachella Valley Preserve property; therefore, few local residents population would be subject to wildfire-related pollutant concentrations. The Coachella Valley Preserve, and two buildings just to the north of the Preserve center, are the only structures in the vicinity. Spark arresters are standard on contemporary construction equipment, which would avoid and minimize the risk of accidental construction-induced wildfire.</u>	Text edited per information provided by commenter regarding residences at the Preserve and language added about spark arresters to clarify wildfire prevention standards.

Project File Name: Thousand Palms Canyon Road Widening Project **Applicant:** County of Riverside, California

Prepared by: LSA **Date:**

Mitigation Measure No./Implementing Action	Responsible for Monitoring	Monitoring Frequency	Timing of Verification	Method of Verification	Verified Date/Initials	Sanctions for Noncompliance
Air Quality						
<p>The following are the typical SCAQMD Air Quality Best Management Practices for the Coachella Valley. There are no construction impacts for the proposed project; however, these control measures would be the standard air quality measures for controlling construction fugitive dust emissions.</p>						
Backfilling						
01-1 Stabilize backfill material when not actively handling; and	County or designee	Daily during backfill operations	Daily during backfill operations	Inspections		Issuance of Stop Work Orders
01-2 Stabilize backfill material during handling; and						
01-3 Stabilize soil at completion of activity.						
Clearing and Grubbing						
02-1 Maintain stability of soil through pre-watering of site prior to clearing and grubbing; and	County or designee	Daily during clearing and grubbing operations	Daily during clearing and grubbing operations	Inspections		Issuance of Stop Work Orders
02-2 Stabilize soil during clearing and grubbing activities; and						
02-3 Stabilize soil immediately after clearing and grubbing activities.						

Mitigation Measure No./Implementing Action		Responsible for Monitoring	Monitoring Frequency	Timing of Verification	Method of Verification	Verified Date/Initials	Sanctions for Noncompliance
Clearing Forms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use water spray to clear forms; or Use sweeping and water spray to clear forms; or Use vacuum system to clear forms. 		County or designee	Daily while clearing forms	Daily while clearing forms	Inspections		Issuance of Stop Work Orders
Crushing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 04-1 Stabilize surface soils prior to operation of support equipment; and 04-2 Stabilize material after crushing. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow permit conditions for crushing equipment Pre-water material prior to loading into crusher Monitor crusher emissions opacity Apply water to crushed material to prevent dust plumes 		County or designee	Daily while crushing	Daily while crushing	Inspections		Issuance of Stop Work Orders
Cut and Fill <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 05-1 Pre-water soils prior to cut and fill activities; and 05-2 Stabilize soil during and after cut and fill activities. For large sites, pre-water trucks with sprinklers or water trucks and allow time for penetration Use water trucks/pulls to water soils to depth of cut prior to subsequent cuts 		County or designee	Daily during cut and fill operations	Daily during cut and fill operations	Inspections		Issuance of Stop Work Orders

Mitigation Measure No./Implementing Action	Responsible for Monitoring	Monitoring Frequency	Timing of Verification	Method of Verification	Verified Date/Initials	Sanctions for Noncompliance
Demolition – Mechanical/Manual						
06-1 Stabilize wind erodible surfaces to reduce dust; and	County or designee	Daily during Demolition	Daily during Demolition	Inspections		Issuance of Stop Work Orders
06-2 Stabilize surface soil where support equipment and vehicles will operate; and						
06-3 Stabilize loose soil and demolition debris; and						
06-4 Comply with AQMD Rule 1403.						
Disturbed Soil						
07-1 Stabilize disturbed soil throughout the construction site; and	County or designee	Daily whenever disturbed soils are present	Daily whenever disturbed soils are present	Inspections		Issuance of Stop Work Orders
07-02 Stabilize disturbed soil between structures						

Mitigation Measure No./Implementing Action		Responsible for Monitoring	Monitoring Frequency	Timing of Verification	Method of Verification	Verified Date/Initials	Sanctions for Noncompliance
Earthmoving Activities 08-1 Pre-apply water to depth of proposed cuts; and 08-2 Re-apply water as necessary to maintain soils in a damp condition and to ensure that visible emissions do not exceed 100 feet in any direction; and 08-3 Stabilize soils once earthmoving activities are complete.		County or designee	Daily during earthmoving activities	Daily during earthmoving activities	Inspections		Issuance of Stop Work Orders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grade each project phase separately, timed to coincide with construction phase Upwind fencing can prevent material movement on site Apply water or a stabilizing agent in sufficient quantities to prevent the generation of visible dust plumes 							
Importing/Exporting of Bulk Materials 09-1 Stabilize material while loading to reduce fugitive dust emissions; and 09-2 Maintain at least six inches of freeboard on haul vehicles; and 09-3 Stabilize material while transporting to reduce fugitive dust emissions; and 09-4 Stabilize material while unloading to reduce fugitive dust emissions; and 09-5 Comply with Vehicle Code Section 23114.		County or designee	Daily during Importing or Exporting	Daily during Importing or Exporting	Inspections		Issuance of Stop Work Orders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use tarps or other suitable enclosures on haul trucks Check belly-dump truck seals regularly and remove any trapped rocks to prevent spillage Comply with track-out prevention/mitigation requirements Provide water while loading and unloading to reduce visible dust plumes 							

Mitigation Measure No./Implementing Action		Responsible for Monitoring	Monitoring Frequency	Timing of Verification	Method of Verification	Verified Date/Initials	Sanctions for Noncompliance
Landscaping 10-1 Stabilize soils, materials, slopes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply water to materials to stabilize materials in a crusted condition Maintain effective cover over materials Stabilize sloping surfaces using soil binders until vegetation or groundcover can effectively stabilize the slopes Hydroseed prior to rain season 		County or designee	Daily during landscaping	Daily during landscaping	Inspections		Issuance of Stop Work Orders
Road Shoulder Maintenance 11-1 Apply water to unpaved shoulders prior to clearing; and 11-2 Apply chemical dust suppressants and/or washed gravel to maintain a stabilized surface after completing road shoulder maintenance. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Installation of curbing and/or paving of road shoulders can reduce recurring maintenance costs Use of chemical dust suppressants can inhibit vegetation growth and reduce future road shoulder maintenance costs 		County or designee	Daily during Road Shoulder Maintenance	Daily during Road Shoulder Maintenance	Inspections		Issuance of Stop Work Orders

Mitigation Measure No./Implementing Action		Responsible for Monitoring	Monitoring Frequency	Timing of Verification	Method of Verification	Verified Date/Initials	Sanctions for Noncompliance	
Screening		County or designee	Daily during screening	Daily during screening	Inspections		Issuance of Stop Work Orders	
12-1	Pre-water material prior to screening; and							• Dedicate water truck or high capacity hose to screening operation
12-2	Limit fugitive dust emissions to opacity and plume length standards; and							• Drop material through the screen slowly and minimize drop height
12-3	Stabilize material immediately after screening.	• Install wind barrier with a porosity of no more than 50% upwind of screen to the height of the drop point						
Staging Areas		County or designee	Daily while using staging areas	Daily while using staging areas	Inspections		Issuance of Stop Work Orders	
13-1	Stabilize staging areas during use; and							• Limit size of staging area
13-2	Stabilize staging area soils at project completion.	• Limit vehicle speeds to 15 miles per hour	• Limit number and size of staging area entrances/exits					
Stockpiles/Bulk Material Handling		County or designee	Daily during construction	Daily during construction	Inspections		Issuance of Stop Work Orders	
14-1	Stabilize stockpiled materials.							• Add or remove material from the downwind portion of the storage pile
14-2	Stockpiles within 100 yards of off-site occupied buildings must not be greater than eight feet in height; or must have a road bladed to the top to allow water truck access or must have an operational water irrigation system that is capable of complete stockpile coverage.	• Maintain storage piles to avoid steep sides or faces						

Mitigation Measure No./Implementing Action	Responsible for Monitoring	Monitoring Frequency	Timing of Verification	Method of Verification	Verified Date/Initials	Sanctions for Noncompliance
Traffic Areas for Construction Activities						
15-1 Stabilize all off-road traffic and parking areas; and	County or designee	Daily during construction	Daily during construction	Inspections		Issuance of Stop Work Orders
15-2 Stabilize all haul routes; and						
15-3 Direct construction traffic over established haul routes.						
Trenching						
16-1 Stabilize surface soils where trencher or excavator and support equipment will operate; and	County or designee	During all Trenching operations	During all Trenching operations	Inspections		Issuance of Stop Work Orders
16.2 Stabilize soils at the completion of trenching activities.						
Truck Loading						
17-1 Pre-water material prior to loading; and	County or designee	During all Truck Loading Operations	During all Truck Loading Operations	Inspections		Issuance of Stop Work Orders
17.2 Ensure that freeboard exceeds six inches (CVC 23114)						

Mitigation Measure No./Implementing Action	Responsible for Monitoring	Monitoring Frequency	Timing of Verification	Method of Verification	Verified Date/Initials	Sanctions for Noncompliance
<p>Turf Overseeding</p> <p>18-1 Apply sufficient water immediately prior to conducting turf vacuuming activities to meet opacity and plume length standards; and</p> <p>18-2 Cover haul vehicles prior to exiting the site.</p>	N/A For activities at this site location	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A
<p>Unpaved Roads/Parking Lots</p> <p>19-1 Stabilize soils to meet the applicable performance standards; and</p> <p>19-2 Limit vehicular travel to established unpaved roads (haul routes) and unpaved parking lots.</p>	County or designee	During appropriate times	During appropriate times	Inspections		Issuance or compliance requirements
<p>Vacant Land</p> <p>20-1 In instances where vacant lots are 0.10 acre or larger and have a cumulative area of 500 square feet or more that are driven over and/or used by motor vehicles and/or off-road vehicles, prevent motor vehicle and/or off-road vehicle trespassing, parking and/or access by installing barriers, curbs, fences, gates, posts, signs, shrubs,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify a dust control supervisor that is employed by or contracted with the property owner or developer, is on the site or available on-site within 30 minutes during working hours, has the authority to expeditiously employ sufficient dust mitigation measures to ensure compliance with all Rule requirements, and has completed the AQMD Fugitive Dust Control Class and has been issued a valid 	County or designee	Daily during construction	Daily	Inspections		Issuance of Stop Work Orders

Mitigation Measure No./Implementing Action	Responsible for Monitoring	Monitoring Frequency	Timing of Verification	Method of Verification	Verified Date/Initials	Sanctions for Noncompliance
<p>trees or other effective control measures.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certificate of Completion for the class; and • Notify the SCAQMD Executive Officer in writing within 30 days after the site no longer qualifies as a large operation. 						
Fugitive Dust Source Category Control Actions						
Earthmoving (except construction cutting and filling areas, and mining operations)						
(1a) Maintain soil moisture content at a minimum of 12 percent, as determined by the ASTM [American Society for Testing and Materials] method D2216, or other equivalent method approved by the Executive Officer, the California Air Resources Board, and the U.S. EPA. Two soil moisture evaluations must be conducted during the first three hours of active operations during a calendar day, and two such evaluations each subsequent four-hour period of active operations; OR (1a-1) For any earthmoving which is more than 100 feet from all property lines, conduct watering as necessary to prevent visible dust emissions from exceeding 100 feet in length in any direction.	County or designee	Daily during construction	Each day	Inspections		Issuance of Stop Work Orders
Earthmoving: Construction fill areas						
(1b) Maintain soil moisture content at a minimum of 12 percent, as determined by ASTM method D2216, or other equivalent method approved by the Executive Officer, the California Air Resources Board, and the U.S. EPA. For areas which have an optimum moisture content for compaction of less than 12 percent, as determined by ASTM Method 1557 or other equivalent method approved by the Executive Officer and the California Air Resources Board and the U.S. EPA, complete the compaction process as expeditiously as possible after achieving at least 70	County or designee	Daily during construction	Each day	Inspections		Issuance of Stop Work Orders

Mitigation Measure No./Implementing Action	Responsible for Monitoring	Monitoring Frequency	Timing of Verification	Method of Verification	Verified Date/Initials	Sanctions for Noncompliance
percent of the optimum soil moisture content. Two soil moisture evaluations must be conducted during the first three hours of active operations during a calendar day, and two such evaluations during each subsequent four-hour period of active operations.						
Earthmoving: Construction cut areas and mining operations (1c) Conduct watering as necessary to prevent visible emissions from extending more than 100 feet beyond the active cut or mining area unless the area is inaccessible to watering vehicles due to slope conditions or other safety factors.	County or designee	Daily during construction	Each day	Inspections		Issuance of Stop Work Orders
Disturbed surface areas (except completed grading areas) (2a/b) Apply dust suppression in sufficient quantity and frequency to maintain a stabilized surface. Any areas which cannot be stabilized, as evidenced by wind driven fugitive dust must have an application of water at least twice per day to at least 80 percent of the unstabilized area.	County or designee	Daily	Each day	Inspections		Issuance of Stop Work Orders
Disturbed Surface Areas: Completed Grading Areas (2c) Apply chemical stabilizers within five working days of grading completion; OR (2d) Take actions (3a) or (3c) specified for inactive disturbed surface areas.	County or designee	Within 5 working days prior to grading completion	During application timeframe	Inspections		Issuance of Stop Work Orders
Inactive Disturbed Surface Areas	County or designee	Daily with evidence of wind driven dust	Daily with evidence of wind driven dust	Inspections		Issuance of a Stop Work Order

Mitigation Measure No./Implementing Action	Responsible for Monitoring	Monitoring Frequency	Timing of Verification	Method of Verification	Verified Date/Initials	Sanctions for Noncompliance
<p>(3a) Apply water to at least 80 percent of all inactive disturbed surface areas on a daily basis when there is evidence of wind driven fugitive dust, excluding any areas which are inaccessible to watering vehicles due to excessive slope or other safety conditions; OR</p> <p>(3b) Apply dust suppressants in sufficient quantity and frequency to maintain a stabilized surface; OR</p> <p>(3c) Establish vegetative groundcover within 21 days after active operations have ceased. Groundcover must be of sufficient density to expose less than 30 percent of unstabilized ground within 90 days of planting, and at all times thereafter; OR</p> <p>(3d) Utilize any combination of control actions (3a), (3b), and (3c) such that, in total, these actions apply to all inactive disturbed surface areas.</p>						
Unpaved Roads	County or designee	During construction	During construction	Inspections		Issuance of a Stop Work Order
<p>(4a) Water all roads used for any vehicular traffic at least once per every two hours of active operations [3 times per normal 8 hour work day]; OR</p> <p>(4b) Water all roads used for any vehicular traffic once daily and restrict vehicle speeds to 15 miles per hour; OR</p> <p>(4c) Apply a chemical stabilizer to all unpaved road surfaces in sufficient quantity and frequency to maintain a stabilized surface.</p>	County or designee	During construction	During construction	Inspections		Issuance of a Stop Work Order
Open Storage Piles	County or designee	During construction	During construction	Inspections		Issuance of a Stop Work Order
<p>(5a) Apply chemical stabilizers; OR</p> <p>(5b) Apply water to at least 80 percent of the surface area of all open storage piles on a daily basis when there is evidence of wind driven fugitive dust; OR</p> <p>(5c) Install temporary coverings; OR</p> <p>(5d) Install a three-sided enclosure with walls no more than 50 percent porosity which extend, at the minimum, to the top of the pile. This option may only be used at aggregate-related plants or at center manufacturing facilities.</p>	County or designee	During construction	During construction	Inspections		Issuance of a Stop Work Order

Mitigation Measure No./Implementing Action	Responsible for Monitoring	Monitoring Frequency	Timing of Verification	Method of Verification	Verified Date/Initials	Sanctions for Noncompliance
<p>All Categories</p> <p>(fa) Any other control measures approved by the Executive Officer and the U.S. EPA as equivalent to the methods specified in Table 2 may be used.</p>	County or designee	During construction	During construction	Inspections		Issuance of a Stop Work Order
Biological Resources						
<p>BIO-1: Pre-construction Le Conte's Thrasher Survey. In order to avoid impacts to the Le Conte's thrasher and other nesting birds, per the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP) during the nesting season (January 15 through August 31), prior to the start of construction activities, surveys shall be conducted by an acceptable biologist on the construction site and within 500 feet of the construction site, or to the property boundary if less than 500 feet. If nesting Le Conte's thrashers are found, a 500-foot Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA), or to the property boundary if less than 500 feet, shall be established around the nest site. The ESA shall be staked and flagged. No construction shall be permitted within the ESA during the breeding season of January 15 through August 31 or until the young have fledged.</p>	County or designee	Prior to construction	Prior to construction	On-site inspection or survey		Issuance of a Stop Work Order
<p>BIO-2: Pre-construction Burrowing Owl Survey. A pre-construction burrowing owl survey would be conducted in all areas of suitable habitat within project limit using an accepted protocol. Prior to construction, a qualified biologist shall survey the construction area including a 500-foot buffer, or to the edge of the property if less than 500 feet, for burrows that could be used by burrowing owl. If a burrow is located, the biologist shall determine whether an owl is present in the burrow. If the burrow is determined to be occupied, the burrow shall be flagged and a 160-foot buffer during the non-breeding season or a 250-foot buffer during the breeding season or a buffer to the edge of the property boundary if less than 500 feet shall be established around the burrow. The buffer area shall be staked and flagged. No development activities shall be permitted within the buffer until the young are no longer dependent on the burrow.</p>	County or designee	Prior to construction	Prior to issuance of demolition permits	Survey results		Issuance of a Stop Work Order
<p>BIO-3. Prior to commencement of construction activities for permanent impacts in jurisdictional features, the project shall obtain authorizations from the Regional Water Quality Control Board</p>	County or designee	Prior to construction	Prior to construction	On-site inspection or survey		Issuance of a Stop Work Order

Mitigation Measure No./Implementing Action	Responsible for Monitoring	Monitoring Frequency	Timing of Verification	Method of Verification	Verified Date/Initials	Sanctions for Noncompliance
<p>(RWQCB) pursuant to <i>Procedures for Discharge for Discharges of Dredged or Fill Material to Waters of the State or State Water Resources Control Board Water Quality Order No. 2004-0004-DWQ</i> and from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) pursuant to Section 1602 of the California Fish and Game Code have been obtained..</p> <p>The type, amount, and location of any required mitigation (including payment of fees or purchase of credits) shall be established by each regulatory agency during the review of any required authorization. As determined appropriate by each agency, the following shall be incorporated into required permit(s):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Off-site replacement and/or restoration of RWQCB jurisdictional "waters of the State" within the Colorado River Watershed at a ratio no less than 2:1 or within an adjacent watershed at a ratio no less than 2:1 for permanent impacts, and for any temporary impacts to restore the impact area to pre-project conditions (i.e., pre-project contours and revegetate where applicable). Off-site mitigation may occur on land acquired for the purpose of in-perpetuity preservation, or through the purchase of mitigation credits at an agency-approved off-site mitigation bank. Off-site replacement and/or restoration of CDFW jurisdictional streambed and associated riparian habitat within the Colorado River Watershed at a ratio no less than 2:1 or within an adjacent watershed at a ratio no less than 2:1 for permanent impacts, and for any temporary impacts to restore the impact area to pre-project conditions (i.e., pre-project contours and revegetate where applicable). Off-site mitigation may occur on land acquired for the purpose of in-perpetuity preservation, or through the purchase of mitigation credits at an agency-approved off-site mitigation bank. 						
<p>BIO-4: Worker Environmental Awareness Program. A Worker Environmental Awareness Program (WEAP) shall be implemented for work crews by a qualified biologist(s) prior to the commencement of construction activities and prior to site access by workers. Training materials and briefings shall include but not be limited to, discussion of</p>	A Qualified Biologist from County or Designee	Once prior to construction	Once prior to construction	Inspection during WEAP training session		Issuance of a Stop Work Order

Mitigation Measure No./Implementing Action	Responsible for Monitoring	Monitoring Frequency	Timing of Verification	Method of Verification	Verified Date/Initials	Sanctions for Noncompliance
<p>the Federal and California Endangered Species Acts, the CVMShCP, the consequences of noncompliance with project permitting requirements, identification and values of special-status plant and wildlife species and sensitive natural plant community habitats, fire protection measures, and hazardous substance spill prevention and containment measures.</p>						
Cultural Resources						
<p>CUL-1: Cultural Resources Monitoring Plan. The Project Archaeologist, in consultation with the Monitoring Tribe(s), and the County shall develop a Cultural Resources Monitoring Plan (CRMP) to address the details, timing, and responsibility of all archaeological and cultural activities that will occur on the project site. Details in the CRMP shall include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project grading and development scheduling. • The coordination of a monitoring schedule as agreed upon by the Monitoring Tribe(s), the Project Archaeologist, and the County. • The protocols and stipulations that the County, Monitoring Tribe(s), and Project Archaeologist shall follow in the event of inadvertent cultural resources discoveries, including any newly discovered cultural resources. They shall have the authority to stop and redirect excavation in order to evaluate the significance of any archaeological resources discovered within 60 feet of the find. 	County or designee	During construction	During construction	Inspection or survey		Issuance of a Stop Work Order
<p>CUL-2: Train Construction Personnel. Prior to any grading, excavation, and/or other ground-disturbing activities on the project site, the Project Archaeologist and the Monitoring Tribe(s) shall conduct cultural resources sensitivity training for all construction personnel. Construction personnel shall be informed of the types of archaeological resources that may be encountered and of the proper procedures to be enacted in the event of an inadvertent discovery of archaeological resources or human remains. The County's construction manager shall ensure that construction personnel are made available for and attend the training, and shall retain documentation demonstrating attendance.</p>	County or designee	During construction	During construction	Inspection or survey		Issuance of a Stop Work Order
<p>CUL-3: All artifacts/cultural material discovered at the project site shall be inventoried and analyzed by the Project Archaeologist and Native American tribal monitor(s). If any cultural materials of Native American</p>	County or designee	During construction	During construction	Inspection or survey		Issuance of a Stop Work Order

Mitigation Measure No./Implementing Action	Responsible for Monitoring	Monitoring Frequency	Timing of Verification	Method of Verification	Verified Date/Initials	Sanctions for Noncompliance
<p>origin are discovered, all activities in the immediate vicinity of the find (within a 60-foot radius) shall stop. The Project Archaeologist and Native American tribal monitor(s) shall analyze the Native American cultural materials for identification as everyday life and/or religious or sacred items, cultural affiliation, temporal placement, and function, as deemed possible. The significance of Native American resources shall be evaluated in accordance with the provisions of CEQA and shall consider the religious beliefs, customs, and practices of the tribe(s). All items found in association with Native American human remains shall be considered grave goods or sacred in origin and subject to special handling.</p> <p>CUL-4: In the event that Native American cultural resources are inadvertently discovered during the course of grading for this project, the following procedures shall be carried out for the treatment and disposition of the discoveries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curation: The County shall relinquish ownership of all cultural resources. Native American cultural materials that cannot be avoided or relocated at the project site shall be prepared for curation. The Project Archaeologist, following consultation with the Monitoring Tribe(s), shall deliver the materials to a qualified repository in Riverside County that meets or exceeds federal standards per Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Title 36, Part 79, and that shall be made available to all qualified researchers and tribal representatives. • Temporary On-Site Curation and Storage: During the course of construction, all discovered resources shall be temporarily curated in a secure location on site. The removal of any cultural materials from the project site will need to be thoroughly inventoried, with Native American Tribal Monitor oversight of the process. • Treatment and Final Disposition: The County shall relinquish ownership of all cultural resources, including sacred items, burial goods, and all cultural materials and nonhuman remains, as part of the required mitigation for impacts to cultural resources within the County right-of-way. The County shall relinquish the cultural materials through the following methods and provide the cultural materials to the Consulting Tribe(s): 	<p>County or designee</p>	<p>During construction</p>	<p>During construction</p>	<p>Inspection or survey</p>		<p>Issuance of a Stop Work Order</p>

Mitigation Measure No./Implementing Action	Responsible for Monitoring	Monitoring Frequency	Timing of Verification	Method of Verification	Verified Date/Initials	Sanctions for Noncompliance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For on-site reburial of the discovered items this shall include measures and provisions to protect the future reburial area from any future impacts. Reburial shall not occur until all cataloguing and basic recordation have been completed. 						
<p>CUL-5: Reporting. The Project Archaeologist shall prepare a final archaeological report within 60 days of project completion. The report shall follow Cultural Resources Management Plan (CRMP) Guidelines and County requirements and shall include at a minimum: a discussion of monitoring methods and techniques used; the results of the monitoring program, including any cultural materials recovered; an inventory of any resources recovered; updated State Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) forms, if any, and any other site(s) identified; final disposition of the resources; and any additional recommendations. A final copy shall be submitted to the County, the Eastern Information Center, and the Monitoring Tribe(s).</p> <p>CUL-6: In the event human remains are encountered, State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 states that no further disturbance shall occur and halt all work within 60 feet until the County Coroner has made a determination of origin and disposition pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 5097.98. The County Coroner must be notified of the find immediately. If the remains are determined to be Native American, the County Coroner will notify the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC), which will determine and notify a Most Likely Descendant (MLD). The archaeologist who discovered the remains will contact the County so that they may work with the MLD to inspect the site of the discovery. The MLD shall complete the inspection within 48 hours of notification by the NAHC. The MLD will have the opportunity to offer recommendations for the disposition of the remains.</p>	County or designee	During construction	During construction	Inspection or survey		Issuance of a Stop Work Order
<p>Hydrology and Water Quality</p> <p>Less than significant. No mitigation required.</p> <p>A Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) would detail the BMPs to be implemented during construction. Construction BMPs would include, but not be limited to, Erosion Control and Sediment Control BMPs designed to minimize the erosion and retain sediment on</p>	County or designee	Daily during construction	Daily during construction	Inspection or survey		Issuance of a Stop Work Order

Mitigation Measure No./Implementing Action	Responsible for Monitoring	Monitoring Frequency	Timing of Verification	Method of Verification	Verified Date/Initials	Sanctions for Noncompliance
site, and Good Housekeeping BMPs to prevent spills, leaks, and discharge of construction debris and waste into receiving waters.						
Noise						
Less than significant. No mitigation required. For noise and vibration, there are no operational Best Management Plans (BMPs) or standard measures for this project because there are no operational noise and vibration impacts. Also, there are no temporary construction vibration impacts. Although temporary construction noise impacts are considered less than significant, the noise section provides standard conditions to further minimize construction noise.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A
Transportation						
Avoidance Measure: TRA-1. A detailed Traffic Management Plan shall be prepared during the construction bid phase of the project and approved by the Riverside County Transportation Department. The objective of the Stage Construction, Traffic Control, and Detours Plan is to minimize the potential impacts that construction activities may have on the traveling public and emergency services providers. Preparation of the plan shall be coordinated with the emergency services providers in the project vicinity to minimize response delays resulting from traffic delays, temporary lane closures, and detours during project construction.	County or designee	During construction	During construction	Inspection or survey		Issuance of a Stop Work Order
Tribal Cultural Resources						
TCR-1: Tribal Monitoring. At least 30 days prior to the commencement of ground-disturbing activity, a Riverside County Consultant shall provide a Native American Monitoring Agreement with the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians to the County for review and approval.	County or designee	30 days prior to construction	30 days prior to construction	Inspection or survey		Issuance of Work Order Not to Begin
TCR-2: Treatment and Final Disposition of Cultural Resources. Any archaeological resource unearthed during construction activities shall be evaluated by the Qualified Archaeologist and Native American Monitor(s). If the resource is determined to be Native American in origin, any such resource (including sacred items, burial goods, and all	County or designee	Daily during construction	Daily during construction	Inspection or survey		Issuance of a Stop Work Order

Mitigation Measure No./Implementing Action	Responsible for Monitoring	Monitoring Frequency	Timing of Verification	Method of Verification	Verified Date/Initials	Sanctions for Noncompliance
<p>archaeological artifacts and non-human remains) shall be addressed through one or more of the following methods:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preservation in place by accommodating on-site reburial of the discovered items with the consulting Native American tribe(s). This shall include measures and provisions to protect the future reburial area from any future impacts. Reburial shall not occur until all cataloging and recordation efforts have been completed. • A curation agreement with an appropriate qualified repository within Riverside County that meets federal standards per 36 CFR Part 79. The collections and associated records shall be transferred, including title, to an appropriate curation facility within Riverside County, to be accompanied by payment of the fees necessary for permanent curation. • If more than one Native American Tribe or band is involved with the project, consensus needs to be reached amongst all Tribes involved regarding the repository. If consensus cannot be reached, the County of Riverside will select an appropriate qualified repository within Riverside County that meets federal standards per 36 CFR 79. 	County or designee	Daily during construction and all activities occurring within 100 feet shall STOP when human remains found	Daily during construction	Inspection or survey		Issuance of a Stop Work Order.
<p>TCR-3: Discovery of Human Remains. In the event that human remains (or remains that may be human) are discovered within the construction areas, all activity within 100 feet of the find shall be immediately halted. Any discovery of human remains shall be immediately reported by the Qualified Archaeologist and Native American monitor(s) to the County Coroner. If the human remains are determined to be Native American, the County Coroner shall notify the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC), who shall appoint a Most Likely Descendant (MLD) in accordance with California Public Resources Code 5097.98.</p> <p>The discovery of any Native American human remains and/or funerary objects shall be kept confidential and secure to prevent any further disturbance. In the case where discovered human remains cannot be fully documented and recovered on the same day, the remains and associated funerary objects, sacred objects and/or objects of cultural patrimony shall be covered with an opaque material or placed in opaque cloth bags. A physical barrier (e.g., metal plate, concrete slab</p>						

Mitigation Measure No./Implementing Action	Responsible for Monitoring	Monitoring Frequency	Timing of Verification	Method of Verification	Verified Date/Initials	Sanctions for Noncompliance
<p>that can be moved by heavy equipment) shall be placed over the excavation opening to protect the remains until examination by the MLD can occur. If this type of protective barrier is not available, a 24-hour guard shall be posted outside of working hours.</p> <p>The MLD shall complete his or her inspection and make recommendations or preferences for treatment within 48 hours of being granted access to the site. The MLD shall identify and direct the most appropriate means of treating the human remains and any associated funerary object(s). As determined through consultation with the County, the MLD shall make recommendations that allow the burial to remain in situ and protected.</p> <p>Once complete, a final report of all activities associated with or resulting from the discovery of human remains shall be submitted to the NAHC.</p>						

SPECIFICATIONS and CONTRACT DOCUMENTS

for the CONSTRUCTION

of

Thousand Palms Canyon Road
Resurfacing Project
Ramon Road / Washington Street to Dillon Road
Community of Thousand Palms
Project No. A7-0394



TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT

FORM APPROVED COUNTY COUNSEL
BY: *Danielle D. Maland*
DANIELLE D. MALAND

FEB 01 2022 *319 PAS*



Original Negative Declaration/Notice of Determination was routed to County Clerks for posting on. 2/3/22 PR Initial



NOTICE OF DETERMINATION COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT

SCH# 2021050392

PROJECT NAME: Thousand Palms Canyon Road Widening Project

DESCRIPTION AND LOCATION: The County of Riverside proposes to widen and resurface Thousand Palms Canyon Road from Ramon Road/Washington Street to Dillon Road (approximately 4.71 miles). The project scope includes pavement widening and resurfacing, constructing pavement transitions, constructing pavement safety measures, installing rumble strips, widening paved shoulders, grading dirt shoulders and dirt berms, installing and removing signs, applying traffic striping and thermoplastic pavement markings, adding a Class II bike lane, utility relocations, and acquiring temporary construction easements (TCEs).

1. The project will not have a significant effect on the environment.
2. A Mitigated Negative Declaration was prepared for this project pursuant to the provisions of CEQA.
3. Mitigation measures were a condition of the approval of this project.
4. A Mitigation Monitoring plan was adopted.

The Mitigated Negative Declaration may be examined, along with administrative record, at the Transportation Department, 3525 14th Street, Riverside, California 92501.

<u>Mary Zambon</u> Mary Zambon	Title	Environmental Project Manager	Date	12.20.2021
<u>Mark Lancaster</u> Mark Lancaster	Title	Director of Transportation	Date	12-21-21

HEARING BODY OR OFFICER

XX Board of Supervisors
 _____ Planning Commission

ACTION ON PROJECT

_____ Approval
 _____ Disapproval
 Date: _____

 Verifying: Title: Date:

For County Clerk Use

RIVERSIDE COUNTY CLERK & RECORDER

**AUTHORIZATION
TO BILL
BY JOURNAL VOUCHER**

-TO BE FILLED IN BY SUBMITTING AGENCY-
537280-20000-3130500000 ZA70394C Z1530

AUTHORIZATION NUMBER: W.O.#ZA70394, Task Code Z1530

AMOUNT: \$2,598.00 (\$50.00 County Clerk Processing Fee + \$ 2,548.00 CDFW MND Filing Fee)

DATE: December 14, 2021

AGENCY: Riverside County Transportation Department

THIS AUTHORIZES THE COUNTY CLERK & RECORDER TO ISSUE A VOUCHER FOR PAYMENT OF ALL FILING AND HANDLING FEES FOR THE ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENT(S).

NUMBER OF DOCUMENTS INCLUDED: One (1)

AUTHORIZED BY: Mary Zambon, Environmental Project Manager

Signature: *Mary Zambon*

PRESENTED BY: Mohamed Eissa, Associate Transportation Planner

-TO BE FILLED IN BY COUNTY CLERK-

ACCEPTED BY: -

DATE: -

RECEIPT # (S) -

Ad Copy:

THE PRESS-ENTERPRISE

1825 Chicago Ave, Suite 100
Riverside, CA 92507
951-684-1200
951-368-9018 FAX

PROOF OF PUBLICATION (2010, 2015.5 C.C.P)

Publication(s): The Press-Enterprise

PROOF OF PUBLICATION OF

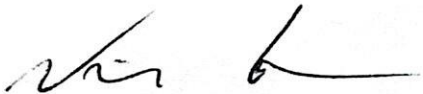
Ad Desc.: NIB- Thousand Palms /

I am a citizen of the United States. I am over the age of eighteen years and not a party to or interested in the above entitled matter. I am an authorized representative of THE PRESS-ENTERPRISE, a newspaper in general circulation, printed and published daily in the County of Riverside, and which newspaper has been adjudicated a newspaper of general circulation by the Superior Court of the County of Riverside, State of California, under date of April 25, 1952, Case Number 54446, under date of March 29, 1957, Case Number 65673, under date of August 25, 1995, Case Number 267864, and under date of September 16, 2013, Case Number RIC 1309013; that the notice, of which the annexed is a printed copy, has been published in said newspaper in accordance with the instructions of the person(s) requesting publication, and not in any supplement thereof on the following dates, to wit:

**02/05, 02/06, 02/07, 02/08, 02/09, 02/10, 02/11, 02/12, 02/13,
02/14/2022**

I certify (or declare) under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Date: February 14, 2022
At: Riverside, California



Legal Advertising Representative, The Press-Enterprise

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE
PO BOX 1147
RIVERSIDE, CA 92502

Ad Number: 0011516189-01

P.O. Number:

Transportation
2/1/2022
item 3.19

Notice to Bidders

County of Riverside, herein called Owner, invites sealed proposals for:

**Thousand Palms Canyon Road
Resurfacing Project
Ramon Road / Washington Street to Dillon Road
Community of Thousand Palms
Project No. A7-0394**

Bid shall be delivered to the County of Riverside Transportation Department, 14th Street Annex, 3525 14th Street, Riverside, California 92501, telephone (951) 955-6780 not later than 2:00 p.m., on Wednesday, **February 23, 2022** to be promptly opened in public at said address. Each bid shall be in accordance with plans, specifications and other contract documents, dated **December 2021**, and prepared by County of Riverside, whose address is same as the above, from whom a digital set of documents (bid book and plans) may be obtained upon request, at no cost, or a printed set of bidding documents with 22" x 34" size plans may be obtained upon request for a nonrefundable fee of **\$40.00** per set, plus mailing costs. Email request of bidding documents, with company and contact information, to **Bids-Contracts@rivco.org** and reference this project (or contact the address or telephone number above).

Pursuant to Labor Code section 1771.1, any Contractor bidding, or subcontractor to be listed on a bid proposal subject to Public Contract Code section 4104, shall not be qualified to bid after March 1, 2015, unless currently registered and qualified to perform public works pursuant to Labor Code section 1725.5. No Contractor or subcontractor may be awarded a contract or perform work on any contract for public work, after April 1, 2015, without proof of current registration with the Department of Industrial Relations pursuant to Labor Code section 1725.5 to perform public works.

The County of Riverside, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (78 Stat. 252) and the Regulations of the Department of Commerce (15 C.F.R., Part 8) and related statutes, issued pursuant to such Act, hereby notifies all bidders that minority businesses will be afforded full opportunity to submit bids, and it will affirmatively insure that the contract entered into pursuant to this advertisement will be awarded to the lowest responsible bidder without discrimination on the grounds of race, color, sex, national origin, religion, age, or disability.

The Contractor is required to have a Class "A" license at the time of bid submission.

Engineering Estimate: \$ 3,318,000 - \$ 3,870,000 (Base Bid Schedule)

Bid Bond	10 %
Performance Bond	100 %
Payment Bond	100 %
Working Days	65 Working Days

Website: <http://rctlma.org/trans/Contractors-Corner/Notices-Inviting-Bids>

Alternative formats available upon request to individuals with disabilities.

Dated: February 1, 2022 **KECIA R. HARPER**
Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
By: Zuly Martinez, Board Assistant Press-Enterprise: 2/05-2/14



PROOF OF PUBLICATION

STATE OF CALIFORNIA SS. COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE

RIVERSIDE COUNTY-BOARD OF SUP.
4080 LEMON ST
RIVERSIDE CA 92501

I am over the age of 18 years old, a citizen of the United States and not a party to, or have interest in this matter. I hereby certify that the attached advertisement appeared in said newspaper (set in type not smaller than non pariel) in each and entire issue of said newspaper and not in any supplement thereof of the following issue dates, to wit:

- 02/05/2022, 02/06/2022, 02/09/2022,
02/10/2022, 02/11/2022, 02/12/2022,
02/13/2022, 02/16/2022, 02/17/2022,
02/18/2022

I acknowledge that I am a principal clerk of the printer of The Desert Sun, printed and published weekly in the City of Palm Springs, County of Riverside, State of California. The Desert Sun was adjudicated a Newspaper of general circulation on March 24, 1988 by the Superior Court of the County of Riverside, State of California Case No. 191236.

I certify under penalty of perjury, under the laws of the State of California, that the foregoing is true and correct.. Executed on this 21st of February 2022 in Green Bay, WI, County of Brown.

[Signature]
DECLARANT

Ad#:0005116457
P.O.:

This is not an invoice

of Affidavits: 2

Trans.
2/11/2022
item 3.19

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(Base Bid Schedule)
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Performance Bond 100 %
Payment Bond 100 %
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Website:
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Dated: February 1, 2022
KECIA R. HARPER
Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
By: Zuly Martinez, Board Assistant
Published: 2/5, 2/6, 2/9, 2/10, 2/11, 2/12, 2/13, 2/16, 2/17, 2/18/2022

RECEIVED RIVERSIDE COUNTY CLERK / BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
2022 FEB 25 AM 10:21

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