

Memorandum

To: CHAIR AND COMMISSIONERS
CALIFORNIA TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

CTC Meeting: October 8, 2013

Reference No.: 2.2c.(7)
Action Item

From: STEVEN KECK
Acting Chief Financial Officer

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Environmental Analysis

Subject: **APPROVAL OF PROJECT FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION OF FUNDING**
08-SBd-58; PM 22.2/31.1
RESOLUTION E-13-80

RECOMMENDATION:

The California Department of Transportation (Department) recommends that the California Transportation Commission (Commission), as a responsible agency, approve the attached Resolutions E-13-80.

ISSUE:

The attached resolution proposes to approve for future consideration of funding the following project for which a Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) has been completed:

- State Route 58 (SR 58) in San Bernardino County. Widen a portion of SR 58 from two lanes to four lanes in and near the town of Hinkley. (PPNO 0217F)

This project in San Bernardino County will widen a portion of State Route 58 from two lanes to four lanes in and near the town of Hinkley. The project is programmed in the 2012 State Transportation Improvement Program. The total estimated cost is \$194,925,000 for capital and support. Construction is estimated to begin in Fiscal Year 2014-15. The scope, as described for the preferred alternative, is consistent with the project scope programmed by the Commission in the 2012 State Transportation Improvement Program.

A copy of the FEIR has been provided to Commission staff. Resources that may be impacted by the project include: visual, community impacts, land use, farmlands, noise, paleontology, water quality and stormwater runoff, hazardous waste, geology and soils, and biological resources. Potential impacts associated with the project can all be mitigated to below significance through proposed mitigation measures with the exception of community impacts, specifically community character/cohesion, which has been determined to be an unavoidable significant environmental effect. As a result, a Final Environmental Impact Report was prepared for the project.

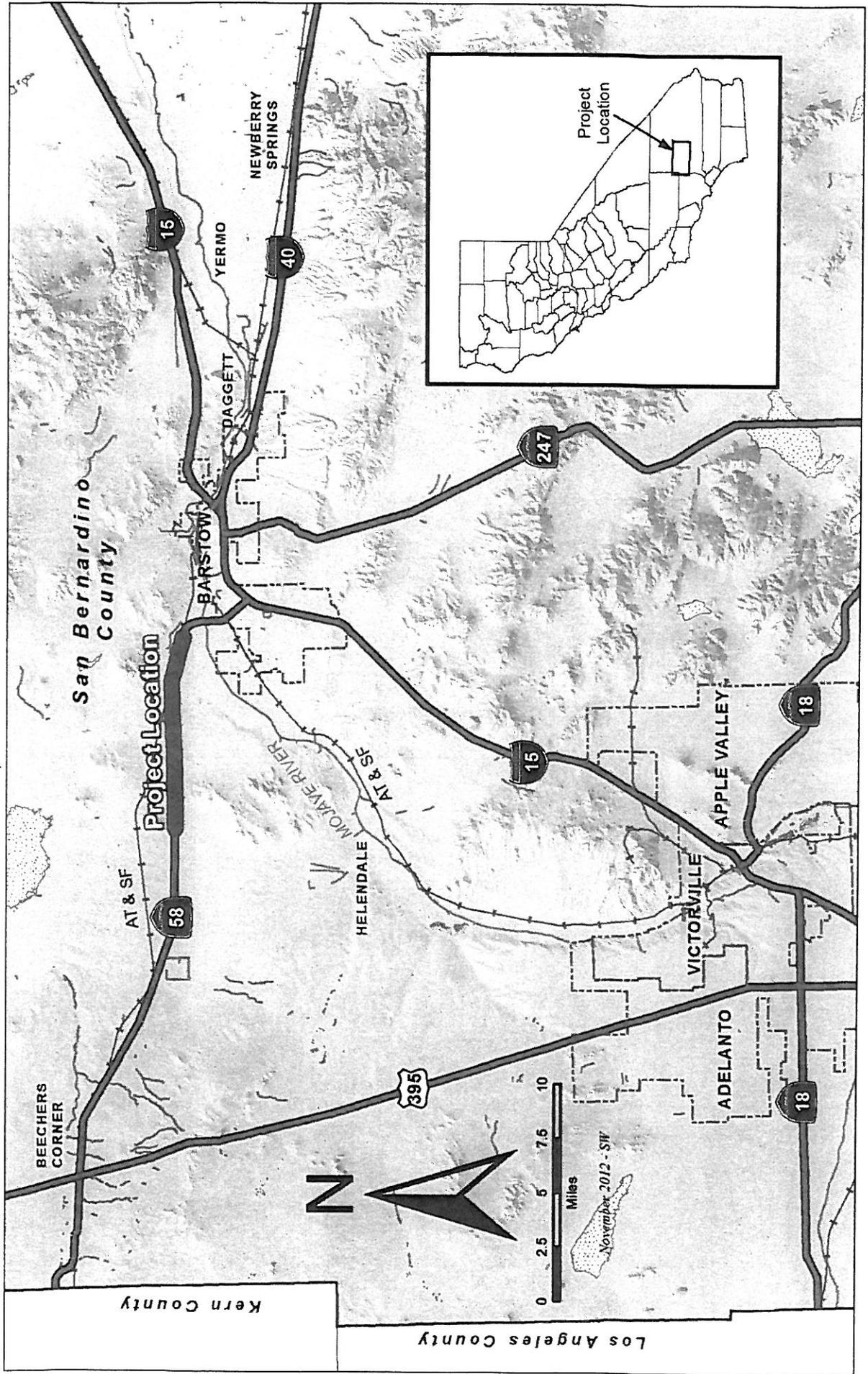
Attachments

CALIFORNIA TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

Resolution for Future Consideration of Funding 08-SBd-58, PM 22.2/31.1 Resolution E-13-80

- 1.1** **WHEREAS**, the California Department of Transportation (Department) has completed an Environmental Impact Report pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the CEQA Guidelines for the following project:
- State Route 58 (SR 58) in San Bernardino County. Widen a portion of SR 58 from two lanes to four lanes in and near the town of Hinkley. (PPNO 0217F)
- 1.2** **WHEREAS**, the Department has certified that the Environmental Impact Report has been completed pursuant to CEQA and the State CEQA Guidelines for its implementation; and
- 1.3** **WHEREAS**, the California Transportation Commission, as a responsible agency, has considered the information contained in the Final Environmental Impact Report.
- 1.4** **WHEREAS**, the project will have a significant effect on the environment.
- 1.5** **WHEREAS**, a Statement of Overriding Considerations was prepared; and
- 1.6** **WHEREAS**, Findings were made pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines; and
- 2.1** **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the California Transportation Commission does hereby support approval of the above referenced project to allow for consideration of funding.

Project Location Map



FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FINDINGS—IN ACCORDANCE WITH CEQA

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FINDINGS FOR THE STATE ROUTE 58 (SR-58) HINKLEY EXPRESSWAY PROJECT LOCATED IN HINKLEY, CA IN THE COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO

The following information is presented to comply with State CEQA Guidelines (Title 14 California Code of Regulations, Chapter 3, Section 15901) and the Department of Transportation and California Transportation Commission Environmental Regulations (Title 21, California Code of Regulations, Chapter 11, Section 1501). Reference is made to the Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) for the project, which is the basic source for the information.

The following effects have been identified in the FEIR prepared for Caltrans' State Route 58 Hinkley Expressway Project as resulting from the project.

1.0 Community Cohesion/Character

Adverse Environmental Effects:

As discussed in sub-section 3.4.5.2 of the June 2013 FEIR:

Alternative 2 would realign SR-58 approximately 0.5 mile south of the existing roadway. Access to the future SR-58 alignment in the project area would be limited to major roadways with adequate exit spacing, as advised by the *Highway Capacity Manual*; these include Hinkley and Lenwood Roads. Cul-de-sacs would be added to the south ends of local streets that currently intersect with Frontier Road between Valley View Road and Hinkley Road, eliminating direct access to this alignment. These improvements are required as safety measures.

As a result of the changes to the SR-58 alignment and local roadways, some properties would no longer have direct access to SR-58, but would still have access to SR-58 and other areas of Hinkley via other routes. This would result in longer distances traveled for some local residents to access the realigned SR-58 (greater than 0.3 mile) compared to the current access routes for residents living along ten of the 13 roadways that currently intersect SR-58.

The project would provide improvement in safety, traffic operations, and congestion. Pedestrian design features would be incorporated where appropriate and feasible, including providing sidewalks at the Lenwood and Hinkley overcrossings, striping all crosswalks, and constructing curb ramps at intersections. Therefore, while Alternative 2 would result in changes to pedestrian access and movement, impacts would be minimized with the implementation of pedestrian design features.

Under Alternative 2, SR-58 would be realigned approximately 0.5 mile south of its existing location. Existing zoned land uses in the area where this alignment would occur

are residential and rural living; thus, this alternative would introduce a highway through an area where no major roadways currently exist, creating a new barrier that would inhibit access between areas north and south of the new alignment. While the new roadway alignment would generally avoid residential areas of the Hinkley community, compared to Alternatives 3 and 4—including the mobile home park located along the existing SR-58 roadway, as well as the residential clusters located south of the existing SR-58 roadway, which include homes along Flower Street—property acquisitions and associated removal of residential and nonresidential structures, and residential relocations would occur under this alternative. This alternative would result in the displacement and relocation of 16 residential units and two agricultural operations occurring on the same sites as single-family residential units; the mobile home park and central area of the community would be avoided.

Alternative 2 would function as a bypass of community facilities by avoiding the central area of the community. Alternative 2 would skirt the southern edge of the community. Impacts on businesses in Hinkley would be expected, as motorists/truckers/regional travelers would be less likely to stop in the community. Speeds on the new facility would be higher (with a design speed of 70 mph), and many travelers may choose not to stop. Such bypass impacts would be expected to be slightly less severe for the other two alternatives since they pass through the central area of the community.

The new intersection with Hinkley Road would bisect a small cluster of residences that currently form a cohesive unit. This type of physical disruption would also occur along Mountain View Road, where two to three homes appear to be cohesively interlinked.

As it relates to community cohesion overall, however, Alternative 2 has less impacts than Alternatives 3 and 4 since this alignment would avoid more residential areas of the Hinkley community. Nevertheless, the addition of a major facility through the desert landscape would impact the rural, community character of the study area by adding an urbanizing element where currently none exists; therefore, potentially substantial impacts would result.

Findings:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project, which avoid or substantially lessen the significant environmental effect as identified in the final EIR.

Statement of Facts:

As discussed in sub-section 3.4.5.3 of the June 2013 FEIR, the following measures will be implemented to minimize, and/or mitigate the impacts associated with the project:

CI-1: A Construction Management Plan and a Transportation Management Plan would be prepared for the project and include coordination efforts that would inform the community about project activities, maintain access to and from the project area during construction, minimize construction-period traffic, control glare, dust, and noise (see Section 3.3, Farmland; Section 3.5, Utilities; Section 3.6, Traffic and Transportation/Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities; Section 3.7, Visual/Aesthetics; Section

3.14, Air Quality; and Section 3.15, Noise and Vibration). Measures to minimize construction impacts in these sections, also apply to minimizing permanent community cohesion/character impacts.

CI-2: Pedestrian design features shall be incorporated wherever feasible on the relinquished portion of SR-58, including providing sidewalks along the Lenwood and Hinkley overcrossings, striping all crosswalks, and constructing curb ramps at all new intersections.

CI-3: To address bypass impacts, during Final Design, Caltrans will coordinate with the community and County regarding the possibility of placing a *Welcome* sign at both ends of the expressway with brief information encouraging visitors to visit services offered in Hinkley.

CI-4: During Final Design and Construction, every effort will be made to further minimize the amount of right of way needed for the facility, and to further minimize community and environmental impacts in accordance with Directors Policy Number DP-22: Context Sensitive Solutions.

CI-5: For permanent impacts to community character, Visual Measures AES-1 through AES-8; and Farmland Measures FA-1 through FA-4 are also designed to minimize impacts.

2.0 Relocations

Adverse Environmental Effects:

As discussed in sub-section 3.4.5.2 and sub-section 3.4.6.3 in the June 2013 FEIR:

The replacement area for residents requiring relocation as a result of this alternative would be the general community of Hinkley and extend to the city of Barstow, which is immediately adjacent to the displacement area. Changes in commute distances and the availability of services associated with relocated residents would depend on where residents are relocated. Currently, within the project area there are numerous groundwater monitoring wells and treatment wells. Groundwater is contaminated in the area generally between Summerset Road and Mountain View Road in the area of the project and would affect any of the build alternatives as this impacts the availability of relocation resources.

A Draft Relocation Impact Report (DRIR) (Caltrans 2010b) and Final Relocation Impact Report (FRIR) (for Alternative 2 only) (Caltrans 2013a) were prepared for the project to determine impacts related to the acquisition of properties and displacement of residents and/or businesses in the project area as a result of each of the alternatives. The DRIR and FRIR identified a replacement area for the displaced resources. The replacement area is the area immediately adjacent to the displacement area and extends to include all of zip codes 92347 and 92311. In other words the replacement area includes unincorporated parts of San Bernardino County surrounding Hinkley as well as the city of Barstow, which is located ten to 14 miles away from the community of Hinkley.

Under Alternative 2, 28 parcels would be fully acquired, and 65 parcels would be partially acquired. Under this alternative, 16 residential properties would be displaced, which would

require the relocation of residences and two agricultural operations. The residential units that would require relocation include eight owner-occupied single-family homes, seven tenant-occupied single-family homes, and one mobile home. Nearly all of the displaced properties would occur as a result of physical alterations to the SR-58 facility or related alterations to adjacent roadways; the exception is one property to the south of the western end of the alignment (APN 0496-131-12), which would be acquired due to Alternative 2 making the property inaccessible.

According to the FRIR prepared for Alternative 2, the current housing market in the area (within zip codes 92347 and 92311 which includes the city of Barstow) has sufficient ability to absorb the displacement of all owner-occupied residential units requiring relocation under the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Act of 1970, as amended. The term "able to absorb" means that there are sufficient homes in the area available to allow for relocation of displaces. Per the Relocation Assistance Program (see Appendix C), *[r]esidential occupants eligible for relocation payment(s) will not be required to move unless at least one comparable "decent, safe and sanitary" replacement dwelling, available on the market, is offered to them by Caltrans.* The immediate relocation resource area may lack existing adequate resources to absorb displaced mobile homes and rental housing; however, there are several options available to displacees, including the use of last resort housing, relocation to multi-family rental units in nearby communities such as Barstow and Victorville, or into single-family residences that are available throughout the relocation resource area. Because there would be no large-scale displacements involved under this alternative, the available replacement resources would be adequate.

The agricultural operations that would be displaced under Alternative 2 include one livestock operation (APN 0497-231-01) and one farming operation (APN 0497-192-16), both of which occur on the same parcels as residential units. The surrounding area is anticipated to be able to absorb the displacement of the agricultural operations.

The number of staff needed to adequately relocate displacees would be minimal, and the time to conduct the relocation process is estimated to be approximately six to 12 months. The additional lead time for relocations has been identified to relocate difficult displacements such as dairies and livestock operations.

Since the surrounding area has the potential to absorb the displacement of non-residential uses under this alternative, no potentially substantial business, employment, economic-and/or farm-related impacts are anticipated to occur. As it relates to residential relocations, however, adverse impacts may occur. Although the number of displacees under Alternative 2 would be substantially less than those required under Alternatives 3 and 4, this relocation means that residents may have to move distances of ten miles or greater from their current locations. Because of the rural character and size of the community, in addition to the distance away from friends and neighbors, Alternative 2 may have substantial impacts.

Findings:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project, which avoid or substantially lessen the significant environmental effect as identified in the final EIR.

Statement of Facts:

As discussed in sub-section 3.4.7.2 of the June 2013 FEIR, the following measures will be implemented to minimize, and/or mitigate the impacts associated with the project:

CI-4: During Final Design and Construction, every effort will be made to further minimize the amount of right of way needed for the facility, and to further minimize community and environmental impacts in accordance with Directors Policy Number DP-22: Context Sensitive Solutions.

CI-6: All relocation activities would be conducted in accordance with the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended. A business survey will be conducted to assist with the relocation of any businesses that are displaced. Relocation resources will be available to all displaced without discrimination.

CI-7: For impacts to agricultural business and dairies, every effort will be made during Final Design and Construction to minimize impacts to these, in an effort to allow them to continue operation with as little disruption as possible.

3.0 Visual/Aesthetic

Adverse Environmental Effects:

Under Alternative 2, the Preferred Alternative, residents located close to the northern side of the alignment may have potentially substantial adverse effects to their southern-facing views because a highway and interchange would be introduced where none currently exists. The neighborhood in Key Observation Point 3 (located north of SR-58 on the corner of Hinkley Road and Acacia Street, looking south toward the planned SR-58/Hinkley Road interchange), and a number of rural homes, may experience potentially substantial adverse impacts to their northern views because the interchange would dominate their mid-ground view. The neighborhood in Key Observation Point 6 (a southern view of the Alternative 2 alignment from Hillview Road at Frontier Road on the western side of the project) would experience moderately adverse impacts to the south, because the view shed would include the new highway alignment.

Residents, businesses, and community facilities would experience impacts ranging from moderate to no-impact based on their respective distance from the alignment. The northern views would remain intact for most viewers.

Findings:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project, which avoid or substantially lessen the significant environmental effect as identified in the final EIR.

Statement of Facts:

As discussed in section 3.7.4 of the June 2013 FEIR, the following measures will be implemented to minimize, and/or mitigate the impacts associated with the project:

- **AES-1:** All lighting used for the project will be directional, directing light to the highway facility and away from homes and habitats to minimize glare (directional lighting) impacts to the night sky, and to minimize affecting background sky views. Glare (directional lighting) shields would be used.
- **AES-2:** Detention basins and bioswales will be designed and addressed as visually integrated elements of the landscape planting. Contour grading of basins will minimize the visual impact by blending with the surrounding natural landscape features.
- **AES-3:** Bridge structures shall be pigmented an earth tone that is compatible with the native soil color within the project limits to mitigate visual impacts.
- **AES-4:** Native plantings shall be used to minimize the visual impact of the highway and associated detention basins. Drought tolerant native trees and shrubs will be planted at appropriate locations, especially near the drainage basins, and at the two proposed interchanges to soften the structures. These interchanges would become the gateways into the community, and will be landscaped to mitigate visual impacts. Inert materials will also be considered where appropriate to beautify these areas and reduce erosion and to mitigate visual impacts.
- **AES-5:** The berm located on the west side of the project area shall be graded and vegetated to reflect the natural terrain to mitigate visual impacts.
- **AES-6:** Where possible, concrete drainage ditches would be avoided in favor of soft-bottom ditches to reduce urbanizing elements, and to encourage infiltration and vegetation growth to minimize visual impacts. Where required, concrete ditches will be pigmented to blend with adjacent soil to mitigate visual impacts.
- **AES-7:** Erosion Control: all disturbed soil areas will be treated with erosion control measures, including seeding with native plant/native grass seeds to minimize visual impacts. The measures identified in GEO-2 (#6, Erosion) will be incorporated in conjunction with implementing this measure:
 - **GEO-2(6): Erosion.**
 - **GEO-2(6a):** Vegetate and mulch the slope surface and include the use of erosion protection coverings. Specifications would require the embankment construction to be done in phases, with completed slopes covered following each phase of grading. The Preliminary Geotechnical Report defers to the District Landscape Architect for techniques, specifications, and materials in vegetating slopes.
 - **GEO-2(6b):** Time the embankment construction to minimize soil exposure. Precipitation is a key factor in slope erosion. If possible, it would be best not to perform embankment construction during the relatively wet season.

Embankment could be constructed during late spring to early summer months and vegetated/mulched prior to the rainy season.

- **GEO-2(6c):** Divert runoff away from slope surface. Use a combination of pavement cross-slope and AC dikes to prevent flow over the toe of the slope.
- **GEO-2(6d):** Roughen the slope surface by applying salvaged topsoil (with vegetation) from the clearing and grubbing operation. This would reduce the runoff velocity and enhance the growth of native vegetation.
- **GEO-2(6e):** Armor the slope using rock fragments derived from blasting/cutting the cut slopes section on the west side of the proposed alignment.
- **GEO-2(6f):** Build “zoned” embankments such that the sides of the embankments are equipment width “shells” of rock fill derived from cutting the hard rock segments of the projects.
- **AES-8:** To address impacts relating to cohesion/rural character, and the bisecting of the community by the facility, design efforts will be made to minimize the visual impact by providing linkage across the facility, such as sidewalks on the interchanges, to encourage pedestrians, and bicyclists in the community, to cross the facility.
- **AES-9:** The Construction Management Plan will include efforts to minimize visual impacts to the community to the extent feasible.
- **AES-10:** The Transportation Management Plan will include efforts to minimize visual impacts to the community to the extent feasible.

4.0 Cultural Resources

Adverse Environmental Effects:

The First Supplemental HPSR prepared for the Preferred Alternative evaluated one historic property within the Alternative 2 footprint that would be impacted. Archaeological investigation and research of CA-SBR-15103/H was performed during Phase II testing and evaluation. CA-SBR-15103/H consists of a multi-component site consisting of a sparse historical refuse deposit (identified as Locus A) and an intact prehistoric artifact and feature deposit (identified as Locus B). Locus A includes a scatter of historical domestic refuse, consisting of ferrous metal objects, ceramics, glass, wood, and other items, that most likely dates to the mid-twentieth century. Locus B contains a small, moderately diverse concentration of artifacts and ecofacts of variable density deposited within fluvial deposits derived from the Mojave River. CA-SBR-15103/H was evaluated and determined to be a NRHP-eligible historic property under Criterion D, as it has yielded information important to prehistory and has the potential to yield additional information.

This historic property measures approximately 90 meters east-west by 38 meters north-south and is located entirely within the existing State right of way in the area of direct impact of the Project APE. Construction activities would result in ground disturbance

and grading activities that will result in the permanent removal of the property from its historic location, resulting in the Finding of Adverse Effect. Because the eligibility determination for CA-SBR-15103/H is based on what important information in prehistory or history this resource has yielded or may be likely to yield, and the DRP will result in recovering an adequate sample of the site's archaeological data to realize the information potential of this resource, the goal of resolving a finding of substantial adverse change would be achieved via implementation of the DRP. While the MOA is prepared for compliance with Section 106 of the NHPA, the stipulations of the MOA will serve as mitigation measures under CEQA.

Avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures will be outlined in the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), which will include a Data Recovery Plan (DRP). The measures in the DRP will be standard for mitigating an adverse effect to this type of historic property, and will reflect input from the participating Native American Tribe. The Native American Tribe has been actively engaged with Caltrans during Phase II testing at the site and a number of meetings have been held to discuss Tribal concerns and Caltrans' planned mitigation. The Tribe has positively responded to cultural resources compliance approaches. Full execution of the MOA for the SR-58/Hinkley Expressway Project will be obtained prior to the signature approval of the Record of Decision (ROD).

Findings:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project, which avoid or substantially lessen the significant environmental effect as identified in the final EIR.

Statement of Facts:

As discussed in sub-section 3.8.4 of the June 2013 FEIR, the following measures will be implemented to minimize, and/or mitigate the impacts associated with the project. Avoidance and minimization measures CR-1 and CR-2 would address any unanticipated discoveries during construction.

- **CR-1:** If cultural materials are discovered during construction, all earthmoving activity within and around the immediate discovery area will be diverted until a qualified archaeologist can assess the nature and significance of the find.
- **CR-2:** If human remains are discovered, State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 states that further disturbances and activities shall cease in any area or nearby area suspected to overlie remains, and the county coroner contacted. Pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 5097.98, if the remains are thought to be Native American, the coroner will notify the NAHC, which will then notify the MLD. At this time, the person who discovered the remains will contact the District 8 Native American Coordinator so that they may work with the MLD on the respectful treatment and disposition of the remains. Further provisions of PRC Section 5097.98 are to be followed as applicable.

Based on SHPO's concurrence with Caltrans' findings in the First Supplemental HPSR and Finding of Adverse Effect, the following Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation measures CR-3 through CR-5 for the project are included in this Final EIR/EIS to address adverse effects to CA-SBR-15103/H.

- **CR-3:** All provisions from the MOA and DRP for this project will be implemented.
- **CR-4a:** Prior to construction, buried site testing will be performed to further define the boundaries of the "sensitive areas." The buried site testing will include a geo-archaeological analysis of the potential for the presence of buried subsurface deposits.
- **CR-4b:** An Osteologically-Trained Archaeological Monitor(s) shall be present during all ground disturbing construction activities in sensitive areas, which will be defined after the buried site testing and before completion of final design. In the event that additional cultural deposits are uncovered during construction operations, the archaeological monitor shall be empowered to halt or divert work in the vicinity of the find until the archaeologist is able to determine the nature and the significance of the discovery.
- **CR-5:** A Native American monitor(s) shall be present during all ground disturbing construction activities in sensitive areas, which will be defined before completion of final design.

5.0 Paleontology

Adverse Environmental Effects:

The following was determined to be applicable for all three of the studied Build Alternatives, including the Preferred Alternative, Alternative 2.

The study area for paleontology covers an area within the northwestern corner of the Mojave Desert and the adjacent ancient shoreline of Lake Harper. The area is defined as such due to the project's proximity to the Mojave River and Lake Harper, which in antiquity were most likely to deposit alluvial sediments increasing the chance of recovering fossils in the present day. Permanent impacts under any of the build alternatives would be expected to be indiscernible and impacts are therefore discussed collectively.

The fact that no fossils were observed during the paleontological reconnaissance is typical since most fossils are subsurface. Existing fossil localities nearby in the same rock units present within the Project Study Area have produced significant vertebrate paleontological resources. On this basis, the Quaternary older alluvium has a high sensitivity or potential to produce significant fossils. This sensitivity increases with increasing depth below the ground surface. In addition, some areas mapped as Quaternary (younger) alluvium are underlain by older alluvium that may be affected by deep excavations. Therefore, all three alternatives would have a less-than-significant impact with mitigation on paleontological resources.

The greatest potential impacts occur near the west end of the project area and between Valley Wells and Summerset roads in Hinkley, because they are closest to the Mojave River and

Harper Lake. The rest of the route consists of younger formations that may overly older fossiliferous sediments.

A Paleontological Mitigation Plan would be required and shall be completed during final project design.

Findings:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project, which avoid or substantially lessen the significant environmental effect as identified in the final EIR.

Statement of Facts:

As discussed in sub-section 3.4.5.3 of the June 2013 FEIR, the following measures will be implemented to minimize, and/or mitigate the impacts associated with the project:

- **PA-1:** Grading, excavation and other surface and subsurface excavation in the RSA have potential to impact significant nonrenewable fossil resources of Pleistocene age. The PMP will be prepared, by a qualified paleontologist, prior to completion of the Plans, Specifications, and Estimates phase of this project once specific information about excavation locations and depth is available and monitoring efforts can be properly estimated. The PMP will detail the measures to be implemented and shall include, at a minimum, the following elements:
- **PA-1.1:** Required 1-hour preconstruction paleontological awareness training for earthmoving personnel, including documentation of training such as sign in sheets, and hardhat stickers, to establish communications protocols between construction personnel and the Principal Paleontologist.
- **PA-1.2:** A signed repository agreement with the San Bernardino County Museum to establish a curation process in the event of sample collection.
- **PA-1.3:** Monitoring, by a Principal Paleontologist, of Quaternary Older Alluvium of the Pleistocene Epoch during excavation.
- **PA-1.4:** Field and laboratory methods that meet the curation requirements of the San Bernardino County Museum will be implemented for monitoring, reporting, collection, and curation of collected specimens. Curation requirements are available for the public review at the San Bernardino County Museum.
- **PA-1.5:** All elements of the PMP will follow the PMP Format published in the Caltrans Standard Environmental Reference (Caltrans 2003).
- **PA-1.6:** A Paleontological Mitigation Report discussing findings and analysis will be prepared by a Principal Paleontologist upon completion of project earthmoving. The report will be included in the Environmental project file and also submitted to the curation facility.

6.0 Hazardous Waste

Adverse Environmental Effects:

As previously mentioned, based on the ISA, a PSI report was prepared for APN 0494-312-26. A PSI report was also prepared for multiple parcels located primarily between Mountain View Road and Lenwood Road. Those parcels were APNs 494-251-15, 494-251-03, 494-201-22, 497-192-16, 497-192-15, and 494-241-05. According to the ISA and PSI reports, there are known hazardous material sources, including USTs, ASTs, contaminated soil, and groundwater within the Alternative 2 alignment. Soil from multiple parcels located in Alternative 2 was tested for pesticides, hexavalent chromium, and Title 22 metals. The results of the preliminary site investigations performed for APN 0494-312-26 revealed that soil accumulated within a trench drain associated with an equipment maintenance wash-down slab drain reported elevated levels of cadmium, lead, and TPH. The PSI report recommended that the trench drain and clarifier materials be removed and disposed of appropriately by a qualified contractor. The results of the preliminary site investigation performed for the multiple parcels located primarily between Mountain View Road and Lenwood Road reported pesticides and hexavalent chromium at concentrations below the laboratory reporting limits. In addition, soil samples analyzed for heavy metals reported concentrations consistent with expected background levels. As such, it did not appear that a significant release had occurred on the investigated parcels and no further investigations were warranted on those parcels.

As shown in Table 3.13-1, under Alternative 2 the project has the potential to impact the least number of wells associated with PG&E's cleanup program. Under this alternative seven active and two inactive domestic/agricultural supply wells, and six active monitoring wells, may be impacted; however, only two monitoring wells would require relocation. The other four monitoring wells will be adjusted in place to remain at grade. Figure 3.13.3 shows the locations and type of wells. Efforts to minimize or avoid disruption of PG&E's cleanup program include continuing coordination with PG&E and the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB).

Sixteen parcels located within the Alternative 2 right of way anticipated to require full acquisition would require demolition. The residences are expected to have a propane AST, water storage AST, water supply well, and a septic tank system.

In addition, given the pre-1978 construction, ACMs and lead-based paint should be anticipated during demolition of structures.

Yellow thermoplastic traffic striping used prior to 2006 may exceed hazardous waste criteria under Title 22 California Code of Regulations (CCR) and require disposal at a Class I disposal site. Because the traffic striping on existing SR-58 is likely older striping, elevated lead concentrations within the yellow striping paint along the highway may be present.

This alternative may include handling earth material containing aerially deposited lead (ADL). An ADL study was performed along the existing state highway in November of 2010. Earth material within the project limits has been tested for ADL, and it has been determined that the soils are within typical background levels for lead.

Findings:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project, which avoid or substantially lessen the significant environmental effect as identified in the final EIR.

Statement of Facts:

As discussed in sub-section 3.13.4 of the June 2013 FEIR, implementation of the following avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures, some of which are standard practice on all Caltrans projects, would ensure that impacts involving hazards and hazardous materials would not be adverse.

- **HAZ-1:** Proper removal and disposal of all stained pole-mounted transformers and evaluation of all soil beneath the cracked/stained units prior to project construction will be conducted.
- **HAZ-2:** All soil excavations conducted on-site will be monitored by the construction contractor for visible soil staining, odor, and the possible presence of unknown hazardous-material sources, such as buried 55-gallon drums and underground tanks.
- **HAZ-3:** For structures within the right of way that require demolition, an Asbestos Pre-Demolition Survey will be completed prior to the disturbance of building materials to determine the asbestos content. A certified asbestos contractor will be retained to abate any identified ACM in accordance with all applicable laws, including OSHA guidelines.
- **HAZ-4:** In the event that ACM not identified in the asbestos study are uncovered during demolition/renovation activities, the contractor must stop work and have these materials tested for asbestos content. Any demolition or renovation of a structure will require notification and submittal of fees to the Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District (MDAQMD) at least 10 days prior to proceeding with demolition work; failure to do so may result in being fined for regulatory non-compliance.
- **HAZ-5:** Prior to demolition, a geophysical survey of affected properties will be conducted in order to investigate the potential for underground features and hazardous materials storage.
- **HAZ-6:** Shallow soil sampling for petroleum, volatile organic compounds, metals, and PCBs will be conducted, as determined necessary by the District Hazardous Waste Coordinator, near identified drum storage and debris-covered areas within the design and construction limits required for constructing the identified Preferred Alternative. All sampling for the above identified materials will be completed prior to the conclusion of the Final Design (Plans, Specifications, and Estimates) Phase of this project. The specifications prepared for constructing this project and/or the Project's Environmental Commitments Record will be updated as needed, based on the results of all sampling. The handling, transport, and disposal of soil determined to exceed maximum concentration levels for petroleum, volatile organic compounds, and metals will be performed in accordance with all applicable State and Federal regulations.

- **HAZ-7:** The handling, transport and disposal of soil determined to exceed maximum concentration levels for hexavalent chromium will be performed in accordance with all applicable regulations, federal/OSHA standards, Title 22, CCR, Caltrans requirements as stated in Section 7-109 Solid Waste Disposal and Recycling Reporting Caltrans Construction Manual, and the Site Safety Plan prepared for the project.
- **HAZ-8:** Due to the possible presence of elevated lead concentrations within the yellow thermoplastic and yellow-painted traffic stripes along the existing highway, it is recommended to include special provisions to require the Contractor to properly manage removed stripe and pavement markings as a hazardous waste and to have and implement a lead compliance plan prepared by a Certified Industrial Hygienist (CIH).
- **HAZ-9:** Caltrans Waste Management and Materials Pollution Control BMPs— Material Delivery and Storage and Material Use. Thermoplastic waste will be disposed of in accordance with Standard Specification 14-11.07. Environmental Rules and Requirements as outlined in the Caltrans Construction Manual— 7-103D (1) Caltrans & Contractor Designated Disposal, Staging, and Borrow Sites— will be followed and/or implemented.
- **HAZ-10:** A Site Safety Plan, which addresses the management of potential health and safety hazards to workers and the public, will be prepared and implemented prior to initiation of the construction activities. Instructions, guidelines, and requirements for handling hazardous materials to ensure employee safety as provided in Chapter 16, “Hazardous Materials Communication Program,” of the Caltrans’ Safety Manual will be included in the Site Safety Plan.
- **HAZ-11:** Wastes and petroleum products used during construction will be collected, transported, and removed from the project site in accordance with RCRA regulations, federal/OSHA standards, including: Waste Management and Materials Pollution Control BMPs- Spill Prevention and Control, Materials and Waste Management BMP, Hazardous Waste Management. All hazardous waste will be stored, transported, and disposed as required in Title 22, CCR, Division 4.5 and 49 CFR 261-263, and Caltrans requirements as stated in Section 7-109 Solid Waste Disposal and Recycling Reporting Caltrans Construction Manual.
- **HAZ-12:** Caltrans will continue to coordinate with PG&E and the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) in all aspects of the abandonment and reinstallation of all wells associated with the PG&E hexavalent chromium cleanup effort, which are located within the design and construction limits of the identified Preferred Alternative. All aspects of the abandonment and reinstallation of all wells associated with the PG&E hexavalent chromium cleanup effort will be completed prior to the conclusion of the Final Design (Plans, Specifications, and Estimates) Phase. All field work specific to the abandonment and reinstallation of all wells associated with the PG&E hexavalent chromium cleanup effort will be performed by contractors responsible to PG&E. Any well that PG&E is responsible for will not be relocated or deactivated in place until the Lahontan RWQCB specifically grants approval.

- **HAZ-13:** A Lead Compliance Plan shall be prepared under Section 7-1.02K of Caltrans' Standard Specifications. The Lead Compliance Plan shall include provisions regarding use of earth material. If earth material will be relinquished to the Contractor, concentration levels of lead and depth of earth material in which lead has been detected will be disclosed. If earth material will not be relinquished to the contractor, all excavated earth material with lead, typically found within the top two feet of material in unpaved areas of the highway, will be reused within the project limits.
- **HAZ-14:** Earth material containing lead will be handled according to all applicable laws, rules, and regulations, including those of the following agencies: (1) Cal/OSHA, (2) California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Region 6 – Lahontan and (3) California Department of Toxic Substances Control.
- **HAZ-15:** If earth material is disposed of: (1) It shall be disposed of under 3-708 of the Caltrans Construction Manual, "Disposal of Material Outside the Highway Right of Way." (2) Lead concentration of the earth material will be disclosed to the receiving property owner when obtaining authorization for disposal on the property. (3) The receiving property owner's acknowledgment of lead concentration disclosure in the written authorization for disposal shall be obtained. (4) Contractor is responsible for any additional sampling and analysis required by the receiving property owner.
- **HAZ-16:** If a commercial landfill will be used to dispose earth material: (1) Earth material will be transported to a Class III or Class II landfill appropriately permitted to receive the material and (2) Contractor is responsible for identifying the appropriately permitted landfill to receive the earth material and for all associated trucking and disposal costs including any additional sampling and analysis required by the receiving landfill. If hazardous waste material is discovered during construction, such material must be transported under manifest to a permitted Class 1 disposal facility.
- **HAZ-17:** For APN 0494-312-26, soil accumulated within a trench drain associated with an equipment maintenance wash-down slab drain reported elevated levels of cadmium, lead, and TPH. The trench drain and clarifier materials will be removed and disposed of appropriately by a qualified contractor. Geophysical studies and investigative potholing will be conducted prior to demolition to confirm that the underground storage tank has been removed and potential for environmental releases avoided.

7.0 Wetlands and Other Waters

Adverse Environmental Effects:

The following was determined to be applicable for all three of the studied Build Alternatives, including the Preferred Alternative, Alternative 2.

There are no perennial water sources in the project area. Washes in the study area are not considered to constitute waters of the United States due to their lack of connectivity with Traditional Navigable Waters. It was determined, through coordination with CDFG, that

they are protected under Section 1600 of the CDFG code and under regulations of the RWQCB. It would therefore be necessary to obtain a 1600 Permit from CDFG and a waste discharge permit from the RWQCB, Lahontan Region.

The project design used to calculate impacts to the waters for the JD is based on the preliminary project design; therefore, the impacts may need to be recalculated prior to submittal of the permits required for this project. Submittal for required permits cannot occur prior to completion of the Project Approval and Environmental Document phase. As determined in the JD, Alternative 2, 3, and 4 have the potential to permanently affect CDFG jurisdictional waters, as shown in Table 3.18-1 below.

Table 3.18-1: California Department of Fish and Game Jurisdictional Waters within the Project Area (JD, June 2011)

Alignment Alternative	Impact Area ¹ (Acres)
Alternative 2	2.815
Alternative 3	0.625
Alternative 4	0.707

¹Acres are based on preliminary design and Jurisdictional Delineation dated December 2011. After the environmental document is approved and an alternative is selected, final design of the selected alternative would occur and acreage may be revised.

Coordination with CDFG and RWQCB, Lahontan Region, would be required to complete the permitting process. Final issuance of permits for the project would be determined by these agencies during the design phase of the project.

Findings:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project, which avoid or substantially lessen the significant environmental effect as identified in the final EIR.

Statement of Facts:

As discussed in sub-section 3.18.4 of the June 2013 FEIR, the following measures will be implemented to minimize, and/or mitigate the impacts associated with the project:

- **W-1:** Avoidance and minimization efforts to be utilized in order to protect aquatic resources during the course of the project will include the implementation of BMPs (Caltrans 2003b) and the SWPPP (Caltrans 2003b) during all phases of construction, which will include the following:
 - **W-1a:** No debris, soil, silt, sand, bark, slash, sawdust, rubbish, cement or concrete or washings thereof, oil or petroleum products or other organic or earthen material from any construction or associated activity of whatever nature shall be allowed to enter into or be placed where it may be washed by rainfall or runoff into washes or culverts that cross the project area. The SWPPP and NPDES will contain specific methods for meeting this requirement.
 - **W-1b:** Raw cement/concrete or washing thereof, asphalt, paint or other coating material, oil or other petroleum products, or any other substances which could be hazardous to aquatic-life, resulting from project related activities, shall be

prevented from contaminating the soil and/or entering washes or culverts that cross the project area as defined through compliance with the contractor's SWPPP.

- **W-1c:** No equipment maintenance/parking or fueling shall be done within or near any drainages or washes depicted in the JD, where petroleum products or other pollutants from equipment shall enter these areas under any flow condition.
- **W-2:** An Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA) fence will be installed along washes within the right of way that will not be directly affected by the project.
- **W-3:** A biological construction monitor will coordinate with the RE to ensure that construction activities will not have an impact on washes limited by the ESA fencing. No grading or fill activity of any type will be permitted within the ESAs. The monitor, in coordination with the RE, will operate in a manner so as to prevent accidental damage to nearby preserved areas.
- **W-4:** Project impacts to the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) jurisdictional waters will be mitigated at a minimum 2:1 ratio, either through onsite restoration and/or offsite acquisition, through coordination with CDFG during the permitting process for the 1602 before PS&E.

8.0 Animal Species

Adverse Environmental Effects:

The following was determined to be applicable for all three of the studied Build Alternatives, including the Preferred Alternative, Alternative 2.

Although impacts to species listed below would occur as a result of this project, these impacts are not expected to affect the species in a way that would lead the species to a trend toward listing under federal or state laws.

Burrowing Owl

Four burrowing owls were detected incidentally during the 2007 surveys. Several suitable burrow locations were detected during the habitat assessment survey as well as during the 2009 focused biological surveys. Suitable habitat for burrowing owl is present throughout the BSA, as owls inhabit various types of disturbed and native desert habitats. It is likely for burrowing owls to move into the project area at various times of the year due to the migratory behavior of some burrowing owls.

Implementation of Alternative 2 would have the greatest impact on potential burrowing owl habitat since it has the greatest amount of burrowing owl habitat with 740.81 acres, followed by Alternatives 3 and 4 with 666.91 acres and 686.33 acres, respectively. All of the alternatives would result in the loss of occupied shelter and foraging habitat and/or the displacement of burrowing owls. However, with the implementation of all the applicable measures, direct effects to this species would be minimized.

American Badger

Alternative 2 has the potential to affect 549.75 acres of potential American badger habitat, followed by Alternative 4 with 427.31 acres, and Alternative 3 with 409.62 acres. Habitat fragmentation will occur with the highway widening under all alternatives, but is

expected to be minimized by the installation of culverts along the project. With implementation of all applicable measures, direct affects to this species would be minimized.

Prairie Falcon

The project area contains marginal foraging habitat for the prairie falcon. The terrain within the project limits is primarily flat, and lacks any mountain ranges that the prairie falcon requires for nesting and cover. Alternative 2 has the potential to affect 549.75 acres of foraging habitat, followed by Alternative 4 with 427.31 acres, and Alternative 3 with 409.62 acres. None of the build alternatives are anticipated to have a direct effect on the species.

This species will be protected under the avoidance and minimization measures in BIO-8 and BIO-9. These measures include preconstruction surveys throughout the project limits which includes construction, staging, storage, sign placement, and parking areas. If this species is found nesting, construction will stop within a minimum radius of 100 feet or as determined by the biological monitor.

Le Conte's Thrasher

Potential habitat for this species would be affected. Alternative 2 has the potential to affect 549.75 acres of potential habitat, followed by Alternative 4 with 427.31 acres, and Alternative 3 with 409.62 acres. This species will be protected under the avoidance and minimization measures in BIO-8 and BIO-9. These measures include preconstruction surveys throughout the project limits which includes construction, staging, storage, sign placement, and parking areas. If this species is found nesting, construction will stop within a minimum radius of 100 feet or as determined by the biological monitor.

Loggerhead Shrike

Potential foraging habitat for this species would be affected. Alternative 2 has the potential to affect 549.75 acres of potential habitat, followed by Alternative 4 with 427.31 acres, and Alternative 3 with 409.62 acres. This species will be protected under the avoidance and minimization measures in BIO-8 and BIO-9. These measures include preconstruction surveys throughout the project limits which includes construction, staging, storage, sign placement, and parking areas. If this species is found nesting, construction will stop within a minimum radius of 100 feet or as determined by the biological monitor.

White-tailed Kite

Nesting habitats for white-tailed kites primarily consist of oaks, river bottom lands, or marshes. There is no nesting habitat within the project limits. Potential foraging habitat for this species, which includes vegetated areas suitable for medium sized bird prey, would be affected. Alternative 2 has the potential to affect 549.75 acres of foraging habitat, followed by Alternative 4 with 427.31 acres, and Alternative 3 with 409.62 acres. This species will be protected under the avoidance and minimization measures in BIO-8 and BIO-9. These measures include preconstruction surveys throughout the project limits which includes construction, staging, storage, sign placement, and parking areas. If this species is found nesting, construction will stop within a minimum radius of 100 feet or as determined by the biological monitor.

Cooper's Hawk

There is no nesting habitat for this species within the project limits. Potential foraging habitat for this species, which includes vegetated areas suitable for medium sized bird prey, would be affected. Alternative 2 has the potential to affect 549.75 acres of potential foraging habitat, follow by Alternative 4 with 427.31 acres, and Alternative 3 with 409.62 acres. This species will be protected under the avoidance and minimization measures in BIO-8 and BIO-9. These measures include preconstruction surveys throughout the project limits which includes construction, staging, storage, sign placement, and parking areas. If this species is found nesting, construction will stop within a minimum radius of 100 feet or as determined by the biological monitor.

Findings:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project, which avoid or substantially lessen the significant environmental effect as identified in the final EIR.

Statement of Facts:

As discussed in sub-section 3.4.5.3 of the June 2013 FEIR, the following measures will be implemented to minimize, and/or mitigate the impacts associated with the project: The following avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures would be applicable to Build Alternatives 2 through 4:

- **BIO-6:** A biological monitor will monitor all construction activities to ensure that no harm to American badger will take place. All monitoring activities will be consistent with the monitoring measures listed in the avoidance and minimization measures for desert tortoise and Mohave ground squirrel.
- **BIO-7 See BIO-5:** All temporary staging areas, storage areas, and access roads involved with this project will be located in the area of permanent direct impact. Access to the project site will be gained from the existing SR-58. No new access roads will be built as part of this project. Staging areas and equipment storage will take place on existing roads or within the proposed right of way of the realigned SR-58.
- **BIO-8:** All measures will be taken to minimize impacts on nesting birds. A pre-construction sweep for nesting birds would be conducted prior to construction activities outside of the nesting season as well. The sweep will include areas used for construction, staging, storage, sign placement, and parking areas. If a migratory bird is detected during surveys construction will stop within a minimum radius of 100 feet or as determined by the biological monitor.
- **BIO-9:** A preconstruction survey of the project site for burrowing owl and other bird species protected by the MBTA will occur 30 days prior to commencing construction activities. See BIO-8 for measures required if nesting birds are identified during the preconstruction survey. Pursuant to the MBTA, and to avoid any impacts on migratory birds, vegetation removal must take place outside of the breeding season,

which occurs between March 15 and September 15. If, due to construction schedules, it is necessary to remove vegetation, including trees, during this season, a biological construction monitor must perform a pre-construction survey of each individual tree and/or of the entire area where vegetation will be removed. All measures will be taken to minimize impacts on nesting birds. A pre-construction sweep for nesting birds would be conducted prior to construction activities outside of the nesting season as well. The sweep will include areas used for construction, staging, storage, sign placement, and parking areas. If a migratory bird is detected during surveys construction will stop within a minimum radius of 100 feet or as determined by the biological monitor.

- **BIO-10:** If burrowing owls are found on site during the pre-construction sweep:
 - Occupied burrows will not be disturbed during the nesting season of February 1 to August 31, unless a biologist can verify through non-invasive methods that either the owls have not begun egg laying and incubation or that juveniles from the occupied burrows are foraging independently and are capable of independent flight.
 - A Burrowing Owl Mitigation and Monitoring Plan will be submitted to CDFG for review and approval prior to relocation of owls. All relocation will be approved by CDFG, and will be based on the mitigation and monitoring plan. The permitted biologist will monitor the relocated owls a minimum of three days per week for a minimum of three weeks. A report summarizing the results of the relocation and monitoring will be submitted to Caltrans within 30 days following completion of the relocation and monitoring of the owls.
 - Owls will be relocated by a qualified biologist from any occupied burrows that will be affected by project activities. Suitable habitat must be available adjacent to or near the disturbance site or artificial burrows will be provided nearby. Once the biologist has confirmed that the owls have left the burrow, burrows will be excavated using hand tools and backfilled to prevent reoccupation.

Compensatory Mitigation

If during preconstruction surveys a burrowing owl is encountered the following mitigation will be implemented:

- **BIO-11:** Replacement habitat for burrowing owl will be provided according to the ratios listed below and can be combined with the mitigation ratios required for other species, unless the land purchase under that mitigation does not comply with the conditions listed:
 - replacement of occupied habitat with occupied habitat at 1.5 times per 6.5 acres (9.95) per pair or single bird, or
 - replacement of occupied habitat with habitat contiguous with occupied habitat 2 times per 6.5 acres per pair or single bird (13), or
 - replacement of occupied habitat with suitable unoccupied habitat, as required by the mitigation plan, at 3 times per 6.5 acres (19.5) per pair or single bird.

American Badger

Avoidance and Minimization Measures

Compensatory Mitigation

The project will not require compensatory mitigation for this species.

Prairie Falcon

Avoidance and Minimization Measures

No specific avoidance and minimization measures will be implemented for this species; protective measures (BIO-8 and BIO-9) will avoid any impact to this species.

Compensatory Mitigation

The project will not require compensatory mitigation for this species.

Le Conte's Thrasher

Avoidance and Minimization Measures

No specific avoidance and minimization measures will be implemented for this species; protective measures (BIO-8 and BIO-9) will avoid any impact to this species.

Compensatory Mitigation

The project will not require compensatory mitigation for this species.

Loggerhead Shrike

Avoidance and Minimization Measures

No specific avoidance and minimization measures will be implemented for this species; protective measures (BIO-8 and BIO-9) will avoid any impact to this species.

Compensatory Mitigation

The project will not require compensatory mitigation for this species.

White-tailed Kite

Avoidance and Minimization Measures

No specific avoidance and minimization measures will be implemented for this species; protective measures (BIO-8 and BIO-9) will avoid any impact to this species.

Compensatory Mitigation

The project will not require compensatory mitigation for this species.

Cooper's Hawk

Avoidance and Minimization Measures

No specific avoidance and minimization measures will be implemented for this species; protective measures (BIO-8 and BIO-9) will avoid any impact to this species.

Compensatory Mitigation

The project will not require compensatory mitigation for this species.

9.0 Threatened and Endangered Species

Adverse Environmental Effects:

Desert Tortoise

Alternative 2 would have the greatest effect on the desert tortoise population. Generally there is much less disturbance along Alternative 2, which accounts for more tortoise habitat that could be affected (refer to Table 3.21-2). Alternative 2 contains the most desert tortoise habitat with approximately 311.5 acres within the footprint that was surveyed. Project activities that may directly affect the desert tortoise include construction and use of temporary access roads, detour roads, work off the paved roadway, and use of staging/storage areas; 2) potential harassment through handling and relocation of individual desert tortoises found within the work area prior to or during construction activities; and 3) potential direct mortality resulting from Project construction activities.

Implementation of Alternative 2 would result in the installation of desert tortoise fencing along the right of way limits; therefore, this would result in a permanent loss of desert tortoise habitat. Table 3.21-3 summarizes the impact areas for Alternative 2 and the total mitigation area required. Of all the build alternatives, Alternative 2 has the best quality habitat for desert tortoise (habitat west of Hinkley Road).

Alternative 2 would have an impact on WEMO populations identified within the Area of Critical Environmental Concern.

Alternative 2 has the potential to increase habitat fragmentation since it would introduce a new, elevated freeway in the area. This impact would be minimized with the inclusion of culverts designed to allow the desert tortoise and other animal species go through them. Alternative 2 contains areas that are wider than Alternatives 3 and 4. The Mojave River is present east of the project site; the river constitutes a natural corridor for wildlife minimizing the habitat fragmentation. Habitat fragmentation is considered to be more intense under Alternative 2 than Alternatives 3 and 4.

Although it has been documented that desert tortoises feed on certain invasive species, it is expected that introduction of these species would affect the availability of native species that are more palatable for the desert tortoise. Alternative 2 is expected to contribute more to this impact than Alternatives 3 and 4 since it is located in less disturbed habitat.

Based on the road-effect zone, Alternative 2 would have a more intense impact in this regard since it is located within less disturbed habitat and surveys detected greater presence of desert tortoise sign. Alternative 3 and 4 would have similar levels of impact since they are located close to the existing SR-58 alignment.

Alternative 2 includes the construction of two new intersections at Lenwood Road and Hinkley Road. These new intersections may induce commercial development around them. The impact is expected to be limited only to the vicinity of the interchanges and would not expand to other areas.

Based on the Biological Opinion, dated March 29, 2013 located in Appendix K, the USFWS concurred with Caltrans' determination that the project "may affect, likely to adversely affect" desert tortoise.

Mohave Ground Squirrel

Impacts to this species will be similar to the impacts described for the desert tortoise. Impact area and mitigation ratios are summarized in Table 3.21-3. Alternative 2 would have the largest permanent MGS habitat loss 2,508.27 acres, followed by Alternative 4 with 1,842.93 acres, and Alternative 3 with 1,781.98 acres. Any existing disturbances such as roads, railroad tracks, and buildings were subtracted from the total. Habitat degradation due to the introduction of invasive species is also expected to be largest for Alternative 2 than for Alternatives 3 and 4.

Since this species is more mobile it is expected that the habitat fragmentation caused by any of the build alternatives would be less severe than for desert tortoise. Culverts are expected to offset this impact.

Alternative 2 is located within less disturbed habitat; therefore, potential commercial growth may be greater than Alternatives 3 and 4, which are both located in previously disturbed areas. Impacts are expected to be limited only to the vicinity of the interchanges and would not expand to other areas.

Findings:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project, which avoid or substantially lessen the significant environmental effect as identified in the final EIR.

Statement of Facts:

As discussed in sub-section 3.21.4 of the June 2013 FEIR, the following measures, in accordance with the USFWS Biological Opinion issued for this project, will be implemented to minimize, and/or mitigate the impacts associated with the project:

- **BIO-12: Biological Monitor.** Caltrans will designate a field contact representative who is responsible for overseeing compliance with protective stipulations for the desert tortoise and for coordination on compliance. The field contact representative will halt all construction activities that are in violation of the stipulations. The field contact representative will have a copy of the stipulations when on the site. The field contact representative may be the resident engineer or a contracted biologist.
- **BIO-13: Species Protection.** At least 30 days prior to the initiation of construction activities within the proposed project site, Caltrans will ensure that their final plans and specifications include all requirements for preconstruction surveys for desert tortoises in all proposed construction staging areas, parking areas, and project elements, and flagging of these areas. The field contact representative will verify compliance with this and all other protective measures. Only biologists authorized by USFWS will handle desert tortoise. Caltrans will submit the name(s) of the proposed

authorized biologist(s) to USFWS for review and approval at least 30 days prior the onset of activities. The authorized biologist(s) will follow the protocols in Chapter 7 of the Desert Tortoise Field Manual (USFWS 2009) for handling and marking desert tortoise.

- **BIO-14: Biological Resource Information Program.** Caltrans will ensure that all construction personnel attend a worker education program presented by the authorized biologist. The program will include information on special-status species within the project area, identification of these species and their habitats, techniques being implemented during construction to avoid impacts to species, consequences of killing or injuring an individual of a listed species, and reporting procedures when encountering listed or sensitive species. Construction crews, foremen, and other personnel potentially working on site will attend this desert tortoise education program and place their names on a sign-in sheet.
- **BIO-15: Biological Monitor.** A construction monitoring notebook shall be maintained on site throughout the construction period. At a minimum, the construction monitoring notebook shall include a copy of the Section 7 consultation for incidental take (USFWS's Biological Opinion), the CDFG Section 2081 permit, a summary of the education program, and the Mitigation Monitoring Plan adopted by Caltrans. Copies of the construction monitoring notebook for this project and Caltrans' brochure *Protection of the Desert Tortoise* will be maintained at the worksite by the project Resident Engineer.
- **BIO-16: Species Protection.** Prior to the start of construction, Caltrans will require the contractor to install fencing to exclude desert tortoises from all work areas and rights of way under the direction of an authorized biologist. Caltrans will construct the fence according to the protocols provided in Chapter 8 of the Desert Tortoise Field Manual (USFWS 2009). If desert tortoises are encountered during installation of the fence, the authorized biologist will move the individual the shortest distance possible to an area outside the fence where it will be safe. Caltrans will be relocating any tortoises found inside the permanent desert tortoise fence onto adjacent BLM land per agreement with the BLM. The authorized biologist will use his or her judgment regarding the best measures to use to ensure the desert tortoise does not immediately return to the area inside of the fence. The authorized biologist may contact USFWS or CDFG to discuss specific situations if the need arises.
- **BIO-17: Permanent Fence (Type Desert Tortoise).** Caltrans will maintain the integrity of the fence to ensure that desert tortoises are excluded from the work area during construction and from the roadway thereafter. The fence will be inspected regularly; initially, it will be inspected on a monthly basis, but Caltrans may adopt a different schedule, based on experience. Caltrans will inspect and, if necessary, repair the fence immediately after any rainstorm that occurs during times of the year or at temperatures when desert tortoises are likely to be active.
- **BIO-18: Biological Monitor.** After the fencing is installed and before the onset of ground-disturbing activities, the authorized biologist will survey the area and remove all desert tortoises. The authorized biologist will survey the area as much as is needed to ensure that all desert tortoises have been found; generally, all desert tortoises will

be considered to have been removed once a complete survey of the work area is conducted without finding any additional animals. Desert tortoises that are found inside the fenced area will be placed on the other side of the desert tortoise exclusion fence on BLM land located south of Alternative 2. The authorized biologist will use his or her best judgment to determine the optimal location for placement of desert tortoises. In general, desert tortoises will be moved to the nearest safe area south of the road realignment. The authorized biologist will follow the protocols provided in Chapter 7 of the Desert Tortoise Field Manual (USFWS 2009) for marking and translocating desert tortoises.

- **BIO-19:** Biological Monitor. All desert tortoises that need to be moved will be handled as described in Chapter 7 of the Desert Tortoise Field Manual (USFWS 2009) for marking and translocating desert tortoises. These procedures will ensure desert tortoises that are being moved are protected to the greatest degree possible from transmission of disease, exposure to adverse weather conditions, and other adverse situations that may arise during handling.
- **BIO-20:** Biological Monitor. Caltrans will have an authorized biologist on site throughout the construction period to monitor relocated desert tortoises and to remove any additional individuals encountered during construction. The authorized biologist will follow the protocols provided in Chapter 7 of the Desert Tortoise Field Manual (USFWS 2009) for marking and translocating desert tortoises.
- **BIO-21:** Species Protection. Caltrans will implement a program to ensure that trash and litter generated by the proposed action do not attract common ravens (*Corvus corax*) and other potential predators of the desert tortoise. All trash and food items will be promptly contained within closed, common raven-proof containers. Caltrans will remove containers regularly from the project site to reduce the attractiveness of the area to common ravens and other desert tortoise predators. Project workers will secure vehicle loads to prevent litter from blowing out along the road.
- **BIO-22:** Species Protection. As a means of minimizing incidental take of the desert tortoise, USFWS shall require the project applicant to post limits of 20 miles per hour (between February 1 and July 1), and strictly enforce speed limits within the project construction area.
- **BIO-23:** Biological Monitor. Caltrans will submit a post-construction report to USFWS and CDFG within 30 days of the completion of work. This report will include information on: the number of desert tortoises handled, injured, and killed; the results of monitoring of relocated desert tortoises; and any difficulties in implementing the protective measures.
- **BIO-24:** Species Protection. Seven out of 33 drainage culverts will be designed with a flat (soft) bottom as well as ripping up a certain distance of the existing SR-58 and allowing it to revert back to its natural state in order to be used as a wildlife crossing for desert tortoise and other small animals. The seven culverts range in size from 36 to 54 inches in diameter.
- **BIO-25:** Species Protection. As a means of minimizing incidental take of the desert tortoise, USFWS shall require the project applicant to restrict firearms and pets within

the work area during construction. Compliance shall be verified by the Resident Engineer. Firearms carried by authorized security and law enforcement personnel are exempt from this term and condition.

- **BIO-26:** Habitat Restoration. Pavement along existing SR-58 between the new cul-de-sac at the west end of the project, and the new cul-de-sac west of Valley View Road, will be removed, hardened earth dug up, and seeded with natives to rehabilitate the earth to a natural condition. The rehabilitated areas will involve the utilization of fill of appropriate characteristics to facilitate the successful reestablishment of desert tortoise habitat. This will include the establishment of vegetation consistent with supporting conditions for desert tortoise habitat.

Mohave Ground Squirrel

In addition to the measures listed above for desert tortoise, in accordance with the Natural Environment Study prepared for this project, the following measures will be implemented to protect MGS:

- **BIO-27:** A biological monitor will ensure that all construction activities will not harm MGS.
- **BIO-28:** MGS awareness training will be provided prior to construction. All construction related vehicles, including private automobiles parked in staging areas, must be inspected prior to ignition to ensure that MGS have not moved underneath the parked vehicle. Inspection flags will be placed on heavy equipment at the end of the day to remind drivers to look under them prior to startup.
- **BIO-29:** If any MGS are excavated during construction, work must stop in the immediate area and the project biologist and the RE will be immediately notified.
- **BIO-30:** If any MGS are injured during the course of construction, work must stop in the immediate area and the project biologist and the RE will be immediately notified. Only the authorized biologist will handle, and transport the animal to a qualified veterinarian.
- **BIO-31:** If any MGS are killed during the course of construction, work must stop in the immediate area, the animal must be left in place as is, and the project biologist and the RE will be immediately notified.

Compensatory Mitigation

These mitigation ratios for desert tortoise and Mohave ground squirrel can be combined as long as land containing habitat for both species can be found for purchase.

Desert Tortoise

- **BIO-32:** Mitigation for loss of marginal desert tortoise habitat will be accomplished based on the quality of habitat affected. As determined through consultation with CDFG and USFWS, habitat will be compensated according to the following ratios:
 - a 5:1 ratio for impacts west of Hinkley Road; and
 - a 3:1 ratio for impacts east of Hinkley Road.

Table 3.21-3 summarizes the impact area by alternative and the mitigation habitat to be acquired. Mitigation habitat for desert tortoise by alternative would total 2,273.56 acres for Alternative 2; 1,781.98 acres for Alternative 3; and 1,842.93 acres for Alternative 4. Some of the loss of habitat associated with this project would partially be offset by the donation and retirement of BLM grazing allotments and subsequent allocation of forage for wildlife purposes in the West Mojave.

Mohave Ground Squirrel

- **BIO-33:** Mitigation for loss of Mohave ground squirrel habitat will be accomplished based on the quality of habitat affected according to the following ratios:
 - a 5:1 ratio for impacts west of Hinkley Road; and
 - a 3:1 ratio for impacts east of Hinkley Road.

Mitigation habitat for Mohave ground squirrel habitat per alternative (refer to Table 3.21-3) would total 2,273.56 acres for Alternative 2; 1,781.98 acres for Alternative 3; and 1,842.93 acres for Alternative 4.

STATEMENT OF OVERRIDING CONSIDERATIONS

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION STATEMENT OF OVERRIDING CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE STATE ROUTE 58 (SR-58) HINKLEY EXPRESSWAY PROJECT LOCATED IN THE COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO NEAR THE UNINCORPORATED COMMUNITY OF HINKLEY, FROM SR-58 POST MILE (PM) 22.2 TO SR-58 PM 31.1

The following information is presented to comply with State CEQA Guidelines (Title 14 California Code of Regulations, Chapter 3, Section 15903), and the Department of Transportation and California Transportation Commission Environmental Regulations (Title 21 California Code of Regulations, Chapter 11, Section 1501). Reference is made to the Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) for the project, which is the basic source for the information.

The following impacts have been identified as significant and not fully mitigable:

Under all of the build alternatives, including Alternative 2, the Preferred Alternative, even with incorporation of the mitigation/ minimization/avoidance measures, impacts would remain potentially significant for community cohesion/character

Overriding considerations that support approval of this recommended project are as follows:

All the following is excerpted directly from the Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR), prepared for Caltrans' State Route 58 (SR-58) Hinkley Expressway Project.

The purpose of the SR-58 Hinkley Expressway Project is:

- To relieve traffic congestion by providing an acceptable Level of Service, which is consistent with the State Route 58 Route Concept Report;
- To improve operational efficiency and enhance safety conditions by upgrading the facility to a controlled access, four-lane expressway that matches the sections on the east and west of the project area on this high emphasis route;
- To correct structural deficiencies, by upgrading the pavement structural section to meet current standards to better accommodate truckloads, reducing roadway damage and maintenance costs associated with the high volume of truck traffic utilizing this route; and
- To meet the needs for regional transportation in accordance with regional plans such as the RTP and FTIP, while minimizing right of way, community, and environmental impacts.

SR-58 is a Significant Transportation Corridor extending a total of 240 miles, from United States 101 (U.S.-101) near San Luis Obispo, to the west, to Interstate 15 (I-15) in Barstow, to the east. SR-58 crosses three major north-south routes: I-5, SR-99, and U.S. 395. SR-58 also serves as the major connection point between I-5 in Bakersfield and I-15 and I-40 in Barstow. SR-58 is also the only east-west corridor for interregional travelers in the area. The nearest east-west alternate is State Route 210 (SR-210)/Interstate 210 (I-210), located 60 miles to the south; therefore, there

are no other viable alternatives for travel. Traffic on SR-58 includes a high volume of interstate trucks that transport agricultural and commercial commodities.

Currently, existing SR-58 operates at LOS E through the project area. This is an unacceptable LOS. By 2040, if no improvements are made to SR-58, the LOS is projected to deteriorate to LOS F. LOS is a qualitative measure that describes operational conditions within a traffic stream, generally in terms of such factors as speed and travel time, freedom to maneuver, traffic interruptions, comfort, convenience, and safety. LOS conditions are designated as “A,” indicating best free-flow conditions, through “F,” indicating worst-case, congested conditions.

Average daily traffic (ADT) is forecast to nearly double, from 12,100 vehicles in 2011 to 24,100 vehicles in 2040. If no improvements are made, this highway segment is projected to deteriorate from LOS E to LOS F by 2040, with heavy traffic congestion and great variations in speed.¹ With respect to the traffic forecasts for the design horizon year for this project (2040), Alternative 1 (the No-Build Alternative) is based on the existing two lane conventional highway structure. The Build Alternatives 2, 3, and 4 are based on the construction of a four lane expressway. The LOS under Alternatives 2, 3, and 4 would improve to LOS B in the opening year and LOS C in 2040.

In addition, this portion of SR-58 contains a number of operational and structural deficiencies.

The existing two-lane highway has numerous driveways and intersecting cross-streets, which present conflict points that affect the operation of the highway. Vehicles enter and exit the highway to access businesses, services, and residences along SR-58. There are numerous crossings (both paved and unpaved) where these turning movements occur.

Route Continuity is defined as the provision of a directional path along and throughout the length of a designated route. The goal of route continuity is to ease the driving task by reducing the need to change lanes and search for directional signing. At the project location, SR-58 is a two-lane facility; however, immediately east and west of the project, SR-58 is a four-lane facility. The narrower highway section within the project area creates a bottleneck between the existing four-lane highway sections and decreases route continuity.

The existing pavement structural section of SR-58 was not designed to accommodate the designation pertaining to the national network for Surface Transportation Assistance Act of 1982 (STAA) trucks. This has resulted in a higher pavement maintenance costs.

Full consideration was given to the technical studies prepared for the proposed alternatives, and data was carefully analyzed for all alternatives on an equal basis. After comparing and weighing the benefits and impacts of all of the feasible alternatives, at a Project Development Team (PDT) meeting on December 6, 2012, the PDT identified Alternative 2 as the preferred alternative, subject to public review.

The rationale which the PDT employed follows.

The key benefits of Alternative 2 include:

Alternative 2 achieves the purpose and need of the project, and provides the same level of operational improvement as the other two build alternatives (Alternative 3 and Alternative 4).

All three build Alternatives 2, 3, and 4 would result in substantial operating improvements with LOS C or better in the design horizon year of the project (2040), while providing the benefits of improved safety with the grade separation of higher speed SR-58 traffic,

¹ Transportation Research Board. 2000. *Highway Capacity Manual*.

elimination of the lane drop, and separation of the slower and bigger truck traffic. However, Alternative 2 is expected to cost substantially less, estimated at \$174,467,000. The other two build alternatives, are estimated to cost \$194,890,000 (Alternative 3) and \$194,803,000 (Alternative 4), respectively.

On February 26, 2013, following conclusion of the circulation period for the DEIR/EIS, and after careful consideration of the comments received during circulation, the PDT affirmed that Alternative 2, initially identified as the Preferred Alternative at a PDT meeting in December 6, 2012, is the final identified Preferred Alternative for the project. See Chapter 5 of this document for a summary of the Open Forum Public Hearing as well as the responses provided to the comments received during circulation of the DEIR/EIS along with the transcript.

As summarized below, Alternative 2 is expected to result in substantially fewer parcels needing to be acquired, and more specifically, is also expected to result in substantially fewer displacements of homes, businesses, as well as community facilities. In addition, Alternative 3 and 4 bisect and pass through the center of the Hinkley community, and therefore have greater community character and cohesion impacts than Alternative 2 (which skirts the southern fringe of the community).

Alternative 2	Alternative 3	Alternative 4
Acquisitions/Displacements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 28 full acquisitions • 65 partial acquisitions • 16 residential units • 2 agricultural operations 	Acquisitions/ Displacements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 77 full acquisitions • 150 partial acquisitions • 44 single-family residences • 2 multi-family residential units • 3 commercial businesses/non-profit • 1 farm 	Acquisitions/Displacements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 75 full acquisitions • 119 partial acquisitions • 34 single-family residences • 2 multi-family residential units • 1 commercial business/non-profit • 1 farm

For the community of Hinkley, hazardous waste and the groundwater plume is a major issue, and impacts to hazardous materials and the mitigation systems which others have installed are a major consideration. Alternative 2 is expected to result in substantially fewer Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) wells in the project area being impacted, and would specifically avoid any impacts to any PG&E extraction wells and USGS wells, as summarized below:

Alternative 2	Alternative 3	Alternative 4
PG&E wells potentially impacted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supply (active) – 7 • Supply (inactive) – 2 • Monitoring (active) – 6² 	PG&E wells potentially impacted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supply (active) – 21 • Supply (inactive) – 13 • Monitoring (active) – 11 • Extraction (active) – 1 • Extraction (inactive) – 1 	PG&E & USGS wells potentially impacted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supply (active) – 14 • Supply (inactive) – 14 • Monitoring (active) – 19 • Extraction (active) – 1 • Extraction (inactive) – 1 • USGS – 2

² Of the six monitoring wells only two are expected to require relocation, the other four are expected to only require adjustment in place.

Regarding biological resources, it is currently expected that Alternative 2 would impact more acres than Alternative 3 or Alternative 4. Specifically, Alternative 2 is expected to impact 2.815 acres of California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) jurisdictional waters, in comparison to Alternative 3 (expected to impact 0.625 acres) and Alternative 4 (expected to impact 0.707 acres). Alternative 2 will also result in more acres of vegetation and animal species habitat being impacted, including impacts to habitat for Desert Tortoise and Mohave ground squirrel (549.71 acres impacted by Alternative 2, 409.62 acres impacted by Alternative 3, and 427.31 acres impacted by Alternative 4).

The ability to mitigate impacts to these specific biological resources versus the ability to mitigate impacts to existing residences and businesses located in the project area, as well as the ability to minimize impacts to existing PG&E wells in the project area, is a major factor considered by the PDT in conjunction with identifying Alternative 2 as the Preferred Alternative.

The potential impacts of the project to the community with respect to potential displacements and acquisition of property, minimizing impacts to PG&E wells in the project area, and the overall cost of the project in conjunction with satisfying the purpose and need for the project were the key criteria in the final identification of the Preferred Alternative following public circulation of the Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement prepared for this project.

The physical and operational characteristics of each of the alternatives were analyzed to determine whether the project would impede or complicate access to SR-58 and other roadways.

The community surrounding the project is predominantly rural. Cohesiveness in the community is evident in the clustering of residences and the community's stability index, which is moderately high due to the long tenure of residents in the study area. Therefore, community character/cohesion impacts, affected by the new expressway's bi-section or division of the community, along with removal/displacement and/or relocation of homes and businesses, would be considered adverse. Although the existing SR-58 facility and the BNSF railway currently function as a barrier between the north and south portions of the community, the expressway would make it more difficult to move across the community for motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, as well as for horses/equestrian use.

In addition, the community includes community facilities, such as churches, a school, and a senior citizen center that potentially form spaces where social interactions occur. With access across the facility restricted to only the two interchanges, people would experience a barrier in these social activity-activity spaces, and for their access to the community facilities. For all build alternatives, removal of farmland and open space (important resources for the community), would add to the community character impacts. Impacts related to community cohesion for each of the alternatives are described below.

Alternative 2 would realign SR-58 approximately 0.5 mile south of the existing roadway. Access to the future SR-58 alignment in the project area would be limited to major roadways with adequate exit spacing, as advised by the *Highway Capacity Manual*; these include Hinkley and Lenwood Roads. Cul-de-sacs would be added to the south ends of local streets that currently intersect with Frontier Road between Valley View Road and Hinkley Road, eliminating direct access to this alignment. These improvements are required as safety measures.

As a result of the changes to the SR-58 alignment and local roadways, some properties would no longer have direct access to SR-58, but would still have access to SR-58 and other areas of Hinkley via other routes. This would result in longer distances traveled for some local residents to access the realigned SR-58 (greater than 0.3 mile) compared to the current access routes for residents living along ten of the 13 roadways that currently intersect SR-58.

The replacement area for residents requiring relocation as a result of this alternative would be the general community of Hinkley and extend to the city of Barstow, which is immediately adjacent to the displacement area. Changes in commute distances and the availability of services associated with relocated residents would depend on where residents are relocated. Currently, within the project area there are numerous groundwater monitoring wells and treatment wells. Groundwater is contaminated in the area generally between Summerset Road and Mountain View Road in the area of the project and would affect any of the build alternatives as this impacts the availability of relocation resources.

The project would provide improvement in safety, traffic operations, and congestion. Pedestrian design features would be incorporated where appropriate and feasible, including providing sidewalks at the Lenwood and Hinkley overcrossings, striping all crosswalks, and constructing curb ramps at intersections. Therefore, while Alternative 2 would result in changes to pedestrian access and movement, impacts would be minimized with the implementation of pedestrian design features.

Under Alternative 2, SR-58 would be realigned approximately 0.5 mile south of its existing location. Existing zoned land uses in the area where this alignment would occur are residential and rural living; thus, this alternative would introduce a highway through an area where no major roadways currently exist, creating a new barrier that would inhibit access between areas north and south of the new alignment. While the new roadway alignment would generally avoid residential areas of the Hinkley community, compared to Alternatives 3 and 4—including the mobile home park located along the existing SR-58 roadway, as well as the residential clusters located south of the existing SR-58 roadway, which include homes along Flower Street—property acquisitions and associated removal of residential and nonresidential structures, and residential relocations would occur under this alternative. This alternative would result in the displacement and relocation of 16 residential units and two agricultural operations occurring on the same sites as single-family residential units; the mobile home park and central area of the community would be avoided.

Alternative 2 would function as a bypass of community facilities by avoiding the central area of the community. Alternative 2 would skirt the southern edge of the community. Impacts on businesses in Hinkley would be expected, as motorists/truckers/regional travelers would be less likely to stop in the community. Speeds on the new facility would be higher (with a design speed of 70 mph), and many travelers may choose not to stop. Such bypass impacts would be expected to be slightly less severe for the other two alternatives since they pass through the central area of the community.

The new intersection with Hinkley Road would bisect a small cluster of residences that currently form a cohesive unit. This type of physical disruption would also occur along Mountain View Road, where two to three homes appear to be cohesively interlinked.

As it relates to community cohesion overall, however, Alternative 2 has less impacts than Alternatives 3 and 4 since this alignment would avoid more residential areas of the Hinkley community. Nevertheless, the addition of a major facility through the desert landscape would impact the rural, community character of the study area by adding an urbanizing element where currently none exists; therefore, potentially substantial impacts would result.

As discussed in sub-section 3.4.5.3 of the June 2013 FEIR, the following measures will be implemented to minimize, and/or mitigate the impacts associated with the project:

CI-1: A Construction Management Plan and a Transportation Management Plan would be prepared for the project and include coordination efforts that would inform the community about project activities, maintain access to and from the project area during construction, minimize construction-period traffic, control glare, dust, and noise (see Section 3.3, Farmland; Section 3.5,

Utilities; Section 3.6, Traffic and Transportation/Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities; Section 3.7, Visual/Aesthetics; Section 3.14, Air Quality; and Section 3.15, Noise and Vibration). Measures to minimize construction impacts in these sections, also apply to minimizing permanent community cohesion/character impacts.

CI-2: Pedestrian design features shall be incorporated wherever feasible on the relinquished portion of SR-58, including providing sidewalks along the Lenwood and Hinkley overcrossings, striping all crosswalks, and constructing curb ramps at all new intersections.

CI-3: To address bypass impacts, during Final Design, Caltrans will coordinate with the community and County regarding the possibility of placing a *Welcome* sign at both ends of the expressway with brief information encouraging visitors to visit services offered in Hinkley.

CI-4: During Final Design and Construction, every effort will be made to further minimize the amount of right of way needed for the facility, and to further minimize community and environmental impacts in accordance with Directors Policy Number DP-22: Context Sensitive Solutions.

CI-5: For permanent impacts to community character, Visual Measures AES-1 through AES-8; and Farmland Measures FA-1 through FA-4 are also designed to minimize impacts.