

# YOLO COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S OFFICE

# **INITIAL STUDY / DRAFT MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION**

**CSA-6 LEVEE SYSTEM MAINTENANCE PLAN** 

JANUARY 2018

# **Initial Environmental Study**

- 1. Project Title: CSA-6 Levee System Maintenance Plan
- 2. Lead Agency Name and Address:

Yolo County Administrator's Office 625 Court Street, Room 202 Woodland, CA 95695

3. Contact Person, Phone Number, E-Mail:

Elisa Sabatini, Manager of Natural Resources 530-406-5773 Elisa.Sabatini@yolocounty.org

- 4. Project Locations: The project is located in Yolo County and runs along the Sacramento River's right (west) bank from the Knights Landing Ridge Cut outfall gates downstream to the Fremont Weir.
- 5. Project Sponsor's Name and Address: Same as lead agency.
- 6. Land Owners' Names and Addresses: N/A
- 7. General Plan Designation(s): Agriculture, Commercial, Residential
- 8. Zoning: Public Open Space (POS)
- **9. Description of the Project:** See attached "Project Description" on the following pages for details.
- 10. Surrounding Land Uses and Setting:

Surrounding uses mainly include various agricultural types (Agricultural Intensive (A-N)), however some areas of include various Commercial and Residential zoning.

- 11. Other public agencies whose approval is required: None.
- **12. Other Project Assumptions:** The Initial Study assumes compliance with all applicable State, Federal, and local codes and regulations.

# **Project Description**

#### Background

The Knights Landing Levee System is part of the Sacramento River Flood Control Project (SRFCP). The SRFCP was authorized by the Flood Control Act of 1917 as Public Law 367 during the 64<sup>th</sup> Congress, and was later modified in 1928, 1937, and 1941. The Knights Landing levee system consists of three levee segments with a total length of approximately 15.19 miles.

Yolo CSA-6, also referred to as Named Area 0022 (NA0022), is the local maintaining agency (LMA) responsible for the operations and maintenance (O&M) of 5.97 miles in the middle of this stretch (Figure 1). Yolo CSA-6's responsibility runs along the Sacramento River's right (west) bank from the Knights Landing Ridge Cut outfall gates downstream to the Fremont Weir. The levee is part of Unit No. 127 of the Sacramento River Flood Control Project with O&M standards prescribed by the United States Army Corps of Engineers' (USACE) Standard Operation and Maintenance Manual for the Sacramento River Flood Control Project, Unit No. 127, Levees of Knights Landing Ridge Cut and Sacramento and Yolo By-Pass Levees of Reclamation Districts No. 730 and 819 and South Levee of Sycamore Slough. Maintenance along portions of the Yolo CSA-6 levee have been deferred for many years with regard to repairs and vegetation clearance required as per standards in the O&M manuals, and are currently rated as "unacceptable" or "deficient."

#### <u>Project</u>

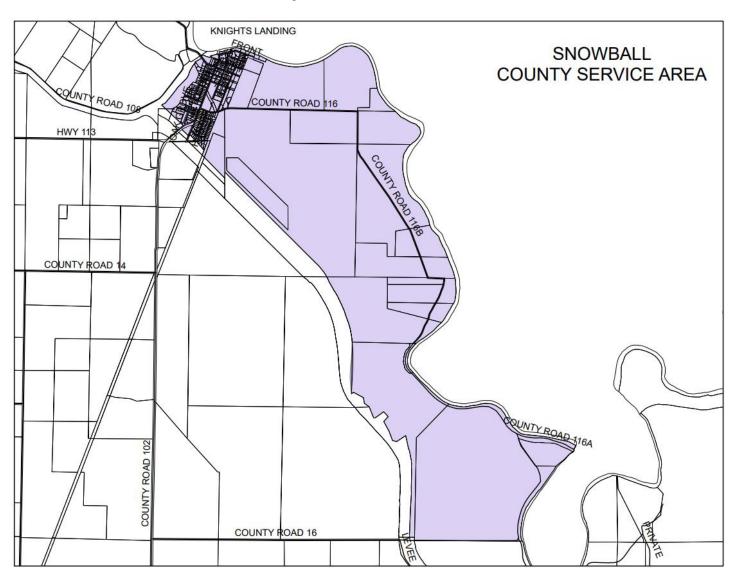
On May 18, 2017, MBK Engineers submitted a Memorandum of Maintenance Considerations to Yolo County. The purpose of the Memorandum was to perform an assessment to determine which maintenance activities should be prioritized for action in the near term. Resulting from this Memorandum was the identification of eleven recommendations for routine and on-going maintenance. These recommendations, which were adopted by the Yolo County Board of Supervisors on July 18, 2017 as the annual level maintenance plan for fiscal year 2017-2018, are as follows:

- 1. Mow, graze and/or burn slopes to allow visibility for rodent damage or surface erosion.
- 2. Clear wild brush and vegetation from levee slopes and 15 feet from the levee toes and trim trees to provide visibility to a minimum of 5 feet above the levee toes and slopes. Work can be performed by spraying and burning; using mechanical equipment such as masticators, mowers, or Brush-Hogs; using hand crews with hand tools; by grazing; or a combination of methods depending on the area. Areas should be treated with herbicide after removal to prevent re-growth.
- 3. Remove or burn brush piles, pruning piles, fallen trees and limbs.

- 4. A rodent abatement program should be initiated. This can be done using bait, Rodex gun, fumigation, or other means in areas where rodents are spotted. Areas with existing rodent burrows should be backfilled and compacted. This can be done using excavators or backhoes from the levee crown to burrow as deep into the levee as can be traced, and backfill/compact the excavated holes. Rodent holes can also be grouted using a cement-bentonite-water mixture with methods developed by the California Department of Water Resources (DWR).
- Once slopes are cleared, larger areas of erosion or depressions should be backfilled and compacted and then levee slopes can be dragged using a Cat track behind a backhoe to repair minor surface erosion rills.
- 6. Work with property owners to remove or relocate equipment and pruning piles to a minimum of 15 feet from the levee toes and keep agricultural disking operations from scarping the levee toe. Also, property owners should be made aware of the need for clear and visible inspection corridors along the levees and asked to thin or remove landscaping and fences where feasible.
- 7. Repair the levee toe scarp created by agricultural disking at levee mile (LM) 2.4-2.5. Work with property owner who disked into the levee toe to ensure the levee is avoided during future agricultural operations.
- 8. Work with DWR Deferred Maintenance Program to inspect and remediate all at grade culvert crossings through levee.
- 9. Reseed slopes or waterside berms with native grass mixtures to prevent erosion where vegetation is lacking or non-existent.
- 10. Upon drying, inspect areas that exhibited general seepage or had water against landside toe during 2017 storm events for signs of cracking, sloughing, or other distress.
- 11. Monitor cracking of pavement along waterside hinge of Front Street for displacement. Displacement could indicate levee slippage and warrant emergent repair.

Figure 1

Map of Yolo CSA-6



# **Environmental Factors Potentially Affected**

The environmental factors checked below could potentially be affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is still a "Potentially Significant Impact" (before any proposed mitigation measures have been adopted or before any measures have been made or agreed to by the project proponent) as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

	Aest	hetics		Agricultural and Forest Resources		Air Quality
$\boxtimes$	Biolo	ogical Resources		Cultural Resources		Geology / Soils
	Gree	enhouse Gas Emissions		Hazards & Hazardous Materials		Hydrology / Water Quality
	Land	l Use / Planning		Mineral Resources		Noise
	Рорц	ulation / Housing		Public Services		Recreation
	Tran	sportation / Traffic		Utilities / Service Systems		Mandatory Findings of Significance
				Determination		
	On the	e basis of this initial evaluation	on:			
		I find that the proposed p NEGATIVE DECLARATIO		COULD NOT have a significant be prepared.	effec	t on the environment, and a
		not be a significant effect in	n this	project could have a significant ecase because revisions to the proj TIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARA	ect h	ave been made by or agreed
		I find that the proposed ENVIRONMENTAL IMPAC	proje CT RE	ct MAY have a significant effe PORT is required.	ct or	n the environment, and an
		or "potentially significant ur an earlier document pursua measures based on the e	nless r ant to arlier	AY have an impact on the environ nitigated" but at least one effect (1 applicable legal standards and (2) analysis, as described on attache ut it must analyze only the effects	) has has b ed sh	been adequately analyzed in been addressed by mitigation eets. An ENVIRONMENTAL
		the project is consistent with analyzed adequately in an further review under the	th an a earlie Califo	project could have a significant e adopted general plan and all poter r ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT RE rnia Environmental Quality Act u B(b) and CEQA Guidelines Section	itially POR inder	significant effects have been T, the project is exempt from the requirements of Public
		The Tarken		1/10/18	ŧ	THE PARFREY
	Planne	er's Signature D		/ Dáte		Planner's Printed name

# **Purpose of this Initial Study**

This Initial Study has been prepared consistent with CEQA Guideline Section 15063, to determine if the project as described herein may have a significant effect upon the environment.

# **Evaluation of Environmental Impacts**

- 1. A brief explanation is required for all answers except "No Impact" answers that are adequately supported by the information sources a lead agency cites in the parentheses following each question. A "No Impact" answer is adequately supported if the referenced information sources show that the impact simply does not apply to projects like the one involved (e.g., the project falls outside a fault rupture zone). A "No Impact" answer should be explained if it is based on project-specific factors as well as general standards (e.g., the project will not expose sensitive receptors to pollutants, based on a project-specific screening analysis).
- 2. All answers must take account of the whole action involved, including offsite as well as onsite, cumulative as well as project-level, indirect as well as direct, and construction as well as operational impacts.
- 3. Once the lead agency has determined that a particular physical impact may occur, the checklist answers must indicate whether the impact is potentially significant, less than significant with mitigation, or less than significant. "Potentially Significant Impact" is appropriate if there is substantial evidence that an effect may be significant. If there are one or more "Potentially Significant Impact" entries when the determination is made, an EIR is required.
- 4. A "Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated" applies when the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from a "Potentially Significant Impact" to a "Less than significant Impact". The lead agency must describe the mitigation measures and briefly explain how they reduce the effect to a less-than-significant level. (Mitigation measures from Section XVIII, "Earlier Analyses", may be cross-referenced.)
- 5. A determination that a "Less Than Significant Impact" would occur is appropriate when the project could create some identifiable impact, but the impact would be less than the threshold set by a performance standard or adopted policy. The initial study should describe the impact and state why it is found to be "less than significant."
- 6. Earlier analyses may be used where, pursuant to the tiering, program EIR, or other CEQA process, an effect has been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or negative declaration [Section 15063(c)(3)(D) of the California Government Code. Earlier analyses are discussed in Section XVIII at the end of the checklist.
- 7. Lead agencies are encouraged to incorporate into the checklist references to information sources for potential impacts (e.g., general plans, zoning ordinances). Reference to a previously prepared or outside document should, when appropriate, include a reference to the page or pages where the statement is substantiated.
- 8. Supporting Information Sources: A source list should be attached, and other sources used or individuals contacted should be cited in the discussion.

I.	AESTHETICS.	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than significant Impact	No Impact
Wou	d the project:				
a.	Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?				$\boxtimes$
b.	Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings along a scenic highway?				
C.	Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?				
d.	Create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect daytime or nighttime views in the area?				$\boxtimes$

- a) **No Impact.** The proposed project does not impact a scenic vista as it does not change any existing structures or obstruct any existing views.
- b) Less Than Significant Impact. The proposed project would not damage any scenic resources along a scenic highway. There are presently no highways within Yolo County that have been officially designated within the California Scenic Highway System. However, the Yolo County 2030 General Plan designates several routes in Yolo County as local scenic roadways. The nearest sections of a local scenic roadway are County Roads 116 and 116B, which stretch from Knights Landing to the eastern terminus of County Road 16. County Road 116B serves as the levee base for approximately 1.3 miles along the system.
- c) Less Than Significant Impact. Aesthetic perceptions are subjective and the aesthetic impacts associated with this project may be perceived differently by various individuals. The project would include the removal and trimming of vegetation along the waterside and landside toes of the levee. These improvements would enhance the visual character and quality of the site and the surrounding areas.
- d) No impact. The proposed project does not include lighting.

II.	AGRICULTURAL AND FOREST RESOURCES.	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than significant Impact	No Impact
signification signification comparts of the co	ermining whether impacts on agricultural resources are cant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to alifornia Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site sment Model (1997) prepared by the California tment of Conservation. In determining whether impacts to resources, including timberland, are significant nmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information led by the California Department of Forestry and Firection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, ing the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Legacy Assessment project; and the forest carbon arement Methodology provided in the Forest Protocols and by the California Air Resources Board. Would the to				
a.	Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?				
b.	Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or conflict with a Williamson Act contract?				
C.	Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)) or timberland (as defined in Public Resources Code section 4526)?				
d.	Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?				$\boxtimes$
e.	Involve other changes in the existing environment that, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?				

- a) No Impact. The proposed project will not convert any farmland to non-agricultural use.
- b) **No Impact.** The proposed project does not conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract.
- c) **No Impact.** The proposed project does not conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land or timberland.
- d) **No Impact.** The proposed project does not result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use.

e)	<b>No Impact.</b> The project is consistent with the General Plan and zoning designations and does not involve any other changes that could result in the conversion of farmland to non-agricultural uses.

					_
III.	Air Quality.	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than significant Impact	No Impact
applio distric	e applicable, the significance criteria established by the cable air quality management or air pollution control at may be relied upon to make the following minations. Would the project:				
a.	Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?				
b.	Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?				
C.	Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is a nonattainment area for an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions that exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?				
d.	Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?				$\boxtimes$
e.	Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?				

# **Environmental Setting**

The project site is within the Yolo-Solano Air Quality Management District (YSAQMD), and the Sacramento Valley Air Basin regulates air quality conditions within Yolo County. Yolo County is classified as a non-attainment area for several air pollutants, including ozone  $(O_3)$  and particulate matter 10 microns or less in diaMeter  $(PM_{10})$  for both federal and state standards, the partial non-attainment of the federal particulate matter 2.5  $(PM_{2.5})$ , and is classified as a moderate maintenance area for carbon monoxide (CO) by the state.

The YSAQMD sets threshold levels for use in evaluating the significance of criteria air pollutant emissions from project-related mobile and area sources in the Handbook for Assessing and Mitigating Air Quality Impacts (YSAQMD, 2007). The handbook identifies quantitative and qualitative long-term significance thresholds for use in evaluating the significance of criteria air pollutant emissions from project-related mobile and area sources. These thresholds include:

Reactive Organic Gases (ROG)	10 tons per year (approx. 55 pounds per day)
Oxides of Nitrogen (NOx)	10 tons per year (approx. 55 pounds per day)
Particulate Matter (PM <sub>10</sub> )	80 pounds per day

Carbon Monoxide (CO)	Violation of State ambient air quality standard

- a) No Impact. The project would not substantially conflict with or obstruct implementation of the Yolo Solano Air Quality Management District Air Quality Attainment Plan (1992), the Sacramento Area Regional Ozone Attainment Plan (1994), or the goals and objectives of the Yolo County 2030 General Plan.
- b) **No Impact.** The proposed project would not violate any air quality standard of contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation.
- c) **No Impact.** The proposed project would not result in the cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant.
- d) **No Impact.** The proposed project would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations.
- e) No Impact. The proposed project would not create any objectionable odors.

IV.	BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES.	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than significant Impact	No Impact
Would	the project:				
a.	Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?				
b.	Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?				
c.	Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marshes, vernal pools, coastal wetlands, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?				
d.	Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?				
e.	Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?				
f.	Conflict with the provisions of an adopted habitat conservation plan, natural community conservation plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?				

#### **Environmental Setting**

Estep Environmental Consulting prepared a Natural Resources Assessment for the proposed project area in October 2017. This assessment involved the conduction of a survey with the propose of evaluating vegetation characteristics and to identify sensitive habitats within the planned maintenance work area. In all, this report provides useful biological background information and survey data that will assist in the below determination of any impacts.

The project area falls within a riparian corridor along the Sacramento River. In some areas of the area, a dense riparian overstory and understory exists. The overstory is composed of various native tree species including, but not limited to, valley oak, Fremont cottonwood, willows, box elder, alder and sycamore. The understory consists of blackberry bramble, poison oak and wild grape. In areas where an overstory and understory does not exist, the levee slopes are composed of native grasses.

Riparian habitat along the Sacramento River supports abundant wildlife, including breeding and migratory birds, and a variety of mammals, reptiles, and amphibians. This type of habitat may be used by listed and other special-status species including valley elderberry longhorn beetle, giant garter snake, western pond turtle, western yellow-billed cuckoo, bank swallow, Swainson's hawk, white-tailed kit, tricolored blackbird and Least Bell's vireo. Based on a variety of factors, Estep's assessment only identifies potential impacts to valley elderberry longhorn beetle and Swainson's hawk.

#### **Discussion of Impacts**

a) Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. The proposed project may have a substantial adverse effect on sensitive species. As mentioned in the "Environmental Setting" section above, riparian habitat along the Sacramento River supports abundant wildlife, including many special-status species. With regards to the proposed project area, Swainson's hawk and the valley elderberry longhorn beetle are two identified special-status species that may be substantially affected by the proposed project.

Potential impacts to the Swainson's hawk are associated with any maintenance activities that may lead to the removal of a Swainson's hawk nest or result in the abandonment of a nest. These impacts can be avoided by working outside of the species' active periods. As listed in BIO-1 in the "Mitigation Measures" section of this chapter, all work associated with the proposed project will occur between September 15 through February 28, which is outside of the nesting bird season. Performing maintenance work outside of the nesting bird season will ensure no significant impacts to the Swainson's hawk.

Potential impacts to the valley elderberry longhorn beetle are associated with the clearing of vegetation in the vicinity of their host plant, the elderberry shrub. There were a total of 56 mature elderberry shrubs documented in the project area during Estep's field assessment. The use of masticators, mowers, Brush-hogs, or hand tools to clear vegetation may result in the inadvertent disturbance of the elderberry shrub. To avoid significantly impacting the valley elderberry longhorn beetle, BIO-2 in the "Mitigation Measures" section of this chapter describes, in detail, the USFWS avoidance measures that will be followed to ensure no significant impact.

By implementing the identified mitigation measures, the potential impacts to special-status species can be considered "less than significant."

b) Less Than Significant Impact. The proposed project contains maintenance components that will clear wild brush and vegetation from levee slopes and 15 feet from the levee toe. Additionally, trees will be trimmed to provide visibility to a minimum of 5 feet above the levee toes and slopes. These components will result in the reduction of some riparian habitat – mostly in areas with a dense understory. Another component of the proposed project involves the revegetation of slopes with native species. Revegetating the slopes not

only serves as a protective measure against erosion, but it also helps to improve the habitat. The seeding of native annual grasses will assist in regenerating areas along the levee where a habitat is lacking. The cumulative impact on the riparian habitat will be less than significant.

- c) **No Impact.** The proposed project will not have any substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands. None have been identified in the area.
- d) **No Impact.** The proposed project will not interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species.
- e) **No Impact.** The proposed project will not conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources.
- f) No Impact. The proposed project will not conflict with the provisions of an approved local, regional or state habitat conservation plan. The Yolo County Habitat Conservation Plan/ Natural Communities Conservation Plan (HCP/NCCP) is in preparation by the Yolo Habitat Conservancy. It is not yet adopted. Thus, the project would not conflict with the provisions of any adopted HCP, NCCP, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan.

#### **Mitigation Measures**

The following mitigation measures will be implemented by Yolo CSA-6 to avoid or minimize potential environmental impacts. Implementation of these mitigation measures would reduce the potential environmental impacts of the proposed project to a less than significant level.

BIO-1: Avoid disturbance of special status bird species, nesting raptors, and other migratory birds protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 (MBTA).

All proposed project activities will be performed outside of the nesting bird season (September 15 through February 28) to avoid violation of MBTA. This will also ensure there will be no impacts to the Swainson's hawk.

BIO-2: Avoid Impacts and/or Disturbance to Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle and their habitat.

The valley elderberry longhorn beetle, a Federally-threatened species, has the potential to occur within proposed project as their host plant was located in several locations throughout the levee system. A total of 56 mature elderberry shrubs were documented during the field assessment. Each shrub was flagged and the GPS coordinates were mapped. CSA-6 shall employ the avoidance and minimization measures most recently described by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife

Service. With implementation of the following measures, impacts to VELB will be less than significant:

- Fencing All areas to be avoided during construction activities will be fenced and/or flagged as close to construction limits as feasible.
- Avoidance area Activities that may damage or kill an elderberry shrug (e.g., trenching, paving, etc.) may need an avoidance area of at least 6 meters (20 feet) from the dripline, depending on the type of activity.
- Worker education A qualified biologist will provide training for all contractors, work crews, and any onsite personnel on the status of the VELB, its host plant and habitat, the need to avoid damaging the elderberry shrugs, and the possible penalties for noncompliance.
- Construction monitoring A qualified biologist will monitor the work area at project appropriate intervals to assure that all avoidance and minimization measures are implemented. The amount and duration of monitoring will depend on the project specifics and should be discussed with the Services biologist.
- Timing As much as feasible, all activities that could occur within 50 meters (165 feet)
  of an elderberry shrub, will be conducted outside of the flight season of the VELB
  (March July).
- Trimming Trimming may remove or destroy VELB eggs and/or larvae and may reduce
  the health and vigor of the elderberry shrub. In order to avoid and minimize adverse
  effects to VELB when trimming, trimming will occur between November and February
  and will avoid the removal of any branches or stems that are ≥ 1 inch in diameter.
  Measures to address regular and/or large scale maintenance (trimming) should be
  established in consultation with the Service.
- Chemical Usage Herbicides will not be used within the drip-line of the shrub.
   Insecticides will not be used within 30 meters (98 feet) of an elderberry shrub. All chemicals will be applied using a backpack sprayer or similar direct application method.
- Mowing Mechanical weed removal within the drip-line of the shrub will be limited to the season when adults are not active (August - February) and will avoid damaging the elderberry.
- Erosion Control and Re-vegetation Erosion control will be implemented and the affected area will be re-vegetated with appropriate native plants.

V.	Cultural Resources.	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than significant Impact	No Impact
Woul	d the project:				
a.	Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in Section 15064.5?				$\boxtimes$
b.	Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?				
C.	Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?				
d.	Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?				

- a) **No Impact.** There are no historic resources as defined in CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5 in the project area.
- b) **No Impact.** There are no archeological resources as defined in CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5 in the project area.
- c) No Impact. Because of its geologic history, the project area is considered an unlikely environment for the presence of paleontological resources and for unique geologic features.
- d) Less Than Significant Impact. No human remains are known or predicted to exist in the project area. However, the potential exists during project implementation to uncover previously unidentified resources. Section 7050.5 of the California Health and Safety Code states that when human remains are discovered, no further site disturbance shall occur until the County coroner has determined that the remains are not subject to the provisions of Section 27491 of the Government Code or any other related provisions of law concerning investigation of the circumstances, manner and cause of any death, and the recommendations concerning the treatment and disposition of the human remains have been made to the person responsible for the excavation, in the manner provided in Section 5097.98 of the Public Resources Code. If the coroner determines that the remains are not subject to his or her authority and the remains are recognized to be those of a Native American, the coroner shall contact the Native American Heritage Commission within 24 hours. However, given that project activities will be conducted on levees constructed in the last century, any impact is considered less than significant.

VI.	GEOLOGY AND SOILS.	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than significant Impact	No Impact
Would	I the project:				
a.	Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
	<ol> <li>Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.</li> </ol>				
	2. Strong seismic groundshaking?				
	3. Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?				
	4. Landslides?				
b.	Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?				$\boxtimes$
C.	Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable or that would become unstable as a result of the project and potentially result in an onsite or offsite landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse?				
d.	Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?				
e.	Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems in areas where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?				

- a) **No impact.** The proposed project will not result in any exposure to the rupture of a known earthquake fault, strong seismic groundshaking, seismic-related ground failure or landslides.
- b) **No Impact.** The proposed project will not result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil.
- c) No Impact. The proposed project is not located on unstable geologic materials and would not have any effect on the stability of the underlying materials or on the underlying materials to potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse. Onsite or off-site potential landslides, liquefaction or other cyclic strength degradation during seismic events are unlikely.

- d) **No Impact.** The proposed project is not located on expansive soils and no structures would be constructed.
- e) **No Impact.** No septic tanks or waste water systems are proposed or would be required for the proposed project.

		Potentially	Less than Significant with	Less than	
VII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS/CLIMA	TE CHANGE.	Significant Impact	Mitigation Incorporated	significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:					
a. Generate greenhouse gas emission indirectly, that may have a significant impact					
b. Conflict with any applicable plan, polici agency adopted for the purpose of reduce greenhouse gases?	, ,				$\boxtimes$
c. Be affected by climate change impacts increased wildfire dangers, diminishing s supplies, etc.?					

#### **Environmental Setting**

To date, specific thresholds of significance to evaluate impacts pertaining to GHG emissions have not been established by the Yolo Solano Air Quality Management District, the state, or the federal government. However, this absence of thresholds does not negate CEQA's mandate to evaluate all potentially significant impacts associated with the proposed project.

Yolo County has adopted General Plan policies and a Climate Action Plan (CAP) which address these issues. In order to demonstrate project-level compliance with CEQA relevant to GHG emissions and climate change impacts, applications for discretionary projects must demonstrate consistency with the General Plan and CAP. The adopted 2030 Yolo Countywide General Plan contains the following relevant policies and actions:

- Policy CO-8.2: Use the development review process to achieve measurable reductions in greenhouse gas emissions.
- Action CO-A117: Pursuant to the adopted Climate Action Plan (CAP), the County shall take all feasible measures to reduce its total carbon dioxide equivalent (CO2e) emissions within the unincorporated area (excluding those of other jurisdictions, e.g., UC-Davis, Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation, DQ University, school districts, special districts, reclamation districts, etc.), from 648,252 Metric tons (MT) of CO2e in 2008 to 613,651 MT of CO2e by 2020. In addition, the County shall strive to further reduce total CO2e emissions within the unincorporated area to 447,965 MT by 2030. These reductions shall be achieved through the measures and actions provided for in the adopted CAP, including those measures that address the need to adapt to climate change. (Implements Policy CO-8.1)

- Action CO-A118: Pursuant to and based on the CAP, the following thresholds shall be used for determining the significance of GHG emissions and climate change impacts associated with future projects:
  - Impacts associated with GHG emissions from projects that are consistent with the General Plan and otherwise exempt from CEQA are determined to be less than significant and further CEQA analysis for this area of impact is not required.
  - 2) Impacts associated with GHG emissions from projects that are consistent with the General Plan, fall within the assumptions of the General Plan EIR, consistent with the CAP, and not exempt from CEQA are determined to be less than significant or mitigated to a less-than-significant level, and further CEQA analysis for this area of impact is generally not required.
    - To be determined consistent with the CAP, a project must demonstrate that it is included in the growth projections upon which the CAP modeling is based, and that it incorporates applicable strategies and measures from the CAP as binding and enforceable components of the project.
  - 3) Impacts associated with GHG emissions from projects that are not consistent with the General Plan, do not fall within the assumptions of the General Plan EIR, and/or are not consistent with the CAP, and are subject to CEQA review are rebuttably presumed to be significant and further CEQA analysis is required. The applicant must demonstrate to the County's satisfaction how the project will achieve its fair share of the established targets including:
    - Use of alternative design components and/or operational protocols to achieve the required GHG reductions;
    - Use of real, additional, permanent, verifiable and enforceable offsets to achieve required GHG reductions. To the greatest feasible extent, offsets shall be: locally based, project relevant, and consistent with other long term goals of the County;
    - The project must also be able to demonstrate that it would not substantially interfere with implementation of CAP strategies, measures, or actions. (Implements Policy CO-8.5)

a) Less Than Significant Impact. The proposed project identifies one potential maintenance activity as the prescribed burning of grass slopes and brush piles. This

activity would result in the emission of carbon dioxide and other particulates. Emissions of these gases will be low because of the limited nature of the burns, as they will only occur in instances where physical removal of brush is not feasible. The burns will be small-scale and short in duration. This maintenance activity is also supported by Policy CO-2.12 of the Yolo County General Plan, which states "support the use of controlled fire management where feasible and appropriate as a natural ecosystem process"

Additionally, the use of diesel and gasoline powered vehicles and equipment during the proposed project will generate GHG emissions. However, based on the small-scale and short duration of the proposed project's activities, the proposed project will not generate significant increase in GHGs.

- b) **No Impact.** The proposed project would not conflict with any applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted to reduce GHG emissions, including the Yolo County Climate Action Plan or the numerous policies of Yolo County 2030 General Plan.
- c) No Impact. The proposed project will not be affected by climate change impacts.

VIII.	Hazards And Hazardous Materials.	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than significant Impact	No Impact
Would	the project:				
a.	Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?				
b.	Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?				
C.	Emit hazardous emissions or involve handling hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?				
d.	Be located on a site that is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?				
e.	Be located within an airport land use plan area or, where such a plan has not been adopted, be within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, and result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?				
f.	Be located within the vicinity of a private airstrip and result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?				
g.	Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?				
h.	Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?				

- a) Less Than Significant Impact. Except for diesel and oil used by the excavator or other equipment, no hazardous materials will be used as a part of this project. Best management practices will be in place to store and use the petroleum products. In the unlikely event of a fuel spill, all measures will be taken to ensure minimal impacts to the surrounding environment.
- b) Less Than Significant Impact. Except for diesel and oil used by the excavator or other equipment, no hazardous materials will be used as a part of this project. Best management practices will be in place to store and use the petroleum products. In the unlikely event of

- a fuel spill, all measures will be taken to ensure minimal impacts to the surrounding environment.
- c) **No Impact.** There are no existing or proposed schools located within one-quarter mile of the project area.
- d) **No Impact.** The project area is not located on a site that is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled by the Yolo County Environmental Health Division-Hazardous Waste Site Files pursuant to Government Code 65962.5.
- e) **No Impact.** The project site is not located within an airport land use plan or within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport.
- f) **No Impact.** No private airstrips are within 2 miles of the project site.
- g) **No Impact.** The project would not interfere with any adopted emergency response or evacuation plans.
- h) Less than Significant Impact. The proposed project identifies one potential maintenance activity as the prescribed burning of grass slopes and brush piles, with which there is always a chance of escape. Personnel carrying out the burns are highly trained with prescribed burning and wildland firefighting, and will take all safety precautions necessary to avoid an escaped fire. Fire engines will be on-site during burning activities and patrols will be used once burning is complete to monitor the area. The proposed project will not expose people or structures to a significant risk, injury or death involving wildland fires.

IX.	HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY.	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than significant Impact	No Impact	
Would	the project:					
a.	Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?					
b.	Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge, resulting in a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of preexisting nearby wells would drop to a level that would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?					
c.	Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner that would result in substantial erosion or siltation onsite or off-site?					
d.	Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner that would result in flooding onsite or off-site?					
e.	Create or contribute runoff water that would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?					
f.	Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?				$\boxtimes$	
g.	Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area, as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?					
h.	Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures that would impede or redirect floodflows?				$\boxtimes$	
i.	Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?					
j.	Contribute to inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?					

- a) **No Impact.** The proposed project will not discharge any pollutants into the water system, or result in any violations of existing requirements.
- b) **No Impact.** The proposed project will not affect any onsite wells and will not deplete groundwater supplies or interfere with groundwater recharge.

- c) **No Impact.** The proposed project would not substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of a waterway that would result in substantial erosion or f
- d) **No Impact.** The proposed project would not substantially alter the existing draining patter of a waterway that would result in flooding on- or off-site.
- e) **No Impact.** The proposed project would not increase runoff volumes or add substantial pollutants to storm water flows.
- f) No Impact. The proposed project would not degrade water quality.
- g) No Impact. The proposed project does not include any housing.
- h) **No Impact.** The proposed project would not involve placement of structures that would impede or redirect flood flows within a 100-year flood hazard area.
- i) **No Impact.** The proposed project would not expose people or structures to any impacts related to the result of the failure of a levee or dam.
- j) **No Impact.** The proposed project does not increase potentials for inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow.

Х.	LAND USE AND PLANNING.	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than significant Impact	No Impact
Woul	d the project:				
a.	Physically divide an established community?				$\boxtimes$
b.	Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to, a general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?				
c.	Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?				$\boxtimes$

- a) No Impact. The proposed project will have no impacts on established communities.
- b) **No Impact.** The proposed project would not conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect.
- c) **No Impact.** The proposed project would not conflict with the provisions of any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conversation plan.

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

- a) **No Impact.** The proposed project would not compromise the availability of any known mineral resource.
- b) **No Impact**. The proposed project will have no effect upon mineral extraction or any planned use for the mineral resources located in or immediately adjacent to the site.

			Less than		
XII.	Noise.	Potentially Significant Impact	Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would	d the project:				
a.	Expose persons to or generate noise levels in excess of standards established in a local general plan or noise ordinance or applicable standards of other agencies?				
b.	Expose persons to or generate excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?				
C.	Result in a substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?				
d.	Result in a substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?				
e.	Be located within an airport land use plan area, or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport and expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?				
f.	Be located in the vicinity of a private airstrip and expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?				

# **Environmental Setting**

Yolo County has not adopted a noise ordinance which sets specific noise levels for different zoning districts or for different land uses in the unincorporated area. However, the State of California Department of Health Services developed recommended Community Noise Exposure standards, which are set forth in the State's General Plan Guidelines (2003). These standards are also included in the Yolo County 2030 Countywide General Plan and used to provide guidance for new development projects. The recommended standards provide acceptable ranges of decibel (dB) levels. The noise levels are in the context of Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) measurements, which reflect an averaged noise level over a 24-hour or annual period.

The proposed project is located in rural agricultural areas and there are no sensitive receptors in the vicinity. The project sites are surrounded by agricultural uses (mostly cropland) for several miles to the right side of the levee, facing in an easterly direction. The noise guidelines define 80-85 dB CNEL for outdoor noise level in agricultural areas as "normally acceptable."

#### **Discussion of Impacts**

a) **No Impact.** The proposed project will not expose persons to, or generate, noise in excess of the above standards.

- b) **No Impact.** The proposed project will not create excessive groundbourne vibrations or groundborne noise levels.
- c) **No Impact.** The proposed project will not result in a substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels above existing noise levels.
- d) **No Impact.** The proposed project will not result in a temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels above existing noise levels.
- e) **No Impact.** The proposed project is not located within an airport land use plan area or in an area where a plan is being contemplated.
- f) **No Impact.** The proposed project would not be located within the vicinity of a private airstrip.

XIII.	POPULATION AND HOUSING.	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than significant Impact	No Impact
Would	the project:				
a.	Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (e.g., by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (e.g., through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?				
b.	Displace a substantial number of existing housing units, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?				
C.	Displace a substantial number of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?				$\boxtimes$

- a) **No Impact.** The proposed project does not involve construction of any new homes, businesses, roads, or other growth inducing infrastructure.
- b) **No Impact**. The proposed project would not involve the displacement of a substantial number of existing housing units.
- c) **No Impact.** The proposed project would not necessitate the construction of replacement housing.

XIV.	Public Services.	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than significant Impact	No Impact
associ govern govern signific accep	the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts ated with the provision of new or physically altered imental facilities or a need for new or physically altered imental facilities, the construction of which could cause cant environmental impacts, in order to maintain table service ratios, response times, or other performance ives for any of the following public services:				
a.	Fire protection?				$\boxtimes$
b.	Police protection?				$\boxtimes$
C.	Schools?				$\boxtimes$
d.	Parks?				$\boxtimes$
e.	Other public facilities?				$\boxtimes$

- a) **No Impact.** The proposed project would not require additional fire protection.
- b) **No Impact.** The proposed project would not require police services.
- c) **No Impact.** The proposed project would not lead to population increase in numbers of students.
- d) No Impact. The proposed project is not located near recreational facilities.
- e) No Impact. The proposed project would not adversely affect public facilities.

XV.	RECREATION.	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than significant Impact	No Impact
Would	the project:				
a.	Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?				
b.	Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?				

- a) **No Impact**. The proposed project would not affect park use any neighborhood, regional or other recreational facilities.
- b) **No Impact.** The proposed project does not include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities.

XVI.	Transportation/Traffic.	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than significant Impact	No Impact
Would	I the project:				
a.	Exceed the capacity of the existing circulation system, based on an applicable measure of effectiveness (as designated in a general plan policy, ordinance, etc.), taking into account all relevant components of the circulation system, including but not limited to intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit?				
b.	Conflict with an applicable congestion management program, including, but not limited to level of service standards and travel demand measures, or other standards established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?				
C.	Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?				
d.	Substantially increase hazards because of a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?				
e.	Result in inadequate emergency access?				$\boxtimes$
f.	Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation (e.g., bus turnouts, bicycle racks)?				

### **Environmental Setting**

The roadway network within the unincorporated parts of the County is primarily rural in character, serving small communities and agricultural uses through a system of State freeways and highways, county roads (including arterials, collectors and local streets) and private roads. Interstate 80, Interstate 5 and Interstate 505 are the primary transportation corridors extending through the County and serve all of the County's major population centers including Davis, West Sacramento, Winters, and Woodland. The project site would primarily be served by Front Street, County Roads 116, 116A, and 116B.

- a) **No Impact.** The proposed project will not result in the exceedance of capacity of the existing circulation system.
- b) **No Impact.** The proposed project would not conflict with an applicable congestion management program.

- c) **No Impact.** The proposed project will not result in a change in air traffic patterns, including an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks.
- d) **No Impact.** The proposed project does not incorporate design features that would substantially increase traffic hazards or introduce incompatible uses.
- e) **No Impact.** The proposed project would not result in inadequate emergency access. Access to the subject sites is via private farm roads from various county roads.
- f) **No Impact.** The proposed project would not conflict with any adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation.

XVII.	UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS.	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than significant Impact	No Impact
Would	the project:				
a.	Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?				
b.	Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?				
C.	Require or result in the construction of new stormwater drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?				
d.	Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or would new or expanded entitlements be needed?				
e.	Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider that serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?				
f.	Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?				
g.	Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?				

- a) **No Impact.** The proposed project does not require waste water treatment capabilities.
- b) **No Impact.** The proposed project does not include structural development that would require water delivery or would generate wastewater.
- c) **No Impact.** The proposed project would not require the development of storm drainage facilities.
- d) **No Impact.** The proposed project will not affect any water uses in the area.
- e) No Impact. The proposed project does not require wastewater treatment services.
- f) No Impact. The proposed project will not generate solid waste.
- g) No Impact. The proposed project will not generate solid waste.

XVIII.	Mandatory Findings Of Significance.	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than significant Impact	No Impact
a.	Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?				
b.	Does the project have impacts that are individually limited but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.)				
C.	Does the project have environmental effects that will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?				

a) Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. The proposed project does have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, but will not substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below selfsustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, or reduce the number of or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory. Mitigation measures have been proposed to reduce the impacts to less than significant levels after each resource discussion when applicable.

No special status species will likely be significantly impacted during project activities due to the employment of avoidance measures developed by the USFWS. Mitigation measures will be implemented to bring environmental impacts of the proposed activities to less than significant levels within the project area. Specifically, potential impacts to biological resources will be mitigated to less than significant levels.

- b) No Impact. The proposed project would not result in cumulative considerable impacts.
- c) **No Impact.** The proposed project would not result in substantial adverse effects on human beings.

#### **REFERENCES**

Estep Environmental Consulting. 2017. Sensitive Natural Resources Assessment at Planned Maintenance Work Areas along Yolo County Service Area 6 Levee

Yolo County, 2004. Yolo County Zoning Ordinance, Title 8, Chapter 2 of the County Code, 2004, as amended

Yolo County, 2009. 2030 Yolo Countywide General Plan

Yolo Solano Air Quality Management District, 2007. *Handbook for Assessing and Mitigating Air Quality Impacts*, 2007