

NEGATIVE DECLARATION

FILE: CUP25-0006

PROJECT NAME: T- Mobile Garden Valley Monopine

NAME OF APPLICANT: Assurance Development obo VB BTS III, LLC

ASSESSOR'S PARCEL NO.: 060-420-028 **SECTION:** 34 **T:** 12 **N R:** 10 E

LOCATION: The property is located on the west side of Garden Valley Road 0.5 miles southeast of the intersection with Marshall Road.

GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT: **FROM:** **TO:**

REZONING: **FROM:** **TO:**

TENTATIVE PARCEL MAP
SUBDIVISION (NAME):

SPECIAL USE PERMIT TO ALLOW:

A Conditional Use Permit request to allow for the construction and operation of a wireless telecommunications tower consisting of a 120' monopine with associated equipment within a 40'x40' lease area. No water or sewer service is required. This is an unmanned facility.

OTHER:

REASONS THE PROJECT WILL NOT HAVE A SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT:

NO SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS WERE IDENTIFIED DURING THE INITIAL STUDY.

MITIGATION HAS BEEN IDENTIFIED WHICH WOULD REDUCE POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS.

OTHER:

In accordance with the authority and criteria contained in the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), State Guidelines, and El Dorado County Guidelines for the Implementation of CEQA, the County Environmental Agent analyzed the project and determined that the project will not have a significant impact on the environment. Based on this finding, the Planning Department hereby prepares this Negative Declaration . A period of (30) thirty days from the date of filing this mitigated negative declaration will be provided to enable public review of the project specifications and this document prior to action on the project by COUNTY OF EL DORADO. A copy of the project specifications is on file at the County of El Dorado Planning Services, 2850 Fairlane Court, Placerville, CA 95667.

This Negative Declaration was adopted by the _____ on _____.

Executive Secretary

Draft
Initial Study/Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration
for
Conditional Use Permit CUP25-0006 T-Mobile Monopine
Garden Valley Project

Prepared for:

El Dorado County
2850 Fairlane Court
Placerville, CA 95667
530/621-5697

Contact: Craig Osborn, Associate Planner

September 2025

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

2023 Ozone Plan	Sacramento Regional 8-Hour Ozone Attainment and Reasonable Further Progress Plan
AB	Assembly Bill
ADU	accessory dwelling unit
APN	Assessor's Parcel Number
AQAP	air quality attainment plan
Basin Plan	Water Quality Control Plan for the Sacramento and San Joaquin River Basins
BMP	best management practice
CAAQS	California Ambient Air Quality Standards
CAL FIRE	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
CARB	California Air Resources Board
CESA	California Endangered Species Act
CFC	California Fire Code
CNDDDB	California Natural Diversity Database
CO ₂	carbon dioxide
County	County of El Dorado
CRPR	California rare plant rank
CWPP	community wildfire protection plan
dB	decibels
DOT	County Department of Transportation
DTSC	California Department of Toxic Substance Control
DWR	California Department of Water Resources
EDCAQMD	El Dorado County Air Quality Management District
EDCHMP	El Dorado County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan
EDCSO	El Dorado County Sheriff's Office
EP	Ecological Preserve
ESA	federal Endangered Species Act
GHG	greenhouse gas
LAMP	Local Agency Management Plan
LOS	level of service
MCAB	Mountain Counties Air Basin
MRZ	Mineral Resource Zones
MS4	municipal separate storm sewer system
msl	mean sea level

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MTCO _{2e} /yr	metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent per year
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NAHC	Native American Heritage Center
NCIC	North Central Information Center
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
NRCS	Natural Resource Conservation
ORMP	Oak Resources Management Plan
PG&E	Pacific Gas and Electric Company
PM ₁₀	respirable particulate matter
PM _{2.5}	fine particles
Project Applicant	Assurance Development obo VB BTS III, LLC
Project	CUP25-0006 T-Mobile Monopine Garden Valley
GVFPD	Garden Valley Fire Protection District
RL	Rural Lands
RR	Rural Residential
RWQCB	regional water quality control board
SB	Senate Bill
SGMA	Sustainable Groundwater Management Act
SIP	State Implementation Plan
SMAQMD	Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District
SR	State Route
SRA	state responsibility area
SWMP	storm water management plan
SWPPP	storm water pollution prevention plan
TAC	toxic air contaminant
Technical Advisory	<i>Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA</i>
US 50	US Highway 50
USACE	US Army Corps of Engineers
USFWS	US Fish and Wildlife Service
USGS	US Geological Service
VMT	vehicle miles traveled
WEAT	Worker Environmental Awareness Training
WERS	Western El Dorado Recovery Systems

1 NOTICE ON INTENT TO ADOPT A NEGATIVE DECLARATION

The attached Initial Study/Proposed Negative Declaration (IS/Proposed ND) has been prepared for the County of El Dorado (County) as the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The purpose of this IS/Proposed ND is to evaluate and disclose potential environmental effects resulting from the CUP25-0006 T-Mobile Monopine Garden Valley Project. Under CEQA, the lead agency is the public agency with primary responsibility over approval of the project.

The County prepared this Proposed ND because, although the attached IS identifies potentially significant environmental effects, revisions to the project have been made or agreed to by the applicant that would avoid the effects or mitigate the effects to a point where clearly no significant effects would occur, consistent with Section 15070 of the State CEQA Guidelines.

1.1 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Assurance Development obo VB BTS III, LLC has submitted an application to the County of EL Dorado (the Lead Agency) for the CUP25-006 T-Mobile Monopine Garden Valley (Project). The Project would allow for the construction and operation of a new 120' monopine multi carrier wireless communication Facility.

1.2 LOCATION

The Project site is located at 5280 Garden Valley Road, in the unincorporated community of Garden Valley in El Dorado County, California (assessor parcel number [APN] (060-420-028).

1.3 REVIEW AND APPROVAL

The purpose of the IS/Proposed ND is to present to decision-makers and the public information about the environmental consequences of implementing the project. This IS/Proposed MND will be available for a XX-day public review period from Month XX, 20XX to Month XX, 20XX.

Supporting documentation referenced in this document is available for review at:

County of El Dorado
Planning and Building Department
2850 Fairlane Court, Building C
Placerville, California 95667

**CUP25-0006 T-Mobile Monopine Garden Valley
Exhibit E - Initial Study Negative Declaration Document**

Comments should be addressed to:

Craig Osborn, Associate Planner
Planning and Building Department
2850 Fairlane Court, Building C
Placerville, California 95667

E-mail comments may be addressed to: sosborn@edcgov.us

If you have questions regarding the IS/Proposed ND, please call Craig Osborn at: (530) 621-5697. If you wish to send written comments (including via e-mail), they must be postmarked by **Month XX, 20XX.**

After comments are received from the public and reviewing agencies, the County may (1) adopt the MND, a mitigation monitoring and reporting program (MMRP), and approve the project; (2) undertake additional environmental studies, potentially including preparation of an Environmental Impact Report; or (3) deny the project. If the project is approved, the project proponent may proceed with the project.

1.4 PROPOSED FINDINGS

The County has reviewed and considered the proposed project and has determined that the project will not have a significant effect on the environment and based upon the substantial supporting evidence provided in the IS. The County hereby prepares and proposes to adopt a ND for this project.

2 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

2.1 PROJECT OVERVIEW

Assurance Development obo VB BTS III, LLC (Applicant) has submitted an application to the County of El Dorado (County) (the Lead Agency under CEQA) for the CUP25-0013 AT&T Monopine Garden Valley (Project). The Project would allow for the construction of a new 120' monopine multi carrier wireless communication Facility.

2.2 PROJECT LOCATION AND EXISTING SETTING

The Project site is located at 5280 Garden Valley Road, in the unincorporated community of Garden Valley, in El Dorado County, California. The Project site is within the western slope of the Sierra Nevada foothills, approximately 6.70 miles north of the City of Placerville (Figure 2-1). The project site is approximately .50 miles due south of the intersection of Marshall Road and Garden Valley Road.

The Project site is comprised of a 12.62-acre parcel, Assessor's Parcel Number (APN) 060-420-028, located along Garden Valley Road (Figure 2-2). The Project site is located in Section 34, Township 12N, and Range 10E, on the Garden Valley, California 7.5-minute USGS quadrangle.

The Project site and surrounding properties is located in a rural setting predominately characterized by a mixture of oak and pine woodlands and annual grasslands. The property is gently sloping, with elevations ranging from approximately 1,950 to 2,000 feet above mean sea level (msl).

Existing development on-site consists of a single-family residence and driveway. Adjoining properties support rural residences and Bureau of Land open space to the southwest.

2.2.1 General Plan and Zoning

The Project site is designated as Medium Density Residential (MDR) in the County General Plan Land Use Diagram. As described in the County's General Plan Land Use Element, the MDR designation establishes areas for detached single-family residences with larger lot sizes which will enable limited agricultural land management activities. This designation shall be applied where the character of an area is single family residences; where the absence or reduced level of infrastructure including roads, water lines, and sewer lines does not justify higher densities; where the topography poses a constraint to higher densities; and as a transitional land use between the more highly developed and the more rural areas of the County.

The zoning designation for the Project is Three-acre Residential (R3A) and is utilized to create a more dispersed suburban residential character to an area by providing for and regulating medium density residential development at the mid-range of one dwelling unit per two acres. Accessory structures and uses and low-intensity commercial agricultural pursuits (crop lands, orchards, raising and grazing of domestic farm animals) are considered compatible with this zone. This zone is applicable to lands designated as Medium Density Residential (MDR) in the General Plan.

2.3 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The objective of the proposed project is to build a new multi carrier wireless communications facility with the initial objective of expanding and enhancing T-Mobile's existing wireless network services serving the Garden Valley community. This Facility is intended to fill a significant gap in 5G and 4G LTE coverage experienced by its customers in a targeted coverage area in El Dorado County, more specifically, the proposed facility provides coverage to this rural and residential area of Garden Valley, specifically along Garden Valley Road and Marshall Road.

CUP25-0006 T-Mobile Monopine Garden Valley Exhibit E - Initial Study Negative Declaration Document

Designed to be consistent with the surrounding area, the Applicant is proposing a multi carrier wireless communications facility consisting of a 120' tall monopine structure situated inside a new 40' x 40' x 6' tall chain link fenced compound with a 50" x 52" inch concrete pad for a transformer outside the fenced compound. T-Mobile antennas and associated radios and equipment will be installed at the 111' center-line. All equipment will be installed within the circumference of the faux monopine branches and painted with non-glare green paint to match the monopine branches and needles. The antennas will be covered with antenna socks to mimic the monopine branches and needles. This method of concealment for tower mounted equipment will also be required for future collocating carriers.

The 6' chain link fence with earthtone colored vinyl privacy slats is required to secure and conceal the equipment cabinets the facility. Access to the facility will be from Garden Valley Road and will require a new 13' wide gravel driveway from Garden Valley Road to the front of the fenced compound with a fire access hammerhead in front of the communications facility as shown on the site plan. A fire extinguisher will be installed inside the compound and two manually operated spotlights switched on/off in emergency situations. The nearest fire hydrant is approximately 900' northeast of the facility.

The communications facility will be above ground. Proposed power and fiber utilities servicing the facility are anticipated to come from an existing utility pole in the public right-of-way at the southwest corner of the property. Electrical lines to the facility will be placed underground and any material that is removed for trenching will be distributed on the larger portion of the property.

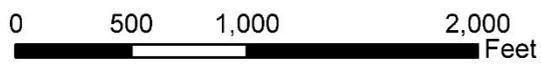
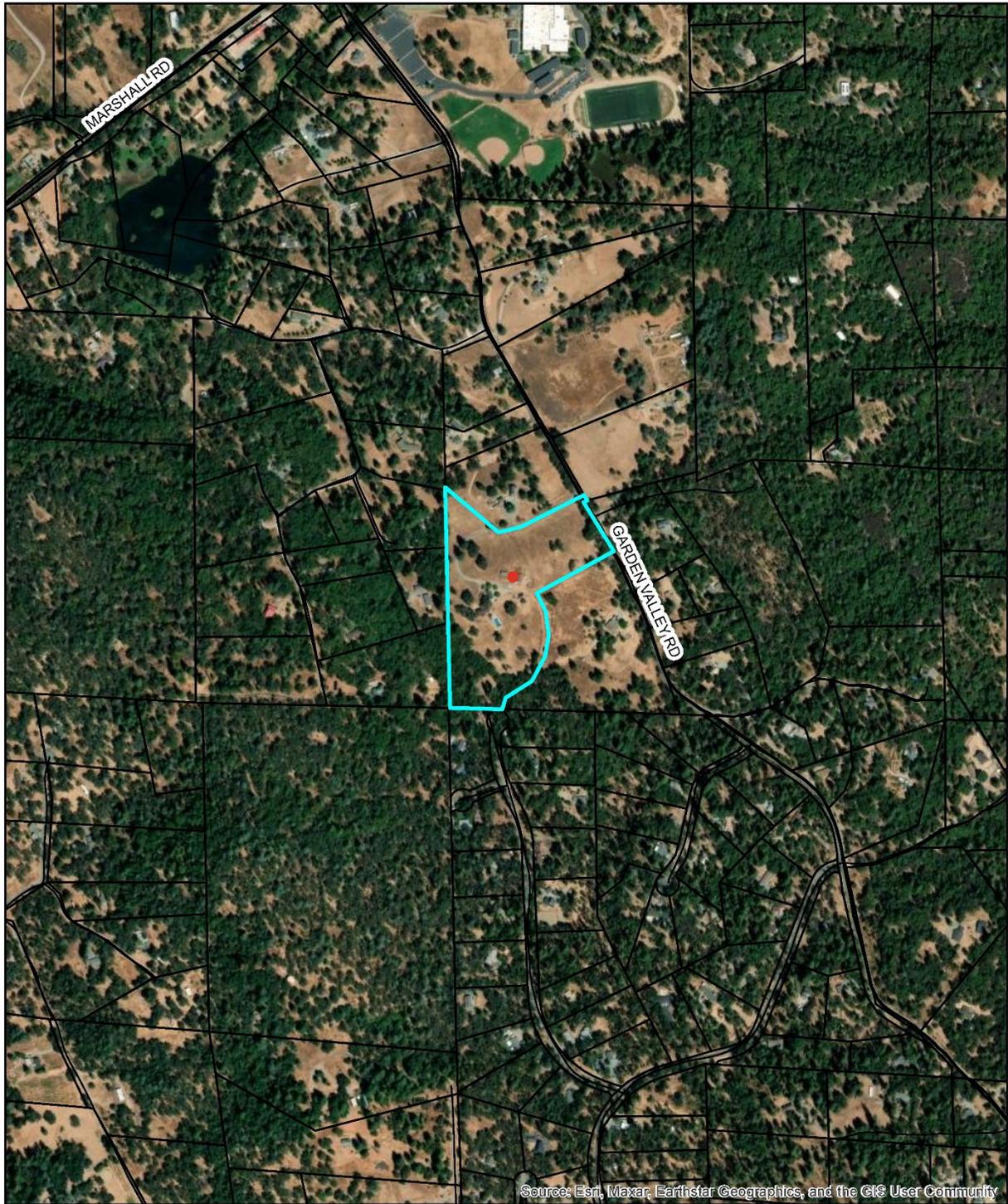
No trees or plant species will be removed and replaced as a result of this project. Accordingly, no landscaping plan is proposed with this wireless communications facility as it would be inconsistent with the existing flora of the immediate area and because the existing tree coverage on and near the site provide effective screen of the proposed facility.

2.4 PROJECT APPROVALS

The project would require the following approvals:

- ▶ County of El Dorado approval of CUP25-0006 T-Mobile Monopine Garden Valley

CUP25-0006 T-Mobile Monopine Garden Valley
Exhibit E - Initial Study Negative Declaration Document



Legend

 Parcel Lines

Figure 2-1 CUP25-0006 Project Site Map

3 ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

PROJECT INFORMATION

1. Project Title: CUP25-0006 T-Mobile Monopine Garden Valley

2. Lead Agency Name and Address: County of El Dorado
Planning and Building Department
2850 Fairlane Court, Building C
Placerville, California 95667

3. Contact Person and Phone Number: Craig Osborn (530) 621-5697
Associate Planner

4. Project Location: 5280 Garden Valley Road
Garden Valley, CA 95633
Assessor parcel number (APN) 060-420-028

5. Project Sponsor's Name and Address: Assurance Development obo VB BTS III, LLC
1499 Huntington Dr., STE 305, South Pasadena, CA 91030

6. General Plan Designation: Medium Density Residential (MDR)

7. Zoning: Three-acre Residential (R3-A)

8. The construction and operations of a 120' monopine wireless telecommunication facility. See Chapter 2 of this document for additional information. Designed to be consistent with the surrounding area, the Applicant is proposing a multi carrier wireless communications facility consisting of a 120' tall monopine structure situated inside a new 40' x 40' x 6' tall chain link fenced compound with a 50" x 52" inch concrete pad for a transformer outside the fenced compound. T-Mobile antennas and associated radios and equipment will be installed at the 111' center-line. All equipment will be installed within the circumference of the faux monopine branches and painted with non-glare green paint to match the monopine branches and needles. The antennas will be covered with antenna socks to mimic the monopine branches and needles. This method of concealment for tower mounted equipment will also be required for future collocating carriers. The 6' chain link fence is required to secure and conceal the equipment cabinets. the facility. Access to the facility will be from Garden Valley Road and will require a new 13' wide gravel driveway from Garden Valley Road to the front of the fenced compound with a fire access hammerhead in front of the communications facility as shown on the site plan. A fire extinguisher will be installed inside the compound and two manually operated spotlights switched on/off in emergency situations. The nearest fire hydrant is approximately 900' northeast of the facility. The communications facility will be above ground. Proposed power and fiber utilities servicing the facility are anticipated to come from an existing utility pole in the public right-of-way at the southwest corner of the property. Electrical lines to the facility will be placed underground and any material that is removed for trenching will be distributed on the larger portion of the property. No trees or sensitive plant species will be removed and replaced as a result of this project. Accordingly, no landscaping plan is proposed with this wireless communications facility as it would be inconsistent with the existing flora of the immediate area and because the existing tree coverage on and near the site provide effective screen of the proposed facility.

**CUP25-0006 T-Mobile Monopine Garden Valley
Exhibit E - Initial Study Negative Declaration Document**

9. Surrounding Land Uses and Setting:

The Project site is located at 5280 Garden Valley Road, in the unincorporated community of Garden Valley, in El Dorado County, California. The Project site is within the western slope of the Sierra Nevada foothills, 6.70 miles north of the City of Placerville (Figure 2-1). The project site is approximately .50 miles due south of the intersection of Marshall Road and Garden Valley Road. The Project site is comprised of a 12.62-acre parcel, Assessor's Parcel Number (APN) 060-420-028, located along Garden Valley Road (Figure 2-2). The Project site is located in Section 34, Township 12N, and Range 10E, on the Garden Valley, California 7.5-minute USGS quadrangle. The Project site and surrounding properties are located in a rural setting predominately characterized by a mixture of oak and pine woodlands and annual grasslands. The property is gently sloping, with elevations ranging from approximately 1,950 to 2,000 feet above mean sea level (msl). Existing development on-site consists of a single-family residence and driveway. Adjoining properties support rural residences with a Bureau of Land Management parcel at the southwest corner.

10. Other public agencies whose approval is required: (e.g., permits, financing approval, or participation agreement)

- ▶ County of El Dorado approval of CUP25-0006 T-Mobile Monopine Garden Valley.

11. Have California Native American tribes traditionally and culturally affiliated with the project area requested consultation pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21080.3.1? If so, is there a plan for consultation that includes, for example, the determination of significance of impacts to tribal cultural resources, procedures regarding confidentiality, etc.?

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

Yes; consultation was requested on May 16, 2025 and completed September 30, 2025.

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED:

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages. Where checked below, the topic with a potentially significant impact will be addressed in an environmental impact report.

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aesthetics | <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture and Forest Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Air Quality |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Biological Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Energy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Geology / Soils | <input type="checkbox"/> Greenhouse Gas Emissions | <input type="checkbox"/> Hazards / Hazardous Materials |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hydrology / Water Quality | <input type="checkbox"/> Land Use / Planning | <input type="checkbox"/> Mineral Resources |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Noise | <input type="checkbox"/> Population / Housing | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Recreation | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | <input type="checkbox"/> Tribal Cultural Resources |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Utilities / Service Systems | <input type="checkbox"/> Wildfire | <input type="checkbox"/> Mandatory Findings of Significance |
| | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> None | <input type="checkbox"/> None with Mitigation Incorporated |

DETERMINATION (To be completed by the Lead Agency)

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

- I find that the proposed project could not have a significant effect on the environment, and a **NEGATIVE DECLARATION** will be prepared.
- I find that although the proposed project **COULD** have a significant effect on the environment, there **WILL NOT** be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A **MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION** will be prepared.
- I find that the proposed project **MAY** have a significant effect on the environment, and an **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT** is required.
- I find that the proposed project **MAY** have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT** is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.
- I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier **EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION** pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier **EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION**, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

Signature

Date

Craig Osborn

Associate Planner

Printed Name

Title

El Dorado County

Agency

EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

1. A brief explanation is required for all answers except "No Impact" answers that are adequately supported by the information sources a lead agency cites in the parentheses following each question. A "No Impact" answer is adequately supported if the referenced information sources show that the impact simply does not apply to projects like the one involved (e.g., the project falls outside a fault rupture zone). A "No Impact" answer should be explained where it is based on project-specific factors as well as general standards (e.g., the project will not expose sensitive receptors to pollutants, based on a project-specific screening analysis).
2. All answers must take account of the whole action involved, including off-site as well as on-site, cumulative as well as project-level, indirect 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, then the checklist answers must indicate whether the impact is potentially significant, Less than Significant Impact with mitigation, or Less than Significant Impact. "Potentially Significant Impact" is appropriate if there is substantial evidence that an effect may be significant. If there are one or more "Potentially Significant Impact" entries when the determination is made, an EIR is required.
4. "Negative Declaration: Less than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated" applies where the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from "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 Impact level (mitigation measures from "Earlier Analyses," as described in (5) below, may be cross-referenced).
5. 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). In this case, a brief discussion should identify the following:
 - a) Earlier Analysis Used. Identify and state where they are available for review.
 - b) Impacts Adequately Addressed. Identify which effects from the above checklist were within the scope of and adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and state whether such effects were addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis.
 - c) Mitigation Measures. For effects that are "Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Measures Incorporated," describe the mitigation measures which were incorporated or refined from the earlier document and the extent to which they address site-specific conditions for the project.
6. Lead agencies are encouraged to incorporate into the checklist references to information sources for potential impacts (e.g., general plans, zoning ordinances). Reference to a previously prepared or outside document should, where appropriate, include a reference to the page or pages where the statement is substantiated.
7. Supporting Information Sources: A source list should be attached, and other sources used or individuals contacted should be cited in the discussion.
8. This is only a suggested form, and lead agencies are free to use different formats; however, lead agencies should normally address the questions from this checklist that are relevant to a project's environmental effects in whatever format is selected.
9. The explanation of each issue should identify:
 - a) the significance criteria or threshold, if any, used to evaluate each question; and
 - b) the mitigation measure identified, if any, to reduce the impact to less than significance.

3.1 AESTHETICS

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
I. Aesthetics.				
Except as provided in Public Resources Code section 21099 (where aesthetic impacts shall not be considered significant for qualifying residential, mixed-use residential, and employment centers), would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage points.) If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3.1.1 Environmental Setting

The Project is in a rural area, with existing development at the Project site consisting of a single-family residential structure located on the southern portion of the site. The visual quality of the Project site is typical for the area, with no unusual or distinctive characteristics. The Project site and surrounding properties are located in a rural setting predominately characterized by pine and oak woodlands and annual grasslands. The property is gently sloping, with elevations ranging from approximately 1,950 to 2,000 feet above mean sea level (msl).

A list of the county's scenic views and resources is presented in Table 5.3-1 of the El Dorado County General Plan EIR (El Dorado County 2003, p. 5.3-3). This list includes areas along highways where viewers can see large water bodies (e.g., Lake Tahoe and Folsom Reservoir), river canyons, rolling hills, forests, or historic structures or districts that are reminiscent of El Dorado County's heritage. The project site is not among the scenic views identified in the General Plan EIR.

There are no officially designated or eligible state scenic highways in proximity to the project site. The closest eligible state scenic highway is State Route (SR) 49, approximately 3.0 miles southwest of the Project site. The project site is not within the viewshed of State US 50 or SR 49, given the distance and topography.

The proposed project includes two (2) switch activated emergency lights on the ground level structure in the lease area. Any potential light sources would be required to comply with the County lighting ordinance, including the shielding of lights to avoid potential glare, during the building permit process. This would not be a substantial new

source of light or glare. There would be less than significant impacts associated with light and glare as a result of project approval.

3.1.2 Discussion

a) **Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?**

No Impact. There are no scenic vistas at the Project site. Views from, and of, the project site are limited by topography and vegetation (e.g., pine tree forest). Because the project site is not part of a scenic vista, and no scenic vistas are visible from the project site, the Project would have no effect on a scenic vista.

b) **Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?**

No Impact. As discussed in Section 3.1.1, the project site is not within the viewshed of an officially designated or eligible state scenic highway. The Project would have no effect to scenic resources within a state scenic highway.

c) **In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?**

Less than Significant Impact. The Project site is in a non-urbanized area with a Three-acre Residential (R3-A) zoning designation, which identifies lands suitable for residential development, with a minimum lot size of 3 acres. Photo simulations of the proposed 120-foot tall monopine tower (Attachment B) have been included with the project application. Based on the photo simulations of the various views traveling along adjacent Garden Valley Road, the tower appears to blend in with the existing tall pine and oak trees. This tower is most visible when looking at the site from a section of Garden Valley Road roughly east of the project site. However, there is not an expectation of high-quality scenic views on this roadway and the monopine would not be inconsistent with the existing visual character of the area.

d) **Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?**

Less than Significant Impact. The proposed project includes two (2) manually activated emergency lights on the ground level structure in the lease area. Any potential light sources would be required to comply with the County lighting ordinance, including the shielding of lights to avoid potential glare, during the building permit process. Lighting would also be obscured by the solid wood fence surrounding the lease area. This would not be a substantial new source of light or glare.

3.2 AGRICULTURE AND FOREST RESOURCES

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
II. Agriculture and Forest Resources.				
<p>In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997, as updated) prepared by the California Department of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland.</p> <p>In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board.</p>				
Would the project:				
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Involve other changes in the existing environment, which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3.2.1 Environmental Setting

According to the California Department of Conservation (CDC) Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program, the Project site is classified as Other Land (CDC 2025a). The project site does not have current Williamson Act enrollment (CDC 2025b).

County lands that are suitable for timber production are typically designated Natural Resource (NR) on the General Plan Land Use map and zoned Timber Production Zone (TPZ) or Forest Resource (FR). The Project site is zoned R2A

and does not contain forestland or timberland. California Public Resource Code (PRC) Section 12220(g) defines forest as "land that can support 10-percent native tree cover of any species, including hardwoods, under natural conditions, and that allows for management of one or more forest resources, including timber, aesthetics, fish and wildlife, biodiversity, water quality, recreation, and other public benefits." PRC Section 4526 defines *timberland* as land that "is available for, and capable of, growing a crop of trees of a commercial species used to produce lumber and other forest products, including Christmas trees." California Government Code Section 51104(g) defines a *timberland production zone* as "an area which has been zoned pursuant to Sections 51112 or 51113 and is devoted to and used for growing and harvesting timber, or for growing and harvesting timber and compatible uses; and timber as trees maintained for eventual harvest for forest project purposes (not including nursery stock.)"

3.2.2 Discussion

- 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?**

No Impact. As discussed in Section 3.2.1, there are no lands designated as Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance, and there are no agricultural uses within the project site. Therefore, the project would not convert Important Farmland to non-agricultural use.

- b) **Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract?**

No Impact. As discussed in Section 3.2.1, the project site is not in an agricultural zone and is not enrolled in a Williamson Act contract. The existing zoning would not change as a result of the proposed project. Therefore, the project would not conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or 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)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?**

No Impact. The project site is not zoned as forest land, timberland, or Timberland Production and does not contain forest land or timberland as defined by the Public Resources Code or Government Code. Therefore, the project would not conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned Timberland Production.

- d) **Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?**

No Impact. The project does not contain forest land or timberland as defined by the Public Resources Code or Government Code. The project does not propose the removal of trees. Therefore, the project would not result in the loss of forest land or the conversion of forest land to non-forest use.

- e) **Involve other changes in the existing environment, which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?**

Less than Significant Impact. The Project site does contain farmland of local importance. Project activities have a relatively small footprint and would not significantly affect Therefore, impacts would be Less than Significant Impact.

3.3 AIR QUALITY

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
III. Air Quality.				
Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management district or air pollution control district may be relied on to make the following determinations.				
Are significance criteria established by the applicable air district available to rely on for significance determinations?				
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes		<input type="checkbox"/> No	
Would the project:				
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3.3.1 Environmental Setting

The project is located in the Mountain Counties Air Basin (MCAB), which is comprised of the western portion of El Dorado County, the middle portion of Placer County, and the entirety of Plumas, Sierra, Nevada, Amador, Calaveras, Tuolumne, and Mariposa counties. Ozone, respirable particulate matter (PM₁₀), and fine particles (PM_{2.5}) are the criteria air pollutants of primary concern in this analysis because of their nonattainment status with respect to the applicable National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) and California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS) in the El Dorado County portion of the MCAB.

The El Dorado County Air Quality Management District (EDCAQMD) is the primary agency responsible for planning to meet NAAQS and CAAQS in El Dorado County. EDCAQMD works with other local air districts in the Sacramento region to maintain the region's portion of the State Implementation Plan (SIP) for ozone. The SIP is a compilation of plans and regulations that govern how the region and State will comply with the Clean Air Act requirements to attain and maintain the NAAQS for ozone. The Sacramento Regional 8-Hour Ozone Attainment and Reasonable Further Progress Plan (2023 Ozone Plan) was prepared by the five local air districts of the Sacramento Federal Non-attainment Area, with the support of the California Air Resources Board (CARB), and is an air quality attainment plan (AQAP) applicable to development in the Project area (CARB 2023).

EDCAQMD has developed a *Guide to Air Quality Assessment: Determining Significance of Air Quality Impacts under CEQA* (EDCAQMD 2002) for use by lead agencies when preparing environmental documents. The guidance includes thresholds of significance for criteria pollutants and toxic air contaminants (TACs) and recommendations for conducting air quality analyses. The guidance also describes project screening criteria to identify projects that can be

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classified as Less than Significant Impact for one or more pollutants without the need for detailed calculations or modeling. The El Dorado County AQMD's guide to air quality assessment also includes a table addressing construction emissions (El Dorado County AQMD 2002:Table 5.2). ROG and NO_x emissions from construction activities may be assumed to not be significant if the project meets one of the conditions below:

- The project encompasses 12 acres or less of ground that is being worked at one time during construction;
- At least one of the recommended mitigation measures related to construction emissions controls is incorporated into the construction of the project;
- The project proponent commits to pay mitigation fees in accordance with the provisions of an established mitigation fee program in the district (or such program in another air pollution control district that is acceptable to District); or
- Daily average fuel use is less than 337 gallons per day for equipment from 1995 or earlier, or 402 gallons per day for equipment from 1996 or later

Furthermore, the EDCAQMD reviewed the proposed Project application and confirmed that quantitative Air Quality Impact Analysis is not required for the Project (EDC 2024a). In their review of the conditional use permit application, the EDCAQMD identified the following standard conditions as potentially applicable to the Project:

- ▶ Fugitive Dust: A Fugitive Dust Mitigation Plan Application with appropriate fees shall be submitted to and approved by the EDCAQMD prior to start of project construction if during the course of the project a Grading Permit is required from the Building Department. Dust control measures shall comply with the requirements of AQMD Rule 223, Fugitive Dust – General Requirements and Rule 223.1 – Construction, Bulk Material Handling, Blasting, Other Earthmoving Activities and Trackout Prevention.
- ▶ Open Burning: Burning of waste vegetation that results from "Land Development Clearing" must be permitted through the AQMD. Only dry vegetative waste materials originating from the property may be disposed of using an open outdoor fire. Burning shall adhere to AQMD Rule 300, Open Burning.
- ▶ Paving: Road construction shall adhere to AQMD Rule 224, Cutback and Emulsified Asphalt Paving Materials.
- ▶ Painting/Coating: The application of architectural coatings shall adhere to AQMD Rule 215, Architectural Coatings.
- ▶ New Point or Stationary Source: Prior to construction/installation of any qualifying new point/stationary source emissions units (e.g., emergency standby engine greater than 50 horsepower, etc.), Authority to Construct applications shall be submitted to the AQMD. Submittal of applications shall include facility diagram(s), equipment specifications and emissions estimates, and shall adhere to AQMD Rules 501, General Permit Requirements and 523, New Source Review.
- ▶ Open Burning: Burning of waste vegetation that results from "Land Development Clearing" must be permitted through the AQMD. Only dry vegetative waste materials originating from the property may be disposed of using an open outdoor fire. Burning shall adhere to AQMD Rule 300, Open Burning.
- ▶ Construction Emissions: During construction, all self-propelled diesel-fueled engines greater than 25 horsepower shall be in compliance with the CARB Regulation for In-Use Off-Road Diesel Fueled Fleets (§ 2449 et al, title 13, article 4.8, chapter 9, California Code of Regulations). The full text of the regulation can be found at CARB's website here: <https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/ourwork/topics/construction-earthmoving-equipment> Questions on applicability should be directed to CARB at 1.866.634.3735. CARB is responsible for enforcement of this regulation.

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- ▶ **Portable Equipment:** All portable combustion engine equipment with a rating of 50 horsepower or greater shall be registered with CARB. A copy of the current portable equipment registration shall be with said equipment. The applicant shall provide a complete list of heavy-duty diesel-fueled equipment to be used on this project, which includes the make, model, year of equipment, and daily hours of operations of each piece of equipment.

CRITERIA AIR POLLUTANTS

Concentrations of criteria air pollutants are used to indicate the quality of the ambient air. Emission source types and health effects are summarized in Table 3-1 and El Dorado County’s attainment status for the CAAQS and the NAAQS are shown in Table 3-2.

Table 3-1 Sources and Health Effects of Criteria Air Pollutants

Pollutant	Sources	Acute ¹ Health Effects	Chronic ² Health Effects
Ozone	Secondary pollutant resulting from reaction of ROG and NO _x in presence of sunlight. ROG emissions result from incomplete combustion and evaporation of chemical solvents and fuels; NO _x results from the combustion of fuels	increased respiration and pulmonary resistance; cough, pain, shortness of breath, lung inflammation	permeability of respiratory epithelia, possibility of permanent lung impairment
Carbon monoxide (CO)	Incomplete combustion of fuels; motor vehicle exhaust	headache, dizziness, fatigue, nausea, vomiting, death	permanent heart and brain damage
Nitrogen dioxide (NO ₂)	combustion devices; e.g., boilers, gas turbines, and mobile and stationary reciprocating internal combustion engines	coughing, difficulty breathing, vomiting, headache, eye irritation, chemical pneumonitis or pulmonary edema; breathing abnormalities, cough, cyanosis, chest pain, rapid heartbeat, death	chronic bronchitis, decreased lung function
Sulfur dioxide (SO ₂)	coal and oil combustion, steel mills, refineries, and pulp and paper mills	Irritation of upper respiratory tract, increased asthma symptoms	Insufficient evidence linking SO ₂ exposure to chronic health impacts
Respirable particulate matter (PM ₁₀), Fine particulate matter (PM _{2.5})	fugitive dust, soot, smoke, mobile and stationary sources, construction, fires and natural windblown dust, and formation in the atmosphere by condensation and/or transformation of SO ₂ and ROG	breathing and respiratory symptoms, aggravation of existing respiratory and cardiovascular diseases, premature death	alterations to the immune system, carcinogenesis
Lead	metal processing	reproductive/ developmental effects (fetuses and children)	numerous effects including neurological, endocrine, and cardiovascular effects

Notes: NO_x = oxides of nitrogen; ROG = reactive organic gases.

¹ “Acute” refers to effects of short-term exposures to criteria air pollutants, usually at fairly high concentrations.

² “Chronic” refers to effects of long-term exposures to criteria air pollutants, usually at lower, ambient concentrations.

Sources: EPA 2024.

Attainment Status

As shown in Table 3-2, El Dorado County is designated as nonattainment for ozone with respect to both the NAAQS (8-hour standard) and CAAQS (1-hour Classification and 8-hour standard), nonattainment for PM₁₀ with respect to the CAAQS, and nonattainment for PM_{2.5} with respect to the NAAQS.

Table 3-2 El Dorado County Attainment Status Designations

Pollutant	National Ambient Air Quality Standard	California Ambient Air Quality Standard
1-hour Ozone	Nonattainment	Revoked in 2005
8-hour Ozone	Nonattainment	Serious Nonattainment
Carbon Monoxide	Unclassified	Unclassified/Attainment
Nitrogen Dioxide	Attainment	Unclassified/Attainment
Sulfur Dioxide	Attainment	Unclassified/Attainment
24-hour Respirable Particulate Matter (PM ₁₀)	Nonattainment	Unclassified/Attainment
Annual PM ₁₀	Nonattainment	
24-hour Fine Particulate Matter (PM _{2.5})	—	Nonattainment
Annual PM _{2.5}	Unclassified	Nonattainment

Source: CARB 2024.

NATURALLY OCCURRING ASBESTOS

An asbestos map of western El Dorado County prepared by the County shows the location of individual parcels and areas in the following four categories that either contain NOA or are considered to be subject to elevated risk of containing NOA (El Dorado County 2018):

- ▶ Found Area of NOA,
- ▶ Quarter Mile Buffer for Found Area of NOA,
- ▶ More Likely to Contain Asbestos, and
- ▶ Quarter Mile Buffer for More Likely to Contain Asbestos or Fault Line.

The Project site is not located in an area that contains NOA or is at an elevated risk of containing NOA (El Dorado County 2018).

3.3.2 Discussion

a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?

Less than Significant Impact. Applicable air quality attainment plans (AQAPs) (e.g. CARB 2023) for the region, including the MCAB portion of El Dorado County, were developed to bring the region into attainment as required by the federal and California Clean Air Acts. According to the EDCAQMD CEQA guidance (2002), projects are considered consistent with applicable air quality plans if they satisfy the following criteria:

- ▶ The project does not require a change in the existing land use designation, such as through a general plan amendment or rezone.
- ▶ The project does not exceed the “project alone” significance criteria.
- ▶ The project implements applicable emission reduction measures.
- ▶ The project complies with all applicable district rules and regulations.

The currently proposed project would not require a change in existing land use or zoning for the project site, and would consist of development which was included in growth projections used in the formulation of applicable AQAPs. Potential short-term construction and long-term operation associated with future development would be required to implement all applicable emission reduction measures and comply with applicable EDCAQMD rules and

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regulations. The "Project Alone" significance criteria is based on use of an emissions model to estimate a project's long term operational emissions of reactive organic gases (ROG) and oxides of nitrogen (NOx). According to EDCAQMD guidance, the current project is below the size of projects requiring emission modeling and can be presumed to have Less than Significant Impacts. Because the Project would not conflict or obstruct implementation of applicable air quality plans, impacts would be Less than Significant Impact.

b) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?

Less than Significant Impact. El Dorado County is currently designated as nonattainment with respect to the NAAQS and CAAQS for ozone, the NAAQS for PM_{2.5}, and the CAAQS for PM₁₀. The significance criteria for ozone is based on two directly emitted primary precursors of ozone, ROG and NOx. A project that emits 82 pounds per day or more of either of these pollutants would be considered to have a significant adverse impact on air quality. For the other criteria pollutants, including PM₁₀, a project is considered to have a significant impact on air quality if it will cause or contribute significantly to a violation of the applicable national or state ambient air quality standard(s). (EDCAQMD 2002)

The EDCAQMD has advised that the current project is below the size of projects requiring modeling of anticipated emissions. Future construction-related activities for new development could result in project-generated emissions of ROG, NO_x, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5} from construction activities (e.g., site preparation, grading, building construction, paving, and architectural coating), off-road equipment, material delivery, and worker commute trips. Additionally, long-term operational emissions associated with potential future new development at the Project site could include area sources (landscape equipment, consumer products, maintenance activities) and mobile sources (vehicle trips to the project site). Future development of the Project site (construction and operation) would be required to comply with applicable EDCAQMD conditions. Emissions resulting from future development would be negligible and would meet the County's screening criteria for projects that can be presumed to have Less than Significant Impact construction and operational impacts without the need for detailed calculations or modeling. Emissions would not exceed applicable thresholds and would not contribute substantially to the region's nonattainment status.

c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?

Less than Significant Impact. Sensitive receptors are generally considered to include those land uses where exposure to pollutants could result in health-related risks to sensitive individuals, such as children or the elderly. Residential dwellings, schools, hospitals, playgrounds, and similar facilities are of primary concern because of the potential presence of individuals particularly sensitive to pollutants and the potential for increased and prolonged exposure of individuals to pollutants. The closest sensitive receptors to the Project site are existing residences on adjacent properties, most of which are at least 100 feet from Project site boundaries.

Potential future development could result in the release of construction and operational pollutants. Construction-related activities could result in temporary, intermittent emissions of diesel PM from equipment exhaust, including during site preparation and grading. Future site development could also result in the operational emissions of diesel PM from the increase in vehicle trips and associated diesel PM emissions.

Given the limited extent of potential future development or improvements, emissions would be of negligible quantities and would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations. In addition, both the CDC and El Dorado County have identified the project site as an area that does not contain NOA. Therefore, future ground disturbance would not result in the potential for NOA to be mobilized and for particles to reach nearby parcels. Impacts would be Less than Significant Impact.

d) **Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?**

Less than Significant Impact Project development could result in the release of construction odors. Because construction-related odors would be intermittent, temporary, and would disperse rapidly with distance from the source, construction-related odors would not result in the frequent exposure of a substantial number of individuals to objectionable odors. With respect to operation, wireless communication uses are not land uses that typically generate excessive objectionable odors. Therefore, the proposed project would not generate objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people.

3.4 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
IV. Biological Resources.				
Would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

3.4.1 Environmental Setting

The Project site is comprised of a 12.62-acre parcel, Assessor’s Parcel Number (APN) 060-420-028, located along Garden Valley Road (Figure 2-2). The Project site is located in Section 34, Township 12N, and Range 10E, on the Garden Valley, California 7.5-minute USGS quadrangle.

The Project site and surrounding properties are located in a rural setting predominately characterized by a mixture of oak and pine woodlands and annual grasslands. The property is gently sloping, with elevations ranging from approximately 1,950 to 2,000 feet above mean sea level (msl). There are no riparian features on the project site.

Existing development on-site consists of a single-family residence and driveway. Adjoining properties support rural residences..

3.4.2 Discussion

Information on sensitive biological resources previously recorded near the Project site was collected through a search of the following databases and background reports:

- ▶ California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB) record search within the Garden Valley, CA; Coloma, CA; Slate Mountain, CA; Georgetown, CA: US Geological Service (USGS) 24K Quadrangle (CDFW 2024a);
- ▶ California Native Plant Society, Rare Plant Inventory search of the Shingle Springs, Pilot Hill, Coloma, Garden Valley, Placerville, Fiddletown, Latrobe, Folsom SE, and Clarksville USGS 7.5-minute quadrangles (CNPS 2024b);
- ▶ US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Information for Planning and Conservation project planning tool (USFWS 2024a);
- ▶ USFWS National Wetlands Inventory website (USFWS 2024b);
- ▶ USGS National Hydrography Dataset (USGS 2024a);
- ▶ CDFW Terrestrial Connectivity Data and Resources (CDFW 2024b, Spencer et al. 2010);
- ▶ NRCS Web Soil Survey (NRCS 2024);
- ▶ Site-specific Rare Plant Survey Report (EBI Consulting 2024a)(Attachment A);
- ▶ Site-specific Biological Resources Evaluation Report (EBI Consulting 2024b)(Attachment A);
- ▶ Conservation and Open Space Element of the El Dorado County General Plan, as amended (EDC 2004a).

- a) **Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or the US Fish and Wildlife Service?**

Less than Significant Impact. Special-status species are defined as species that are legally protected or that are otherwise considered sensitive by federal, state, or local resource agencies, which fall into one or more of the following categories:

- ▶ officially listed under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) or the California Endangered Species Act (CESA) as endangered, threatened, or rare;
- ▶ a candidate for state or federal listing as endangered, threatened, or rare;
- ▶ taxa (i.e., taxonomic category or group) that meet the criteria for listing, even if not currently included on any list, as described in Section 15380 of the State CEQA Guidelines;
- ▶ species identified by CDFW as Species of Special Concern;
- ▶ species listed as Fully Protected under the California Fish and Game Code;
- ▶ species afforded protection under local planning documents; and

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- ▶ taxa considered by CDFW to be “rare, threatened, or endangered in California” and assigned a California rare plant rank (CRPR). The CDFW system includes five rarity and endangerment ranks for categorizing plant species of concern. The three relevant to the project are summarized as follows:
 - CRPR 1A - Plants presumed to be extinct in California;
 - CRPR 1B - Plants that are rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere; and
 - CRPR 2 - Plants that are rare, threatened, or endangered in California but more common elsewhere.

Special-Status Plants

The Project site is not within an area designated by the County as a preferred ecological preserve for rare plants, as the project is not located within a General Plan Ecological Preserve or within a Rare Plant Mitigation area (EDC 2024a) (Figure 3-1). The California Native Plant Protection Act (NPPA) (California Fish and Game Code Section 1900-1913) authorizes the Fish and Game Commission to designate plants as endangered or rare and prohibits take of any such plants, except as authorized in limited circumstances. The California Native Plant Protection Act (California Fish and Game Code Section 1900–1913) prohibits the taking, possessing, or sale of any plants with a state designation of rare, threatened, or endangered (as defined by CDFW). The California Native Plant Society (CNPS) maintains a list of plant species native to California that have low population numbers, limited distribution, or are otherwise threatened with extinction. Plants are given one of four rankings, with Rank 1 being the rarest and Rank 4 including plants of the least rarity. This information is published in the Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants of California (CNPS 2001). Potential impacts to populations of CNPS-listed plants in the Rank 1 and Rank 2 categories receive consideration under CEQA review. According to a biological resources assessment conducted by Lotis Environmental, LLC (May, 2025), no plants under the jurisdiction of the NPPA or CNPS Rank 1 or Rank 2 listed plant species are known to occur on the project site.

Special-Status Wildlife

A biological resources evaluation for special-status wildlife species was completed for the Project site in May 2025 Lotis Environmental, LLC (Attachment A). No special-status habitat or wildlife species were observed at the Project site during reconnaissance-level field surveys in 2024. According to a review of database searches, there are 3 special-status wildlife species known to occur in the Project region.

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

No Impact. According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service National Wetlands Inventory, there are no wetlands or aquatic habitats on the subject parcel. There is no riparian habitat or other sensitive habitats on the project site. Project implementation would have no impact on these resources.

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

Less than Significant Impact. Lotis Environmental LLC. has reviewed the United States Geological Survey’s (USGS) topographic map as well as the USFWS National Wetlands Inventory Map (NWIM) to determine if the lease area and easements would have an impact on any wetlands. Lotis determined that the proposed undertaking is not located in

a recognized national wetland area, however Lotis recommends best management practices be incorporated to protect adjacent habitats and wetlands from runoff caused by impervious surfaces. The closest USFWS identified wetland is approximately 322 feet southwest of the proposed undertaking's access easement. A wetlands map is included in this report to show all wetlands in the surrounding area. As such, based on the review, the Facility is not anticipated to impact identified wetlands.

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?

Less than Significant Impact. The Project site does not support habitat for native resident or migratory fish. Based on CDFW's *California Essential Habitat Connectivity* project, which includes an evaluation of areas of contiguous natural habitat blocks and linkages between these blocks in California, the Project site is not located within an Essential Connectivity Area, Natural Landscape Block (defined as relatively natural habitat blocks that support native biodiversity) or Natural Areas Small, which are designated important blocks of habitat and movement corridors for wildlife. The Project site is also not within the range of mule deer migration. The USFWS has indicated its concern of the impact of towers on migrating bird populations. The proposed undertaking and design process for this undertaking could not conform to all the USFWS recommendations to decrease potential effects on migratory birds. Lotis has assessed the potential habitat for migratory birds and has determined that potential habitat is present at and around the proposed undertaking. This habitat includes a few wetlands, wooded land, and open fields in the surrounding area. The siting of this proposed undertaking has placed it within disturbed habitat. It should also be noted that the proposed undertaking is located within 2.04 miles of an existing 103-foot monopine telecommunication tower to the southwest. Based upon the efforts during this IBA as well as the current data made available, surrounding habitat has the potential to support migratory birds; however, potential negative effects of a nearby tower are unknown and the addition of another tower may or may not negatively affect migratory birds.

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

No Impact. The project will not interfere or conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources. The adopted El Dorado County General Plan Conservation and Open Space Element discusses significant natural resources in the County, including aquatic habitat, special-status species, and sensitive habitats, and establishes goals, objectives, and policies related to these topics. Relevant policies from the El Dorado County General Plan include:

- ▶ **Objective 7.3.3:** Wetlands - Protection of natural and man-made wetlands, vernal pools, wet meadows, and riparian areas from impacts related to development for their importance to wildlife habitat, water purification, scenic values, and unique and sensitive plant life.
 - **Policy 7.3.3.1:** For projects that would result in the discharge of material to or that may affect the function and value of river, stream, lake, pond, or wetland features, the application shall include a delineation of all such features. For wetlands, the delineation shall be conducted using the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Wetland Delineation Manual.
 - **Policy 7.3.3.5:** Rivers, streams, lakes and ponds, and wetlands shall be integrated into new development in such a way that they enhance the aesthetic and natural character of the site while disturbance to the resource is avoided or minimized and fragmentation is limited.
- ▶ **Objective 7.3.4:** Drainage - Protection and utilization of natural drainage patterns.
 - **Policy 7.3.4.1:** Natural watercourses shall be integrated into new development in such a way that they enhance the aesthetic and natural character of the site without disturbance.

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- **Policy 7.3.4.2:** Modification of natural stream beds and flow shall be regulated to ensure that adequate mitigation measures are utilized.
- ▶ **Objective 7.4.1:** Pine Hill Rare Plant Species - The County shall protect Pine Hill rare plant species and their habitats consistent with Federal and State laws.
 - **Policy 7.4.1.1:** The County shall continue to provide for the permanent protection of the eight sensitive plant species known as the Pine Hill endemics and their habitat through the establishment and management of ecological preserves consistent with County Code Chapter 130.71 and the USFWS *Gabbro Soil Plants for the Central Sierra Nevada Foothills Recovery Plan* (USFWS 2002).
 - **Policy 7.4.1.2:** Private land for Pine Hill rare plant preserve sites will be purchased only from willing sellers.
 - **Policy 7.4.1.3:** Limit land uses within established Pine Hill rare plant preserve areas to activities deemed compatible. Such uses may include passive recreation, research and scientific study, and education. In conjunction with use as passive recreational areas, develop a rare plant educational and interpretive program.
 - **Policy 7.4.1.4:** The Pine Hill Preserves, as approved by the County Board of Supervisors, shall be designated Ecological Preserve (-EP) overlay on the General Plan land use map.
 - **Policy 7.4.1.6:** All development projects involving discretionary review shall be designed to avoid disturbance or fragmentation of important habitats to the extent reasonably feasible. Where avoidance is not possible, the development shall be required to fully mitigate the effects of important habitat loss and fragmentation. Mitigation shall be defined in the Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan (INRMP) (see Policy 7.4.2.8 and Implementation Measure CO-M).
- ▶ **Objective 7.4.2:** Identify and Protect Resources - Identification and protection, where feasible, of critical fish and wildlife habitat including deer winter, summer, and fawning ranges; deer migration routes; stream and river riparian habitat; lake shore habitat; fish spawning areas; wetlands; wildlife corridors; and diverse wildlife habitat.
 - **Policy 7.4.2.5:** Setbacks from all rivers, streams, and lakes shall be included in the Zoning Ordinance for all ministerial and discretionary development projects.
 - **Policy 7.4.4.4:** For all new development projects or actions that result in impacts to oak woodlands and/or individual native oak trees, including Heritage Trees, the County shall require mitigation as outlined in the El Dorado County ORMP. The ORMP functions as the oak resources component of the County's biological resources mitigation program, identified in Policy 7.4.2.8

El Dorado County General Plan Biological Resources Policy Update and Oak Resources Management Plan

The El Dorado County Board of Supervisors adopted the Biological Resources Policy Update and ORMP in October 2017. The Biological Resources Policy Update included revisions to the General Plan objectives, policies, and implementation measures to establish a comprehensive Biological Resource Mitigation Program. The objective of this program is to conserve special-status species habitat, aquatic habitat, wetland and riparian habitat, habitat for migratory deer herds, and large expanses of native vegetation. The ORMP updated and revised the existing Oak Woodland Management Plan, and now defines mitigation requirements for impacts on oak woodlands, individual native oak trees, and heritage trees; and also outlines El Dorado County's strategy for oak resource management and conservation. The ORMP establishes an in-lieu fee payment option for impacts on oak woodlands and oak trees and identifies Priority Conservation Areas where oak woodland conservation efforts will be focused. The standards for implementing the County's ORMP are established in the County's Oak Resources Conservation Ordinance, found in County Code Chapter 130.39.

The ORMP designates three classes of protected oak resources: oak woodlands that have at least 10 percent oak canopy; heritage trees, defined as native oaks with a total trunk diameter at breast height of 36 inches or greater;

and individual oak trees, defined as native oak trees with a trunk diameter at breast height of 6 inches or greater that are not located in oak woodlands. An oak woodland removal permit is required prior to removal of oak trees that are part of an oak woodland and an oak tree removal permit is required prior to removal of heritage trees and individual oak trees. Mitigation for impacts on oak woodlands is based on the total area affected ranging from 1:1 mitigation for zero to 50 percent removal to 2:1 mitigation for more than 75 percent removal. Mitigation may be completed with a combination of the following options: acquisition of an off-site conservation easement, payment of in-lieu fees, or either on- or off-site replacement planting of up to 50 percent of the required mitigation area. Mitigation for removal of heritage or individual oak trees requires on- or off-site replacement planting or payment of in-lieu fees at a 3:1 (heritage trees) or 1:1 (individual oak trees) ratio, respectively, to the number of trunk inches removed. Any oak woodland preserved on site and all mitigation planting areas must be protected in perpetuity through deed restrictions or a conservation easement.

El Dorado County Ecological Preserve Fee Program

In 1998, the County established the Ecological Fee Program, through Ordinance 4500 and Resolution 205-98, to protect eight special-status gabbro soils plant species (i.e., El Dorado bedstraw, Layne's butterweed, Pine Hill ceanothus, Pine Hill flannel bush, Stebbins' morning glory, Bisbee Peak rush rose, El Dorado mule ears, Red Hills soaproot). The County has established the following three Mitigation Areas to protect gabbro soils rare plants through on-site and off-site mitigation requirements and options.

- ▶ Mitigation Area 0 – Lands within one of the five ecological preserves that comprise Pine Hill Preserve (i.e., Salmon Falls, Martel Creek, Pine Hill, Penny Lane Ridge, Cameron Park). The Mitigation Area 0 boundaries are the same as the General Plan Ecological Preserve overlay (approximately 3,450 acres).
- ▶ Mitigation Area 1 – Lands outside of Mitigation Area 0 that contain gabbro soils rare plant habitat (approximately 36,000 acres).
- ▶ Mitigation Area 2 – Lands outside of Mitigation Areas 0 and 1, but within the service area of the El Dorado Irrigation District, excluding parcels served by wells.

f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?

No Impact. There are no adopted Habitat Conservation Plans, Natural Community Conservation Plans, or other approved state habitat conservation plans that apply to the Project site. Compliance with County conservation requirements is described under question e.

3.5 CULTURAL RESOURCES

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
V. Cultural Resources.				
Would the project:				
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Substantially disturb human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3.5.1 Environmental Setting

A cultural resources records search was conducted in by the North Central Information Center (NCIC) of the California Historical Resources Information System at California State University, Sacramento. The records search was conducted to determine if archaeological or historic cultural resources had been previously recorded within the Project site, the extent to which the Project site had been previously surveyed, and the number and type of cultural resources within a 1/4-mile radius of the Project site.

The NCIC records search indicated that the proposed project area contains 0 recorded indigenous-period/ethnographic-period cultural resources and 0 recorded historic-period cultural resources. Additionally, 0 cultural resources study reports on file that covers a portion of the project site. Outside the proposed project area, but within the ¼ mile radius, the broader search area contains 0 recorded indigenous-period/ethnographic-period cultural resources and 1 recorded historic period cultural resources. Additionally, 1 cultural resources study reports are on file at NCIC that covers a portion of the broader search area.

This region is known as the ethnographic-period territory of the Nisenan, also called the Southern Maidu. The Project site has been previously surveyed with negative results for indigenous-period/ethnographic-period cultural resources. Given the extent of known cultural resources and the environmental setting, there is moderate potential for locating indigenous period/ethnographic-period cultural resources in the Project site.

3.5.2 Discussion

a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?

Less than Significant Impact. Section 15064.5 of the CEQA Guidelines notes that “a project with an effect that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment.” Substantial adverse changes include physical changes to the historic resource or to its immediate surroundings, such that the significance of the historic resource would be materially impaired. Lead agencies are expected to identify potentially feasible measures to mitigate significant adverse changes in the significance of a historic resource before they approve such projects. Historic resources are those that are:

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- listed in, or determined to be eligible for listing in, the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) (Public Resources Code Section 5024.1[k]);
- included in a local register of historic resources (Public Resources Code Section 5020.1) or identified as significant in an historic resource survey meeting the requirements of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1(g); or
- determined by a lead agency to be historically significant.

There are no known historic resources on the project site.

From NCIC records search of the 1871 GLO plat of T10N, R10E and the 1872 GLO plat of T11N, R10E shows Garden Valley Road in the vicinity of the proposed project area. The 1950 Garden Valley 7.5' USGS topographical map shows Garden Valley Road and Blue Ledge Lane in the vicinity of the proposed project area. Given the extent of the known cultural resources and patterns of local history, there is low potential for locating historic-period cultural resources within the proposed project area. nineteenth-century roads and Dutch Henry's Ranch in close proximity to the subject property.

b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?

Less than Significant Impact. As previously discussed, there are no records of archaeological resources at the Project site and the potential for discovery of archaeological material is estimated to be moderate (NCIC 2023). Nevertheless, the possibility remains that archaeological materials could be encountered during potential future ground disturbing activities. This impact could be potentially significant, however the implementation of standard conditions of approval to address discovery of human remains consistent with California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 would ensure that impacts on previously undiscovered human remains would be Less than Significant Impact.

c) Substantially disturb human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?

Less than Significant Impact. Based on documentary research, no evidence suggests that any marked or un-marked human interments associated with periods before or after European arrival in the project area are present within or in the immediate vicinity of the project site. However, the location of grave sites and Native American remains can occur outside of identified cemeteries or burial sites. Therefore, there is a possibility that unmarked, previously unknown Native American or other graves could be present within the project site and could be uncovered by project-related construction activities.

California law recognizes the need to protect Native American human burials, skeletal remains, and items associated with Native American burials from vandalism and inadvertent destruction. The procedures for the treatment of Native American human remains are contained in California Health and Safety Code Sections 7050.5 and PRC Section 5097.

These statutes require that, if human remains are discovered, potentially damaging ground-disturbing activities in the area of the remains shall be halted immediately, and the El Dorado County coroner shall be notified immediately. If the remains are determined by the coroner to be Native American, the Native American Heritage Center (NAHC) shall be notified within 24 hours, and the guidelines of NAHC shall be adhered to in the treatment and disposition of the remains. Following the coroner's findings, the NAHC-designated most likely descendants and the landowner shall determine the ultimate treatment and disposition of the remains and take appropriate steps to ensure that additional human interments, if present, are not disturbed. The responsibilities for acting upon notification of a discovery of Native American human remains are identified in PRC Section 5097.94.

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Compliance with California Health and Safety Code Sections 7050.5 and PRC Section 5097, would provide an opportunity to avoid or minimize the disturbance of human remains, and to appropriately treat any remains that are discovered.

3.6 ENERGY

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

3.6.1 Environmental Setting

California relies on a regional power system composed of a diverse mix of natural gas, petroleum, renewable, hydroelectric, and nuclear generation resources:

- ▶ **Natural gas:** Approximately 39% of California’s net electricity generation is fueled by natural gas, and six out of ten California households use natural gas for home heating (EIA 2024).
- ▶ **Petroleum:** Petroleum products (gasoline, diesel, jet fuel), which are consumed almost exclusively by the transportation sector, account for vast majority of the energy used in California by the transportation sector, with the rest provided by ethanol, natural gas, and electricity (Bureau of Transportation Statistics 2023). For the first time since 1953, transportation’s reliance on petroleum dipped below 90 percent in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic. Transportation’s petroleum dependence remained below 90 percent, at 89.7 percent in 2021 and 89.4 percent in 2022 (Bureau of Transportation Statistics 2023). California is the largest consumer of jet fuel and second-largest consumer of motor gasoline among the 50 states (EIA 2024).
- ▶ **Electricity and renewables:** In 2023, renewable resources, including hydroelectric power and small-scale solar power, supplied 54% of California’s in-state electricity generation. (EIA 2024).
- ▶ **Alternative fuels:** Conventional gasoline and diesel may be replaced (depending on the capability of the vehicle) with many alternative transportation fuels (e.g., biodiesel, hydrogen, electricity). Use of alternative fuels is encouraged through various statewide regulations and plans (e.g., Low Carbon Fuel Standard, 2022 Scoping Plan).

Electricity and natural gas service in the County is provided by Pacific Gas and Electric Company. However, like much of the rural development in the County, natural gas service is not available at the project site and propane, delivered to on-site propane tanks, would be used in place of natural gas if needed.

3.6.2 Discussion

- a) **Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?**

Less than Significant Impact. Construction and operation of the project will result in a small increase in energy use. Implementation of the Project would include construction of a concrete pad, installation of a metal monopine structure and associated facilities related cabinets. Grading for a driveway and parking area would also occur during the construction phase. During normal operation the facility will utilize electricity provided from the electrical grid. During potential future construction, energy would be required to operate and maintain construction equipment and transport construction materials. The one-time energy expenditure required to construct the physical buildings and infrastructure associated with potential future development would be nonrecoverable. The energy needs for potential future construction would be temporary and would not require additional capacity or substantially increase peak or base period demands for electricity and other forms of energy. Associated energy consumption would be typical of that associated with construction of a wireless communication facility. Non-renewable energy would not be consumed in a wasteful, inefficient, and unnecessary manner when compared to other construction activity in the region.

The potential for adding or modifying antennas or facilities related cabinets at the Project site could result in a negligible increase in electricity consumption in the region relative to existing conditions. However, the new facilities would be built in compliance with current Title 24 Building Energy Efficiency Standards (or the standards in effect at the time of construction), which serve to reduce wasteful, uneconomical, and unnecessary uses of energy for the State. Operation of the project would be typical of telecommunication facility uses requiring electricity for sending and receiving electromagnetic radiation and climate control for related equipment. The net fuel consumption associated with potential additional future vehicle trips to the Project site would not be considered wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary in comparison to other similar developments in the region. State and federal regulations regarding fuel efficiency standards for vehicles in California are designed to reduce wasteful, inefficient, and unnecessary use of energy for transportation

- b) **Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?**

Less than Significant Impact. Relevant plans that pertain to the efficient use of energy include the Energy Efficiency Action Plan, which focuses on energy efficiency and building decarbonization (CEC 2022). Potential future development at the Project site has the potential to result in a negligible increase in consumption of energy resources during construction and operation of new buildings and facilities. However, any future development would be minor and would be required to comply with all applicable requirements for construction and operational efficiency. The project would not conflict with or obstruct a State or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency.

3.7 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
VII. Geology and Soils.				
Would the project:				
a) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? (Refer to California Geological Survey Special Publication 42.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iv) Landslides?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994, as updated), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

3.7.1 Environmental Setting

Based on mapping by California Geologic Survey, the nearest Alquist-Priolo Fault Zones are approximately 45 miles from the project site (CDC 2024b). According to the General Plan EIR, "no active faults have been identified in El

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Dorado County. One fault, part of the Rescue Lineament–Bear Mountains fault zone, is classified as a well located late-Quaternary fault (CDC 1990); therefore, it represents the only potentially active fault in the county. It is part of the Foothill Fault Suture Zone system, which was considered inactive until a Richter scale magnitude 5.7 earthquake occurred near Oroville on August 1, 1975 (CDC 1990). All other faults located in El Dorado County are classified as pre-Quaternary (inactive).” (EDC 2003).

The local area geology is characterized by Tertiary pyroclastic and volcanic mudflow deposits within a larger area of undivided Paleozoic metasedimentary rocks.

There are two NRCS mapped soil units in the Project site:

- ▶ SkD, Sites loam , 15 to 30 percent slopes, 55.4% of Area of Interest (AOI)
- ▶ BpD, Boomer sites loam, 15 to 30 percent slopes, 31.9% AOI
- ▶ MaD, Mariposa gravelly silt loam, 3 to 30 percent slopes, 12.7% AOI

All two soil units are derived from residuum weathered from metasedimentary rock, are well-drained, and have medium runoff rates (NRCS 2024). Depth to bedrock for these soil units typically range from approximately 36 to 79 inches. According to the web soil survey, depth to water table is typically more than 80 inches in the well-drained El Dorado Area, California (CA624), soils (NRCS 2024).

The topography of the project site is gently sloping with generally no particular aspect.

Based on the soil characteristics, topography, depth to groundwater, and distance to active faults, there is low potential for geologic hazards from landslides, steep areas, rock falls, mud flows, liquefaction, and expansive soils at the project site.

3.7.2 Discussion

- a) **Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:**
 - i) **Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? (Refer to California Geological Survey Special Publication 42.)**

No Impact. As discussed in Section 3.7.1, the project site is not within an Alquist-Priolo Fault Zone and is located approximately 40 miles west of the nearest Alquist-Priolo Fault Zones (CDC 2024b). Therefore, the project would not cause substantial adverse effects involving rupture of a known earthquake fault.

- ii) **Strong seismic ground shaking?**

Less than Significant Impact As described in Section 3.7.1, the project site is not within an active fault zone; however, earthquakes in the region have potential to cause seismic ground shaking of low severity at the project site. Potential future construction and building design would be subject to the County’s Building Code (Title 110- Buildings and Construction), which incorporates the California Building Code and International Building Code standards. Potential future development at the Project site would involve limited excavation that would not alter seismic and fault conditions in the region and would not create new seismic events or exacerbate existing seismic hazards. Therefore, the project would not cause substantial adverse effects from strong seismic ground shaking.

iii) **Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?**

Less than Significant Impact. Liquefaction is the process in which water is combined with unconsolidated soils, generally from ground motion and pressure, which causes the soils to behave like a liquid (e.g., like “quicksand”). Liquefaction potential is determined from a variety of factors, including soil type, soil density, depth to the groundwater table, and the duration and intensity of ground shaking. Liquefaction is most likely to occur in deposits of water-saturated alluvium or areas of considerable artificial fill. Other types of seismic-related ground failure include ground lurching, differential settlement, and lateral spreading.

The potential for liquefaction and other seismic-related ground failure is considered low on the project site because the depth to groundwater is typically greater than 50 feet below ground surface and the distance to the nearest active fault is approximately 40 miles from the project site. The site is not located within a State Designated Seismic Hazard Zone for liquefaction (CDC 2024b). Therefore, the project would not cause substantial adverse effects from seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction.

iv) **Landslides?**

Less than Significant Impact. The project site has gently rolling hills typical of those in the western central Sierra Nevada foothills. The potential for landslides to occur is considered low given the lack of steep slopes within or adjacent to the project site. Therefore, the project would not cause substantial adverse effects from landslides.

b) **Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?**

Less than Significant Impact. Soil erosion refers to the process by which soil or earth material is loosened or dissolved and removed from its original location. Erosion can occur by varying processes and may occur in the project site where bare soil is exposed to wind or moving water (both rainfall and surface runoff). The processes of erosion are generally a function of material type, terrain steepness, rainfall or irrigation levels, surface drainage conditions, and general land uses.

The proposed Project would not affect erosion. Potential future development could include ground disturbance, such as excavation, grading, and trenching, which could increase the potential for erosion to occur. Future development will occur in compliance with the grading, erosion, and sediment control requirements outlined in Section 110.14 of the County municipal code. Potential future development would also comply with all applicable EDCAQMD fugitive dust requirements. Furthermore, if potential future development were to result in a disturbance area of more than 1 acre, it would be required to obtain coverage under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) General Permit for Discharges of Storm Water Associated with Construction Activity (Construction General Permit Order 2009-0009-DWQ). The Construction General Permit requires the development of a storm water pollution prevention plan (SWPPP), with best management practices (BMPs) for erosion and sediment control. The Construction General Permit is issued and enforced by the appropriate RWQCB. The Project site is within the jurisdiction of the Central Valley RWQCB and the project would be subject to all existing regulations associated with the protection of water quality, including erosion and sediment control.

Potential future development would comply with standard requirements for erosion control, thereby preventing substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil. Impacts would be Less than Significant Impact.

c) **Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse?**

Less than Significant Impact. The surrounding topography is moderately hilly, with relatively gentle slopes, and soils are typically well-drained stony, sandy, loams. The potential for on- or off-site landslides, lateral spreading, liquefaction, or collapse is considered low. Potential future development at the Project site would not cause soils to become unstable.

- d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994, as updated), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?

No Impact. Expansive soils are typically associated with fine-grained clayey soils that have the potential to shrink and swell with repeated cycles of wetting and drying. The Project site does not have fine-grained clayey soils; the soils found on the project site are loosely unconsolidated and well drained. There would be no impact.

- e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?

No Impact. Project proposes no septic tanks or alternative waster water disposal systems and there would be no impact.

- f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?

No Impact. As described in Section 3.7.1, the local area geology of the project is characterized by reidumm weathered from metasedimentary rock. The geomorphology of the area is igneous and metamorphic in nature. Because fossils typically occur in sedimentary rocks, which are not present within the Project site, potential future ground disturbance is unlikely to encounter a paleontological resource. No fossil-bearing strata or paleontological sites have been previously recorded or observed within or near the project site. The project would not destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature.

3.8 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
VIII. Greenhouse Gas Emissions.				
Would the project:				
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3.8.1 Environmental Setting

Certain gases in the earth’s atmosphere, classified as greenhouse gases (GHGs), play a critical role in determining the earth’s surface temperature. Solar radiation enters the earth’s atmosphere from space. Most solar radiation passes through GHGs; however, infrared radiation is absorbed by these gases. As a result, radiation that otherwise would have escaped back into space is instead “trapped,” resulting in a warming of the atmosphere. This phenomenon, known as the greenhouse effect, is responsible for maintaining a habitable climate on earth.

Prominent GHGs contributing to the greenhouse effect are carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane, nitrous oxide, hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons, and sulfur hexafluoride. GHG emissions contributing to global climate change are attributable, in large part, to human activities associated with on-road and off-road transportation, industrial/manufacturing, electricity generation by utilities and consumption by end users, residential and commercial on-site fuel usage, and agriculture and forestry. It is “extremely likely” that more than half of the observed increase in global average surface temperature from 1951 to 2010 was caused by the anthropogenic increase in GHG concentrations and other anthropogenic factors together (IPCC 2014).

Climate change is a global problem. GHGs are global pollutants because even local GHG emissions contribute to global impacts. GHGs have long atmospheric lifetimes (one to several thousand years) and persist in the atmosphere long enough to be dispersed around the globe. Although the lifetime of any particular GHG molecule is dependent on multiple variables and cannot be determined with any certainty, it is understood that more CO₂ is emitted into the atmosphere than is sequestered by ocean uptake, vegetation, and other forms of sequestration (IPCC 2013).

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSION SOURCES AND SINKS

As discussed previously, GHG emissions are attributable in large part to human activities. CO₂ is the main byproduct of fossil fuel combustion. Methane, a highly potent GHG, primarily results from off-gassing (the release of chemicals from nonmetallic substances under ambient or greater pressure conditions) and is largely associated with agricultural practices, organic material decomposition in landfills, and the burning of forest fires. Nitrous oxide emissions are largely attributable to agricultural practices and soil management. CO₂ sinks, or reservoirs, include vegetation and the ocean, which absorb CO₂ through sequestration and dissolution (CO₂ dissolving into the water); respectively, these are the two of the most common processes for removing CO₂ from the atmosphere.

STATEWIDE GHG EMISSION TARGETS AND THE CLIMATE CHANGE SCOPING PLAN

Reducing GHG emissions in California has been the focus of the state government for approximately two decades (State of California 2018). GHG emission targets established by the state legislature include reducing statewide GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020 (Assembly Bill [AB] 32 of 2006) and reducing them to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030 (Senate Bill [SB] 32 of 2016). EO S-3-05 calls for statewide GHG emissions to be reduced to 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050. EO B-55-18 calls for California to achieve carbon neutrality by 2045 and achieve and maintain net negative GHG emissions thereafter. These targets align with the scientifically established levels needed globally to limit the rise in global temperature to no more than 2 degrees Celsius, the warming threshold at which major climate disruptions, such as super droughts and rising sea levels, are projected; these targets also pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase even further to 1.5 degrees Celsius (UN 2015).

CARB adopted the *Final 2022 Scoping Plan for Achieving Carbon Neutrality* (2022 Scoping Plan) on December 16, 2022, which traces the State's pathway to achieve its carbon neutrality and an 85 percent reduction in 1990 emissions goal by 2045. It identifies the reductions needed by each GHG emission sector (e.g., transportation [including off-road mobile source emissions], industry, electricity generation, agriculture, commercial and residential, pollutants with high global warming potential, and recycling and waste) to achieve these goals. (CARB 2022)

Unlike thresholds of significance established for criteria air pollutants in the EDCAQMD's CEQA guidance (EDCAQMD 2002), the EDCAQMD has not adopted GHG emissions thresholds for land use development projects. In the absence of County adopted thresholds, El Dorado County AQMD recommends using the adopted thresholds of other lead agencies, which are based on consistency with the goals of AB 32. Since climate change is a global problem and the location of the individual source of GHG emissions is somewhat irrelevant, it's appropriate to use thresholds established by other jurisdictions as a basis for impact significance determinations. Projects exceeding these thresholds would have a potentially significant impact and be required to mitigate those impacts to a Less than Significant Impact level. Until the County adopts a CAP consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.5, and/or establishes GHG thresholds, the El Dorado County AQMD has recommended the use of thresholds adopted by the Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District (SMAQMD). The thresholds of significance established by SMAQMD, and used by EDCAQMD, were developed to identify emissions levels for which a project would not be expected to substantially conflict with existing California legislation adopted to reduce statewide GHG emissions needed to move towards climate stabilization. Per the SMAQMD Thresholds of Significance Table, most recently updated in 2020, if a proposed project results in emissions less than 1,100 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent per year (MTCO₂e/yr) during both construction and/or operation, the proposed project would result in a less-than-significant impact related to GHG emissions.

3.8.2 Discussion

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

Less than Significant Impact. As stated above, the EDCAQMD recommends the use of thresholds adopted by the SMAQMD for assessing the significance of GHG emissions from individual projects. The SMAQMD thresholds were developed to identify emissions levels for which a project would not be expected to substantially conflict with existing California legislation adopted to reduce statewide GHG emissions needed to move towards climate stabilization. Within these thresholds is the criteria that if a proposed project results in emissions less than 1,100 MTCO₂e/yr during both construction and operation, the proposed project would result in a less-than-significant impact related to GHG emissions. Although specific GHG emissions have not been calculated for the future development that could occur as a result of the proposed Project, it can still be confirmed that emissions from construction and operation would be below the 1,100 MTCO₂e/yr threshold. For comparison, in the Draft EIR for the Dorado Oaks Tentative Subdivision Map Project (which included 157 single-family

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residential lots and 225 multi-family lots covering approximately 48 acres, approximately 18 acres of roadway and intersection improvements, roughly 3 acres of public parks, and installation of utility connections), first year construction GHG emissions were modelled at 1,044 MTCO_{2e}, below the threshold of 1,100 MTCO_{2e} (Draft EIR available at Dorado Oaks Tentative Subdivision Map, Draft EIR (July 2021)). If construction at this scale would result in GHG emissions below the 1,100 MTCO_{2e} threshold, then the relatively modest level of potential future construction and operational activity that may result from the proposed Project would also generate GHG emissions below this threshold. Modelled operational impacts for the Dorado Oaks Project are 1,906 MTCO_{2e}, exceeding the 1,100 MTCO_{2e} threshold. However, Operation of the proposed telecommunications facility, involving electricity usage for this one facility and only occasional vehicle trips for inspection and maintenance as well as occasional backup generator testing and use, would result in GHG emissions substantially less the Dorado Oaks project and below the 1,100 MTCO_{2e} threshold.

Because both the construction and operational GHG emissions of the proposed telecommunication facility would be below 1,100 MTCO_{2e}, any potential impacts related to GHG emissions would be less than significant impact. Because emissions would be Less than Significant Impact, the project also would not conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases.

3.9 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
IX. Hazards and Hazardous Materials.				
Would the project:				
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and/or accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?

- | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
-

3.9.1 Environmental Setting

There are no hazardous materials sites at or near the Project site (DTSC 2024, *also CA Water Board Geotracker*). There are no existing or proposed schools within 0.25 miles of the project site. The nearest school is Golden Sierra Junior/Senior High School, approximately .5 miles southeast of the project site. The Georgetown Airport is the closest public airport, located approximately 5.0 miles north of the project site.

The project and surrounding vicinity are subject to the County’s 2022 General Plan Safety Element Update (EDC 2004a), as well as the El Dorado County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan (EDCHMP) (EDCSO 2024), which provides guidance for the County’s response in emergency situations, including wildfire and emergency evacuation.

According to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE), the project site is in a state responsibility area (SRA) within a very high fire hazard severity zone (CAL FIRE 2024). . The El Dorado County Fire Department provides fire and initial emergency medical services to the Project site. Wildfire risks are discussed further in Section 3.20. Development at the Project site would be subject to vegetation management requirements of El Dorado County Municipal Code Chapter 8.09 addressing Hazardous Vegetation and Defensible Space.

3.9.2 Discussion

- a) **Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?**

Less than Significant Impact. A hazardous material is defined as any material that due to its quantity, concentration, physical or chemical characteristics, poses a significant present or potential hazard to human health or to the environment if released. Potential future development at the Project site may involve the temporary use, transport, and disposal of hazardous materials in the form of inorganic and organic chemicals, solvents, paints, oil, gasoline, cleansers. However, any future construction-related transport, use, and disposal of hazardous materials would be temporary, and all materials would be used, stored, and disposed of in accordance with applicable laws and regulations and manufacturers’ instructions. Furthermore, any emissions from the use of such materials would be temporary in nature and localized to the Project site.

Land uses that involve the routine transport, use, and disposal of hazardous materials include but are not limited to manufacturing plants, dry cleaning facilities, gas stations, agricultural properties, recycling centers, refineries, and shipyards. Potential future development at the Project site would not involve activities that involve the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials. Any hazardous materials needed for ongoing maintenance and landscaping activities (e.g., solvents, paints, and pesticides) would be used and stored in small quantities typical of residential land uses. Therefore, the Project would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment.

- b) **Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and/or accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?**

Less than Significant Impact. Refer to Section 3.9.2(a) above. Potential future construction at the Project site could involve the temporary use, transport, and disposal of hazardous materials. This would be required to comply with federal, state, and County regulations relating to control of hazardous materials. Compliance with these regulations would reduce the likelihood of accidents and risks associated with release of hazardous materials. Potentially hazardous materials would be contained, stored, and used in accordance with manufacturers' instructions and handled in compliance with applicable standards and regulations.

Once operational, telecommunication facility land use would not involve activities that often give rise to concerns regarding hazardous materials. Therefore, the project would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset or accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment.

- c) **Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?**

No Impact. As discussed in Section 3.9.1, there are no existing or proposed schools within 0.25 miles of the project site. The closest school, Golden Sierra High School, is located approximately 0.3 miles north of the project site. Therefore, the project would have no impact related to the emission or handling of hazardous materials, substances, or waste within 0.25 miles of an existing or proposed school.

- d) **Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code §65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?**

No Impact. The Project site is not located near any hazardous materials sites on the California Department of Toxic Substance Control (DTSC) EnviroStor or SWQCB's Geotracker database (DTSC 2024). The Project site is not located at a site that is mapped as likely to contain NOA (CDC 2000). There would be no impact.

- e) **For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?**

No Impact. The Georgetown Airport is the closest public airport, located approximately 5.3 miles north of the project site. The Project site is not within the airport's land use plan. There would be no impact.

- f) **Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?**

No Impact. Potential future development at the Project site would occur in a manner consistent with the existing zoning for the site and planned population growth for the region. There would be no alteration of roadways that could hinder emergency response or evacuation. For each potential future point of access, an encroachment permit would be obtained from the County Department of Transportation and driveways would be constructed in accordance with County Design and Improvements Standards Manual. The Project would not impair or physically interfere with implementation of the EDCHMP.

- g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires?

Less than Significant Impact. Compliance with existing laws and regulation, such as El Dorado County Municipal Code Chapter 8.09 addressing Hazardous Vegetation and Defensible Space, the project would not expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires.

3.10 HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

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

3.10.1 Environmental Setting

According to the USGS Watershed Boundary Dataset, the project site is in the r South Fork American River Subbasin and the Middle South Fork American River Watershed (USGS 2024). There is a seasonal stream, Big Sailor Creek that begins approximately 660 feet to the south of the project site and flows north to south. approximately 1.25 miles to the southeast where it joins Little Sailor Creek to then discharge into an unnamed lake.

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According to groundwater basin maps developed under the California Department of Water Resources' (DWR) Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA), the Project site is located within a non-basin area, which refers to areas that are not part of a defined groundwater basin (DWR 2021).

According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the project site is within an area of minimal flood hazard (FEMA 2008). The project site is not within a tsunami hazard area (CDC 2024c) and is not in proximity to an enclosed body of water that is susceptible to seiche.

3.10.2 Discussion

a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality?

Less than Significant Impact. Potential future development at new associated with the proposed Project could adversely affect surface or groundwater quality through ground disturbance, such as excavation, grading, and trenching, as well as construction of new areas of impervious surfaces.

The Project site is under the jurisdiction of the Central Valley RWQCB. The Central Valley RWQCB adopted the Water Quality Control Plan for the Sacramento and San Joaquin River Basins (Basin Plan) in 1975, with the current fifth edition approved in 2019, as amended in 2020. The purpose of the Basin Plan is to designate beneficial uses of waters within the Sacramento and San Joaquin River basins, establish water quality objectives to protect those beneficial uses, and implement a program needed to achieve those objectives. The Basin Plan establishes water quality standards for both surface and ground waters (Central Valley RWQCB 2019).

Discretionary projects must comply with the County's West Slope Development and Redevelopment Standards (EDC 2024c), the storm water management plan (SWMP) for Western El Dorado County (EDC 2004b), and the County's Grading, Erosion, and Sediment Control Ordinance (EDC 2013). Any future development with a disturbance area of more than 1 acre (43,560 sq. ft.) would also be required to obtain coverage under the NPDES General Permit for Discharges of Storm Water Associated with Construction Activity (Construction General Permit Order 2022-0057-DWQ). Through compliance with all applicable regulations and requirements, potential future development at the Project site would not violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality.

The unincorporated portion of El Dorado County's west slope, including the Project site, is subject to the State of California's Phase II NPDES municipal separate storm sewer system (MS4) permit. As such, the County's post-construction water quality requirements follow those outlined in Section E.12 of the MS4 permit. Under the MS4 Permit, projects that create or replace less than 2,500 square feet of impervious surface are exempt from post construction requirements; small projects, including single family homes, which create or replace between 2,500 and 4,999 square feet of impervious surface, must follow a set of standard site design measures, found in Section E.12.b of the MS4 Permit (EDC 2024c). Future development at the Project site will be required to comply with applicable NPDES permit requirements, which may include treatment of stormwater prior to the water leaving the site or entering a waterbody, submittal of an Erosion and Sediment Control Plan, and/or other requirements, as applicable. Through compliance with all applicable standard County and State regulations, impacts would be Less than Significant Impact.

b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?

Less than Significant Impact. Potential future development at the Project site could include new well drilling and/or introduction of new impervious surfaces. The Project is in a non-basin area and any new future wells would be subject to applicable County permitting requirements, preventing a substantial decrease in groundwater supplies.

Potential new impervious cover would not reach levels that could substantially affect groundwater recharge; however, development would be subject to applicable stormwater infrastructure requirements for treating stormwater runoff and allowing it to percolate back into the soil. Therefore, potential future development would avoid substantial impacts to groundwater supplies and groundwater recharge.

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

i) Result in substantial on- or offsite erosion or siltation.

Less than Significant Impact. Potential future development that includes ground disturbance, such as excavation, grading, and trenching, could increase the potential for erosion to occur. As described under Question a), potential future development would be required to comply with all applicable regulations and requirements, including the NPDES MS4 permit; the County SWMP, the County Grading, Erosion, and Sediment Control Ordinance; and, if disturbance is greater than 1 acre, the Construction General Permit issued by the Central Valley RWQCB, which would require a SWPPP with BMPs to control erosion. With adherence to applicable rules and regulations and implementation of BMPs, potential future development would result in a Less than Significant Impact related to erosion and siltation.

ii) Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or offsite.

Less than Significant Impact Potential future development at the Project site could include introduction of new impervious surfaces; however, this would be subject to applicable stormwater infrastructure requirements for treating stormwater runoff and allowing it to percolate back into the soil. Therefore, potential future development would not increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner that would result in flooding on- or off-site.

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

Less than Significant Impact. Potential future development at the Project site could include introduction of new impervious surfaces and ground disturbance, such as excavation, grading, and trenching. However, potential future development would be required to comply with all applicable regulations related to stormwater drainage and water quality protection. Therefore, the Project would not 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.

iv) Impede or redirect flood flows?

Less than Significant Impact. As discussed in Section 3.10.1, the project site is within an area of minimal flood hazard (FEMA 2008). Therefore, any development on the Project site would not result in impacts related to impeding or redirecting flood flows.

d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?

No Impact. As discussed in Section 3.10.1, the Project site is not within a flood hazard zone, a tsunami hazard area, or in proximity to an enclosed body of water that is susceptible to seiche (FEMA 2008; CDC 2024c). Therefore, the Residences Project would not risk release of pollutants due to project inundation in flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones.

e) **Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?**

Less than Significant Impact. The Project site is in a non-basin area and is not subject to a sustainable groundwater management plan. Potential future development at the Project site would be required to comply with requirements of the NPDES MS4 permit, the County SWMP, the County Grading, Erosion, and Sediment Control Ordinance, and, if disturbance is greater than 1 acre, the Construction General Permit issued by the Central Valley RWQCB. During potential future development, BMPs would be implemented during construction activities to prevent stormwater contamination, control sedimentation, and erosion, and comply with stormwater discharge requirements. Because potential future development would comply with applicable rules and regulations and implementation of BMPs, the project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of the Basin Plan.

3.11 LAND USE AND PLANNING

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
XI. Land Use and Planning.				
Would the project:				
a) Physically divide an established community?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

3.11.1 Environmental Setting

The Project site is in a rural residential setting in the unincorporated community of Garden Valley, in El Dorado County, in the Sierra Nevada foothills. The Project site and surrounding properties are predominately characterized by mixed pine and oak woodlands and annual grasslands. Adjoining properties support rural residences, with most parcels in the region being privately owned.

The project site is designated as MDR (Medium Density Residential) in the County General Plan Land Use Diagram (EDC 2004a). As described in the County’s General Plan Land Use Element, the MDR designation establishes areas for residential development.

The zoning designation for the Project is 3A, which identifies lands that are suitable for residential development based on topography, access, groundwater or septic capability, and other infrastructural requirements. The minimum lot size designator for the Project site is 3 acres.

3.11.2 Discussion

a) Physically divide an established community?

No Impact. As described in Section 3.11.1, the project site is surrounded by existing residential and open space development and would not result in the physical division of an established community or conflict with existing land use patterns. The project site is not a pathway connecting one part of the community to another. The project proposes a use that is compatible with surrounding uses and with the site’s General Plan land use designation.

b) Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?

No Impact. As discussed in Section 3.11.1, the project site is designated for MDR land uses and is zoned R3A. The proposed project is consistent with the objectives of these designations, including minimum parcel size requirements. The proposed project would not conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation and the construction of a telecommunications facility has been determined to be consistent in the R3A zone with the approval of a Conditional Use Permit.

3.12 MINERAL RESOURCES

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
XII. Mineral Resources.				
Would the project:				
a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

3.12.1 Environmental Setting

The California Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975 requires the State Geologist to classify land into Mineral Resource Zones (MRZ) according to the known or inferred mineral potential of that land. Areas classified as MRZ-2 include areas where adequate information indicates that significant mineral deposits are present, or where it is judged that a high likelihood exists for their presence. The process is based solely on geology, without regard to existing land use or land ownership. The primary goal of mineral land classification is to ensure that the mineral resource potential of land is recognized by local government decision-makers and considered before land-use decisions that could preclude mining are made. However, according to the El Dorado County General Plan EIR, the project site is not within an area classified as MRZ-2 (EDC 2003).

3.12.2 Discussion

- 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?**

No Impact. The Project site’s land use designation is MDR, which does allow for mineral resource extraction with an approved Conditional Use Permit. Additionally, the project site is outside of a mineral resource overlay designation. The proposed Project would not preclude future mineral resource extraction after the minor amount of project development. However, because the Project site is not known to support significant mineral deposits, any future development would not result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource of regional value or of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a land use plan.

- 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?**

No Impact. The Project site’s land use designation is MDR, which does not allow for mineral resource extraction. The proposed Project would not preclude future mineral resource extraction after the minor amount of project development. However, because the Project site is not known to support significant mineral deposits, any future development would not result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource of regional value or of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a land use plan.

3.13 NOISE

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

3.13.1 Environmental Setting

ACOUSTIC FUNDAMENTALS

Acoustics is the scientific study that evaluates perception, propagation, absorption, and reflection of sound waves. Sound is a mechanical form of radiant energy, transmitted by a pressure wave through a solid, liquid, or gaseous medium. Sound that is loud, disagreeable, unexpected, or unwanted is generally defined as noise. Noise is typically expressed in decibels (dB), which is a common measurement of sound energy. Definitions of acoustical terms used in this section are provided in Table 3-3.

Table 3-3 Acoustic Term Definitions

Term	Definition
Noise	Noise is generally defined as sound that is loud, disagreeable, unexpected, or unwanted.
Decibel (dB)	Sound levels are measured using the decibel scale, developed to relate to the range of human hearing. A decibel is logarithmic; it does not follow normal algebraic methods and cannot be directly summed. For example, a 65-dB source of sound, such as a truck, when joined by another 65-dB source results in a sound amplitude of 68 dB, not 130 dB (i.e., doubling the source strength increases the sound pressure by 3 dB). A sound level increase of 10 dB corresponds to 10 times the acoustical energy, and an increase of 20 dB equates to a 100-fold increase in acoustical energy.
A-weighted decibel (dBA)	The human ear is not equally sensitive to loudness at all frequencies in the audible spectrum. To better relate overall sound levels and loudness to human perception, frequency-dependent weighting networks were developed, identified as A through E. There is a strong correlation between the way humans perceive sound and A-weighted sound levels. For this reason, the A-weighted sound levels are used to predict community response to noise from the environment,

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Term	Definition
	including noise from transportation and stationary sources, and are expressed as A-weighted decibels. All sound levels discussed in this section are A-weighted decibels unless otherwise noted.
Equivalent Noise Level (L_{eq})	The average noise level during a specified time period; that is, the equivalent steady-state noise level in a stated period of time that would contain the same acoustic energy as the time-varying noise level during the same period (i.e., average noise level).
Maximum Noise Level (L_{max})	The highest instantaneous noise level during a specified time period.

Source: Caltrans 2013.

Noise Generation and Attenuation

Noise can be generated by many sources, including mobile sources such as automobiles, trucks, and airplanes and stationary sources such as activity at construction sites, machinery, and commercial and industrial operations. As sound travels through the atmosphere from the source to the receiver, noise levels attenuate (i.e., decrease) depending on ground absorption characteristics, atmospheric conditions, and the presence of physical barriers. Sound from a localized source (i.e., a point source) propagates uniformly outward in a spherical pattern. The sound level attenuates at a rate of 6 dB for each doubling of distance from a point source. Noise from a line source, such as a road or highway, propagates outward in a cylindrical pattern, often referred to as cylindrical spreading. Sound levels attenuate at a rate of 3 dB for each doubling of distance from a line source. Noise attenuation from ground absorption and reflective wave canceling provides additional attenuation associated with geometric spreading. For acoustically absorptive sites such as soft dirt, grass, or scattered bushes and trees, additional ground-attenuation value of 1.5 dB per doubling of distance is normally assumed. When added to the attenuation rate associated with cylindrical spreading, the additional ground attenuation results in an overall drop-off rate of 4.5 dB per doubling of distance. This would hold true for point sources, resulting in an overall drop-off rate of up to 7.5 dB per doubling of distance.

Atmospheric conditions such as wind speed, wind direction, turbulence, temperature gradients, and humidity also alter the propagation of noise and affect levels at a receiver. Furthermore, the presence of a barrier (e.g., topographic feature, intervening building, and dense vegetation) between the source and the receptor can provide substantial attenuation of noise levels at the receiver. Natural (e.g., berms, hills, and dense vegetation) and human-made features (e.g., buildings and walls) may function as noise barriers.

To provide some context to noise levels described throughout this section, common sources of noise and associated noise levels are presented in Table 3-4.

Table 3-4 Typical Noise Levels

Common Outdoor Activities	Noise Level (dB)	Common Indoor Activities
	110	Rock band
Jet flyover at 1,000 feet	100	
Gas lawnmower at 3 feet	90	
Diesel truck moving at 50 mph at 50 feet	80	Food blender at 3 feet, garbage disposal at 3 feet
Noisy urban area, gas lawnmower at 100 feet	70	Vacuum cleaner at 10 feet, normal speech at 3 feet
Commercial area, heavy traffic at 300 feet	60	
Quiet urban daytime	50	Large business office, dishwasher in next room
Quiet urban nighttime	40	Theater, large conference room (background)
Quiet suburban nighttime	30	Library, bedroom at night, concert hall (background)
Quiet rural nighttime	20	Broadcast/recording studio
	10	

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Threshold of human hearing	0	Threshold of human hearing
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Notes: dB = A-weighted decibels; mph = miles per hour

Source: Caltrans 2013.

Effects of Noise on Humans

Exposure to excessive noise may result in physical damage to the auditory system, which may lead to gradual or traumatic hearing loss. Gradual hearing loss is caused by sustained exposure to moderately high noise levels over a period of time; traumatic hearing loss is caused by sudden exposure to extremely high noise levels over a short period. Non-auditory behavioral effects of noise on humans are primarily subjective effects such as annoyance, nuisance, and dissatisfaction, which lead to interference with activities such as communications, sleep, and learning.

EXISTING NOISE SOURCES AND LEVELS

The project will be located within a residential setting. Existing noise sources and levels are consistent with typical larger lot residential use such as automobiles, lawn care equipment and HVAC equipment, etc

NOISE- AND VIBRATION-SENSITIVE LAND USES AND RECEPTORS

Noise- and vibration-sensitive land uses generally include those uses where noise exposure could result in health-related risks to individuals, places where a quiet setting is an essential element of the intended purpose (e.g., schools and libraries), and historic buildings that could sustain structural damage due to vibration. The project is in a moderately populated area where land is developed to the northwest and south of the project site. Noise- and vibration-sensitive receptors in the vicinity of the project area include nearby residents. The closest sensitive receptors are the existing nearby residences, which are typically a minimum of 100 feet from the project site boundary.

AIRPORTS AND PRIVATE AIRSTRIPS

There are no airport influence area or private airstrips located on or near the project site.

COUNTY NOISE STANDARDS

County Municipal Code Chapter 9.16 (Noise) and Chapter 130.37 (Noise Standards) establish standards concerning acceptable noise levels for both noise-sensitive land uses and for noise-generating land uses, in compliance with General Plan Goal 6.5 (Acceptable Noise Levels). Section 6.5 of the General Plan identifies noise criteria for various stationary and transportation noise sources, including those related to construction.

3.13.2 Discussion

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

Less than Significant Impact. Proposed development at the Project site could result in temporary or permanent increases in ambient noise levels. The site is located within the El Dorado County Zoning jurisdiction on property designated with Medium Density Residential Land Use. The receiving properties to the north, south, and west are designated with Medium-Density Residential Land Use. The receiving property to the east is designated with Rural Residential Land Use. These properties are all located within the

**CUP25-0006 T-Mobile Monopine Garden Valley
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Garden Valley Rural Center area.

The proposed new equipment includes equipment support cabinets.
The equipment support cabinets are expected to run 24 hours a day.
El Dorado County Code Chapter 130.37 limits noise from equipment to a receiving property as follows:

Rural Center: Noise is limited to 55 dBA during daytime hours. During evening hours, between the hours of 7 p.m. and 10 p.m., the maximum permissible sound level is decreased by 5 decibels. During nighttime hours, between the hours of 10 p.m. and 7 a.m., the maximum permissible sound level is decreased by 10 decibels.

Since the support cabinets are expected to operate 24 hours a day, they must meet the 45 dBA nighttime limit at the Residential receiving properties to the east and west.

Potential future construction could result in temporary increased noise levels from equipment use, construction activities, and increased vehicle trips to the site. Construction-related noise sources could include both mobile and stationary on-site equipment (e.g., dozers, loaders, generators). Construction noise would be short-term and temporary, and operation of heavy-duty construction equipment would be intermittent throughout the day during construction.

County code exempts certain activities, including construction, from noise standards as long as the construction occurs between the hours of 7:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. Monday through Friday, and between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. on weekends and on federally recognized holidays.

Construction activities would occur within the timeframe identified by the County's noise ordinance when construction noise is exempt from noise standards. Thus, the project would not generate a substantial temporary increase in ambient noise levels in excess of allowable standards in the vicinity of the project.

Potential future development at the Project site could also result in increased operational noise, from both traffic and stationary sources. With potential future additional maintenance employees at the Project site, there could be an increase in average daily traffic volumes and associated increases in traffic noise levels along affected roadway segments near the site. However, given the relatively minor number of visits to a telecommunication facility, the increase in traffic volume and associated noise would be negligible and would not result in a substantial noise increase due to new vehicle trips.

Potential noise impacts would be less than significant impact.

The telecommunications equipment will be located at grade surrounded by a 6'-0" tall chainlink fence. The nearest receiving properties are approximately 400 feet north, 540 feet west, 700 feet east, and 470 southeast of the equipment. Due to the extended distance of surrounding properties from the facility any noise impacts will be less than significant impact.

b) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?

Less than Significant Impact. The proposed parcel split would not affect groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels. Potential future site development would not use ground vibration-intensive activities, such as pile driving or blasting, although pieces of equipment that generate lower levels of ground vibration, such as dozers and pavers, may be used during construction. However, any potential vibration would be minor and temporary and would not result in structural damage or human annoyance.

- c) For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?

No Impact. There is no airport influence area or private airstrips located on or near the project site.

3.14 POPULATION AND HOUSING

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

3.14.1 Environmental Setting

According to the County General Plan Housing Element 2021-2029 Update, the 2020 population of the unincorporated areas of El Dorado County was 159,722 residents, which was an increase of 7 percent from the 2010 population. Projections estimate that the population will increase an additional 8.8 percent between 2020 and 2030, with an average growth of 0.9 percent per year. In 2018 there were approximately 68,094 housing units in the unincorporated portions of the County. Of these, 56,478 units (82.9 percent) were occupied, and 11,616 units (17.1 percent) were vacant. However, 8,946 units (13.1 percent) were classified as vacant for seasonal, recreational, or occasional uses only. (EDC 2003)

3.14.2 Discussion

- a) Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?

Less than Significant Impact. Potential future development included in the proposed project consists of constructing a monopine cellular communication facility and would not increase residential building density. This potential future development would not result in a increase in population in the area. Therefore, the Project would not induce substantial unplanned population growth.

- b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

No Impact. The project would not displace people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.

3.15 PUBLIC SERVICES

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

3.15.1 Environmental Setting

The Garden Valley Fire Protection District (GVFPD) is the department that provides all fire and initial emergency medical services to the Project site. The (GVFPD) provides fire, rescue, and non-transport ALS medical response to a 60 square mile area with a population of 8100 people. The district operates 3 stations, 1 staffed and 2 volunteer. The current staffing level of the district is one Captain and one Chief officer 24/7, supplemented with volunteer response. Garden Valley Fire Protection District operates a fleet of 2 engines, 1 water tender, 1 type 6 engine, and 5 command/utility vehicles.

The El Dorado County Sheriff's Office (EDCSO) provides law enforcement services in the unincorporated portions of the County, including the Project site. EDCSO is made up of the South Lake Tahoe patrol and the West Slope patrol, operating out of Placerville, which serves the Project site. In 2023 the Sheriff's Dispatchers answered 99.71 percent of all 911 calls within 15 seconds, exceeding national standards, which recommend 90% of all 911 calls be answered within 15 seconds. (EDCSO 2023)

The project site is within the boundaries of the Black Oak Mine Unified School District.

Nearby public parks and open space/recreation areas include Garden Valley Park, an approximately 1.0 mile drive from the Project site.

3.15.2 Discussion

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

Fire protection?

Less than Significant Impact. Potential future development resulting from the proposed Project could result in a minor increase in population in the Project. However, this would not result in the need for new or expanded fire protection facilities. The Project site would continue to be served by the GVFPD. Building permits associated with potential future development at the Project site would require permits from County departments relating to traffic, public services, and safety and would require payment of various fees (e.g., schools, roads). Through this process, the potential future development would contribute its proportional amount to support public services operations. The potential addition of Project development and associated population in their service area would not significantly affect the response time, service ratios, or performance of the GVFPD or any other public service. The project would not result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered fire protection and emergency services facilities.

Police protection?

Less than Significant Impact. The Project site would continue to receive law enforcement services from the EDCSO West Slope patrol, operating out of Georgetown. . Potential future development on the Project site would consist of the construction of a wireless communication monopine facility. This would not significantly increase the demand for EDCSO services or affect EDCSO service ratios and response times. The project would not result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered police protection facilities.

Schools?

Less than Significant Impact. The proposed Project includes the construction of a wireless communication monopine facility. This would not result in population growth and would not have the potential to add new students to these school districts. While this population growth could include some student enrollment, the amount would be minor and could be accommodated by existing facilities. The Project would not result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered school facilities.

Parks?

Less than Significant Impact. The potential future population growth in the region that could result from the proposed Project is minimal and could be accommodated by existing nearby parks. The Project would not result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered public park facilities.

Other public facilities?

Less than Significant Impact. Given the negligible amount of population growth that could result from the proposed Project, it would not cause a substantial adverse physical impact associated with the provision of new or physically altered public facilities.

3.16 RECREATION

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

3.16.1 Environmental Setting

Section 3.15.1 includes a summary of the existing public parks and recreational facilities in the vicinity of the project site.

3.16.2 Discussion

- 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?**

Less than Significant Impact. As discussed in Section 3.15.2(a), Garden Valley Park is an approximately 1.0 mile drive from the Project site. The potential future population growth in the Project area that could result from the proposed project is minimal and could be accommodated by existing nearby parks. The Project would not cause substantial physical deterioration of existing parks or recreational facilities to 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?**

No Impact. The Project does not include recreational facilities and would not require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities. There would be no impact.

3.17 TRANSPORTATION

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

3.17.1 Environmental Setting

EXISTING TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

Access to the Project site is provided by the surrounding roadway network, which includes Garden Valley Road and State Highway 193. Garden Valley Road is classified as a minor collector and State Highway is classified as a minor arterial. The project site is in a rural area where public transportation is not available

REGULATORY SETTING

Senate Bill 743

SB 743, passed in 2013, required OPR to develop new State CEQA guidelines that address traffic metrics under CEQA. As stated in the legislation, upon adoption of the new guidelines, "automobile delay, as described solely by level of service (LOS) or similar measures of vehicular capacity or traffic congestion shall not be considered a significant impact on the environment pursuant to this division, except in locations specifically identified in the guidelines, if any."

In December of 2018, OPR published the most recent version of the *Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA* (Technical Advisory) which provides guidance for vehicle miles traveled (VMT) analysis. The Office of Administrative Law approved the updated State CEQA Guidelines and lead agencies had an opt-in period until July 1, 2020, to implement the updated guidelines as they related to VMT. As of July 1, 2020, implementation of Section 15064.3 of the updated CEQA Guidelines is required statewide.

The OPR Technical Advisory states that lead agencies may screen out VMT using project size, maps, transit availability, and provision of affordable housing. Many agencies use these screening thresholds to identify when a project should be expected to cause a less-than-significant impact without conducting a detailed study. The screening criteria applicable to this project is for small projects, stating that projects that generate or attract fewer than 110 trips per day generally may be assumed to result in a less-than-significant transportation impact.

Regional Transportation Planning

El Dorado County is within the boundaries of the Sacramento Area Council of Governments, which oversees the regional transportation plan for the Sacramento region, updated every four years in collaboration with local governments. The El Dorado County Transportation Commission is the Regional Transportation Planning Agency for the west slope of El Dorado County and is responsible for coordinating the regional transportation efforts on the western slope of El Dorado County and the City of Placerville.

The County developed and adopted the El Dorado County and City of Placerville SB 743 Implementation Plan (EDCTC 2019), which shifted the evaluation of transportation impacts from LOS to VMT and describes the CEQA analysis for transportation impacts that shall be used in the County. The El Dorado County Board of Supervisors Resolution 141-2020 adopting VMT thresholds of significance for transportation impacts under CEQA (EDC 2020) includes the following screening criteria to identify projects that are presumed to have Less than Significant Impacts:

- ▶ Projects that generate or attract less than 100 trips per day, consistent with OPR's determination of projects that generate or attract fewer than 110 trips per day and further reduced to 100 to remain consistent with the existing threshold in General Plan Policy TC-Xe;
- ▶ Projects that are within 0.5 miles of either a major transit stop, as defined in Public Resources Code Section 21064.3, or a high-quality transit corridor, as defined in Public Resources Section 21155. Consistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3(b)(l) and OPR's conclusions in its Technical Advisory; and
- ▶ 100% affordable residential development, including moderate, low, and very low categories as defined in the Regional Housing Needs Assessment, consistent with OPR's conclusions in its Technical Advisory.

3.17.2 Discussion

a) Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities?

Less than Significant Impact. The Project would add minimal vehicle trips due to periodic maintenance visits. Additional equipment changes at the site could result in additional vehicle trips to and from the Project site in the future. Even with the maximum potential future development at the Project site, the Project meets the County's screening criteria as a small project that would generate or attract less than 100 trips per day (see the discussion of Question b) below). Therefore, further traffic modeling and analysis are not required, and impacts are presumed to be Less than Significant Impact. The project and potential future development at the Project site would comply with these requirements. The Project would not conflict with the programs, plans, policies, or ordinances addressing the circulation system.

b) Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3(b), which pertains to vehicle miles travelled?

Less than Significant Impact. Potential future development at the Project site could result in additional trips to the Project site, both operationally at the monopine telecommunication facility and temporarily during construction. This may generate new VMT, or it may redistribute existing VMT. Trip generation from the project using the ITE Trip Generation Manual, 10th Edition is less than 100 trips daily. Therefore, the Project meets the County's screening criteria as a small project that would generate or attract less than 110 trips per day. Therefore, further traffic modeling and analysis are not required, and project impacts are presumed to be Less than Significant Impact. Potential VMT impacts would be Less than Significant Impact.

c) **Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?**

Less than Significant Impact. As described under question a) above, potential future changes related to new parcel access would require an encroachment permit from the County DOT for each point of access, and potential future driveways serving each proposed parcel would be constructed in compliance with the County Design and Improvements Standards Manual. The Project would not create dangerous intersections, would not include incompatible uses, and would not substantially increase hazards.

d) **Result in inadequate emergency access?**

Less than Significant Impact. Driveway at project site would comply with County Design and Improvements Standards Manual, County Regional Fire Protection Standards (GVFPD)2024, and California Fire Code (CFC) requirements, including those that define standards for providing emergency access, including fire apparatus access. The surrounding roadways provide adequate circulation and access for emergency response and the project would not significantly modify any roads or otherwise affect emergency response times. Therefore, the project would not result in inadequate emergency access.

3.18 TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
XVIII. Tribal Cultural Resources.				
Has a California Native American Tribe requested consultation in accordance with Public Resources Code section 21080.3.1(b)?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No
Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:				
a) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3.18.1 Environmental Setting

AB 52, signed by Governor Edmund G. Brown, Jr., in September 2014, established a new class of resources under CEQA: "tribal cultural resources." AB 52, as provided in Public Resource Code Sections 21080.3.1, 21080.3.2, and 21082.3, requires that lead agencies undertaking CEQA review must, upon written request of a California Native American Tribe, begin consultation once the lead agency determines that the application for the project is complete, and prior to the issuance of a NOP of an EIR or notice of intent to adopt a negative declaration or mitigated negative declaration.

The NAHC was contacted to request a Sacred Lands File search for known cultural resources within or near the project site. The results of the search returned by the NAHC on January 14, 2025, were positive for Native American cultural resources in the project vicinity. The NAHC provided contact information for tribal members and organizations affiliated with the region and recommended that they be contacted for more information on the potential for Native American cultural resources within or near the project area. The following tribes were contacted on date, for consultation under AB 52:

- ▶ United Auburn Indian Community of the Auburn Rancheria
- ▶ Nashville Enterprise Miwok-Maidu-Nishinam Tribe
- ▶ Shingle Springs Band of Miwok Indians

- ▶ Tsi Akim Maidu
- ▶ United Auburn Indian Community of the Auburn Rancheria
- ▶ Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California
- ▶ Lone Band of Miwok Indians
- ▶ Wilton Rancheria

There have been no replies for further consultation.

3.18.2 Discussion

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

- a, b) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k)? A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe?

Less than Significant Impact. Consultation under AB 52 did not result in the identification of tribal cultural resources as defined by PRC Section 21074. A California Historical Resources Information System records search indicates the proposed project area contains 0 recorded indigenous period/ethnographic-period cultural resources. Initial Consultation began on May 16, 2025 with Lone Band of Miwok Indians, Nashville Enterprise Miwok-Maidu-Nishinam Tribe, Shingle Springs Band of Miwok Indians, Tsi Akim Maidu, United Auburn Indian Community of the Auburn Rancheria, Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California, and Wilton Rancheria. No response or request for mitigation was received.

3.19 UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

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

3.19.1 Environmental Setting

There is currently no water or wastewater infrastructure at the project site. The proposed telecommunication facility will be unoccupied and proposes no use of water or wastewater utility services.

Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) provides electricity which the project will utilize to power the facility. Electrical supply will be routed underground from an existing power pole approximately 60' southwest of the facility.

El Dorado Disposal Services provides solid waste collection, disposal, and recycling services in the region. Solid waste is transported to the Western El Dorado Recovery Systems (WERS) Transfer Station and Material Recovery Facility, located at 4100 Throwita Way in Placerville, which handles a maximum permitted throughput of 400 tons per day (CalRecycle 2024a). After undergoing processing, non-recyclable waste from the WERS Transfer Station and Material Recovery Facility are delivered to the Potrero Hills Landfill, located at 3675 Potrero Hills Lane, in Suisun City, which has a maximum permitted capacity of 83.1 million cubic yards and, as of the year 2006, a remaining estimated

capacity of approximately 13.9 million cubic yards, or 16.7 percent of the landfill's total capacity. The landfill receives a maximum disposal of 4,330 tons per day (CalRecycle 2024b).

Chapter 8.42- Solid Waste Management Ordinance No. 4525 describes the County's requirements related to the provision of solid waste disposal services including collection and transport. The California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989 (AB 939) required a diversion of a minimum of 50 percent of discarded materials away from disposal in landfills.

3.19.2 Discussion

- a) **Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or stormwater drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunication facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?**

Less than Significant Impact. The project will not require or result in the significant relocation or construction of new or expanded utility infrastructure. Any impact from providing the facility with electric service will be minimal and thus will have a Less than Significant Impact.

- b) **Have insufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?**

No Impact. Any water needed for the maintenance of the telecommunication facility will be delivered by truck or trailer. The project proposes no water use now or into the future, therefore insufficient water supplies available to serve the project is irrelevant and has no impact.

- c) **Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider that serves or may serve the project that it has inadequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand, in addition to the provider's existing commitments?**

No Impact. The project proposes no need for wastewater treatment now or into the future, therefore the project will have no impact on the wastewater treatment provider.

- d) **Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?**

Less than Significant Impact. The proposed project would generate solid waste from construction. The project would not generate waste in excess of local standards or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure and would not impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals.

- e) **Fail to comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?**

Less than Significant Impact. Operation of the telecommunications facility would not produce daily trash, recycling or organic waste. If needed, solid waste services to the project site would be provided by El Dorado Disposal Services and waste generated at the site would be disposed of at the Potrero Hills Landfill. Development at the Project site would be provided, if needed, with trash, recycling, and organics disposal services in accordance with local, state, and federal regulations. The project would, therefore, comply with regulations including the County's ordinances and AB 939. The Project would not fail to comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction regulations related to solid waste.

3.20 WILDFIRE

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

3.20.1 Environmental Setting

According to CAL FIRE, the project site is within the SRA for fire protection and is located within a designated very high fire hazard severity zone (CAL FIRE 2024). The Project is in a rural area, with most properties in the region being privately owned. The topography of the project site is characterized by gently rolling hills with a generally southwest aspect.

The project site is in an area susceptible to wildland fires. Surrounding properties support residential structures, amongst foothill pine woodlands and annual grasslands. The topography of the project site is generally relatively flat with some gentle rolling hills; there are no steep slopes within or adjacent to the project site. Nearby roads that may be used for Project site access include State Highway 49 and 139, Marshall Grade Road, and Garden Valley Road.

Discussion

a) **Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?**

No Impact. The project and surrounding vicinity are subject to a number of emergency response plans, including the El Dorado County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan (EDCSO 2024), which provides guidance for the County's response in emergency situations, including wildfire and emergency evacuation. Impairment of emergency response plans or emergency evacuation plans would occur if the project would introduce an undue or extraordinary burden on emergency responders as they respond to an emergency incident. The proposed wireless telecommunication facility would not affect emergency response or evacuation. Any future development at the Project site would be required to conform to applicable County Development Standards and Guidelines, County Regional Fire Protection Standards, and CFC requirements, including those that define standards for providing emergency access, including fire apparatus access. The surrounding roadways provide adequate circulation and access for emergency response and the project would not significantly modify any roads or otherwise affect emergency response times. Therefore, the project would not impair or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan.

b) **Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?**

Less than Significant Impact. The project site is in an area susceptible to wildland fires. Development at the unoccupied Project site would not increase the population of the site, thereby having little effect on increasing the ignition risk. The Western El Dorado Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) describes wildfire risks and mitigation strategies for the portion of the County that includes the Project site (EDC 2022). Implementation of the County CWPP, which includes ongoing vegetation management, would reduce the likelihood of an ignition becoming an out-of-control wildfire. The project would not exacerbate wildfire risks or expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire.

c) **Require the installation of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?**

Less than Significant Impact. The proposed wireless telecommunication facility would not materially affect infrastructure. Any future development at the Project site would avoid exacerbating fire risk during infrastructure installation through compliance with the most current building and fire codes, CFC requirements, and County Regional Fire Protection Standards, including those for access and roadways, rural water supply, and firefighting. The installation of new infrastructure would also be required to comply with all applicable County regulations to protect the environment, including the ORMP and other measures. Actions associated with development of new utility facilities, including transmission or utility lines, are not exempt from the mitigation requirements of the ORMP. Actions taken to maintain existing utility facilities, as well as action taken pursuant to an approved Fire Safe Plan, including fuel break construction, are exempt from the ORMP mitigation requirements.

d) **Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?**

Less than Significant Impact. Implementation of the project would not exacerbate wildfire risk, nor would it substantially increase the likelihood that the project would expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire.

As discussed in Section 3.7.2(a)(iv), the potential for landslides to occur is negligible because the site generally has gentle hills and there are no steep slopes within or adjacent to the project site. In addition, as discussed in Section

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3.10.1, the project site is within an area of minimal flood hazard (FEMA 2008). Potential future development at the Project site could change the drainage patterns of the project site by increasing impervious surfaces; however, development would be designed to comply with the County's West Slope Development and Redevelopment Standards (EDC 2024c), the SWMP for Western El Dorado County (EDC 2004b), and the County's Grading, Erosion, and Sediment Control Ordinance (EDC 2013) to prevent drainage, flooding, and erosion impacts from site runoff (see Section 3.10.2[c] for additional information). Therefore, the Project would not expose people or structures to significant risks from runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes. Impacts would be Less than Significant Impact.

3.21 MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
XXI. Mandatory Findings of Significance.				
a) Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of an endangered, rare, or threatened species, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history (both before and after European arrival)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (“Cumulatively considerable” means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Does the project have environmental effects that will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3.21.1 Environmental Setting

The environmental setting for this section is presented above in the environmental settings for each of the checklist issue areas. No additional environmental setting is necessary.

3.21.2 Discussion

- a) Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of an endangered, rare, or threatened species, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history (both before and after European arrival)?

Less than Significant Impact. Based on evaluations and discussions contained in Sections 3.1 through 3.20 of this Initial Study, the Project is not anticipated to substantially degrade the quality of the environment. As conditioned or mitigated, and with adherence to established laws, regulations, and County permit requirements, this project would

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not have the potential to substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal. In addition, as discussed in Section 3.5, "Cultural Resources," although unlikely, ground-disturbing activities during project construction may result in the unanticipated discovery of archaeological resources; however, the County requires that specific procedures be followed in the event of unanticipated discoveries (refer to Section 3.5 for additional information) as a condition of project approval. Therefore, the project would not eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history (both before and after European arrival).

b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable?

Less than Significant Impact. The Project would not result in significant cumulatively considerable impacts for the following reasons:

- ▶ The Project would not make a substantial contribution to the cumulative condition for agricultural and forest resources, biological resources, cultural and tribal cultural resources, and mineral resources due to the lack of Important Farmland and known mineral resources at the project site.
- ▶ Impacts related to geology, soils, hazards and hazardous materials are generally site-specific and would not substantially contribute to the cumulative condition.
- ▶ The project would be consistent with existing land use and zoning designations for the project site, the County's Municipal Code and ordinances, and the County's Design Guidelines. In addition, population growth from the Project would be consistent with the growth anticipated in the County's General Plan. Therefore, the Project would not substantially contribute to the cumulative condition for aesthetics, land use and planning, population and housing, public services, recreation, and wildfire.
- ▶ The Project could indirectly increase impervious surfaces and change drainage patterns within the watershed; however, the Project would not substantially contribute to the cumulative condition for hydrology and water quality because the proposed development would be designed to meet all applicable stormwater quality requirements.
- ▶ With respect to air quality, energy, noise, transportation, and utilities, the project would be consistent with the existing land use designation and the population assumptions for the area. GHG emissions impacts, which are inherently cumulative, would be Less than Significant Impact.

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

Less than Significant Impact. The project's potential effects on the way residents experience the existing environment (aesthetics) and plans for future use of the area (land use and population and housing) would be Less than Significant Impact. Elements of the project that could physically affect sensitive populations, including air quality impacts and generation of noise, were also found Less than Significant Impact. GHG emissions, which are understood to result in global warming, would be less-than-significant.

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5 REPORT PREPARERS

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