



# Kings County Association of Governments

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Member Agencies: Cities of Avenal, Corcoran, Hanford and Lemoore, County of Kings

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## Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report for the 2011 Regional Transportation Plan

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Kings County Association of Governments (KCAG) is the lead agency for the preparation and review of the Program Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the 2011 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). Pursuant to section 15082 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), KCAG is soliciting views from your agency as to the scope and content of the environmental information which is germane to your agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project. KCAG will accept written comments concerning the scope and content of the EIR from interested persons and organizations concerned with the project.

The Draft EIR will be a Program EIR. Per the CEQA Guidelines, a Program EIR is an EIR that may be prepared on a series of actions that can be characterized as one large project. The purpose of a Program EIR is to allow the lead agency to consider broad policy alternatives and program-wide mitigation measures at an early time when the agency has greater flexibility to deal with basic problems or cumulative impacts.

A summary of the project description and probable environmental effects associated with the 2011 RTP is provided in the attached CEQA Initial Study. The Initial Study will be available for review at the KCAG office, located at 339 W. "D" Street, Suite B Lemoore, CA 93245 and on the KCAG website at [www.countyofkings.com/kcag](http://www.countyofkings.com/kcag). Time limits required by State law mandate your response be sent at the earliest possible date but not later than 30 days after receipt of this notice.

KCAG will hold a public information/EIR scoping meeting on **Monday, October 5, 2009** in the Kings County Government Center, Administration Building, Multi-purpose Room, located at 1400 W. Lacey Blvd., at 6:00 p.m. The purpose of the meeting is to solicit input on the scope and content of the environmental analysis that will be included in the Draft EIR.

The 30-day public review and comment period will commence on September 23, 2009 and conclude October 23, 2009 at 5:00 p.m. Public comments may be submitted in writing by 5:00 p.m. on October 23 to Bruce Abanathie at the address below.

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Kings County Association of Governments

# 2011 Kings County Regional Transportation Plan

## Initial Study



September 2009

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# 2011 Kings County Regional Transportation Plan

## Initial Study

*Prepared for:*

**Kings County Association of Governments**

339 W. "D" Street, Suite B

Lemoore, CA 93245

*Contact:* Bruce Abanathie

*Prepared by:*

**Rincon Consultants, Inc.**

1530 Monterey Street, Suite D

San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

September 2009

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## INTRODUCTION

### LEGAL AUTHORITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION:

This Initial Study (IS) has been prepared in accordance with the *California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines*, County's Rules and Procedures for the Implementation of CEQA, and relevant provisions of CEQA, as amended.

**Initial Study.** Section 15063(c) of the *CEQA Guidelines* defines an Initial Study as the proper preliminary method of analyzing the potential environmental consequences of a project. The purposes of an Initial Study are:

- (1) To provide the Lead Agency with the necessary information to decide whether to prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR), or a Negative Declaration, or a Mitigated Negative Declaration, or an Exemption
- (2) To enable the Lead Agency to modify a project, mitigating adverse impacts, thus avoiding the need to prepare an EIR; and
- (3) To provide sufficient technical analysis of the environmental effects of a project to permit a judgment to be made by the Lead Agency, based on the record as a whole, that the environmental effects of a project have been adequately mitigated or require further in-depth study in an EIR.

### EVALUATION OF POSSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS AND SIGNIFICANCE DETERMINATION:

The following sections of this Initial Study provide discussions of the possible environmental effects of the proposed project for specific environmental issue areas that have been identified on the CEQA Initial Study Checklist. For each environmental issue area, potential effects are evaluated.

A "significant effect" is defined by Section 15382 of the *CEQA Guidelines* as "a substantial, or potentially substantial, adverse change in any of the physical conditions within the area affected by a project, including land, air, water, minerals, flora, fauna, ambient noise, and objects of historic or aesthetic significance." According to the *CEQA Guidelines*, "an economic or social change by itself shall not be considered a significant effect on the environment, but may be considered in determining whether the physical change is significant."

Following the evaluation of each environmental effect is a discussion of mitigation measures and the residual effects or level of significance remaining after the implementation of the measures. In those cases where a mitigation measure for an impact could have a significant environmental impact in another issue area, this impact is discussed as a residual effect.

## INITIAL STUDY

### PROJECT TITLE:

2011 Kings County Regional Transportation Plan

### LEAD AGENCY NAME AND ADDRESS:

Kings County Association of Governments, 339 W. "D" Street, Suite B, Lemoore, CA 93245

### CONTACT PERSON AND PHONE NUMBER:

Bruce Abanathie, Regional Planner, (559) 582-3211, Extension 2584, Bruce.Abanathie@co.kings.ca.us

### PROJECT SPONSOR:

Kings County Association of Governments, 339 W. "D" Street, Suite B, Lemoore, CA 93245

### PROJECT LOCATION:

The study area includes all of King County's 1,391 square miles. Located in the southern half of California's San Joaquin Valley, Kings County is bounded by Fresno, Tulare, Kern, Monterey, and San Luis Obispo counties. There are four incorporated cities within the boundaries of Kings County, including Avenal, Corcoran, Hanford, and Lemoore.

### GENERAL PLAN AND ZONING DESIGNATIONS:

The Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) is a regional planning document; therefore it covers the entire County. As such, the General Plan land use and zoning designations for the areas affected by the RTP are all-inclusive—meaning that the land that would be affected by implementation of the RTP will include any and all General Plan land use and zoning designations that are established in the incorporated and unincorporated areas.

### PUBLIC AGENCIES WHOSE APPROVAL MAY BE REQUIRED:

Approval of the proposed project is at the discretion of the Kings County Association of Governments (KCAG), which is the lead agency for the 2011 RTP. It should be noted that additional environmental review may be required by the responsible lead agency for individual projects contained within the RTP. Future approvals for individual transportation projects identified in the RTP would have to be completed by the following agencies:

- Kings County Association of Governments
- California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)
- California Public Utilities Commission's Rail Crossings Engineering Section (RCES)
- Cities of Avenal, Corcoran, Hanford, and Lemoore
- County of Kings

### DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT:

California Government Code §65080 et seq. and Title 23 United States Code (USC) §134 require Regional Transportation Planning Agencies (RTPA) and Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) to prepare long-range transportation plans to: 1) establish regional goals, 2) identify present and future needs, deficiencies and constraints, 3) analyze potential solutions, 4) estimate available funding, and 5) propose investments. State Statutes require that the RTP serve as the foundation for the short-range



transportation planning documents: the Regional and Federal Transportation Improvement Programs (RTIP and FTIP).

The 2011 RTP is the long-range planning, policy, action, and financial document for the Kings County Region. The plan would cover a 25-year period from 2010 to 2035. The RTP identifies the region's transportation needs and issues and sets forth actions, programs, and projects to address those needs and issues. In addition, the RTP adopts policies, sets goals, and identifies financial resources to encourage and promote the safe and efficient management, operation, and development of a regional intermodal transportation system that would serve the mobility needs of goods and people.

### ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED:

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that would be addressed in the EIR, as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Aesthetics                  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agriculture Resources   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Air Quality            |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Biological Resources        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cultural Resources      | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Geology/Soils          |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hazards/Hazardous Materials | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hydrology/Water Quality | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Land Use/Planning      |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mineral Resources           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Noise                   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Population/Housing     |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public Services             | <input type="checkbox"/> Recreation                         | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation/Traffic |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Utilities/Service Systems   |   |  |

### DETERMINATION:

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.

  
Bruce Abanathie, Regional Planner  
Kings County Association of Governments

9-23-09  
Date

**EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS:**

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

a, c-d. Kings County contains many scenic views including riparian corridors, valley oak groves, and mountain and open space areas which could be impacted by projects listed in the RTP. Projects included in the RTP could adversely affect scenic vistas and resources, degrade the existing visual quality of an area, and/or create new sources of light or glare. As a result, impacts to aesthetic resources will be addressed through preparation of the EIR.

b. Kings County does not contain any County or State designated scenic highways. Therefore, the RTP would result in no impacts on these resources.

<b>II. AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES</b> – <i>Would the project:</i>	<b>Impact to be Addressed in the EIR</b>	<b>Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
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 nonagricultural use?	X			
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	X			
c) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in loss of Farmland, to non-agricultural use?	X			

a-c. A vast amount of the land within the County (approximately 749,000 acres) is devoted to agricultural production. Approximately 90 percent (or 678,000 acres) of this land is eligible for or under either Williamson Act or Farmland Security Zone contracts. Transportation projects listed in the RTP could result in the conversion of some of these farmlands, directly or indirectly. Potential impacts to agricultural resources will be examined in the EIR.

<b>III. AIR QUALITY</b> - <i>Would the project<sup>1</sup>:</i>	<b>Impact to be Addressed in the EIR</b>	<b>Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable Air Quality Attainment Plan or Congestion Management Plan?	X			



<b>III. AIR QUALITY</b> - <i>Would the project<sup>1</sup>:</i>	<b>Impact to be Addressed in the EIR</b>	<b>Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
b) Violate any stationary source air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?	X			
c) Result in a net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?	X			
d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	X			
e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?	X			
<i>1 Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations</i>				

a-e. Kings County is located within the San Joaquin Valley Air Basin (SJVAB). State air quality oversight for the basin is provided by the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD). The SJVAPCD is responsible for implementing programs and regulations required by the Federal and State Clean Air Acts. The SJVAB is in serious nonattainment with the federal 8-hour standard for ozone, and severe nonattainment with the state 1-hour standard for ozone. In addition, the SJVAB is in nonattainment with the federal standard for PM<sub>2.5</sub>, the state 8-hour standard for ozone, and the state standards for PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recently announced that it had finalized approval of the SJVAPCD's request for re-designation to attainment of the federal PM<sub>10</sub> standard. The combination of topography and inversion layers in the Central Valley generally prevents dispersion of air pollutants.

The RTP could increase pollutant emissions from improvements to existing transportation infrastructure or development of additional infrastructure. Future development may increase air pollution due to construction activities and/or operational emissions. Buildout of the proposed RTP could result in the creation of isolated objectionable odors. Air quality impacts associated with the RTP will be assessed in the EIR.

<b>IV. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS</b> - <i>Would the project:</i>	<b>Impact to be Addressed in the EIR</b>	<b>Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment, based on any applicable threshold of significance?	X			
b) Conflict with any applicable plan, policy or regulation of an agency adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	X			

a-b. Transportation projects under the RTP may result in an increase in greenhouse gas emissions due to construction activities and/or operational emissions. Greenhouse gas emissions associated with the RTP will be assessed in the EIR.



<b>V. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES -</b> <i>Would the project:</i>	<b>Impact to be Addressed in the EIR</b>	<b>Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	X			
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or US Fish and Wildlife Service?	X			
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	X			
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?	X			
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	X			
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?	X			

a-f. Existing undeveloped lands in the county provide open space and support habitats that are considered sensitive. Transportation projects contained in the RTP may have the potential to affect sensitive species, their habitats, and wildlife corridors.

Kings County contains a wide variety of native plant communities, sensitive habitats, and other important wildlife habitats due to the size of the county and its diverse geographic, topographic, and hydrological features. The county encompasses riparian habitat (along the Kings River, Cross Creek, the Kern River channel, and several lesser streams), freshwater marsh, seasonal wetlands, and periodically flooded areas at the southern end of the Tulare Lake Basin, grasslands in the Kettleman Hills and along Cross Creek, oak and conifer forests in the Kreyenhagen Hills, alkali scrub near Guernsey and Lemoore, and desert scrub on the margins of the Tulare Lake Basin and in the hills west of the California Aqueduct. Kings County contains twenty (20) threatened or endangered wildlife species and two plant species that have been recorded in the county as identified in the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB, 2009). These species are listed below.

- **Mammals:** Fresno Kangaroo Rat, Giant Kangaroo Rat, Nelson's Antelope Squirrel, San Joaquin Kit Fox, Tipton Kangaroo Rat
- **Birds:** Swainson's Hawk, Western Snowy Plover, California Condor<sup>1</sup>, Golden Eagle<sup>2</sup>
- **Fish:** Steelhead<sup>2</sup>
- **Reptiles:** Blunt-nosed leopard Lizard, Giant Garter Snake<sup>1</sup>
- **Amphibians:** California Tiger Salamander, California Red-legged Frog<sup>1</sup>
- **Arthropods:** Vernal Pool Fairy Shrimp, Vernal Pool Tadpole Shrimp, Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle<sup>1</sup>, Conservancy Fairy Shrimp<sup>2</sup>



- **Plants:** California Jewel-flower, San Joaquin Woollythreads

<sup>1</sup>These species are noted by the USFWS on their sensitive species lists, but they do not occur in the CNDDDB records list for Kings County.

<sup>2</sup>These species are known to occur in Kings County, but they do not occur in the CNDDDB records list.

A Habitat Conservation Plan for the Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E) San Joaquin Valley operations covers all of Kings County.

Impacts to biological resources which may occur as a result of implementation of the RTP will be analyzed in the EIR.

<b>VI. CULTURAL RESOURCES -</b> <i>Would the project:</i>	<b>Impact to be Addressed in the EIR</b>	<b>Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in § 15064.5?	X			
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to § 15064.5?	X			
c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	X			
d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	X			

a-d. Many recorded cultural resource sites have been identified in Kings County and the surrounding area. Transportation projects identified in the RTP have the potential to impact cultural resources. These issues will be addressed in the EIR.

<b>VII. GEOLOGY AND SOILS -</b> <i>Would the project:</i>	<b>Impact to be Addressed in the EIR</b>	<b>Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
a) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.</li> </ul>	X			
ii. Strong seismic ground shaking?	X			
iii. Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	X			
iv. Landslides?	X			
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	X			



<b>VII. GEOLOGY AND SOILS -</b> <i>Would the project:</i>	<b>Impact to be Addressed in the EIR</b>	<b>Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
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?	X			
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?	X			
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?	X			

a-e. Kings County has no known major fault systems within its boundaries. The greatest potential for seismic activity in Kings County is posed by the San Andreas Fault, which is located approximately four miles west of the Kings County line (California Geologic Survey, 1999). Future seismic events could produce ground shaking within the Kings County area that could damage structures and/or create adverse health and safety effects. Portions of Kings County are also potentially subject to landslides, subsidence, liquefaction, expansive soils, and erosion. As such, projects listed in the RTP have the potential to expose people or structures to adverse effects. These issues will be examined in the EIR.

<b>VIII. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS -</b> <i>Would the project:</i>	<b>Impact to be Addressed in the EIR</b>	<b>Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	X			
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the likely release of hazardous materials into the environment?	X			
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	X			
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?	X			
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?	X			
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?	X			
g) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	X			



<b>VIII. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS</b> - <i>Would the project:</i>	<b>Impact to be Addressed in the EIR</b>	<b>Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
h) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?	X			

a-h. Projects contained in the RTP have the potential to create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials, as well as through a reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the likely release of hazardous materials into the environment. Construction of these projects may also have the potential to emit hazardous emissions and create hazardous waste. In addition, transportation projects may be located in areas with hazardous materials. For projects located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of Hanford Municipal Airport, Corcoran Airport, or Naval Air Station Lemoore (NAS Lemoore), there may be a potential safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area. Furthermore, projects listed in the RTP may have the potential to interfere with an adopted emergency response or evacuation plan, as well as expose people or structures to risk involving wildland fires. As such, potential impacts involving hazards and hazardous materials will be evaluated in the EIR.

<b>IX. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY</b> - <i>Would the project:</i>	<b>Impact to be Addressed in the EIR</b>	<b>Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?	X			
b) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?	X			
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?	X			
d) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site?	X			
e) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?	X			
f) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?	X			
g) Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?				X
h) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures which would impede or redirect flood flows?	X			



i) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?	X			
j) Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?				X

a-f. Drainage patterns may be altered as a result of future development under the RTP. The RTP may introduce impervious surfaces in undeveloped areas, which could result in increased surface runoff that has the potential to affect surface water quantities, result in changes to absorption rates, discharge degraded surface water quality, affect the capacity of existing or planned drainage systems, and/or create erosion. Landscaping and other project features may decrease groundwater supplies. The EIR will analyze these potential impacts.

g. Transportation projects included in the RTP would not place housing within a 100-year flood zone. No impacts would result.

h-i. The potential exists for the RTP to expose people or structures to flooding, and for projects included in the RTP to impede or redirect flood flows. The EIR will analyze these impacts.

j. Kings County is not subject to inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow. No impacts would result.

<b>X. LAND USE AND PLANNING –</b> <i>Would the project:</i>	<b>Impact to be Addressed in the EIR</b>	<b>Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
a) Physically divide an established community?	X			
b) Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	X			
c) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?	X			

a-c. Linear transportation projects have the potential to physically divide exiting communities. The RTP project list is adapted from the Circulation Elements of applicable General Plans and regional plans, and is generally expected to be consistent with these plans. However, projects in the RTP may lead to land use conflicts that require analysis in the EIR. An HCP for the PG&E San Joaquin Valley operations covers all of Kings County. The EIR will evaluate the anticipated impacts to land use and planning.

<b>XI. MINERAL RESOURCES –</b> <i>Would the project:</i>	<b>Impact to be Addressed in the EIR</b>	<b>Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
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?	X			
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?	X			

a-b. The California Geological Survey (CGS) Division of Mines and Geology provides objective economic-geologic expertise to assist in the protection and development of mineral resources through the land-use planning process, as mandated by the Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975 (SMARA). According to their *Publication of the SMARA Mineral Land Classification Project Dealing with Mineral*



*Resources in California* (2001), Kings County is listed under “counties within which no SMARA classification has occurred.” In addition, according to the Kings County General Plan Resource Conservation Element, there are currently no mineral extraction activities occurring within the County. However, the Kings County General Plan Resource Conservation Element reports that oil and gas resources have been identified in and extracted from portions of the County. Although substantial volumes of oil and gas have been produced, production has been in decline within the County for the last 30 years. Nevertheless, the EIR will analyze potential impacts to such resources.

<b><i>XII. NOISE</i></b> - <i>Would the project result in:</i>	<b>Impact to be Addressed in the EIR</b>	<b>Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
a) Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	X			
b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	X			
c) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	X			
d) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	X			
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	X			
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	X			

a-f. The RTP contains policies that would minimize noise impacts within the County. However, implementation of the RTP transportation improvement projects may increase noise generating uses and vehicular traffic in addition to possibly locating noise generating uses near noise sensitive land uses. Short-term increases could arise from project construction, while long-term increases may be associated with changes in traffic patterns. The EIR will evaluate these issues. In addition, the EIR will analyze the compatibility of future land uses including land uses in the vicinity of airstrips.

<b><i>XIII. POPULATION AND HOUSING --</i></b> <i>Would the project:</i>	<b>Impact to be Addressed in the EIR</b>	<b>Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
a) Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?	X			
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	X			
c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	X			



a-c. Projects listed in the RTP may induce population growth in an area by improving access. Additionally, improvements in the RTP may have the potential to result in the displacement of residences in the event that right-of-way acquisition is required. These issues will be discussed in the EIR.

<b>XIV. PUBLIC SERVICES</b> - <i>Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:</i>	<b>Impact to be Addressed in the EIR</b>	<b>Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
a) Fire protection?	X			
b) Police protection?	X			
c) Schools?				X
d) Parks?				X
e) Other public facilities?	X			

a-b, e. The RTP may affect fire and police protection services, and other public facilities. An increase in service demand may also increase maintenance costs of public facilities, including roads and result in a need for additional municipal services including administration, planning, and public works. The EIR will evaluate these potential public services impacts.

c-d. The RTP would not generate population that would increase demand for schools or parks services or create the need for new schools or parks facilities. Therefore, the RTP would result in no impacts on these public services.

<b>XV. RECREATION</b> -	<b>Impact to be Addressed in the EIR</b>	<b>Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?				X
b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?				X

a-b. The RTP would not construct parks, and would not generate population that would increase demand for park services or create the need for additional park facilities. There would be no significant adverse impacts to recreational facilities from implementation of the RTP, and no mitigation is proposed.

<b>XVI. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC</b> - <i>Would the project:</i>	<b>Impact to be Addressed in the EIR</b>	<b>Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
a) Cause an increase in traffic which is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system (i.e., result in a substantial increase in either the number of vehicle trips, the volume to capacity ratio on roads, or congestion at intersections)?	X			



<b><i>XVI. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC</i></b> - Would the project:	<b>Impact to be Addressed in the EIR</b>	<b>Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
b) Exceed, either individually or cumulatively, a level of service standard established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?	X			
c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?	X			
d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	X			
e) Result in inadequate emergency access?	X			
f) Result in inadequate parking capacity?	X			
g) Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation (e.g., bus turnouts, bicycle racks)?	X			

a-g. Projects contained in the RTP may result in increased volumes of traffic on certain roads, and/or alter existing traffic patterns. Either individually or cumulatively, these projects have the potential to exceed a level of service standard for designated roads or highways. Projects listed in the RTP would also have the potential to result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in safety risks. The implementation of individual projects listed in the RTP may result in an increase in hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment). These projects would also have the potential to result in inadequate emergency access and inadequate parking capacity, as well as conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation. These issues will be discussed in the EIR.

<b><i>XVII. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS</i></b> -Would the project:	<b>Impact to be Addressed in the EIR</b>	<b>Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
a) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?	X			
b) Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?	X			
c) Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?	X			
d) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?	X			
e) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?	X			
f) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?	X			



g). Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	<b>X</b>			
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a-g. All utility services within the four unincorporated communities are provided by either a community service district or a public utility district. Projects listed in the RTP may require water and wastewater service. The RTP may include projects that would result in new or modified storm water drainage facilities, which could cause a significant effect. Transportation projects may create solid waste that would require disposal in local landfills and other regional waste facilities. These issues will be discussed in the EIR.

<b>XVIII. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE</b>	<b>Impact to be Addressed in the EIR</b>	<b>Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
a) Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	<b>X</b>			
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)?	<b>X</b>			
c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	<b>X</b>			

a-c. The RTP is a guide for the development of transportation improvements and other projects within the plan area and includes policies that would reduce or prevent impacts to the environment. Nevertheless, the RTP may generate impacts in the following areas: Aesthetics, Agricultural Resources, Air Quality, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Geology and Soils, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Hydrology and Water Quality, Land Use and Planning, Mineral Resources, Noise, Population and Housing, Public Services, Transportation and Traffic, and Utilities and Service Systems. These issue areas as well as cumulative impacts will be evaluated in the EIR, and any feasible mitigation measures will be identified to avoid and/or reduce any significant impacts.



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