

BUTTE 70 CAPM PROJECT

INITIAL STUDY

with Proposed Negative Declaration



BUTTE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

DISTRICT 3 – BUT – 70

Post Miles 34.1/46.0 to 47.0/48.076

EA 03-0J430 / EFIS 0319000284

**Prepared by the
State of California Department of Transportation**



April 2024



General Information About This Document

What is in this document?

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) has prepared this Initial Study with proposed Negative Declaration (IS/ND) which examines the potential environmental impacts of the alternatives being considered for the proposed project located on State Route 70 in Butte County, California. Caltrans is the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). This document tells you why the project is being proposed, how the existing environment could be affected by the project, the potential impacts of the project, and proposed avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures.

What should you do?

- Please read this document.
- Additional copies of this document are available for review at the Butte County Library, Oroville Branch, 1820 Mitchell Ave, Oroville, CA 95966.
- The document can be viewed digitally via Caltrans weblink:
<https://dot.ca.gov/caltrans-near-me/district-3/d3-programs/d3-environmental/d3-environmental-docs>
- Please send comments via U.S. mail to:
California Department of Transportation
Attention: Marta Martinez-Topete
North Region Environmental–District 3
703 B Street
Marysville, CA 95901
- Submit comments via e-mail to: Butte.70.CAPM@dot.ca.gov
- Submit comments by the deadline: May 15, 2024.

What happens after this?

After comments are received from the public and reviewing agencies, Caltrans may (1) give environmental approval to the proposed project, (2) do additional environmental studies, or (3) abandon the project. If the project is given environmental approval and funding is obtained, Caltrans could complete the design and construct all or part of the project.

For individuals with sensory disabilities, this document can be made available in Braille, in large print, on audiocassette, or on computer disk. To obtain a copy in one of these alternate formats, please write to or call Caltrans, Attention: Steve Nelson, Chief Public Information Officer Environmental - District 3, 703 B Street, Marysville, CA 95901; (530) 632-0080 Voice, or use the California Relay Service 1 (800) 735-2929 (TTY to Voice), 1 (800) 735-2922 (Voice to TTY), 1 (800) 855-3000 (Spanish TTY to Voice and Voice to TTY), 1-800-854-7784 (Spanish and English Speech-to-Speech) or 711.

BUTTE 70 CAPM PROJECT

Preserve and extend the service life of the existing pavement as well as rehabilitate or replace fair to poor condition drainage systems on State Route 70 in Butte County from Post Miles 34.1/46.0 and 47.0/48.076.

INITIAL STUDY With Proposed Negative Declaration

Submitted Pursuant to: Division 13, California Public Resources Code

**THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
Department of Transportation**

April 3, 2024
Date of Approval

Mike Bartlett

Mike Bartlett, Office Chief
North Region Environmental-District 3
California Department of Transportation
CEQA Lead Agency

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PROPOSED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

Pursuant to: Division 13, California Public Resources Code

SCH Number: Pending

Project Description

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) proposes to preserve and extend the service life of the existing pavement as well as rehabilitate or replace drainage systems in fair to poor condition. The proposed project is in Butte County on State Route 70 from Post Miles 34.1/46.0 and 47.0/48.076.

Determination

This proposed Negative Declaration (ND) is included to give notice to interested agencies and the public that it is Caltrans' intent to adopt an ND for this project. This does not mean that Caltrans' decision regarding the project is final. This ND is subject to change based on comments received by interested agencies and the public.

Caltrans has prepared an Initial Study for this project and, pending public review, has determined from this study that the proposed project would not have a significant impact on the environment based on the following:

The project would have ***No Impacts*** to:

- Agriculture and Forest Resources
- Air Quality
- Cultural Resources
- Energy
- Geology and Soils
- Land Use and Planning
- Mineral Resources
- Population and Housing
- Public Services
- Recreation
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Utilities and Service Systems
- Wildfire
- Mandatory Findings of Significance

The project would have ***Less than Significant Impacts*** to:

- Aesthetics
- Biological Resources
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Noise
- Transportation

Dotrick Wilson, Office Chief
North Region Environmental–District 3
California Department of Transportation

Date



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Acronyms and Abbreviated Terms

Acronym/Abbreviation	Description
AB	Assembly Bill
ADL	Aerially Deposited Lead
ARB	Air Resources Board
AVC	Automated Vehicle Classification
BAT/BCT	Best Available Technology/Best Conventional Technology
BCAG	Butte County Association of Governments
BMPs	Best Management Practices
BSA	Biological Study Area
CAA	Clean Air Act
CAFE	Corporate Average Fuel Economy
CAL-CET	Caltrans Construction Emissions Tool
CAL FIRE	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
Caltrans	California Department of Transportation
CAPM	Capital Preventative Maintenance
CAPTI	Climate Action Plan for Transportation Infrastructure
CARB	California Air Resources Board
CCR	California Code of Regulations
CDFW	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CESA	California Endangered Species Act
CFGC	California Fish and Game Code
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CGP	Construction General Permit
CGS	California Geological Survey
CH ₄	methane
CIA	Cumulative Impact Analysis
CIPP	Cured-In-Place-Pipe
CMP	Corrugated Metal Pipe
CNPS	California Native Plant Society
CO ₂	carbon dioxide
CO ₂ e	carbon dioxide equivalent
CRHR	California Register of Historical Resources
CRPR	California Rare Plant Rank
CSB	Contractor Supplied Biologist
CTP	California Transportation Plan
CWA	Clean Water Act
dB	decibels
dBA	A-weighted decibels

Acronym/Abbreviation	Description
DOT	Department of Transportation
DP	Director's Policy
ECL	Environmental Construction Liaison
EIR	Environmental Impact Report
EISA	Energy Independence and Security Act
EO(s)	Executive Order(s)
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
ESA	Endangered Species Act
ESL	Environmental Study Limits
°F	degrees Fahrenheit
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FERS	Floodplain Evaluation Report Summary
FESA	Federal Endangered Species Act
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FIRM	Flood Insurance Rate Map
FP	Fully Protected (listing status)
FR	Federal Register
FRA	Federal Responsibility Area
FTIP	Federal Transportation Improvement Program
FYLF	Foothill yellow-legged frog
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GHG	greenhouse gas
GWP	Global Warming Potential
H&SC	Health & Safety Code
HFCs	hydrofluorocarbons
HVF	High-Visibility Fencing
I-80	Interstate 80
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IRRS	Interregional Road System
IS	Initial Study
ISA	Initial Site Assessment
ISAC	Invasive Species Advisory Committee
IS/ND	Initial Study / Negative Declaration
IRRS	Interregional Road System
LCFS	Low Carbon Fuel Standard
LID	Low Impact Development
Lmax	maximum root mean square (rms) level
LRA	Local Responsibility Area
MASH Standards	Caltrans–Manual for Assessing Safety Hardware
MGS	Midwest Guardrail System
MLD	Most Likely Descendent

Acronym/Abbreviation	Description
MMT	million metric tons
MMTCO _{2e}	million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization
MSA	Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act
MSAT	Mobile Source Air Toxics
MVDS	Microwave Vehicle Detection Station
N ₂ O	nitrous oxide
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NAGPRA	Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990
NAHC	Native American Heritage Commission
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NES	Natural Environment Study
NHTSA	National Highway Traffic and Safety Administration
NISC	National Invasive Species Council
NMFS	National Marine Fisheries Service
ND	Negative Declaration
NOA	Naturally Occurring Asbestos
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
O ₃	ozone
OH	Overhead
OPR	Governor's Office of Planning and Research
PDT	Project Development Team
PM(s)	Post Mile(s)
Porter-Cologne Act	Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act
Project	Butte 70 CAPM (Capital Maintenance) Project
PRC	Public Resources Code (California)
RCP	Representative Concentration Pathways 8.5 Emissions Scenario
RSP	Rock Slope Protection
RTP	Regional Transportation Plan
RTPA	Regional Transportation Planning Agency
RWQCB	Regional Water Quality Control Board
SB	Senate Bill
SCS	Sustainable Communities Strategy
SF ₆	sulfur hexafluoride
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Officer
SHS	State Highway System
SLR	Sea Level Rise

Acronym/Abbreviation	Description
SNC(s)	Sensitive Natural Community(ies)
SO ₂	sulfur dioxide
SR	State Route
SRA	State Responsibility Area
SSC	Species of Special Concern
SWPPP	Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan
SWRCB	State Water Resources Control Board
TCE	Temporary Construction Easement
TMP	Transportation Management Plan
TPZ	Timber Production Zone
UG	Underground
U.S. or US	United States
USACE	United States Army Corps of Engineers
USC	United States Code
USDOT	U.S. Department of Transportation
U.S. EPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
VIA	Visual Impact Assessment
VMT	Vehicle Miles Traveled
WOTUS	Waters of the United States
WPCP	Water Pollution Control Program
WQAR	Water Quality Assessment Report

Chapter 1. Proposed Project

The California Department of Transportation, as assigned by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), is the lead agency under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The California Department of Transportation is the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

1.1 Project History

State Route (SR) 70 is one of the primary north-south transportation corridors for the eastern Sacramento Valley. The District 3 portion of SR 70 traverses Sutter, Yuba, and Butte counties, totaling approximately 81 miles. The route begins approximately 14 miles north of the city of Sacramento, at the junction of SR 99 and SR 70 (PM R0.051) near Catlett Road in southeastern Sutter County. Figures 1 and 2 indicate the property vicinity and location maps. SR 70 continues north, bisecting the city of Marysville in Sutter County, the city of Oroville in Butte County, and then continues northeast through Lake Oroville State Recreation Area and Lassen National Forest in Butte County, terminating at the Butte/Plumas County boundary (PM 48.0).

The terrain of SR 70 transitions from flat terrain, south of SR 162 to rolling hills, and then mountainous. In this section of the route, the land use also changes to mostly recreational and open space, passing through the federal and state Park lands and a few unincorporated communities.

The proposed project would preserve and extend the service life of the existing pavement as well as rehabilitate or replace drainage systems in fair to poor condition.

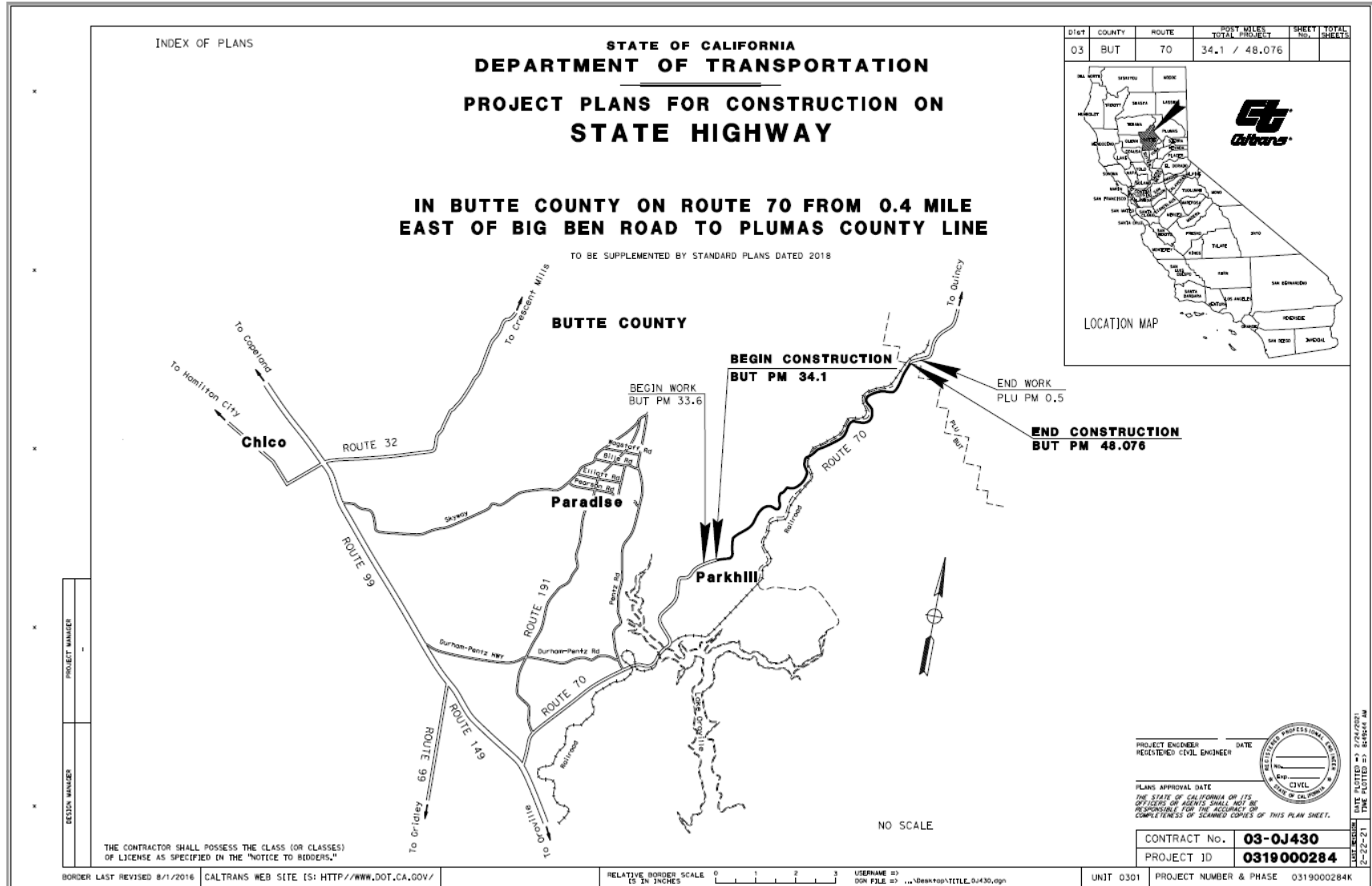


Figure 1. Project Vicinity

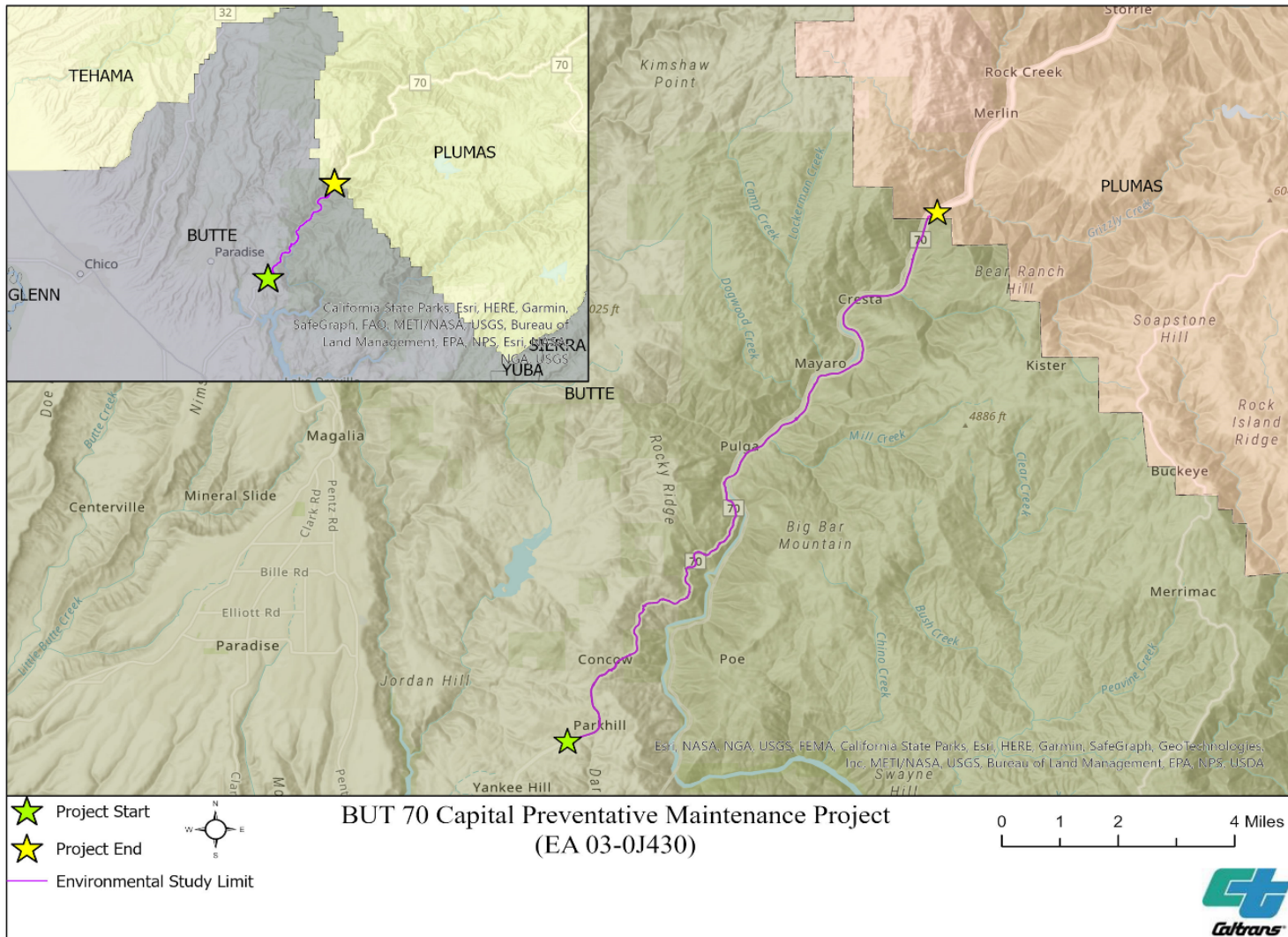


Figure 2. Project Vicinity Map

1.2 Project Description

The Butte 70 CAPM project is on State Route 70 between Post Miles (PMs) 34.1/46.0 and 47.0/48.076 in Butte County. SR 70 accommodates regional, interregional, recreational, and commercial truck traffic, in addition to serving local traffic within Marysville, Oroville, and numerous unincorporated communities. SR 70 also serves as a major commuter route between Marysville and Sacramento and constitutes a portion of the primary commuter route between Chico and Oroville. The route carries substantial recreational traffic through Yuba and Butte counties and is a parallel easterly alternative route to SR 99 for most trip purposes. SR 70 plays an important role in goods movement, particularly for transporting local agricultural products to market and processing plants in the region. In addition, SR 70 serves as an emergency alternative route for Interstate-80 (I-80) across the Sierra Nevada Mountains when I-80 is closed or impaired due to weather conditions or other significant incidents.

SR 70 is also designated an Interregional Road System (IRRS) route, providing access to, and a link between, economic centers, major recreational areas, and urban and rural regions. The entire route is identified as a high emphasis route, and all (except for a portion of the route from SR 149 to the Butte/Plumas County boundary) is designated a “focus route”. A focus route is Caltrans’ highest priority route designation for completion to minimum facility standards (four-lane expressway, gap closures) within a twenty-year period to ensure that a statewide trunk system is in place and complete for higher volume interregional trip movements. Additionally, the portion of the route which traverses through the Lassen National Forest, between SR 149 to the end of the route, is eligible for official designation as a Scenic Highway.

Project Objective

Purpose

The project will preserve and extend the service life of the roadbed while improving safety, pavement reliability, and rideability through the project limits of SR 70. Additionally, the project will also preserve and improve the functionality of drainage culverts systems to better preserve the roadbed and prevent flooding. Finally, the project will also bring lighting, guardrail and signs up to current standards.

Need

SR 70 has frequent closures for maintenance due to extreme weather in combination with the mountainous area. Landslides and flooding are not uncommon, and the impact on the health of the drainage system and pavement must be addressed to prevent further complications.

Proposed Project

There is one Build Alternative and one No-Build Alternative for this project.

Build Alternative

Drainage

- Rehabilitate nineteen (19) corrugated metal pipe (CMP) culverts in fair to substandard condition (Table 1). Culverts will be rehabilitated using Cured-In-Place-Pipe Liner (CIPP).
- Acquire Temporary Construction Easements (TCEs) as needed for culvert improvements.
- Construct one access road for culvert at PM 35.73
- Improvements to animal passage for Foothill yellow-legged frog (FYLF) (*Rana boylei*) at two culvert locations (PM 43.42 and PM 47.2) where FYLF suitable habitat is present.

Table 1. Culverts to be Rehabilitated

Post Mile	Primary Object Struck
PM 34.25	Natural Material on Road
PM 34.55	Cut Slope or Embankment
PM 34.72	Guardrail
PM 34.94	Cut Slope or Embankment
PM 34.96	Cut Slope or Embankment
PM 37.61	Cut Slope or Embankment
PM 37.88	Cut Slope or Embankment
PM 38.90	Cut Slope or Embankment
PM 39.22	Cut Slope or Embankment
PM 39.29	Cut Slope or Embankment

Post Mile	Primary Object Struck
PM 39.30	Post-mile Marker
PM 39.68	Cut Slope or Embankment
PM 40.59	Cut Slope or Embankment
PM 42.34	Sign Post
PM 42.77	Abutment
PM 42.93	Other Object Off Road
PM 44.23	Other Object Off Road
PM 45.13	Other Object Off Road
PM 45.70	Cut Slope or Embankment
PM 46.14	Cut Slope or Embankment
PM 47.37	Cut Slope or Embankment
PM 47.80	Cut Slope or Embankment

Pavement

- Cold plane and overlay as follows: Cold plane 0.25' and overlay 0.25' of HMA-A from edge of pavement to edge of pavement on BUT-70-PM 34.1/46.0 and BUT-70-PM-47.0/48.076;
- Perform digouts as needed;
- Place shoulder backing at outside edge of both shoulders, where appropriate.

Safety

- Upgrade metal beam guardrail (MBGR) at the departure and approach ends of the Arch Rock Tunnel (PM 47.15) to current *Caltrans Manual for Assessing Safety Hardware* (MASH) standards and Midwest Guardrail System (MGS) using steel posts;
- Vegetation Control (Minor Concrete) will be placed under MGS.

Transportation Management Systems

- Replace existing automated vehicle classification (AVC) census station located at PM 42.08 (census station will be damaged due to cold plane operations);
- Install HM-90 Pole at PM 42.074 with new Microwave Vehicle Detection Station (MVDS).

Signs and Striping

- Restripe lanes and shoulders with new standard 6" thermoplastic traffic stripe and pavement marking;
- Replace and upgrade non-standard two post ground-mounted sign located at PM 35.4;
- Construct centerline rumble strips within project limits.

Electrical

- Replace and upgrade lighting at the entry of the Pulga Maintenance Station located at PM 42.07.

No-Build Alternative

The No-Build Alternative would maintain the facility in its current condition and would not meet the purpose and need of the project. For each potential impact area discussed in Chapter 2, the No-Build Alternative has been determined to have no impact. Under the No-Build Alternative, no alterations to the existing conditions would occur and the proposed improvements would not be implemented.

General Plan Description, Zoning, and Surrounding Land Uses

The project would occur within the existing Caltrans right of way. The surrounding land uses along SR 70 consist primarily of agriculture.

1.3 Permits and Approvals Needed

The following table indicates the permitting agency, permits/approvals and status of permits required for the project.

Table 2. Agency, Permit/Approval and Status

Agency	Permit/Approval	Status
Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB)	Section 401 Certification from Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board	Pending
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)	Section 404 Nationwide Permit	Pending
California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)	1600 Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement (LSAA)	Pending
US Fish and Wildlife (USFWS)	Letter of Concurrence from United States Fish and Wildlife	Pending

1.4 Standard Measures and Best Management Practices Included in All Alternatives

Under CEQA, “mitigation” is defined as avoiding, minimizing, rectifying, reducing/ eliminating, and compensating for an impact. In contrast, Standard Measures and Best Management Practices (BMPs) are prescriptive and sufficiently standardized to be generally applicable and do not require special tailoring to a project. They are measures that typically result from laws, permits, agreements, guidelines, resource management plans, and resource agency directives and policies. They predate the project’s proposal, and apply to all similar projects. For this reason, the measures and practices are not considered “mitigation” under CEQA; rather, they are included as part of the project description in environmental documents.

The following section provides a list of project features, standard practices (measures), and Best Management Practices (BMPs) that are included as part of the BUT-70-CAPM project description.

Standard measures relevant to the protection of natural resources deemed applicable to the proposed project include:

Biological Resources

BR-1: General

Before start of work, as required by permit or consultation conditions, a Caltrans Biologist, or Environmental Construction Liaison (ECL) would meet with the contractor to brief them on environmental permit conditions and requirements relative to each stage of the proposed project, including, but not limited to, work windows, drilling site management, and how to identify and report regulated species within the project areas.

BR-2: Invasive Species

Invasive non-native species control would be implemented. Measures would include:

- Straw, straw bales, seed, mulch, or other material used for erosion control or landscaping which would be free of noxious weed seed and propagules.

- All equipment would be thoroughly cleaned of all dirt and vegetation prior to entering the job site to prevent importing invasive non-native species. Project personnel would adhere to the latest version of the *California Department of Fish and Wildlife Aquatic Invasive Species Cleaning/Decontamination Protocol (Northern Region)* (CDFW 2022) for all field gear and equipment in contact with water.

Cultural Resources

CR-1: If cultural materials are discovered during construction, work activity within a 60-foot radius of the discovery would be stopped and the area secured until a qualified archaeologist can assess the nature and significance of the find, in consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO).

CR-2: If human remains and related items are discovered on private or State land, they would be treated in accordance with State Health and Safety Code § 7050.5. Further disturbances and activities would cease in any area or nearby area suspected to overlie remains, and the County Coroner contacted. Pursuant to California Public Resources Code (PRC) § 5097.98, if the remains are thought to be Native American, the coroner would notify the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) who would then notify the Most Likely Descendent (MLD).

Human remains and related items discovered on federally-owned lands would be treated in accordance with the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990 (NAGPRA) (23 USC 3001). The procedures for dealing with the discovery of human remains, funerary objects, or sacred objects on federal land are described in the regulations that implement NAGPRA 43 CFR Part 10. All work in the vicinity of the discovery would be halted and the administering agency's archaeologist would be notified immediately. Project activities in the vicinity of the discovery would not resume until the federal agency complies with the 43 CFR Part 10 regulations and provides notification to proceed.

Geology, Seismic/Topography, and Paleontology

- GS-1:** The project would be designed to minimize slope failure, settlement, and erosion using recommended construction techniques and Best Management Practices (BMPs). New earthen slopes would be vegetated to reduce erosion potential.
- GS-2:** In the unlikely event that paleontological resources (fossils) are encountered, all work within a 60-foot radius of the discovery would stop, the area would be secured, and the work would not resume until appropriate measures are taken.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

- GHG-1:** Caltrans Standard Specification "Air Quality" requires compliance by the contractor with all applicable laws and regulations related to air quality.
- GHG-2:** Compliance with Title 13 of the California Code of Regulations, which includes restricting idling of diesel-fueled commercial motor vehicles and equipment with gross weight ratings of greater than 10,000 pounds to no more than 5 minutes.
- GHG-3:** Caltrans Standard Specification "Emissions Reduction" ensures that construction activities adhere to the most recent emissions reduction regulations mandated by the California Air Resource Board (CARB).
- GHG-4:** Use of a Transportation Management Plan (TMP) to minimize vehicle delays and idling emissions. As part of this, construction traffic would be scheduled and routed to reduce congestion and related air quality impacts caused by idling vehicles along the highway during peak travel times.
- GHG-5:** All areas temporarily disturbed during construction would be revegetated with appropriate native species. Landscaping reduces surface warming and, through photosynthesis, decreases CO₂. This replanting would help offset any potential CO₂ emissions increase.

Hazardous Waste and Material

- HW-1:** Per Caltrans requirements, the contractor(s) would prepare a project-specific Lead Compliance Plan (California Code of Regulations [CCR] Title 8, § 1532.1, the “*Lead in Construction*” standard) to reduce worker exposure to lead-impacted soil. The plan would include protocols for environmental and personnel monitoring, requirements for personal protective equipment, and other health and safety protocols and procedures for the handling of lead-impacted soil.
- HW-2:** When identified as containing hazardous levels of lead, traffic stripes would be removed and disposed of in accordance with Caltrans Standard Special Provision “*Residue Containing Lead from Paint and Thermoplastic.*”
- HW-3:** If treated wood waste (such as removal of sign posts or guardrail) is generated during this project, it would be disposed of in accordance with Standard Specification “*Treated Wood Waste.*”

Water Quality and Stormwater Runoff

- WQ-1:** The project would comply with the provisions of the Caltrans Statewide National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit (Order 2022-0033-DWQ), effective January 1, 2023. If the project results in a land disturbance of one acre or more, coverage under the Construction General Permit (CGP) (Order 2022-0057-DWQ) is also required.

Before any ground-disturbing activities, the contractor would prepare a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) (per the Construction General Permit Order 2022-0057-DWQ) or Water Pollution Control Program (WPCP) (projects that result in a land disturbance of less than one acre) that includes erosion control measures and construction waste containment measures to protect Waters of the State during project construction. For SWPPP projects (which are governed according to both the Caltrans NPDES permit and the Construction General Permit), soil disturbance is permitted to occur year-round as long as the Caltrans NPDES and CGP and the corresponding requirements of those permits are adhered to. For WPCP projects (which are governed according to the Caltrans NPDES permit), soil disturbance is permitted to occur year-round as long as the Caltrans NPDES permit is adhered to.

The SWPPP or WPCP would identify the sources of pollutants that may affect the quality of stormwater; include construction site Best Management Practices (BMPs) to control sedimentation, erosion, and potential chemical pollutants; provide for construction materials management; include non-stormwater BMPs; and include routine inspections and a monitoring and reporting plan. All construction site BMPs would follow the latest edition of the *Caltrans Storm Water Quality Handbooks: Construction Site BMPs Manual* (Caltrans 2016) to control and reduce the impacts of construction-related activities, materials, and pollutants on the watershed.

The project SWPPP or WPCP would be continuously updated to adapt to changing site conditions during the construction phase.

Construction may require one or more of the following temporary construction site BMPs:

- Any spills or leaks from construction equipment (e.g., fuel, oil, hydraulic fluid, and grease) would be cleaned up in accordance with applicable local, state, and/or federal regulations.
- Accumulated stormwater, groundwater, or surface water from excavations or temporary containment facilities would be removed by dewatering.
- Water generated from the dewatering operations would be discharged on-site for dust control and/or to an infiltration basin, or disposed of offsite.
- Temporary sediment control and soil stabilization devices would be installed.
- Existing vegetated areas would be maintained to the maximum extent practicable.
- Clearing, grubbing, and excavation would be limited to specific locations, as delineated on the plans, to maximize the preservation of existing vegetation.
- Vegetation reestablishment or other stabilization measures would be implemented on disturbed soil areas, per the Erosion Control Plan.
- For SWPPP projects (which are governed according to both the Caltrans NPDES permit and the Construction General Permit), soil disturbance is permitted to occur year-round as long as the Caltrans NPDES and CGP and the corresponding requirements of these permits are adhered to. For WPCP projects (which are governed according to the Caltrans NPDES permit), soil

disturbance is permitted to occur year-round as long as the Caltrans NPDES permit is adhered to.

WQ-2: The project would incorporate pollution prevention and design measures consistent with the *2016 Caltrans Storm Water Management Plan*. This plan complies with the requirements of the Caltrans Statewide NPDES Permit (Order 2022-0033-DWQ).

The project design may include one or more of the following:

- Vegetated surfaces would feature native plants, and revegetation would use the seed mixture, mulch, tackifier, and fertilizer recommended in the Erosion Control Plan prepared for the project.
- Where possible, stormwater would be directed in such a way as to sheet flow across vegetated slopes, thus providing filtration of any potential pollutants.

1.5 Discussion of the NEPA Categorical Exclusion

This document contains information regarding compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and other state laws and regulations. Separate environmental documentation supporting a Categorical Exclusion determination will be prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). When needed for clarity, or as required by CEQA, this document may contain references to federal laws and/or regulations (CEQA, for example, requires consideration of adverse effects on species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)—in other words, species protected by the Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA)).



Chapter 2. CEQA Environmental Checklist

Environmental Factors Potentially Affected

The environmental factors noted below would be potentially affected by this project. Please see the CEQA Environmental Checklist on the following pages for additional information.

Potential Impact Area	Impacted: Yes / No
Aesthetics	Yes
Agriculture and Forest Resources	No
Air Quality	No
Biological Resources	Yes
Cultural Resources	No
Energy	No
Geology and Soils	No
Greenhouse Gas Emissions	Yes
Hazards and Hazardous Materials	Yes
Hydrology and Water Quality	Yes
Land Use and Planning	No
Mineral Resources	No
Noise	Yes
Population and Housing	No
Public Services	No
Recreation	No
Transportation	No
Tribal Cultural Resources	No
Utilities and Service Systems	No
Wildfire	No
Mandatory Findings of Significance	No

The CEQA Environmental Checklist identifies physical, biological, social, and economic factors that might be affected by the proposed project. In many cases, background studies performed in connection with the project will indicate there are no impacts to a particular resource. A “NO IMPACT” answer in the last column of the checklist reflects this determination. The words “significant” and “significance” used throughout the CEQA Environmental Checklist are only related to potential impacts pursuant to CEQA. The questions in the CEQA Environmental Checklist are intended to encourage the thoughtful assessment of impacts and do not represent thresholds of significance.

Project features, which can include both design elements of the project, as well as standardized measures applied to all or most Caltrans projects (such as Best Management Practices [BMPs] and measures included in the Standard Plans and Specifications or as Standard Special Provisions [Section 1.4]), are considered to be an integral part of the project and have been considered prior to any significance determinations documented in the checklist or document.

Project Impact Analysis Under CEQA

CEQA broadly defines “project” to include “*the whole of an action, which has a potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment*” (14 CCR § 15378). Under CEQA, normally the baseline for environmental impact analysis consists of the existing conditions at the time the environmental studies began. However, it is important to choose the baseline that most meaningfully informs decision-makers and the public of the project’s possible impacts. Where existing conditions change or fluctuate over time, and where necessary to provide the most accurate picture practically possible of the project’s impacts, a lead agency may define existing conditions by referencing historic conditions, or conditions expected when the project becomes operational, or both, that are supported with substantial evidence. In addition, a lead agency may also use baselines consisting of both existing conditions and projected future conditions that are supported by reliable projections based on substantial evidence in the record. The CEQA Guidelines require a “statement of the objectives sought by the proposed project” (14 CCR § 15124(b)).

CEQA requires the identification of each potentially “significant effect on the environment” resulting from the project, and ways to mitigate each significant effect. Significance is defined as “*Substantial or potentially substantial adverse change to any of the physical conditions within the area affected by the project*” (14 CCR § 15382). CEQA determinations are made prior to and separate from the development of mitigation measures for the project.

The legal standard for determining the significance of impacts is whether a “fair argument” can be made that a “substantial adverse change in physical conditions” would occur. The fair argument must be backed by substantial evidence including facts, reasonable assumption predicated upon fact, or expert opinion supported by facts. Generally, an environmental professional with specific training in an area of environmental review can make this determination.

Though not required, CEQA suggests Lead Agencies adopt thresholds of significance, which define the level of effect above which the Lead Agency will consider impacts to be significant, and below which it will consider impacts to be less than significant. Given the size of California and its varied, diverse, and complex ecosystems, as a Lead Agency that encompasses the entire State, developing thresholds of significance on a state-wide basis has not been pursued by Caltrans. Rather, to ensure each resource is evaluated objectively, Caltrans analyzes potential resource impacts in the project area based on their location and the effect of the potential impact on the resource as a whole. For example, if a project has the potential to impact 0.10 acre of wetland in a watershed that has minimal development and contains thousands of acres of wetland, then a “less than significant” determination would be considered appropriate. In comparison, if 0.10 acre of wetland would be impacted that is located within a park in a city that only has 1.00 acre of total wetland, then the 0.10 acre of wetland impact could be considered “significant.”

If the action may have a potentially significant effect on any environmental resource (even with mitigation measures implemented), then an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) must be prepared. Under CEQA, the lead agency may adopt a negative declaration (ND) if there is no substantial evidence that the project may have a potentially significant effect on the environment (14 CCR § 15070(a)). A proposed negative declaration must be circulated for public review, along with a document known as an Initial Study. CEQA allows for a “Mitigated Negative Declaration” in which mitigation measures are proposed to reduce potentially significant effects to less than significant (14 CCR § 15369.5).

Although the formulation of mitigation measures shall not be deferred until some future time, the specific details of a mitigation measure may be developed after project approval when it is impractical or infeasible to include those details during the project's environmental review. The lead agency must (1) commit itself to the mitigation, (2) adopt specific performance standards the mitigation will achieve, and (3) identify the type(s) of potential action(s) that can feasibly achieve that performance standard and that will be considered, analyzed, and potentially incorporated in the mitigation measure. Compliance with a regulatory permit or other similar processes may be identified as mitigation if compliance would result in implementation of measures that would be reasonably expected, based on substantial evidence in the record, to reduce the significant impact to the specified performance standards (§ 15126.4(a)(1)(B)).

Per CEQA, measures may also be adopted, but are not required, for environmental impacts that are not found to be significant (14 CCR § 15126.4(a)(3)). Under CEQA, mitigation is defined as *avoiding, minimizing, rectifying, reducing, and compensating for any potential impacts* (CEQA 15370). Regulatory agencies may require additional measures beyond those required for compliance with CEQA. Though not considered “mitigation” under CEQA, these measures are often referred to in an Initial Study as “mitigation”, Good Stewardship or Best Management Practices. These measures can also be identified after the Initial Study/Negative Declaration is approved.

CEQA documents must consider direct and indirect impacts of a project (CAL. PUB. RES. CODE § 21065.3). They are to focus on significant impacts (14 CCR § 15126.2(a)). Impacts that are less than significant need only be briefly described (14 CCR § 15128). All potentially significant effects must be addressed.

No-Build Alternative

For each of the following CEQA Environmental Checklist questions, the “No-Build” Alternative has been determined to have “No Impact”. Under the “No-Build” Alternative, no alterations to the existing conditions would occur and no proposed improvements would be implemented. The “No-Build” Alternative will not be discussed further in this document.

Definitions of Project Parameters

When determining the parameters of a project for potential impacts, the following definitions are provided:

Project Area: This is the general area where the project is located. This term is mainly used in the Affected Environment/Environmental Setting section (e.g., watershed, climate type, etc.).

Project Limits: This is the beginning and ending post miles for a project. This is different than the ESL in that it sets the beginning and ending limits of a project along the highway. It is the limits programmed for a project, and every report, memo, etc. associated with a project should use the same post mile limits. In some cases, there may be areas associated with a project that are outside of the project limits, such as staging and disposal locations.

Project Footprint: The area within the Environmental Study Limits (ESL) the project is anticipated to impact, both temporarily and permanently. This includes staging and disposal areas.

Environmental Study Limits (ESL): The project engineer provides the Environmental team the ESL as an anticipated boundary for potential impacts. The ESL is *not* the project footprint. Rather, it is the area encompassing the project footprint where there could *potentially* be direct and indirect disturbance by construction activity. The ESL is larger than the project footprint in order to accommodate any future scope changes. The ESL is also used for identifying the various Biological Study Areas (BSAs) needed for different biological resources.

Biological Study Area (BSA): The BSA encompasses the ESL plus any areas outside of the ESL that could potentially be affected by a project (e.g., noise, visual, Coastal Zone, etc.). Depending on resources in the area, a project could have multiple BSAs. Each BSA should be identified and defined. If the project is within the Coastal Zone, this area would also include the required 100 foot buffer.

2.1 Aesthetics

Except as provided in the Public Resources Code Section 21099:	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project: a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?				✓
Would the project: b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?				✓
Would the project: 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 a publicly accessible vantage point). If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?				✓
Would the project: d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?			✓	

“No Impact” and “Less than Significant Impact” determinations in this section are based on the scope, description, and location of the proposed project, as well as the *Visual Impact Assessment* (Caltrans 2023f) dated March 15, 2023.

Regulatory Setting

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) establishes it is the policy of the state to take all action necessary to provide the people of the state “with...enjoyment of *aesthetic*, natural, scenic and historic environmental qualities” (California Public Resources Code [PRC] Section 21001[b]).

Affected Environment

The project is in rural Butte County on SR 70 between Post Miles 34.1 to 48.0. The surrounding area is rural and forested with sporadic residential use, and the landscape is characterized by mountainous terrain. Within the project limits, SR 70 is an undivided two-lane conventional highway.

Discussion of CEQA Environmental Checklist Question 2.1— Aesthetics

a) Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?

A scenic vista is defined as a viewpoint that provides expansive views of a highly valued landscape for the benefit of the public. In addition, some scenic vistas are officially designated by public agencies or informally designated by tourists and tourist guides. A substantial adverse effect to such a scenic vista is one that degrades the view from a designated view spot. This project would not have any of its scenic viewpoints or vistas affected by the proposed project scope items. As a result, the project would not have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista. Therefore, there would be no impact.

b) Would the project substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings, within a state scenic highway?

The proposed project is in an area of SR 70 listed as an Eligible Scenic Highway. Eligible Scenic Highways possess similar scenic resources to those of an Officially Designated Scenic Highway, so an effort should be made to preserve and protect their scenic resources. The implementation of the proposed project would not damage scenic resources such as trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings. The project would not construct any buildings or structures that would block long-range views or interfere with scenic vistas. The scope of the project includes preserving and extending the service life of the roadbed and rehabilitating the culverts. Therefore, the project would have no impact to scenic resources.

- c) *Would the project, 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 a publicly accessible vantage point.)*

The project would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings. The proposed work would be on the roadway and would be compatible with the existing site elements. Therefore, the project would have no impact to public views.

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

The proposed work is expected to be completed during normal working daylight hours; however, construction may require some work during the night. All nighttime illumination sources coming from the project would comply with standard Caltrans practices controlling illumination for public safety pursuant to Cal/OSHA and any light and glare from construction activities would be temporary.

Upon completion of the project, new lighting would permanently improve the quality of illumination within the project limits. The surrounding areas are rural. No new source of lighting or glare would substantially affect day or nighttime views. Therefore, the impact would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

Based on the determinations made in the CEQA Environmental Checklist, no mitigation measures are proposed for this project.

2.2 Agriculture and Forest Resources

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) prepared by the California Department of Conservation (California Department of Conservation 2023a) as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. 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 (CAL FIRE) regarding the state’s inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project; the Forest Legacy Assessment Project; and the forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board (CARB).

Question	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<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?</p>				✓
<p>Would the project: b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?</p>				✓
<p>Would the project: c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of forest land (as defined by 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))?</p>				✓
<p>Would the project: d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?</p>				✓

Question	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<p>Would the project: 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?</p>				✓

“No Impact” determinations in this section are based on the scope, description, location of the proposed project, and the *California Department of Conservation Farmland Maps*.

Regulatory Setting

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires the review of projects that would convert Williamson Act contract land to non-agricultural uses. The main purposes of the Williamson Act are to preserve agricultural land and to encourage open space preservation and efficient urban growth. The Williamson Act provides incentives to landowners through reduced property taxes to discourage the early conversion of agricultural and open space lands to other uses.

Impacts to timberland are analyzed as required by the California Timberland Productivity Act of 1982 (California Government Code Sections 51100 et seq.) which was enacted to preserve forest resources. Similar to the Williamson Act, this program gives landowners tax incentives to keep their land in timber production. Contracts involving Timber Production Zones (TPZ) are on 10-year cycles. Although state highways are exempt from provisions of the Act, the California Secretary of Resources and the local governing body are notified in writing if new or additional right of way from a TPZ will be required for a transportation project.

Affected Environment

The proposed project is located on SR 70 in rural Butte County between Post Miles 34.1 and 48.0. The project area is zoned Timber Mountain, Community Commercial, Foothill Residential, and Public. Timber Mountain land uses encompass most of the land bordering the proposed project. In the community of Jarbo Gap, the area adjacent to the community is zoned Community Commercial and Public. The Department of Conservation identifies the area as, “Land on which the existing vegetation is suited to the grazing of livestock.”

The California Department of Conservation-California Important Farmland Finder identifies the area as Grazing Land. “Land not included in any other mapping category. Common examples include low density rural developments; brush, timber, wetland, and riparian areas not suitable for livestock grazing; confined livestock, poultry or aquaculture facilities; strip mines, borrow pits; and water bodies smaller than forty acres. Vacant and nonagricultural land surrounded on all sides by urban development and greater than 40 acres is mapped as Other Land. Land on which the existing vegetation is suited to the grazing of livestock. This category is used only in California and was developed in cooperation with the California Cattlemen's Association, University of California Cooperative Extension, and other groups interested in the extent of grazing activities”.

Discussion of CEQA Environmental Checklist Question 2.2— Agriculture and Forest Resources

- a) *Would the project 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?*

The lands neighboring SR 70 within the proposed project are zoned Timber Mountain, Community Commercial, Foothill Residential, and Public. The Department of Conservation states that “Common examples include low density rural developments; brush, timber, wetland, and riparian areas not suitable for livestock grazing; confined livestock, poultry or aquaculture facilities; strip mines, borrow pits; and water bodies smaller than forty acres”. The proposed project would not convert land designated as Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance to non-agriculture use. Therefore, the project would have no impact to agricultural resources.

- b) Would the project conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?*

There are no parcels within the Williamson Act contract in the project limits. Therefore, there would be no impacts to existing zoning for agriculture use or the Williamson Act contract.

- c) Would the project conflict with existing zoning 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))?*

The proposed project does not conflict with forest land or timberland. As there are no parcels with these classifications identified within the project limits, there would be no impacts.

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

While there is forest land in the project area, no rezoning would occur because of the project. The purpose of the project is to preserve and extend the life of the roadbed, ensure pavement reliability and rideability by rehabilitating drainage systems, and improve safety. Therefore, no impacts to forest land would occur.

- e) Would the project 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?*

The project is located adjacent to forest land. However, as the project would not modify the existing environment and no conversion of farmland would occur, there would be no impact.

Mitigation Measures

Based on the determinations made in the CEQA Environmental Checklist, no mitigation measures are proposed for this project.

2.3 Air Quality

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.

Question	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project: a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?				✓
Would the project: 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?				✓
Would the project: c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?				✓
Would the project: d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?				✓

“No Impact” determinations in this section are based on the scope, description, and location of the proposed project, as well as the *Air Quality and Noise Analysis Report* (Caltrans 2023a) dated July 15, 2023.

Regulatory Setting

The federal Clean Air Act (CAA), as amended, is the primary federal law that governs air quality, while the California Clean Air Act is its corresponding state law. These laws, and related regulations by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) and California Air Resources Board (CARB), set standards for the concentration of pollutants in the air.

Federal air quality standards and regulations provide the basic scheme for project-level air quality analysis under NEPA. In addition to this analysis, a parallel “Conformity” requirement under the federal CAA also applies. U.S. EPA regulations at 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 93 govern the conformity process. Conformity requirements do not apply in unclassifiable/attainment areas for National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) and do not apply at all for state standards regardless of the status of the area.

Affected Environment

This project site is located in rural Butte County within the Plumas National Forest. Within the project limits, SR 70 is a 2-lane freeway. This project is exempt from all air quality conformity analysis requirements per Table 2 of 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) § 93.126, subsection “Safety” (“Pavement resurfacing and/or rehabilitation”). Conformity requirements do not apply.

Discussion of CEQA Environmental Checklist Question 2.3—Air Quality

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

The proposed project does not conflict or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan. The proposed project would not result in changes to the traffic volume, fleet mix, speed, location of existing facility, or any other factor that would cause an increase in emissions relative to the No-Build Alternative. This project would not cause an increase in operational emissions that affect healthy air quality standards. Therefore, there would be no impact to any air quality plan.

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

Based on the *Air Quality Analysis Memo* (Caltrans 2023a) completed July 15, 2023, the project would not result in increases of criteria pollutants. Construction activities are expected to increase traffic congestion in the area, resulting in an increase in emissions from traffic during delays. However, these emissions would be temporary and limited to the immediate area surrounding the construction site. Therefore, there would be no impact.

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

Based on the Air Quality Analysis Memo, the project would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations. Therefore, there would be no impact.

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

Fugitive dust, sometimes called windblown dust or particulate matter (PM₁₀), would be generated during grading and construction operations; however, it would be a short-term construction emission. The project would comply with construction standards, and implementation of Caltrans Standard Measures and Best Management Practices would minimize air pollutants during construction. Therefore, there would be no impact.

Mitigation Measures

Based on the determinations made in the CEQA Environmental Checklist, no mitigation measures are proposed for this project.

2.4 Biological Resources

Question	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<p>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, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, or NOAA Fisheries?</p>			✓	
<p>Would the project: 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 Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?</p>			✓	
<p>Would the project: 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?</p>			✓	
<p>Would the project: 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?</p>				✓

Question	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<p>Would the project: e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?</p>				✓
<p>Would the project: 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?</p>				✓

“No Impact” and “Less Than Significant Impact” determinations in this section are based on the scope, description, and location of the proposed project, as well as the *Natural Environment Study* (Caltrans 2023e).

Regulatory Setting

Within this section of the document (2.4. Biological Resources), the topics are separated into Sensitive Natural Communities, Wetlands and Other Waters, Plant Species, Animal Species, Threatened and Endangered Species, and Invasive Species. Plant and animal species listed as “threatened” or “endangered” are covered within the Threatened and Endangered sections. Other special status plant and animal species, including USFWS and NMFS candidate species, CDFW Fully Protected (FP) species, Species of Special Concern (SSC), and California Native Plant Society (CNPS) rare plants are covered in the respective Plant and Animal sections below.

Sensitive Natural Communities

CDFW maintains a list of sensitive natural communities (SNCs). SNCs are those natural communities that are of limited distribution statewide or within a county or region and are often vulnerable to environmental effects of projects. These communities may or may not contain special status taxa or their habitat.

Wetlands and Other Waters

Waters of the United States (including wetlands) and State are protected under several laws and regulations. The primary laws and regulations governing wetlands and other waters include:

- Federal: Clean Water Act (CWA)–33 United States Code (USC) 1344
- Federal: Executive Order for the Protection of Wetlands
(Executive Order [EO] 11990)
- State: California Fish and Game Code (CFGC)–Sections 1600–1607
- State: Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act–Section 3000 et seq.

Plant Species

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) have regulatory responsibility for the protection of special status plant species. The primary laws governing plant species include:

- Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA)–USC 16 Section 1531, et seq. See also 50 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 402
- California Endangered Species Act (CESA)–California Fish and Game Code Section 2050, et seq.
- Native Plant Protection Act–California Fish and Game Code Sections 1900–1913
- National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)–40 CFR Sections 1500 through 1508
- California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)–California Public Resources Code (PRC) Sections 21000–21177

Animal Species

The USFWS, NMFS, and CDFW have regulatory responsibility for the protection of special status animal species. The primary laws governing animal species include:

- NEPA–40 CFR, Sections 1500 through 1508
- CEQA–California Public Resources Code, Sections 21000–21177
- Migratory Bird Treaty Act–16 USC Sections 703–712

- Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act–16 USC Section 661
- California Fish and Game Code, Sections 1600–1603
- California Fish and Game Code, Sections 4150 and 4152

Threatened and Endangered Species

The primary laws governing threatened and endangered species include:

- FESA–USC 16–Section 1531, et seq. See also 50 CFR Part 402
- CESA–California Fish and Game Code–Section 2050, et seq.
- CESA–California Fish and Game Code–Section 2080
- CEQA–California Public Resources Code–Sections 21000–21177
- Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, as amended–16 USC Section 1801

Invasive Species

The primary laws governing invasive species are Executive Order (EO) 13112 and NEPA.

Affected Environment

A Natural Environment Study (NES) (Caltrans 2023e) was prepared for the project. Official species lists were obtained from USFWS, NMFS, CDFW, and CNPS in September 2023. The biologist has communicated with the technical Foothill yellow-legged frog group (members include U.S. Forest Service [USFS], USFWS, and CDFW, among others) regarding the project.

The natural communities of special concern identified within the Environmental Study Limits (ESL) include Waters of the United States (U.S.) and State, including special aquatic sites in the form of seeps and riparian. Due to the limited scope of work of the project which includes pavement overlay and culvert lining, minimal impacts to both of these resources would occur. No new fill would be placed into Waters of the U.S. and State; however, water diversion could be required at some locations, as well as clearing and grubbing of a 20' wide x 20' long area within these waters.

The ESL encompasses SR 70 including shoulders, several culverts, areas of work for culvert lining, forested and open vegetated areas within the existing right of way (ROW), large

granite outcroppings, and Waters of the U.S. and State including special aquatic sites (seeps). Incorporated into the ESL is a buffer to perform the work needed for the pavement overlay, culvert lining, and all other elements of the project.

Sensitive Natural Communities

Habitats and natural communities of special concern are habitats considered sensitive because of their high species diversity, high productivity, unusual nature, limited distribution, or declining status. Local, state, and federal agencies consider these habitats important, and compensation for loss of sensitive communities is generally required by agencies. Streams, wetlands, riparian habitat, sensitive natural communities (SNCs), critical habitat (CH), and Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) are regulated by federal, state, and local laws; therefore, they are considered habitats of concern. These habitat types are discussed below. The ESL contains special aquatic sites in the form of seeps (Table 3). Four seeps have been identified within the ESL in which culvert lining is proposed. Vegetation at the seeps includes, but is not limited to, native species Douglas-fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*), madrone (*Arbutus menziesii*), watercress (*Nasturtium officinale*), California bay (*Umbellularia californica*), big leaf maple (*Acer macrophyllum*), and white fir (*Abies concolor*). Dominant understory species include Western redbud (*Cercis occidentalis*), poison oak (*Toxicodendron diversilobum*), and (*Ceanothus* sp.) The ESL also supports a small amount of riparian vegetation located at some of the inlets and outlets of the culverts associated with aquatic resources.

Wetlands and Other Waters

Under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, Waters of the U.S. (WOTUS) include the following: territorial seas, coastal and inland waters, lakes, rivers, and streams that are navigable and their adjacent wetlands, tributaries to navigable waters and their adjacent wetlands, interstate waters and their tributaries including adjacent wetlands, and all other Waters of the U.S. (intermittent and ephemeral streams). According to the State Water Resources Control Board, Waters of the State include any surface water or groundwater, including saline waters, within the boundaries of the state. Aquatic resources regulated by the California Fish and Game Code 1600 et seq. include areas of bed, bank, and channel of watercourses in addition to the lateral extent of riparian vegetation associated with habitat and hydrology.

The USACE and the U.S. EPA jointly define wetlands as areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturate soil conditions.

Surveys for Waters of the U.S. and State were focused on culverts in which CIPP lining is proposed. See Table 3 below for culvert locations and water conveyance. Within the ESL, there were no wetlands mapped on the National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) and after initial surveys were conducted no wetlands were identified.

Table 3. Culvert Locations and Water Conveyance

Culvert Post Mile	Conveyance
35.73	Ephemeral Stream
36.19	Ephemeral Stream
37.16	Stormwater
37.24	Ephemeral Stream
37.60	Water flows from seep down roadway and into culvert
38.06	Stormwater
38.18	Stormwater
39.59	Ephemeral stream
39.71	Stormwater
40.13	Stormwater
40.83	Seep
41.42	Stormwater
41.55	Stormwater
42.68	Stormwater
42.71	Stormwater
43.42	Stormwater/possible seep (must be surveyed in Spring of 2024)
47.13	Seep
47.20	Seep
47.53	Stormwater
47.72	Stormwater
47.95	Stormwater

Plant Species

The plants listed in Appendix D (compiled from queries to the USFWS, CDFW-CNDDDB and CNPS databases) are considered to be of special concern based on (1) federal, state, or local laws regulating their development; (2) limited distributions; and/or (3) the habitat requirements of special status plants or animals occurring on-site.

Botanical surveys were conducted during the appropriate time of the year when potentially occurring rare plants are present and identifiable following CDFW (CDFW 2018) and Caltrans protocols. Botanical surveys were conducted on July 20 and August 9, 2023, to assess the presence of sensitive plants and sensitive natural communities within the ESL, specifically within the construction footprint. Botanical surveys focused heavily on the 20'-wide x 20'-long areas surrounding the inlets and outlets of culverts in which CIPP lining is proposed. No federal or state listed plants were observed within the Environmental Study Limits (ESL).

While not federal or state listed, the following plant species were identified as having suitable habitat or were observed within the ESL:

- Sanborn's onion (*Allium sanbornii* var. *sanbornii*)
- Slender silver moss (*Anomobryum julaceum*)
- Depauperate milk-vetch (*Astragalus pauperculus*)
- Sierra foothills brodiaea (*Brodiaea sierrae*)
- Thread-leaved beakseed (*Bulbostylis capillaris*)
- Butte County morning-glory (*Calystegia atriplicifolia* ssp. *buttensis*)
- Golden-anthered clarkia (*Clarkia mildrediae* ssp. *lutescens*)
- Mildred's clarkia (*Clarkia mildrediae* ssp. *mildrediae*)
- Mosquin's clarkia (*Clarkia mosquinii*)
- Streambank spring beauty (*Claytonia parviflora* ssp. *grandiflora*)
- Obtuse starwort (*Engellaria obtusa*)
- Clifton's eremogone (*Eremogone cliftonii*)
- Northern Sierra daisy (*Eriogonum petrophilus* var. *sierrensis*)

- Fern-leaved monkeyflower (*Erythranthe filicifolia*)
- Small-flowered monkeyflower (*Erythranthe inconspicua*)
- Butte County fritillary (*Fritillaria eastwoodiae*)
- Red Bluff dwarf rush (*Juncus leiospermus* var. *leiospermus*)
- Colusia layia (*Layia septentrionalis*)
- Cantelow's lewisia (*Lewisia cantelovii*)
- Humboldt lily (*Lilium humboldtii* ssp. *humboldtii*)
- Elongate copper moss (*Mielichhoferia elongata*)
- Bacigalupi's yampah (*Perideridia bacigalupii*)
- Sierra blue grass (*Poa sierrae*)
- Bidwell's knotweed (*Polygonum bidwelliae*)
- Siskiyou jellyskin lichen (*Scytinium siskiyouense*)
- Feather River stonecrop (*Sedum albomarginatum*)
- Butte County checkerbloom (*Sidalcea robusta*)
- Western campion (*Silene occidentalis* ssp. *occidentalis*)
- Obtuse starwort (*Stellaria obtuse*)
- Sickie-fruit jewelflower (*Streptanthus drepanoides*)

Special Status Animal Species

Animals considered special status or species of special concern" (SSC) are based on (1) federal, state or local laws regulating their development; (2) limited distributions, and/or (3) the habitat requirements of special status animals occurring on-site. Special status species occurrences within the region were identified based on the USFWS, NMFS and CDFW-CNDDDB queries (Appendix D). Discussion of those special status animal species that could be impacted by the project, potential impacts, and avoidance and minimization measures is provided below.

Invasive Species

The Butte 70 CAPM Project would not cause or promote the introduction or spread of invasive species. There are currently invasive species already in the areas where botanical surveys were conducted. With the limited scope of work in vegetated areas, Caltrans has determined this project would not result in the spread of invasive species.

Discussion of CEQA Environmental Checklist Question 2.4a)— Biological Resources

- a) *Would the project 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, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, or NOAA Fisheries/NMFS?*

Special Status Plants

As no special status plants were identified within the project Environmental Study Limits, there would be no impact to special status plants.

Special Status Animals

Based on queries to the USFWS and CDFW-CNDDDB databases, three special status animal species were identified as potentially present within the Environmental Study Limits.

- Foothill yellow-legged frog (*Rana boylei*) (pop. 2)—Feather River Distinct Population Segment (DPS)
- Sierra Nevada mountain beaver (*Aplodontia rufa californica*)
- Western pond turtle (*Emys marmorata*)

Also identified on the species lists are the silver-haired bat (*Lasionycteris noctivagans*) and fringed myotis bat (*Myotis thysanodes*); however, there is no federal or state listing status for these species. Furthermore, although the project ESL is within the range of these species, suitable maternity roosting sites do not exist within the project area and no tree removal is proposed. Therefore, Caltrans has determined there would be no impact to these bat species.

Foothill Yellow-legged Frog

The Foothill yellow-legged frog (*Rana boylei*) (FYLF)—North Feather River DPS is designated a federal and state threatened species. Many of the culverts were dry at the time of surveys, including all culverts conveying stormwater and the three culverts that convey ephemeral streams. FYLF are not anticipated at these locations since it is assumed these culverts would be dry during the summer months. There are four seeps that flow into culverts in which culvert lining is proposed. FYLF may use seeps as foraging and refugia habitat. Two of the seeps (PMs 37.61 and 40.83) are located towards the beginning (southern portion) of the project limits prior to SR 70, crossing the North Fork Feather River at the bridge and going into the canyon. It is very unlikely that any FYLF would be in this section of the project since these two seeps are located hundreds of feet above the North Fork Feather River before the highway goes into the canyon. Both culverts are buried deep into the roadway prism and are extremely steeply sloped. The culverts outlet down a very steep hillside on the east side of the highway. Both outlets are inaccessible due to safety. The other two seeps are located within the Feather River Canyon near the Arch Rock Tunnel towards the end (northern portion) of the project limits. While the potential for FYLF to occur at these seeps is greater, it is not anticipated since there are many tributaries located in this section of the project that would provide higher quality foraging, refugia, and dispersal habitats.

There would be no permanent impacts to FYLF habitat as a result of this project. No *take* of FYLF in the form of mortality is expected.

Per FESA, Caltrans has determined the Butte 70 CAPM Project ***may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect*** Foothill yellow-legged frog.

Per CESA, Caltrans has determined the project would have ***no state “take”*** of Foothill yellow-legged frog.

Sierra Nevada Mountain Beaver

The Sierra Nevada mountain beaver is a state species of special concern (SSC). Based on habitat requirements and the presence of minimal potential suitable habitat within the ESL, it is anticipated the species could be present. However, the species was not observed during field surveys and, due to the limited scope of work, Sierra Nevada mountain beaver is not anticipated to be present.

Caltrans has determined there would be no substantial impact to Sierra Nevada mountain beaver.

Western Pond Turtle

The Western pond turtle is a state species of special concern (SSC). Based on habitat requirements and the presence of potential suitable habitat within the ESL, it is anticipated the species could be present. However, the species was not observed during field surveys and no work is proposed in any perennial streams or permanent waters.

Caltrans has determined there would be no substantial impact to Western pond turtle.

Special Status Bird Species

Tree removal is not proposed as part of the project; however, tree trimming is required. The proposed project could result in the “take” of migratory birds during construction activities; however, with implementation of the Standard Measures and Best Management Practices identified in Section 1.4, and avoidance and minimization measures, no take of migratory or non-game birds is anticipated. Tree and shrub trimming would be required during the nesting season of protected raptors and migratory birds (February 1 to September 30) to access some culvert inlets or outlets.

No tree removal is anticipated. With the implementation of Standard Measures and Best Management Practices (Section 1.4), no impacts to special status birds are anticipated.

Invasive Species

The project area has many invasive botanical species as well as native plant species. However, with implementation of the Standard Measures and Best Management Practices (Section 1.4), the proposed scope of work would not contribute to the spread of invasive plant species.

Discussion of CEQA Environmental Checklist Question 2.4b)— Biological Resources

- b) Would the project 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 Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?*

Most of the culverts within the project do not have riparian vegetation associated with them or the riparian is located where it would not need to be trimmed or removed to conduct the CIPP lining work. The culvert associated with PM 36.19 has riparian vegetation that would need to be trimmed (large shrubs) to access the vertical culvert inlet. This is the only location in which riparian vegetation would need to be trimmed or cut at the stump to access the drainage inlet. The dominant riparian vegetation at this culvert consists of native blackberry (*Rubus ursinus*).

Impacts to riparian should be minimal since only trimming is proposed. However, if it is determined that this riparian habitat would need to be removed, the maximum amount of impacts to riparian are approximately 200 square feet or 0.005 acres. Thus, Caltrans has determined the impact to riparian habitat or other sensitive natural communities would be ***less than significant***.

Discussion of CEQA Environmental Checklist Question 2.4c)— Biological Resources

- c) *Would the project 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?*

Impacts to riparian should be minimal since only trimming is proposed. However, if it is determined this riparian would need to be removed, the maximum amount of impacts to riparian are approximately 200 square feet or 0.005 acres.

The project would, however, have minimal impacts to the four ephemeral streams and seeps. Water diversion may be required at these locations. A pre-liner and CIPP tube are either inverted and placed inside the existing culvert using water or compressed air or pulled into place with a winch. An inversion bladder filled with air forces the CIPP tube to press against the inner wall of the existing pipe and provides a pathway for the curing agent. The cured pipe performs as a firm, form-fitting plastic liner within the host pipe, extending the life of a culvert for up to 50 years. Some increased sedimentation could occur because of water diversion. However, with implementation of the Standard Measures and Best Management Practices (Section 1.4), the impact is determined to be *less than significant*.

Discussion of CEQA Environmental Checklist Question 2.4d)— Biological Resources

- d) *Would the project 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?*

There are two total fish barriers located downstream of the project area, with the primary permanent barrier being the Oroville Dam which completely blocks the passage of all anadromous fish species beyond this point. Therefore, no anadromous fish habitat is present within the project area. This project is located outside of NOAA Fisheries (NMFS) jurisdiction; therefore, a NOAA Fisheries (NMFS) species list is not required and no effects to NOAA Fisheries (NMFS) species are anticipated. Accordingly, there would be *no impact* to fish species.

**Discussion of CEQA Environmental Checklist Question 2.4e)—
Biological Resources**

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

The proposed project would not conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance, as none were identified within the project limits. Therefore, there would be *no impact*.

**Discussion of CEQA Environmental Checklist Question 2.4f)—
Biological Resources**

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

A “No Impact” determination in this section is based on the location of the proposed project. As the project is not within any habitat or community conservation location, it would not conflict with provisions of any Habitat or Natural Community Conservation Plan.

Mitigation Measures

A qualified contractor supplied biologist (CSB) would be present to monitor the cutting/trimming of riparian habitat. The CSB should ensure that riparian cutting would be minimized as much as feasible.

2.5 Cultural Resources

Would the project:	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project: a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to § 15064.5?				✓
Would the project: b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to § 15064.5?				✓
Would the project: c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?				✓

“No Impact” determinations in this section are based on the scope, description, and location of the proposed project and the Butte 70 CAPM Project Cultural Resources Report (Caltrans 2023b). Potential impacts to cultural resources are not anticipated.

Regulatory Setting

The term “cultural resources,” as used in this document, refers to the built environment (e.g., structures, bridges, railroads, water conveyance systems, etc.), places of traditional or cultural importance, and archaeological sites (both prehistoric and historic), regardless of significance. Under California state laws, cultural resources that meet certain criteria of significance are referred to by various terms including *archaeological resources*, *historic resources*, *historic districts*, *historical landmarks*, and *tribal cultural resources* as defined in PRC § 5020.1(j) and PRC § 21074(a). The primary state laws and regulations governing cultural resources include:

- California Historical Resources—PRC § 5020 et seq.
- California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR)—PRC § 5024 et seq. (codified 14 CCR § 4850 et seq.)

- PRC § 5024, Memorandum of Understanding (MOU): The MOU between Caltrans and the State Historic Preservation Officer streamlines the PRC § 5024 process.
- California Environmental Quality Act–PRC § 21000 et seq. (codified 14 CCR § 15000 et seq.)
- Native American Historic Resource Protection Act–PRC § 5097 et seq.
- Assembly Bill (AB) 52, amends the California Environmental Quality Act and the Native American Historic Resource Protection Act:
 - An effect that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, as defined in PRC § 21074(a), is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment
 - Additional consultation guidelines and timeframes
- California Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA)–California Health and Safety Code §§ 8010-8011

Sections 5024(f) and 5024.5 require state agencies to provide notice to and consult with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) before altering, transferring, relocating, or demolishing state-owned historical resources that are listed on or are eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) or are registered or eligible for registration as California Historical Landmarks. Procedures for compliance with PRC Section 5024 are outlined in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)¹ between the California Department of Transportation and SHPO, effective January 1, 2015. For most Federal-aid projects on the State Highway System, compliance with the Section 106 PA will satisfy the requirements of PRC Section 5024.

¹ The MOU is located on the Caltrans Standard Environmental Reference (SER) at <https://dot.ca.gov/-/media/dot-media/programs/environmental-analysis/documents/5024mou-15-a11y.pdf>

Affected Environment

“No Impact” determinations in this section are based on the scope, description and the location of the proposed project. Potential impacts to cultural resources are not anticipated. The Feather River Highway Historic District runs through the project area; however, project-related activities would not impact contributing elements of the district.

No additional archaeological properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places, California Historical Landmarks, California Inventory of Historic Resources, California Points of Historical Interest, or California Register of Historical Resources are present within the proposed project limits. No structures or built-environment features would be affected by the project. Given this, the proposed project would not affect the historic built environment in a direct or indirect way. The project is not anticipated to disturb any human remains. If cultural remains are discovered during construction, the Standard Measures and Best Management Practices identified in Section 1.4—Cultural Resources (CR-1 and CR-2) would be implemented. Therefore, no impacts would occur to cultural resources.

Discussion of CEQA Environmental Checklist Question 2.5— Cultural Resources

- a) *Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to § 15064.5?*

The proposed project would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as there are no historical resources within the project limits. Caltrans has determined there would be no impact to archaeological resources.

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

The proposed project would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource as there are no historical resources within the project limits. If archaeological resources are encountered, Caltrans would implement Standard Measures and Best Management Practices (Section 1.4: Cultural Resources C-1 and C-2.) Caltrans has determined there would be no impact to archaeological resources.

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

No burial sites were identified within the ESL. Although the area has culturally sensitive areas, the probabilities of encountering human remains is low to none. If a burial site or human remains were encountered, Caltrans would implement Standard Measures and Best Management Practices (Section 1.4: Cultural Resources C-1 and C-2.) Caltrans has determined there would be no impact to archaeological resources.

Mitigation Measures

Based on the determinations made in the CEQA Environmental Checklist, no mitigation measures are proposed for this project.

2.6 Energy

Question	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project: a) Result in a potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources during project construction or operation?				✓
Would the project: b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?				✓

“No Impact” determinations in this section are based on the scope, description, and location of the proposed project, as well as the *Air Quality and the Noise Analysis* (Caltrans 2023a) dated July 15, 2023.

Regulatory Setting

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (42 United States Code [USC] Part 4332) requires the identification of all potentially significant impacts to the environment, including energy impacts.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2(b) and CEQA Guidelines Appendix F—Energy Conservation require an analysis of a project’s energy use to determine if the project may result in significant environmental effects due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary use of energy, or wasteful use of energy resources.

Affected Environment

An *Air Quality and the Noise Analysis* was completed July 15, 2023, which included a review of the project scope, timeline, and proposed bill of materials to inform operational and construction energy consumption data. Energy in a resource context generally pertains to the use or conservation of fossil fuels, which are a finite resource.

Transportation energy is generally described in terms of direct (comprising mobile sources and construction activities) and indirect energy (comprising equipment required to operate and maintain the proposed project).

Discussion of CEQA Environmental Checklist Question 2.6— Energy

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

The proposed project would not result in potentially significant environmental impacts due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources during project construction or operation as the construction-related energy consumption would be temporary and not a permanent new source of energy demand, and demand for fuel would have no noticeable effect on peak or baseline demands for energy. While construction would result in a short-term increase in energy use, energy-saving measures and construction design features would help conserve energy. Therefore, there would be no impact.

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

The proposed project is a SHOPP–Minor Pavement Rehabilitation, Capital Preventative Maintenance (CAPM) project. Projects funded with SHOPP resources are for safety, improvements, damage repairs, and highway operational projects on the State Highway System. The purpose of the proposed project is to repair and preserve SR 70. As the project would not conflict with state or local plans for renewable energy or energy efficiency, there would be no impact.

Mitigation Measures

Based on the determinations made in the CEQA Environmental Checklist, no mitigation measures are proposed for this project.

2.7 Geology and Soils

Question	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<p>Would the project:</p> <p>a) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">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.</p>				✓
<p style="padding-left: 20px;">ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?</p>				✓
<p style="padding-left: 20px;">iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?</p>				✓
<p style="padding-left: 20px;">iv) Landslides?</p>				✓
<p>Would the project:</p> <p>b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?</p>				✓
<p>Would the project:</p> <p>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?</p>				✓
<p>Would the project:</p> <p>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?</p>				✓

Question	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<p>Would the project: 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 wastewater?</p>				✓
<p>Would the project: f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?</p>				✓

“No Impact” determinations in this section are based on the scope, description, and location of the proposed project, and data obtained from the California Department of Conservation (California Department of Conservation 2023b and c.)

Caltrans Highway Corridor Landslide Hazard Mapping program, California Geological Survey (CGS), Earthquake Zones of Required Investigation map, and the Butte County Local Hazard Mitigation Plan Update show no potential impacts to geology and soils.

Regulatory Setting—Geology and Soils

The primary laws governing geology and soils include:

- Historic Sites Act of 1935–16 USC 461 et seq.
- CEQA–California Public Resources Code (PRC) 21000

Affected Environment—Geology and Soils

The project site lies in Butte County, part of the Northern Sacramento Valley. Much of the eastern portion of Butte County is part of the Sierra Nevada geomorphic province. The Sierra foothills in Butte County are rather complex geologically, and contain a wide variety of igneous, metamorphic, and sedimentary rocks.

Discussion of CEQA Environmental Checklist Questions 2.7a-e)—Geology and Soils

a) *Would the project directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:*

i) *Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.*

According to the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Maps (California Department of Conservation 2023b), the proposed project is not in a fault zone. Given the absence of known earthquake faults in the area, the project would not result in a rupture of a known earthquake fault; therefore, there would be no impact.

ii) *Strong seismic ground shaking?*

The proposed project would not cause potential adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death due to strong seismic ground shaking as the project is not in a known earthquake fault zone; therefore, there would be no impact.

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

The proposed project would not cause adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death due to seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction. The project area is not in a liquefaction zone; the general composition of the soils are sedimentary rocks. Therefore, there would be no impact.

iv) *Landslides?*

The proposed project would not cause substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death due to landslides. The project area is not susceptible to landslides, nor has a landslide occurred where the proposed project is located. Therefore, there would be no impact.

b) *Would the project result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?*

The proposed project would not result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil. The project activities would primarily be performed within the existing road prism, minimizing the potential for substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil. In addition, implementation of erosion control measures during construction would minimize any potential soil erosion or loss of topsoil. Therefore, there would be no impact.

- c) Would the project 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?*

The project limits go over several different geologic units consisting of marine sedimentary rock, metavolcanics rock, and plutonic rock. As the proposed project is not located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, there would be no impact.

- d) Would the project 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?*

The proposed project is not located on expansive soil, creating substantial risks to life or property. Therefore, there would be no impact.

- e) Would the project 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 wastewater?*

The proposed project would not construct septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems. Therefore, there would be no impact.

Mitigation Measures—Geology and Soils

Based on the determinations made in the CEQA Environmental Checklist, no mitigation measures are proposed.

2.8 Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Question	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<p>Would the project: a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?</p>			✓	
<p>Would the project: b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?</p>			✓	

Climate Change

Climate change refers to long-term changes in temperature, precipitation, wind patterns, and other elements of the Earth's climate system. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, established by the United Nations and World Meteorological Organization in 1988, is devoted to greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction and climate change research and policy. Climate change in the past has generally occurred gradually over millennia, or more suddenly in response to cataclysmic natural disruptions. The research of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and other scientists over recent decades, however, has unequivocally attributed an accelerated rate of climatological changes over the past 150 years to GHG emissions generated from the production and use of fossil fuels.

Human activities generate GHGs consisting primarily of carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), nitrous oxide (N₂O), tetrafluoromethane, hexafluoroethane, sulfur hexafluoride (SF₆), and various hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs). CO₂ is the most abundant GHG; while it is a naturally occurring and necessary component of Earth's atmosphere, fossil-fuel combustion is the main source of additional, human-generated CO₂ that is the main driver of climate change. In the U.S. and in California, transportation is the largest source of GHG emissions, mostly CO₂.

The impacts of climate change are already being observed in the form of sea level rise, drought, extended and severe fire seasons, and historic flooding from changing storm

patterns. The most important strategy to address climate change is to reduce GHG emissions. Additional strategies are necessary to mitigate and adapt to these impacts. In the context of climate change, “mitigation” involves actions to reduce GHG emissions to lessen adverse impacts that are likely to occur. “Adaptation” is planning for and responding to impacts to reduce vulnerability to harm, such as by adjusting transportation design standards to withstand more intense storms, heat, and higher sea levels. This analysis will include a discussion of both in the context of this transportation project.

Regulatory Setting

This section outlines federal and state efforts to comprehensively reduce greenhouse gas emissions from transportation sources.

FEDERAL

To date, no nationwide numeric mobile-source GHG reduction targets have been established, nor have any regulations or legislation been enacted specifically to address climate change and GHG emissions reduction at the project level.

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (42 United States Code [USC] Part 4332) requires federal agencies to assess the environmental effects of their proposed actions prior to making a decision on the action or project. In January 2023, the White House Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) issued updated and expanded interim National Environmental Policy Act Guidance on Consideration of Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Climate Change (88 Fed. Reg. 1196) (CEQ NEPA GHG Guidance), in accordance with Executive Order (EO) 14057, *Catalyzing Clean Energy Industries and Jobs Through Federal Sustainability* 86 FR 70935 (December 13, 2021) and EO 14008, *Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad*. The CEQ guidance does not establish numeric thresholds of significance, rather emphasizes quantifying reasonably foreseeable lifetime direct and indirect emissions whenever possible. This guidance also emphasizes resilience and environmental justice in project-level climate change and GHG analyses.

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) recognizes the threats that extreme weather, sea level rise, and other changes in environmental conditions pose to valuable transportation infrastructure and those who depend on it. FHWA therefore supports a sustainability approach that assesses vulnerability to climate risks and incorporates resilience into planning, asset management, project development and design, and operations and maintenance practices (FHWA 2022). This approach encourages planning for sustainable highways by

addressing climate risks while balancing environmental, economic, and social values— “the triple bottom line of sustainability” (FHWA n.d.). Program and project elements that foster sustainability and resilience also support economic vitality and global efficiency, increase safety and mobility, enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, and improve the quality of life.

Early efforts by the federal government to improve fuel economy and energy efficiency to address climate change and its associated effects include The Energy Policy and Conservation Act of 1975 (42 USC Section 6201) and Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) Standards. The U.S. Department of Transportation’s National Highway Traffic and Safety Administration (NHTSA) sets and enforces CAFE standards for on-road motor vehicles sold in the United States. The United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) calculates average fuel economy levels for manufacturers, and also sets related GHG emissions standards for vehicles under the Clean Air Act. Raising CAFE standards leads automakers to create a more fuel-efficient fleet, which improves our nation’s energy security, saves consumers money at the pump, and reduces GHG emissions (USDOT 2014). These standards are periodically updated and published through the federal rulemaking process.

STATE

California has been innovative and proactive in addressing GHG emissions and climate change by passing multiple Senate and Assembly bills and executive orders (EOs).

In 2005, EO S-3-05 initially set a goal to reduce California’s GHG emissions to 80 percent below year 1990 levels by 2050, with interim reduction targets. Later EOs and Assembly and Senate bills refined interim targets and codified the emissions reduction goals and strategies. The California Air Resources Board (CARB) was directed to create a climate change scoping plan and implement rules to achieve “real, quantifiable, cost-effective reductions of greenhouse gases.” Ongoing GHG emissions reduction was also mandated in Health and Safety Code (H&SC) Section 38551(b). In 2022, the California Climate Crisis Act was passed, establishing state policy to reduce statewide human-caused GHG emissions by 85 percent below 1990 levels, achieve net zero GHG emissions by 2045, and achieve and maintain negative emissions thereafter.

Beyond GHG reduction, the State maintains a climate adaptation strategy to address the full range of climate change stressors, and passed legislation requiring state agencies to consider protection and management of natural and working lands as an important strategy in meeting the state’s GHG reduction goals.

Affected Environment

The proposed project is on SR 70 in Butte County. The surrounding land uses are a mixture of national forest, open space, and agriculture and the area is characterized by rolling mountain terrain. The area is within the Plumas National Forest. SR 70 is an undivided, two-lane conventional scenic highway that runs south and north. The nearest alternative route is SR 32, approximately 35 miles to the southwest.

GHG INVENTORIES

A GHG emissions inventory estimates the amount of GHGs discharged into the atmosphere by specific sources over a period of time. Tracking annual GHG emissions allows countries, states, and smaller jurisdictions to understand how emissions are changing and what actions may be needed to attain emission reduction goals. U.S. EPA is responsible for documenting GHG emissions nationwide, and the CARB does so for the state of California, as required by H&SC Section 39607.4. Cities and other local jurisdictions may also conduct local GHG inventories to inform their GHG reduction or climate action plans.

NATIONAL GHG INVENTORY

The annual GHG inventory submitted by the U.S. EPA to the United Nations provides a comprehensive accounting of all human-produced sources of GHGs in the United States. Total national GHG emissions from all sectors in 2021 were 5,586.0 million metric tons (MMT), factoring in deductions for carbon sequestration in the land sector. (Land Use, Land Use Change, and Forestry provide a carbon sink equivalent to 12% of total U.S. emissions in 2021 [U.S. EPA 2023a].) While total GHG emissions in 2021 were 17% below 2005 levels, they increased by 6% over 2020 levels. Of these, 79.4% were CO₂, 11.5% were CH₄, and 6.2% were N₂O; the balance consisted of fluorinated gases. From 1990 to 2021, CO₂ emissions decreased by only 2% (U.S. EPA 2023a).

The transportation sector's share of total GHG emissions increased to 28% in 2021 and remains the largest contributing sector (Figure 3). Transportation fossil fuel combustion accounted for 92% of all CO₂ emissions in 2021. This is an increase of 7% over 2020, largely due to the rebound in economic activity following the COVID-19 pandemic (U.S. EPA 2023a, 2023b)).

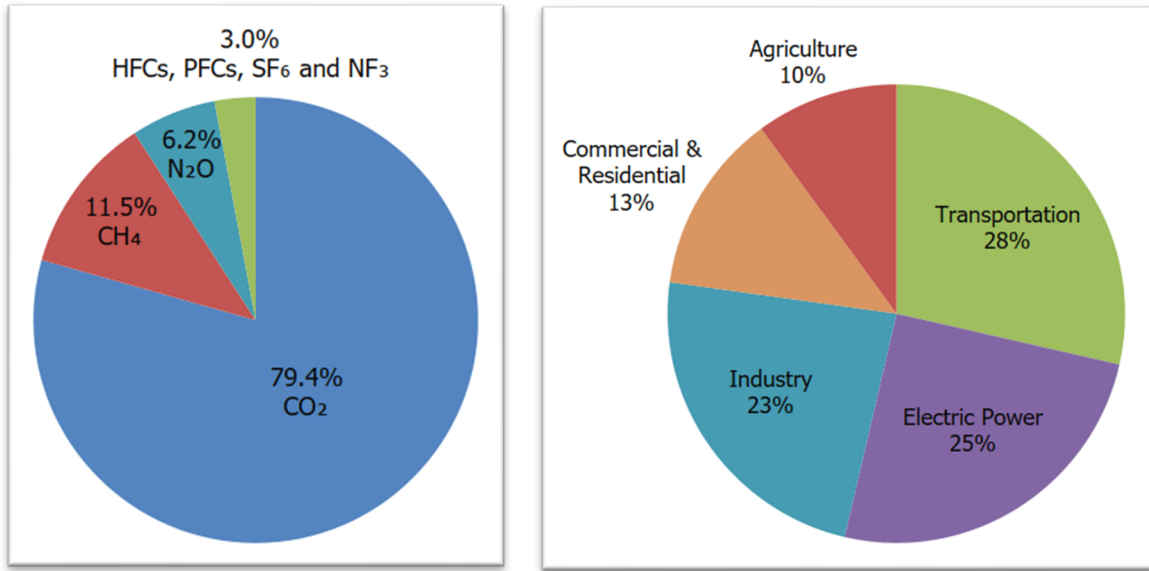


Figure 3. U.S. 2021 Greenhouse Gas Emissions

(Source: U.S. EPA 2023b)

STATE GHG INVENTORY

The CARB collects GHG emissions data for transportation, electricity, commercial and residential, industrial, agricultural, and waste management sectors each year. It then summarizes and highlights major annual changes and trends to demonstrate the state’s progress in meeting its GHG reduction goals. Overall statewide GHG emissions declined from 2000 to 2020 despite growth in population and state economic output (Figure 4) (CARB 2022a).

ARB collects GHG emissions data for transportation, electricity, commercial/residential, industrial, agricultural, and waste management sectors each year. It then summarizes and highlights major annual changes and trends to demonstrate the state’s progress in meeting its GHG reduction goals. Overall statewide GHG emissions declined from 2000 to 2020 despite growth in population and state economic output (Figure #) (ARB 2022a).

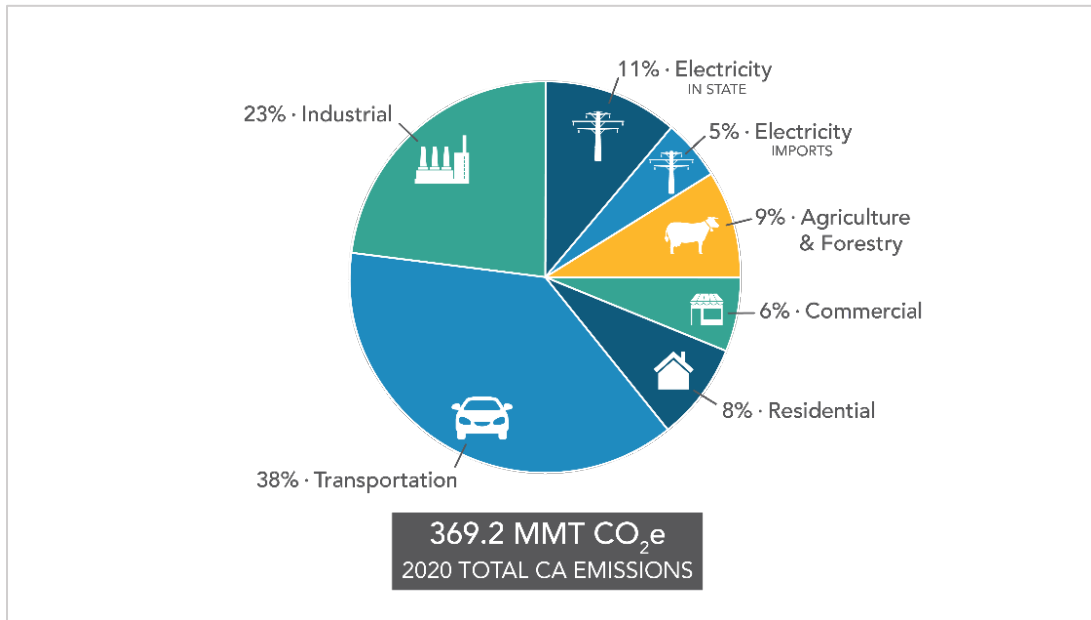


Figure 4. California 2020 Greenhouse Gas Emissions by Economic Sector

(Source: CARB 2022a)

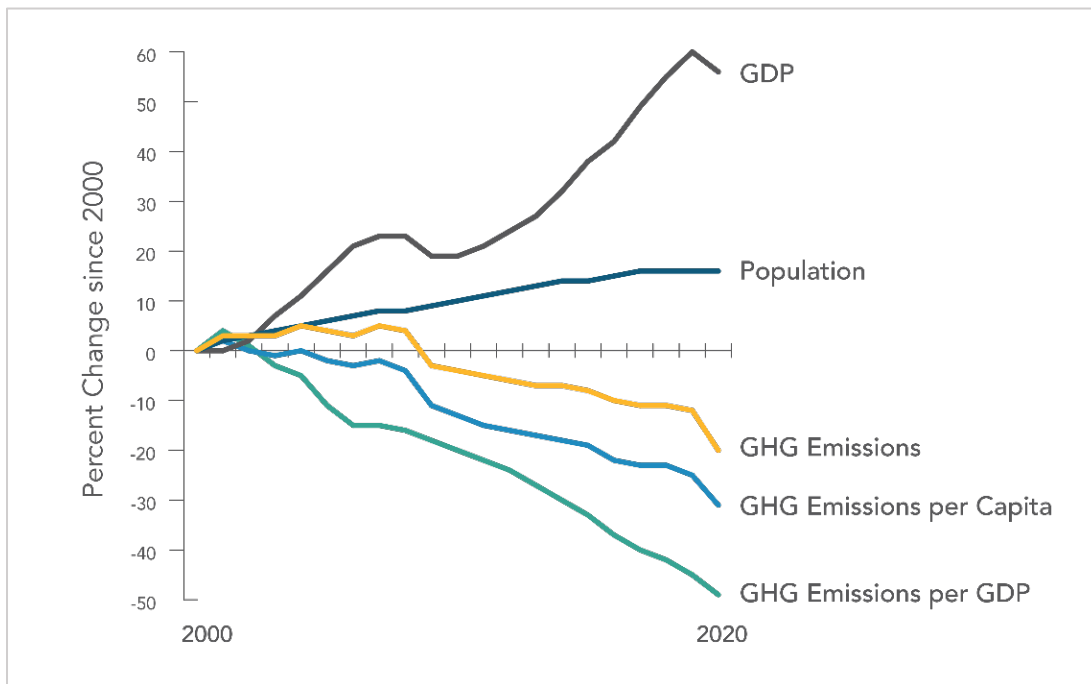


Figure 5. Change in California Gross Domestic Product (GDP), Population, and GHG Emissions since 2000

(Source: CARB 2022a)

AB 32 required the CARB to develop a Scoping Plan that describes the approach California will take to achieve the goal of reducing GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020, and to update it every 5 years. The AB 32 Scoping Plan and the subsequent updates contain the main strategies California will use to reduce GHG emissions. The CARB adopted the first scoping plan in 2008. The second updated plan, *California’s 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan*, adopted on December 14, 2017, reflects the 2030 target established in EO B-30-15 and SB 32. The *2022 Scoping Plan for Achieving Carbon Neutrality*, adopted September 2022, assesses progress toward the statutory 2030 reduction goal and defines a path to reduce human-caused emissions to 85 percent below 1990 levels and achieve carbon neutrality no later than 2045, in accordance with AB 1279 (CARB 2022b).

REGIONAL PLANS

As required by *The Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act of 2008*, the CARB sets regional GHG reduction targets for California’s 18 Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) to achieve through planning future projects that will cumulatively achieve those goals, and reporting how they will be met in the Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS). Targets are set at a percent reduction of passenger vehicle GHG emissions per person from 2005 levels. The Butte County Association of Governments (BCAG 2023) is the MPO for the project area.

In 2018, the CARB updated the BCAG targets as a 6% decrease from 2005 emissions levels by 2020 and 7% decrease from 2005 emissions levels by 2035. These targets apply to the BCAG region for passenger vehicle emissions, and not to individual cities or sub-regions. The metric used for reporting will be GHG emissions per capita. The 2020 RTP/SCS, shown in Table 4 below, demonstrates the ability to meet these targets.

Table 4. Regional Transportation Plan/ Sustainable Communities Strategy per Capita CO2 Emission Reductions for Passenger Vehicles from 2005

TARGET YEAR	CARB TARGET (2018)	BCAG RTP/SCS
2020	6% reduction	14% reduction
2035	7% reduction	8% reduction

The CARB sets regional GHG reduction targets for California’s 18 Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) to achieve through planning future projects that will cumulatively achieve those goals, and reporting how they will be met in the Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS). Targets are set at a percent reduction of passenger vehicle GHG emissions per person from 2005 levels. The proposed project is included in the RTP/SCS. The regional reduction target for BCAG is 1% by 2035 (CARB 2022c).

Project Analysis

GHG emissions from transportation projects can be divided into those produced during operation and use of the State Highway System (SHS) (operational emissions) and those produced during construction. The primary GHGs produced by the transportation sector are CO₂, CH₄, N₂O, and HFCs. CO₂ emissions are a product of burning gasoline or diesel fuel in internal combustion engines, along with relatively small amounts of CH₄ and N₂O. A small amount of HFC emissions related to refrigeration is also included in the transportation sector. (GHGs differ in how much heat each traps in the atmosphere, called global warming potential, or GWP. CO₂ is the most important GHG, so amounts of other gases are expressed relative to CO₂, using a metric called “carbon dioxide equivalent”, or CO₂e. The global warming potential of CO₂ is assigned a value of 1, and the GWP of other gases is assessed as multiples of CO₂.)

The CEQA Guidelines generally address greenhouse gas emissions as a cumulative impact due to the global nature of climate change (Public Resources Code, § 21083(b)(2)). As the California Supreme Court explained, “because of the global scale of climate change, any one project's contribution is unlikely to be significant by itself.” (Cleveland National Forest Foundation v. San Diego Assn. of Governments (2017) 3 Cal.5th 497, 512.) In assessing cumulative impacts, it must be determined if a project’s incremental effect is “cumulatively considerable” (CEQA Guidelines Sections 15064(h)(1) and 15130).

To make this determination, the incremental impacts of the project must be compared with the effects of past, current, and probable future projects. Although climate change is ultimately a cumulative impact, not every individual project that emits greenhouse gases must necessarily be found to contribute to a significant cumulative impact on the environment.

Operational Emissions

The proposed project would preserve and extend the service life of the roadbed while improving safety, pavement reliability, and rideability throughout the project limits of SR 70. Additionally, the project would also preserve and improve the functionality of drainage culvert systems to better preserve the roadbed and prevent flooding. Finally, the project would also bring lighting, guardrails and signs within the project limits up to current standards.

Construction is expected to begin in 2026, with a duration of approximately 80 working days. The proposed project would result in generation of short-term, construction-related GHG emissions. Construction GHG emissions consist of emissions produced as a result of material processing, emissions produced by on-site construction equipment, and emissions arising from traffic delays and detours due to construction. These emissions would be generated at different levels throughout the construction phase.

Construction Emissions

Construction GHG emissions would result from material processing and transportation, on-site construction equipment, and traffic delays due to construction. These emissions would be produced at different levels throughout the construction phase; their frequency and occurrence can be reduced through innovations in plans and specifications and by implementing better traffic management during construction phases. While construction GHG emissions are only produced for a short time, they have long-term effects in the atmosphere, so cannot be considered “temporary” in the same way as criteria pollutants that subside after construction is complete.

Use of long-life pavement, improved Transportation Management Plans (TMPs), and changes in materials can also help offset emissions produced during construction by allowing longer intervals between maintenance and rehabilitation activities.

The Caltrans Construction Emission Tool (CAL-CET2021) was used to estimate average carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), nitrous oxide (N₂O), hydrofluorocarbon-134a (HFC-134a) emissions from construction activities. Table 5 summarizes estimated GHG emissions generated by on-site equipment for the project. The total CO₂e produced during construction is estimated to be 417 metric tons.

Table 5. Estimates (US tons) of GHG Emissions During Construction

Construction	CO ₂	CH ₄	N ₂ O	HFC-134a	BC	CO ₂ e*
2026	374	0.008	0.020	0.021	0.015	417
TOTAL	374	0.008	0.020	0.021	0.015	417

All construction contracts include Caltrans Standard Specifications related to air quality. Sections 7-1.02A and 7 1.02C, Emissions Reduction, require contractors to comply with all laws applicable to the project and to certify they are aware of and will comply with all CARB emission reduction regulations. Section 14-9.02, Air Pollution Control, requires contractors to comply with all air pollution control rules, regulations, ordinances, and statutes. Certain common regulations (such as equipment idling restrictions) that reduce construction vehicle emissions also help reduce GHG emissions.

CEQA Conclusion

While the proposed project would result in GHG emissions during construction, it is anticipated the project would not result in any increase in operational GHG emissions. The proposed project does not conflict with any applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases. With implementation of construction GHG reduction measures, the impact would be less than significant.

Caltrans is firmly committed to implementing measures to help reduce GHG emissions. These measures are outlined in the following section.

Greenhouse Gas Reduction Strategies

STATEWIDE EFFORTS

In response to Assembly Bill 32, the Global Warming Solutions Act, California is implementing measures to achieve emission reductions of GHGs that cause climate change. Climate change programs in California are effectively reducing GHG emissions from all sectors of the economy. These programs include regulations, market programs, and incentives that will transform transportation, industry, fuels, and other sectors to take California into a sustainable, cleaner, low-carbon future, while maintaining a robust economy (CARB 2022c).

Major sectors of the California economy, including transportation, will need to reduce emissions to meet 2030 and 2050 GHG emissions targets. The Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) identified five sustainability pillars in a 2015 report:

- 1) Increasing the share of renewable energy in the State's energy mix to at least 50 percent by 2030;
- 2) Reducing petroleum use by up to 50 percent by 2030;
- 3) Increasing the energy efficiency of existing buildings by 50 percent by 2030;
- 4) Reducing emissions of short-lived climate pollutants; and
- 5) Stewarding natural resources, including forests, working lands, and wetlands, to ensure that they store carbon, are resilient, and enhance other environmental benefits (OPR 2015).

The transportation sector is integral to the people and economy of California. To achieve GHG emission reduction goals, it is vital that the state build on past successes in reducing criteria and toxic air pollutants from transportation and goods movement. GHG emission reductions will come from cleaner vehicle technologies, lower-carbon fuels, and reduction of vehicle miles traveled (VMT). Reducing today's petroleum use in cars and trucks is a key state goal for reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 (California Environmental Protection Agency 2015).

In addition, SB 1386 (Wolk 2016) established as state policy the protection and management of natural and working lands and requires state agencies to consider that policy in their own decision making. Trees and vegetation on forests, rangelands, farms, and wetlands remove

carbon dioxide from the atmosphere through biological processes and sequester the carbon in above- and below-ground matter.

Subsequently, Governor Gavin Newsom issued Executive Order N-82-20 to combat the crises in climate change and biodiversity. It instructs state agencies to use existing authorities and resources to identify and implement near- and long-term actions to accelerate natural removal of carbon and build climate resilience in our forests, wetlands, urban greenspaces, agricultural soils, and land conservation activities in ways that serve all communities and particularly low-income, disadvantaged, and vulnerable communities. To support this order, the California Natural Resources Agency released *Natural and Working Lands Climate Smart Strategy* (California Natural Resources Agency 2022).

CALTRANS ACTIVITIES

Caltrans continues to be involved on the Governor's Climate Action Team as the CARB works to implement EOs S-3-05 and S-01-07 and help achieve the targets set forth in AB 32. EO B-30-15, issued in April 2015, and SB 32 (2016) set an interim target to cut GHG emissions to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030. The following major initiatives are underway at Caltrans to help meet these targets.

Climate Action Plan For Transportation Infrastructure

The *California Action Plan for Transportation Infrastructure* (CAPTI) builds on executive orders signed by Governor Newsom in 2019 and 2020 targeted at reducing GHG emissions in transportation, which account for more than 40% of all polluting emissions, to reach the state's climate goals. Under CAPTI, where feasible and within existing funding program structures, the state will invest discretionary transportation funds in sustainable infrastructure projects that align with its climate, health, and social equity goals (California State Transportation Agency 2021).

California Transportation Plan

The California Transportation Plan (CTP) is a statewide, long-range transportation plan to meet our future mobility needs and reduce GHG emissions. It serves as an umbrella document for all the other statewide transportation planning documents. The CTP 2050 presents a vision of a safe, resilient, and universally accessible transportation system that supports vibrant communities, advances racial and economic justice, and improves public and environmental health. The plan's climate goal is to achieve statewide GHG emissions reduction targets and increase resilience to climate change. It demonstrates how GHG

emissions from the transportation sector can be reduced through advancements in clean fuel technologies; continued shifts toward active travel, transit, and shared mobility; more efficient land use and development practices; and continued shifts to telework (Caltrans 2021a).

Caltrans Strategic Plan

The Caltrans 2020–2024 Strategic Plan includes goals of stewardship, climate action, and equity. Climate action strategies include developing and implementing a Caltrans Climate Action Plan; a robust program of climate action education, training, and outreach; partnership and collaboration; a VMT monitoring and reduction program; and engaging with the most vulnerable communities in developing and implementing Caltrans climate action activities (Caltrans 2021b).

Caltrans Policy Directives And Other Initiates

Caltrans Director’s Policy 30 (DP-30) Climate Change (June 22, 2012) established a policy to ensure coordinated efforts to incorporate climate change into Caltrans decisions and activities. Other Director’s policies promote energy efficiency, conservation, and climate change, and commit Caltrans to sustainability practices in all planning, maintenance, and operations. *Caltrans Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Mitigation Report* (Caltrans 2020) provides a comprehensive overview of Caltrans’ emissions and current Caltrans procedures and activities that track and reduce GHG emissions. It identifies additional opportunities for further reducing GHG emissions from Department-controlled emission sources, in support of Caltrans and State goals.

Project-Level Greenhouse Gas Reduction Strategies

The following measures will also be implemented in the project to reduce GHG emissions and potential climate change impacts from the project.

- GHG-1:** Caltrans Standard Specification "Air Quality" requires compliance by the contractor with all applicable laws and regulations related to air quality.
- GHG-2:** Compliance with Title 13 of the California Code of Regulations, which includes restricting idling of diesel-fueled commercial motor vehicles and equipment with gross weight ratings of greater than 10,000 pounds to no more than 5 minutes.

GHG-3: Caltrans Standard Specification “Emissions Reduction” ensures that construction activities adhere to the most recent emissions reduction regulations mandated by the California Air Resources Board (CARB).

GHG-4: Use of a Transportation Management Plan (TMP) to minimize vehicle delays and idling emissions. As part of this, construction traffic would be scheduled and routed to reduce congestion and related air quality impacts caused by idling vehicles along the highway during peak travel times.

ADAPTATION STRATEGIES

Reducing GHG emissions is only one part of an approach to addressing climate change. Caltrans must plan for the effects of climate change on the state’s transportation infrastructure and strengthen or protect the facilities from damage. Climate change is expected to produce increased variability in precipitation, rising temperatures, rising sea levels, variability in storm surges and their intensity, and in the frequency and intensity of wildfires. Flooding and erosion can damage or wash out roads; longer periods of intense heat can buckle pavement and railroad tracks; storm surges combined with a rising sea level can inundate highways. Wildfire can directly burn facilities and indirectly cause damage when rain falls on denuded slopes that landslide after a fire. Effects will vary by location and may, in the most extreme cases, require that a facility be relocated or redesigned. Furthermore, the combined effects of transportation projects and climate stressors can exacerbate the impacts of both on vulnerable communities in a project area. Accordingly, Caltrans must consider these types of climate stressors in how highways are planned, designed, built, operated, and maintained.

FEDERAL EFFORTS

Under NEPA Assignment, Caltrans is obligated to comply with all applicable federal environmental laws and FHWA NEPA regulations, policies, and guidance. Caltrans practices generally align with the 2023 CEQ interim Guidance on Consideration of Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Climate Change, which offers recommendations for additional ways of evaluating project effects related to GHG emissions and climate change. These recommendations are not regulatory requirements.

The *Fifth National Climate Assessment*, published in 2023, presents the most recent science and “analyzes the effects of global change on the natural environment, agriculture, energy production and use, land and water resources, transportation, human health and welfare, human social systems, and biological diversity; [It] analyzes current trends in global change,

both human-induced and natural, and projects major trends for the subsequent 25 to 100 years ... to support informed decision-making across the United States.” Building on previous assessments, it continues to advance “an inclusive, diverse, and sustained process for assessing and communicating scientific knowledge on the impacts, risks, and vulnerabilities associated with a changing global climate” (U.S. Global Change Research Program 2023).

The U.S. Department of Transportation recognizes the transportation sector’s major contribution of GHGs that cause climate change and has made climate action one of the department’s top priorities (USDOT 2023). FHWA’s policy is to strive to identify the risks of climate change and extreme weather events to current and planned transportation systems. FHWA has developed guidance and tools for transportation planning that fosters resilience to climate effects and sustainability at the federal, state, and local levels (FHWA 2022).

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) provides sea level rise projections for all U.S. coastal waters to help communities and decision makers assess their risk from sea level rise. Updated projections through 2150 were released in 2022 in a report and online tool (NOAA 2022).

STATE EFFORTS

Climate change adaptation for transportation infrastructure involves long-term planning and risk management to address vulnerabilities in the transportation system. A number of state policies and tools have been developed to guide adaptation efforts.

California’s Fourth Climate Change Assessment (Fourth Assessment) (2018) provides information to help decision makers across sectors and at state, regional, and local scales protect and build the resilience of the state’s people, infrastructure, natural systems, working lands, and waters. The Fourth Assessment reported that if no measures are taken to reduce GHG emissions by 2021 or sooner, the state is projected to experience an up to 8.8 degrees Fahrenheit increase in average annual maximum daily temperatures; a two-thirds decline in water supply from snowpack resulting in water shortages; a 77% increase in average area burned by wildfire; and large-scale erosion of up to 67% of Southern California beaches due to sea level rise. These effects will have profound impacts on infrastructure, agriculture, energy demand, natural systems, communities, and public health (State of California 2018).

Sea level rise is a particular concern for transportation infrastructure in the Coastal Zone. Major urban airports will be at risk of flooding from sea level rise combined with storm surge

as early as 2040; San Francisco airport is already at risk. Miles of coastal highways vulnerable to flooding in a 100-year storm event will triple to 370 by 2100, and 3,750 miles will be exposed to temporary flooding. The Fourth Assessment's findings highlight the need for proactive action to address these current and future impacts of climate change.

To help actors throughout the state address the findings of California's Fourth Climate Change Assessment, AB 2800's multidisciplinary Climate-Safe Infrastructure Working Group published *Paying it Forward: The Path Toward Climate-Safe Infrastructure in California*. This report provides guidance on assessing risk in the face of inherent uncertainties still posed by the best available climate change science. It also examines how state agencies can use infrastructure planning, design, and implementation processes to respond to the observed and anticipated climate change impacts (Climate-Safe Infrastructure Working Group 2018).

EO S-13-08, issued in 2008, directed state agencies to consider sea level rise scenarios for 2050 and 2100 during planning to assess project vulnerabilities, reduce risks, and increase resilience to sea level rise. It gave rise to the 2009 *California Climate Adaptation Strategy*, the Safeguarding California Plan, and a series of technical reports on statewide sea level rise projections and risks, including the *State of California Sea-Level Rise Guidance Update* in 2018. The reports addressed the full range of climate change impacts and recommended adaptation strategies. The current *California Climate Adaptation Strategy* incorporates key elements of the latest sector-specific plans such as the *Natural and Working Lands Climate Smart Strategy*, *Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Plan*, *Water Resilience Portfolio*, and the CAPTI (described above). Priorities in the 2023 *California Climate Adaptation Strategy* include acting in partnership with California Native American Tribes, strengthening protections for climate-vulnerable communities that lack capacity and resources, implementing nature-based climate solutions, using best available climate science, and partnering and collaboration to best leverage resources (California Natural Resources Agency 2023).

EO B-30-15 recognizes that effects of climate change threaten California's infrastructure and requires state agencies to factor climate change into all planning and investment decisions. Under this EO, the Office of Planning and Research published *Planning and Investing for a Resilient California: A Guidebook for State Agencies*, to encourage a uniform and systematic approach to building resilience.

SB 1 Coastal Resources: Sea Level Rise (Atkins 2021) established statewide goals to “anticipate, assess, plan for, and, to the extent feasible, avoid, minimize, and mitigate the adverse environmental and economic effects of sea level rise within the Coastal Zone.” As the legislation directed, the Ocean Protection Council collaborated with 17 state planning and coastal management agencies to develop the *State Agency Sea-Level Rise Action Plan for California* in February 2022. This plan promotes coordinated actions by state agencies to enhance California's resilience to the impacts of sea level rise (California Ocean Protection Council 2022).

CALTRANS ADAPTATION EFFORTS

Caltrans Vulnerability Assessments

Caltrans completed climate change vulnerability assessments to identify segments of the State Highway System vulnerable to climate change effects of precipitation, temperature, wildfire, storm surge, and sea level rise.

The climate change data in the assessments were developed in coordination with climate change scientists and experts at federal, state, and regional organizations at the forefront of climate science. The findings of the vulnerability assessments guide analysis of at-risk assets and development of Adaptation Priority Reports as a method to make capital programming decisions to address identified risks.

Caltrans Sustainability Programs

The Director's Office of Equity, Sustainability and Tribal Affairs supports implementation of sustainable practices at Caltrans. The *Sustainability Roadmap* is a periodic progress report and plan for meeting the Governor's sustainability goals related to EOs B-16-12, B-18-12, and B-30-15. The Roadmap includes designing new buildings for climate change resilience and zero-net energy, and replacing fleet vehicles with zero-emission vehicles (Caltrans 2023).

PROJECT ADAPTATION EFFORTS

Sea Level Rise

The proposed project is outside the Coastal Zone and not in an area subject to sea level rise. Accordingly, direct impacts to transportation facilities due to projected sea level rise are not expected.

Precipitation and Flooding

The area lies within the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM) 06007C600E and 06007C0425E. The areas on both flood insurance rate maps are marked “zone X” which indicates areas of minimal flood hazard.

A review of the flooding records showed no report of flooding in the project area. The FEMA website was reviewed to determine the potential 100-year floodplains to be impacted. The California Department of Water Resources Best Available Maps website (California Department of Water Resources 2023) was also reviewed to determine the designated floodways and regulated streams to be impacted. No anticipated flood risk is expected within the project area.

Within the project limits there are multiple culverts in fair to poor condition. This project proposes to rehabilitate fair to poor condition culverts. The proposed project would improve drainage to reduce the risk of localized flooding. Accordingly, the project would be resilient to future changes in precipitation and flooding.

Wildfire

The project is located in a Federal Responsibility Area (FRA) in Butte County. Approximately 229,000 people reside in the county. Approximately 52% of the county is designated a State Responsibility Area (SRA), and approximately 14% is designated Federal Responsibility Area (FRA). Much of the public lands include parts of the Lassen National Forest and the Plumas National Forest. The remaining 34% of the county comprises a Local Responsibility Area (LRA). The LRA contains densely populated areas as well as lower density rural areas. The LRA experiences a large occurrence of wildfires and poses a significant threat to the adjacent SRA.

The proposed project includes culvert replacement work that consists of drainage system restoration to pre-failure conditions, which would reduce the risk of flooding and landslides if future wildfires were to occur and leave slopes exposed.

Caltrans Standard Specifications mandate fire prevention procedures, including a Fire Prevention Plan, to avoid accidental fire starts during construction. The project is therefore expected to be resilient to the risk of wildfire.

Temperature

The District Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment (Caltrans 2019) does not indicate temperature changes during the project’s design life that would require adaptive changes in pavement design or maintenance practices.

2.9 Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Question	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<p>Would the project: a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?</p>				✓
<p>Would the project: b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?</p>				✓
<p>Would the project: c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?</p>			✓	
<p>Would the project: 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?</p>				✓
<p>Would the project: 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?</p>				✓

Question	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project: f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?			✓	
Would the project: g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?				✓

“No Impact” and “Less than Significant Impact” determinations in this section are based on the scope, description, and location of the proposed project, as well as the *Initial Site Assessment* dated July 12, 2023 (Caltrans 2023d).

Regulatory Setting

Hazardous materials, including hazardous substances and wastes, are regulated by many state and federal laws. Statutes govern the generation, treatment, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials, substances, and waste, and also the investigation and mitigation of waste releases, air and water quality, human health, and land use.

The primary laws governing hazardous materials, waste and substances include:

- California Health and Safety Code—Chapter 6.5
- Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act—§ 13000 et seq.
- CFR Title 22 Division 4.5 Environmental Health Standards for the Management of Hazardous Waste, Title 23 Waters, and Title 27 Environmental Protection

Worker and public health and safety are key issues when addressing hazardous materials that may affect human health and the environment. Proper management and disposal of hazardous material is vital if it is found, disturbed, or generated during project construction.

Affected Environment

An Initial Site Assessment (ISA) was completed on July 12, 2023. The purpose of the ISA is to identify hazardous wastes/materials within and adjacent to the project area that could affect the design, constructability, feasibility, and/or the cost of the project. As documented in the ISA, lead-contaminated soils may exist throughout the project limits due to the historical use of leaded gasoline on the roadway, pollutants may be present in treated wood, and lead/chromium may be present in yellow and white road striping.

Discussion of CEQA Environmental Checklist Question 2.9— Hazards and Hazardous Materials

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

This project would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials. If soil is to be removed from the site, an Aerially Deposited Lead (ADL) survey would be conducted. Naturally Occurring Asbestos (NOA) may exist within and near the right of way. Since a large quantity of soil disturbance will occur, a NOA site investigation is required. This site investigation will determine if NOA exists and what actions, if any, will need to occur during construction. This study would take place at the same time as the ADL study. Through the implementations of Caltrans Standard Measures and Best Management Practices and Caltrans Standard Specifications, the proposed project would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials. Therefore, there would be no impact regarding disposal of hazardous materials.

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

Standard specifications for removal and handling of known hazardous materials such as treated wood waste, ADL, and yellow traffic striping would minimize the chances of accidental release into the environment. Therefore, there would be no impact regarding significant hazards pertinent to the release of hazardous materials into the environment.

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

The Concow Elementary School is a mile west of the project limits. The proposed project would not cause an increase in mobile source air toxics (MSAT), which are considered hazardous air pollutants, and would not cause an increase in criteria pollutants which have been established as hazardous to human health. Caltrans Standard Specifications and Standard Special Provisions (Section 1.4) would be implemented to prevent the spread and limit the impacts of hazardous waste to the environment and the public, which ensures that hazardous emissions and materials are contained within the project area, if present. Given the implementation measures and the projected outcomes of the proposed project, impacts to schools from hazardous waste and/or their associated emissions would be less than significant.

Accidental release of hazardous materials during construction near a school would be a less than significant impact. Given the temporary and short-term nature of construction, relatively small quantity of hazardous materials to be used, and distance to the nearest school, impacts on schools from potential hazardous substance emissions would be less than significant.

- d) Would the project 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?***

This project is not on the Cortese list. Therefore, there would be no impact since the project would not create a hazard to the public or the environment.

- 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?***

The Paradise Airport is 5 miles west of the project site. However, the project would not expose people to additional airport-related hazards. Due to the nature of the work, the project would have no impact related to airports hazards.

f) Would the project impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

SR 70 is identified as an evacuation route. It is also a pivotal route for transportation of goods. A Transportation Management Plan, finalized in later design stages of the project, includes provisions to allow evacuation efforts to be conducted in coordination with the California Highway Patrol and local emergency response personnel. Because of these provisions, there would be a less than significant impact to emergency response and evacuations.

g) Would the project expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?

The proposed project would not exacerbate existing risks associated with wildfire caused by highway users. Standard Measures and Best Management Practices (Section 1.4) and construction specifications for equipment idling and fuel storage during construction are intended to minimize the risk associated with their use. Thus, there would be no impact.

Mitigation Measures

Based on the determinations made in the CEQA Environmental Checklist, no mitigation measures are proposed for this project.

2.10 Hydrology and Water Quality

Question	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<p>Would the project: a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?</p>			✓	
<p>Would the project: b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?</p>				✓
<p>Would the project: 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:</p> <p>(i) result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site;</p>			✓	
<p>(ii) substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or offsite;</p>			✓	
<p>(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</p>			✓	
<p>(iv) impede or redirect flood flows?</p>				✓

Question	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project: d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?				✓
Would the project: e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?				✓

“No Impact” and “Less Than Significant Impact” determinations in this section are based on the scope, description, and location of the proposed project, as well as the *Water Quality Assessment* dated July 20, 2023 (Caltrans 2023d) and the *Floodplain Hydraulic Study Report* (Caltrans 2023c) dated July 5, 2023. Both reports were used to inform the analysis of effects to hydrology and water quality from the proposed project. Potential impacts to resources are not anticipated.

Regulatory Setting

The primary laws and regulations governing hydrology and water quality include:

- Federal: Clean Water Act (CWA)–33 USC 1344
- Federal: Executive Order for the Protection of Wetlands–EO 11990
- State: California Fish and Game Code (CFGF)–Sections 1600–1607
- State: Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act– Sections 13000 et seq.

Discussion of CEQA Environmental Checklist Question 2.10— Hydrology and Water Quality

- a) Would the project violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?*

The proposed project would comply with the conditions of Caltrans' MS4 NPDES Permit (Stormwater Permit) and the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) Construction General Permit (CGP). Caltrans' Stormwater Permit requires Caltrans implement Best Management Practices, to the maximum extent practicable, and adhere to the conditions of the CGP if a project is expected to have 1 acre or more of soil disturbance. The CGP requires the construction contractor prepare a project-specific Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), which identifies construction site Best Management Practices (BMPs) meant to reduce construction impacts on receiving water quality based on potential pollutants and pollutant sources with consideration to the Best Available Technology/Best Conventional Technology (BAT/BCT) criteria. Therefore, with proper implementation of the Standard Measures and BMPs, less than significant impacts are anticipated.

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

Considering the construction operations anticipated, natural fluctuations of groundwater within the project corridor and the limited (improbable) chance of groundwater being encountered, it is not anticipated that the proposed project would interfere with regional groundwater supplies or recharge. Therefore, no impacts are anticipated.

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

- (i) result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?*

For the entire project, appropriate construction site Standard Measures and BMPs would be implemented to minimize, reduce, and/or eliminate erosion or siltation from occurring during construction operations using the BAT/BCT criteria outlined in the CGP.

In addition, design BMPs and low impact development (LID) features would be evaluated and implemented (where appropriate and applicable) to satisfy post construction stabilization

requirements and Caltrans' Stormwater Permit compliance. Therefore, less than significant impacts are anticipated.

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

Rehabilitation of the existing drainage systems would perpetuate existing flow patterns and volumetric flow rates. Treatment BMPs and LID features would be implemented, when and where applicable, to minimize potential impacts due to new impervious areas. Therefore, less than significant impacts are anticipated.

(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?

It is anticipated that rehabilitation of the existing drainage systems would perpetuate existing flow patterns and volumetric flow rates—not to exceed current capacities. Appropriate and applicable temporary and permanent design BMPs would be implemented to address potential impacts resulting from construction operations and new design features constructed within the project corridor. Therefore, less than significant impacts are anticipated.

(iv) impede or redirect flood flows?

The proposed project would not substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the area. Any potential temporary impacts due to construction would be minimized with implementation of Standard Measures and Best Management Practices (Section 1.4), as well as adherence to regulatory and Caltrans requirements. Therefore, no impact would occur.

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

The proposed project is not in an area at risk of seiches or tsunamis. The project would not store pollutants and would not be constructed with hazardous materials that would threaten the public if disturbed by a flood event. Therefore, there would be no impact.

- e) Would the project conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?*

Implementation of Caltrans Standard Measures and BMPs and compliance with all applicable NPDES regulatory permits, including the Regional Basin Plan, is anticipated to protect water quality resources within the project limits and associated CalWater watershed(s). Therefore, no impacts are anticipated.

Mitigation Measures

Based on the determinations made in the CEQA Environmental Checklist, no mitigation measures are proposed for this project.

2.11 Land Use and Planning

Question	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project: a) Physically divide an established community?				✓
Would the project: 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” determinations in this section are based on the scope, description, and location of the proposed project. Potential impacts to land use and planning are not anticipated.

Regulatory Setting

The primary law governing land use and planning is CEQA.

Discussion of CEQA Environmental Checklist Question 2.11—Land Use and Planning

a) Would the project physically divide an established community?

The project would improve the safety, reliability, and freight mobility in this area for the traveling public. The project is in a rural mountainous area of Butte County on SR 70. The project would not physically divide an established community. Therefore, there would be no impact to an established community.

- b) Would the project 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?*

The proposed project would not 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 as the proposed project would comply with goals of the Butte County General Plan and the BCAG Transportation Plan. Therefore, there would be no impact.

Mitigation Measures

Based on the determinations made in the CEQA Environmental Checklist, no mitigation measures are proposed for this project.

2.12 Mineral Resources

Question:	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<p>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?</p>				✓
<p>Would the project: 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?</p>				✓

“No Impact” determinations in this section are based on the scope, description, location of the proposed project, and the *Mineral Resource Maps from the California Department of Conservation* (California Department of Conservation 2023c). Potential impacts to mineral resources are not anticipated as there are no known mineral resources within the project limits.

Regulatory Setting

The primary laws governing mineral resources are CEQA and the Surface Mining and Reclamation Act (Public Resources Code Sections 2710-2796).

Discussion of CEQA Environmental Checklist Question 2.12— Mineral Resources

- a) *Would the project 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?*

There are no known economically viable mineral sources within the project limits that would be affected by the proposed project. Mineral resource extraction is not proposed with this project. Therefore, there would be no impact to mineral resources.

- b) Would the project 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?***

The determinations in this section are based on the scope, description, and location of the proposed project, as well as the mineral resource maps from the California Department of Conservation. Potential impacts to mineral resources are not anticipated, and no mineral resources were identified within the project limits or would be affected by the proposed project. There would be no impact to mineral resources.

Mitigation Measures

Based on the determinations made in the CEQA Environmental Checklist, no mitigation measures are proposed for this project.

2.13 Noise

Question	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<p>Would the project result in: a) Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?</p>				✓
<p>Would the project result in: b) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?</p>			✓	
<p>Would the project result in: 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?</p>				✓

“No Impact” and “Less than Significant Impact” determinations in this section are based on the scope, description, and location of the proposed project, as well as the *Air Quality and Noise Analysis* dated July 15, 2023 (Caltrans 2023a). Potential impacts to Noise are not anticipated as this project is considered a Type III project as described in Title 23, Part 772 of the Code of Federal Regulations (23 CFR 772). Traffic noise impacts are not anticipated, and a detailed noise report is not required.

Regulatory Setting

The primary laws governing noise are NEPA and CEQA.

Discussion of CEQA Environmental Checklist Question 2.13— Noise

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

The proposed project is not expected to result in substantial increases in noise. 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 is not anticipated. Based on the scope of work, this project is not a Type I project. Traffic noise impact is not anticipated to occur from the proposed project; therefore, noise abatement is not considered. Therefore, no impacts are anticipated.

During construction, noise may be generated from the contractors' equipment and vehicles. Caltrans requires the Contractor to conform to the provisions of 2018 Caltrans' Standard Specification, Section 14-8.02 "Noise Control" which states, "Control and monitor noise from work activities." and "Do not exceed 86 dBA Lmax at 50 feet from the job site activities from 9 p.m. to 6 a.m."

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

During construction, noise may be generated from the contractors' equipment and vehicles. Construction noise would be short-term and is not anticipated to have adverse noise impacts from construction, because construction would conform with Caltrans Standard Specifications Section 14.8-02 "Noise Control," which states:

1. Control and monitor noise from work activities.
2. Do not exceed 86 A-weighted decibels (dBA) maximum sound level (Lmax) at 50 feet from the job site activities from 9 p.m. to 6 a.m.

Given that construction noise would be short-term, and the proposed project would follow standard measures regarding noise during construction, a less than significant impact is anticipated.

- 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?*

There are no public airports or public use airports within two miles of the proposed project. Due to the nature of the work, the project would have no impact related to excessive noise levels, thus there would be no impact.

Mitigation Measures

Based on the determinations made in the CEQA Environmental Checklist, no mitigation measures are proposed for this project.

2.14 Population and Housing

Question	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<p>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)?</p>				✓
<p>Would the project: b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?</p>				✓

“No Impact” determinations in this section are based on the scope, description, and location of the proposed project. Potential impacts to population and housing are not anticipated as the project would not increase roadway capacity or access, nor would the project add new homes or businesses. There are residences and businesses along the project corridor; however, no replacement housing or businesses would be necessary to construct the proposed project.

Regulatory Setting

The primary law governing population and housing is CEQA.

Discussion of CEQA Environmental Checklist Question 2.14— Population and Housing

- a) *Would the project 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)?*

The proposed project would provide a safe corridor for the traveling public with enhanced safety features. The project does not involve any residential development or the extension of roadways or infrastructure which could induce population growth in an area. Therefore, the proposed project would not directly or indirectly induce population growth in the area and there would be no impact.

- b) *Would the project displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?*

The project would not introduce incompatible land uses. As the work would occur along the roadway, it would not cause the displacement of the local population. Also, it would not necessitate the construction of replacement housing elsewhere. The proposed project would not conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation. Therefore, there would be no impact to displaced housing or people.

Mitigation Measures

Based on the determinations made in the CEQA Environmental Checklist, no mitigation measures are proposed for this project.

2.15 Public Services

Question	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<p>a) 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:</p> <p>Fire protection?</p>				✓
Police protection?				✓
Schools?				✓
Parks?				✓
Other public facilities?				✓

“No Impact” determinations in this section are based on the scope, description, and location of the proposed project. Potential impacts to public services are not anticipated.

Regulatory Setting

The primary law governing public services is CEQA.

Affected Environment

The project is in Butte County, north of Parkhill. The surrounding areas are rural forested and sporadic residential use.

Discussion of CEQA Environmental Checklist Question 2.15— Public Services

- a) *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: fire protection, police protection, schools, parks, or other public facilities.*

Fire protection?

Caltrans is aware that with any roadway construction project, construction-related vehicles and activities could potentially temporarily interfere with safe access during construction. To maintain fire emergency access through construction, Caltrans will coordinate any road closures with emergency services providers so that response times will not be substantially affected. The closest fire stations to the proposed project are the Butte County Fire Station 36 and Butte County Fire Station 37. Therefore, there would be no impact to fire protection during project construction and operation.

Once the project is complete, the proposed project would improve movement and decrease safety concerns at the project site. This would include improved movement for emergency vehicles. The proposed project would not increase the resident population in the project area and is not expected to result in a substantial increase in demand for any community facilities or services. Therefore, there would be no impact to fire protection.

Police protection?

The closest police station is Oroville, located at 33 County Center Drive, Oroville, CA 95965, which is located 15 miles south from the project site. The proposed project would result in no permanent increase in population and would introduce no new uses to the project site that would generate increased long-term demand for police protection services.

During project construction, Caltrans will coordinate any road closures with emergency service providers so that response times will not be affected. Therefore, the proposed project would have no impact on police protection services in Butte County.

Schools?

The nearest school to the proposed project is the Concow Elementary School, located at 11679 Nelson Bar Road, Oroville, CA 95965. The school is located west of the project limits. Increased demand for public school services are typically associated with increases in the local population or demand for housing. The proposed project would not directly or indirectly result in an increase in population. Therefore, there would be no impact.

Parks?

The proposed project would not directly or indirectly result in an increase in population, which is typically a factor that increases the demand for public parks. There are no parks that would be impacted due to the project. Therefore, there would be no impact.

Other public facilities?

The proposed project would not result in substantial adverse impacts related to other types of public facilities (e.g., public libraries, hospitals, or other civic uses) because the proposed project would not result in an increase of local population or housing, which is typically associated with increased demand for public facilities. The proposed project would provide safe and serviceable facilities for the traveling public and would not directly or indirectly induce growth or create a need for additional public services. Therefore, there would be no impact.

Mitigation Measures

Based on the determinations made in the CEQA Environmental Checklist, no mitigation measures are proposed for this project.

2.16 Recreation

Question	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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?				✓
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?				✓

“No Impact” determinations in this section are based on the scope, description, and location of the proposed project. Potential impacts to recreation are not anticipated. The project would not increase the use of existing neighborhood parks, regional parks, or other recreational facilities.

Regulatory Setting

The primary law governing recreation is CEQA.

Discussion of CEQA Environmental Checklist Question 2.16— Recreation

- 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?*

The proposed project would not increase the use of existing neighborhood parks, regional parks, or other recreational facilities. No neighborhood park, regional parks, or other recreational facilities are present within the project limits. Therefore, there would be no impact.

- 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?***

The proposed project does not include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities. No neighborhood parks, regional parks, or other recreational facilities are present within the project limits. Therefore, there would be no impact.

Mitigation Measures

Based on the determinations made in the CEQA Environmental Checklist, no mitigation measures are proposed for this project.

2.17 Transportation

Question	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project: a) Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?				✓
Would the project: b) Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines § 15064.3, subdivision (b)?			✓	
Would the project: c) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?				✓
Would the project: d) Result in inadequate emergency access?				✓

“No Impact” determinations in this section are based on the scope, description, and location of the proposed project scope.

Regulatory Setting

The primary laws and regulations governing transportation and traffic are CEQA, 23 CFR 652, 49 CFR 27, 29 USC 794, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (42 USC § 12101).

Affected Environment

SR 70 accommodates regional, interregional, recreational, and commercial truck traffic, in addition to serving local traffic within Marysville, Oroville, and numerous unincorporated communities. SR 70 serves as a major commuter route between Marysville and Sacramento and constitutes a portion of the primary commuter route between Chico and Oroville. The route carries substantial recreational traffic through Yuba and Butte counties and is a parallel easterly alternative route to SR 99 for most trip purposes.

SR 70 plays an important role in goods movement, particularly for transporting local agricultural products to market and to processing plants in the region. In addition, SR 70 serves as an emergency alternative route for I-80 across the Sierra Nevada Mountains when I-80 is closed or impaired due to weather conditions or other significant incidents.

SR 70 is designated an Interregional Road System (IRRS) route, providing access to and a link between economic centers, major recreational areas, and urban and rural regions. The entire route is identified as a high emphasis route and all, except for a portion of the route from SR 149 to the Butte/Plumas county boundary, is designated a “focus route”. Additionally, the portion of the route which traverses through the Lassen National Forest, between SR 149 to the end of the route, is eligible for official designation as a Scenic Highway.

Discussion of CEQA Environmental Checklist Question 2.17— Transportation and Traffic

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

The project would preserve and enhance the useful life of existing pavement and improve the ride quality along SR 70, which would improve the safety, reliability, and operational efficiency of the highway. The proposed project is consistent with the Transportation Asset Management Plan, 10-year SHOPP Plan, and 5-year Maintenance Plan. The proposed project is included in the 2021 Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP) for Butte County Association of Government (BCAG). There are no pedestrian facilities within the project limits and the project would not impact the existing bus route along SR 70. Therefore, the project would not conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system; thus, there would be no impact.

b) Would the project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines § 15064.3, subdivision (b)?

The proposed project would not conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines § 15064.3, subdivision (b) because the project is screenable, as identified in Section 5 of the *Transportation Analysis under CEQA* (TAC) guidance document, which cites projects that are not likely to lead to a measurable and substantial increase in VMT. This project can be screened from preparing an induced travel analysis, in accordance with Section 5.1.1, ii)

Project Types Not Likely to Lead to a Measurable and Substantial Increase in Vehicle Travel, bullet #1:

“Rehabilitation, maintenance, replacement, safety, and repair projects designed to improve the condition of existing transportation assets (e.g., highways; roadways; bridges; culverts; Transportation Management System field elements such as cameras, message signs, detection, or signals; tunnels; transit systems; and assets that serve bicycle and pedestrian facilities) and that do not add additional motor vehicle capacity”.

Therefore, a less than significant impact is anticipated.

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

The proposed project would not contain concentrations or patterns of hazardous geometrical design elements and does not require geometrical improvements; there are no existing or proposed curves, driveways, intersections, or traffic signals within the project limits. Therefore, there would be no impact.

d) Would the project result in inadequate emergency access?

The proposed project would not result in inadequate emergency process. All emergency response agencies in the project area would be notified of the project construction schedule and all emergency vehicles would be accommodated through the work area. Therefore, there would be no impact.

Mitigation Measures

Based on the determinations made in the CEQA Environmental Checklist, no mitigation measures are proposed for this project.

2.18 Tribal Cultural Resources

Question	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<p>Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code § 21074 as either a site, feature, place, or 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:</p> <p>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 § 5020.1(k), or</p>				✓
<p>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 § 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code § 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.</p>				✓

“No Impact” determinations in this section are based on the scope, description, and location of the proposed project.

Regulatory Setting

In addition to the laws identified in Section 2.5 (Cultural Resources), the primary law governing tribal cultural resources is AB 52 (Chapter 532, Statutes of 2014).

Discussion of CEQA Environmental Checklist Question 2.18— Tribal Cultural Resources

Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in the Public Resources Code § 21074 as either a site, feature, place, or 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 § 5020.1(k).*

The project would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource 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). Therefore, there would be no impact.

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

Caltrans has not identified any resources in the project area that would be significant to a California Native American tribe within the project limit. Therefore, the project does not have the potential to cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource. Therefore, there would be no impact.

Mitigation Measures

Based on the determinations made in the CEQA Environmental Checklist, no mitigation measures are proposed for this project.

2.19 Utilities and Service Systems

Question	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<p>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 telecommunications facilities—the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?</p>				✓
<p>Would the project: b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry, and multiple dry years?</p>				✓
<p>Would the project: c) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?</p>				✓
<p>Would the project: 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?</p>				✓
<p>Would the project: e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?</p>				✓

“No Impact” determinations in this section are based on the scope, description, and location of the proposed project. Potential impacts to utilities and service systems are not anticipated.

Regulatory Setting

The primary law governing utilities and service systems is CEQA.

Affected Environment

Many utilities are located within the limits of this project including water, electric, gas, communication, and sanitation. Some of these companies include AT&T and PG&E which own underground (UG) and overhead (OH) utilities, respectively. No conflicts are anticipated as Design will work to avoid impacting any utilities.

Discussion of CEQA Environmental Checklist Question 2.19— Utilities and Service Systems

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

The proposed project would not 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. Caltrans would verify the location of any underground gas, electric, water, or sewer lines within the project area. Therefore, there would be no impact.

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

The project will preserve and extend the service life of the roadbed while improving safety, pavement reliability, and rideability throughout the project limits. The project does not require a water supply. Thus, there would be no impact.

- c) *Would the project 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?*

The project primarily comprises pavement and culvert rehabilitation activities. The proposed project would not have a demand for wastewater treatment. Therefore, there would be no impact.

- d) Would the project 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?*

The project would improve a transportation facility and is not a development that requires additional wastewater. The construction contractor would be responsible for disposing of all construction waste in accordance with all federal, state, and local statutes related to solid waste disposal. Thus, there would be no impact.

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

Caltrans Standard Specification 14-10 (Solid Waste Disposal and Recycling), along with other standards that govern the use of recycled materials, ensure that the proposed project would comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste. Therefore, there would be no impact.

Mitigation Measures

Based on the determinations made in the CEQA Environmental Checklist, no mitigation measures are proposed for this project.

2.20 Wildfire

Question	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<p>If located in or near State Responsibility Areas (SRAs) or lands classified as <i>very high</i> Fire Hazard Severity Zones, would the project:</p> <p>a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?</p>				✓
<p>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?</p>				✓
<p>c) Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?</p>				✓
<p>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?</p>				✓

Senate Bill 1241 required the Office of Planning and Research, the Natural Resources Agency, and the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) to develop amendments to the “CEQA Environmental Checklist” for the inclusion of questions related to fire hazard impacts for projects located on lands classified as *very high* Fire Hazard Severity Zones. The 2018 updates to the CEQA Guidelines expanded this to include projects “near” these *very high* Fire Hazard Severity Zones.

“No Impact” determinations in this section are based on the scope, description, and location of the proposed project.

Regulatory Setting

The primary law governing wildfire is CEQA.

Affected Environment

The project is located in rural Butte County. The county is located on the eastern side of the northern Sacramento Valley. The county ranges in elevation from 60 feet to 7,000 feet above sea level. The predominant summer weather pattern includes high to very high temperatures, low humidity, and light to moderate south winds associated with high pressure weather gradients.

The County of Butte developed a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (County of Butte 2022). The plan identifies, prioritizes and protects the wide range of assets found throughout the wildlands of Butte County. The project location is within an area designated as a Federal Responsibility Area (FRA) which are lands administered by the Federal Government.

Discussion of CEQA Environmental Checklist Question 2.20— Wildfire

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?

The proposed project is in a Federal Responsibility Area with *very high* fire severity (Figure 6 below). The project would not substantially impair this area as the existing structures and roadway would remain open to one-way traffic during construction. Therefore, there would be no impact.

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?

The proposed project would incorporate design features to prevent the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire within the project area. Project activities are limited to road rehabilitation activities; site occupancy is not applicable. Therefore, project implementation would not expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire. Thus, there would be no impact.

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

The proposed project is an infrastructure project. Project activities primarily comprise pavement rehabilitation, culvert replacement, and sign panels, as well as Transportation Management System (TMS) elements. The project does not include fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines, or other utilities that may exacerbate fire risk or result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment. Thus, there would be no impact.

- 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?*

The proposed project is not located in an area that has a high landslide risk, so no impact is anticipated from fire-related landslides. Although the project would place fill in a 100-year floodplain, the project would comply with all pertinent regulations, and the project would not expose people or structures to fire-related flooding. Therefore, there would be no impact.

Mitigation Measures

Based on the determinations made in the CEQA Environmental Checklist, no mitigation measures are proposed for this project.

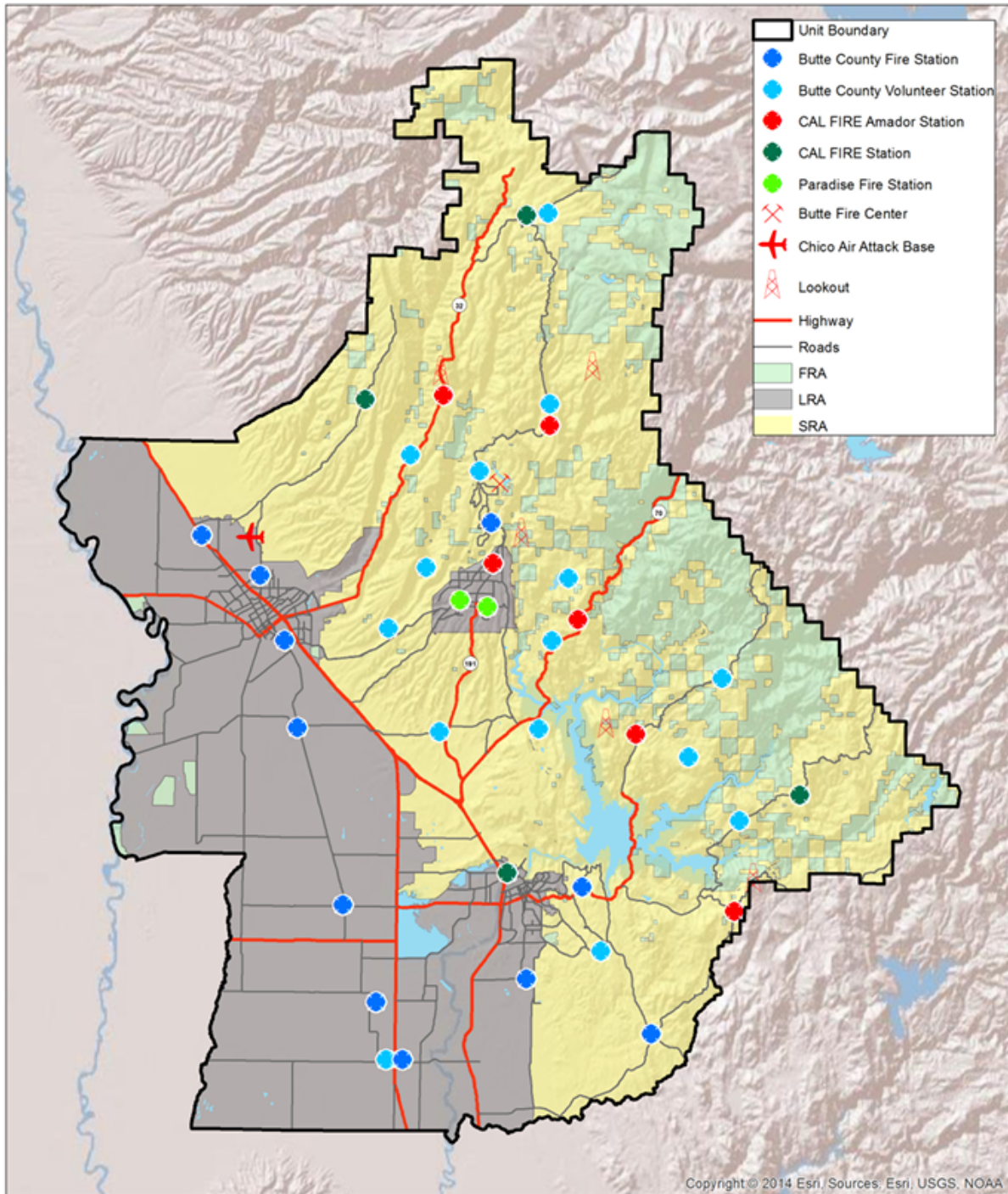


Figure 6. Federal Responsibility Area

2.21 Mandatory Findings of Significance

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

Discussion of CEQA Environmental Checklist Question 2.21— 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 a rare or endangered plant or animal, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?*

The “No Impact” and “Less Than Significant Impact” determinations are based on the Natural Environmental Study, which was completed by a qualified Caltrans biologist in October 2023. The proposed project does not have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment. The studies and conclusions reached in Section 2.4–Biological Resources support a less than significant determination.

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

There is one project along the SR 70 currently in construction. The past, present, and foreseeable future actions of these proposed projects would not have cumulatively considerable impacts leading to the degradation of habitat and species diversity, populations, disruption of migration corridors, water quality or other natural resources. The proposed project would not result in any adverse effects that, when considered in connection with other projects, would be considered cumulatively considerable. Thus, there would be no impact.

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

Based on studies completed for the proposed project to analyze potential impacts, the project would not cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly. Thus, there would be no impact.

2.22 Cumulative Impacts

Cumulative impacts are those that result from past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions, combined with the potential impacts of this proposed project. A cumulative impact assessment looks at the collective impacts posed by individual land use plans and projects. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor but collectively substantial impacts taking place over a period of time (CEQA § 15355).

Cumulative impacts to resources may result from residential, commercial, industrial, and highway development, as well as from agricultural development and the conversion to more intensive agricultural cultivation. These land use activities can degrade habitat and species diversity through consequences such as displacement and fragmentation of habitats and populations, alteration of hydrology, contamination, erosion, sedimentation, disruption of migration corridors, changes in water quality, and introduction or promotion of predators. They can also contribute to potential community impacts identified for the project, such as changes in community character, traffic patterns, housing availability, and employment.

Per Section 15130 of CEQA, a Cumulative Impact Analysis (CIA) discussion is only required in "...situations where the cumulative effects are found to be significant." Given this, an EIR and CIA were not required for this project.



Chapter 3. Agency and Public Coordination

Early and continuing coordination with the general public and public agencies is an essential part of the environmental process. It helps planners determine the necessary scope of environmental documentation and the level of analysis required, and to identify potential impacts and avoidance, minimization and/or mitigation measures and related environmental requirements. Agency consultation and public participation for this project have been accomplished through a variety of formal and informal methods, including Project Development Team (PDT) meetings, interagency coordination meetings. This chapter summarizes the results of Caltrans' efforts to identify, address, and resolve project-related issues through early and continuing coordination.

The following agencies, organizations, tribes, and individuals were consulted in the preparation of this environmental document.

Agency Coordination and Professional Contacts

Professional Contacts

- Plumas National Forest–Feather River Ranger District
Cecily Merwin, Acting District Archaeologist
- Plumas National Forest–Supervisor's Office
Christopher O'Brien, Ph.D., Heritage Program Manager

Native American Tribes

- Estom Yumeka Maidu Tribe of the Enterprise Rancheria
- Mechoopda Indian Tribe of Chico Rancheria, California
- Mooretown Rancheria of Maidu Indians
- KonKow Valley Band of Maidu Indians
- Berry Creek Rancheria of Maidu Indians
- T'si Akim Maidu
- Greenville Rancheria
- Nevada City Rancheria Nisenan Tribe
- Butte County Historical Society

Circulation

The Initial Study/Negative Declaration will be made available for public and agency review and comment for 30 days from April 15, 2024 – May 15, 2024. Caltrans will ensure the document is made available to all appropriate parties and agencies, including:

- 1) Responsible agencies
- 2) Trustee agencies that have resources affected by the project
- 3) Other state, federal and local agencies which have regulatory jurisdiction, or that exercise authority over resources which may be affected by the project
- 4) Public. The document is available online at <https://dot.ca.gov/caltrans-near-me/district-3/d3-programs/d3-environmental/d3-environmental-docs>. Additional copies of the document are available at:
 - Butte County Library, Oroville Branch: 1820 Mitchell Avenue, Oroville, CA 95966.
 - Caltrans District 3 Office: 703 B Street, Marysville, CA 95901
 - and available to send via postal mail by submitting a request to the project email address at Butte.70.CAPM@dot.ca.gov.

Chapter 4. List of Preparers

The following individuals performed the environmental work and contributed to the preparation of the Initial Study/Proposed Negative Declaration for this project:

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Emmanuel Oguike	Hydraulics Specialist
Lorenzo Ibarra	Landscape Architect
Project Manager	Bikramjit Kahlon
Michael Anderson	Design Engineer
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Chapter 5. Distribution List

Federal and State Agencies

California Department of Fish and Wildlife
1416 9th Street, 12th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

Regional Water Quality Control Board
11020 Sun Center Drive, #200
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670

Office of Historic Preservation
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Sacramento, CA 95816

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Local Elected Officials

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California Highway Patrol
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Oroville, CA 95966

Utilities, Service Systems, Businesses, and Other Property Owners

PG&E
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Marysville, CA 95901

Chapter 6. References

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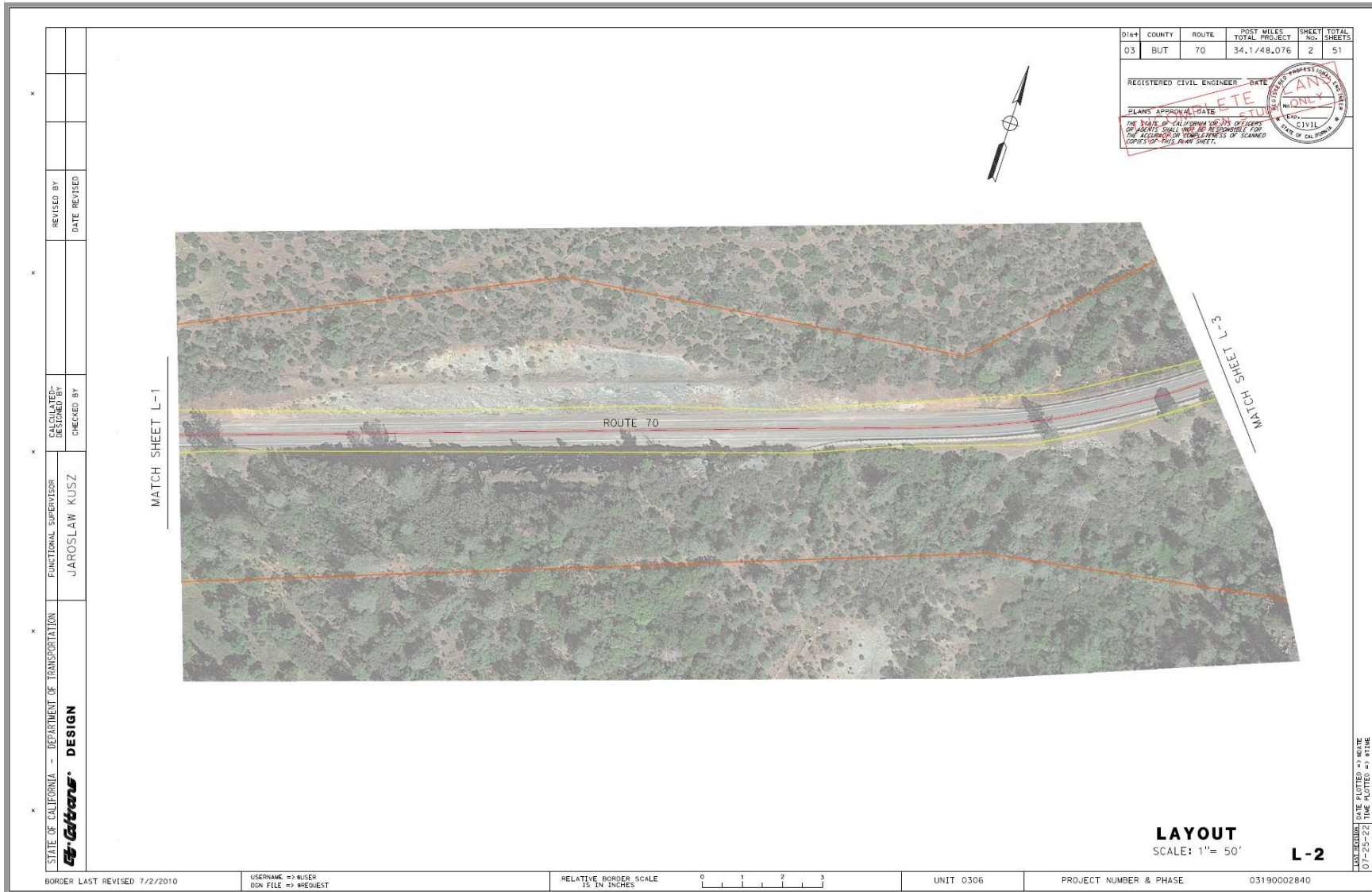
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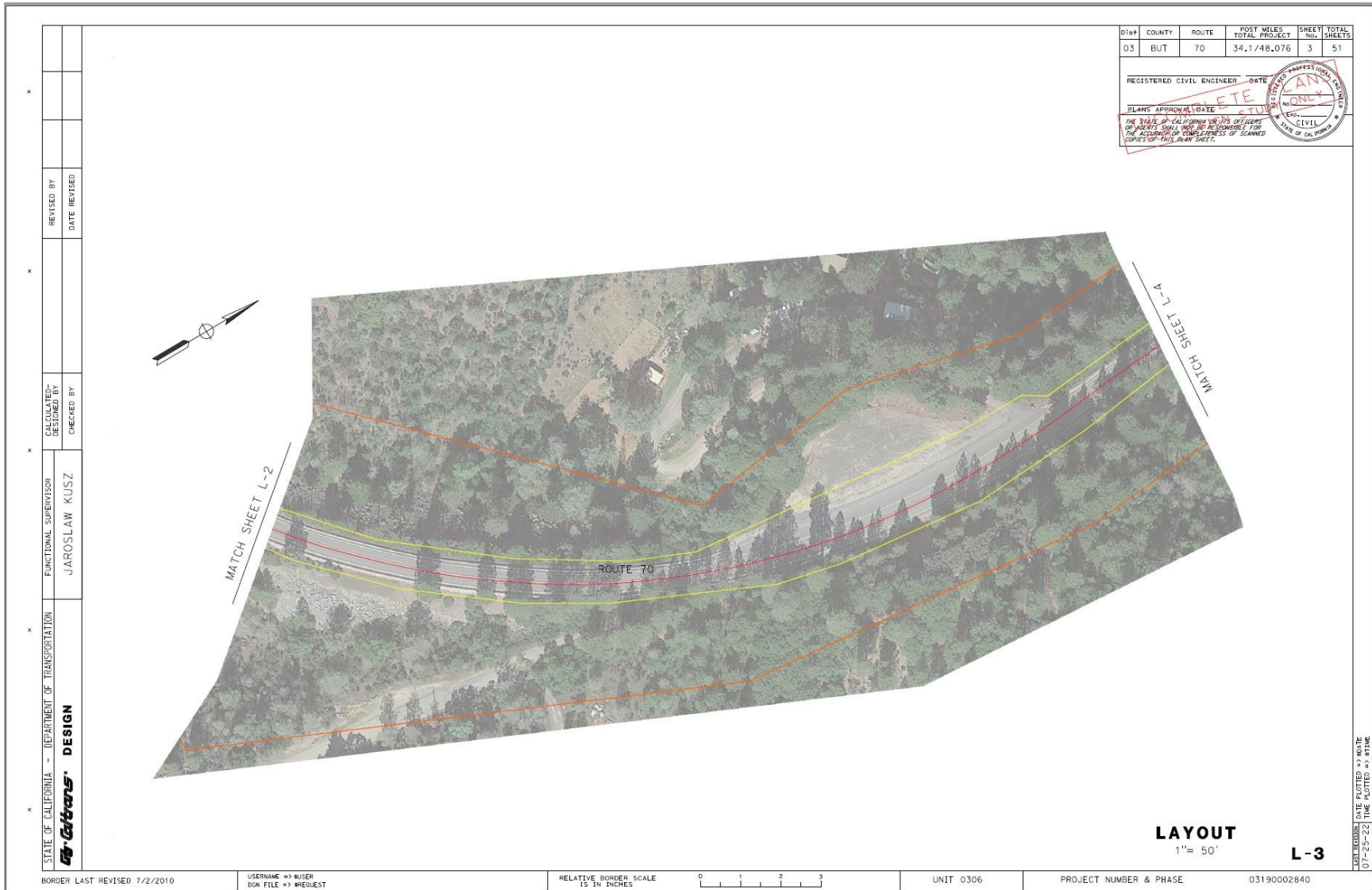
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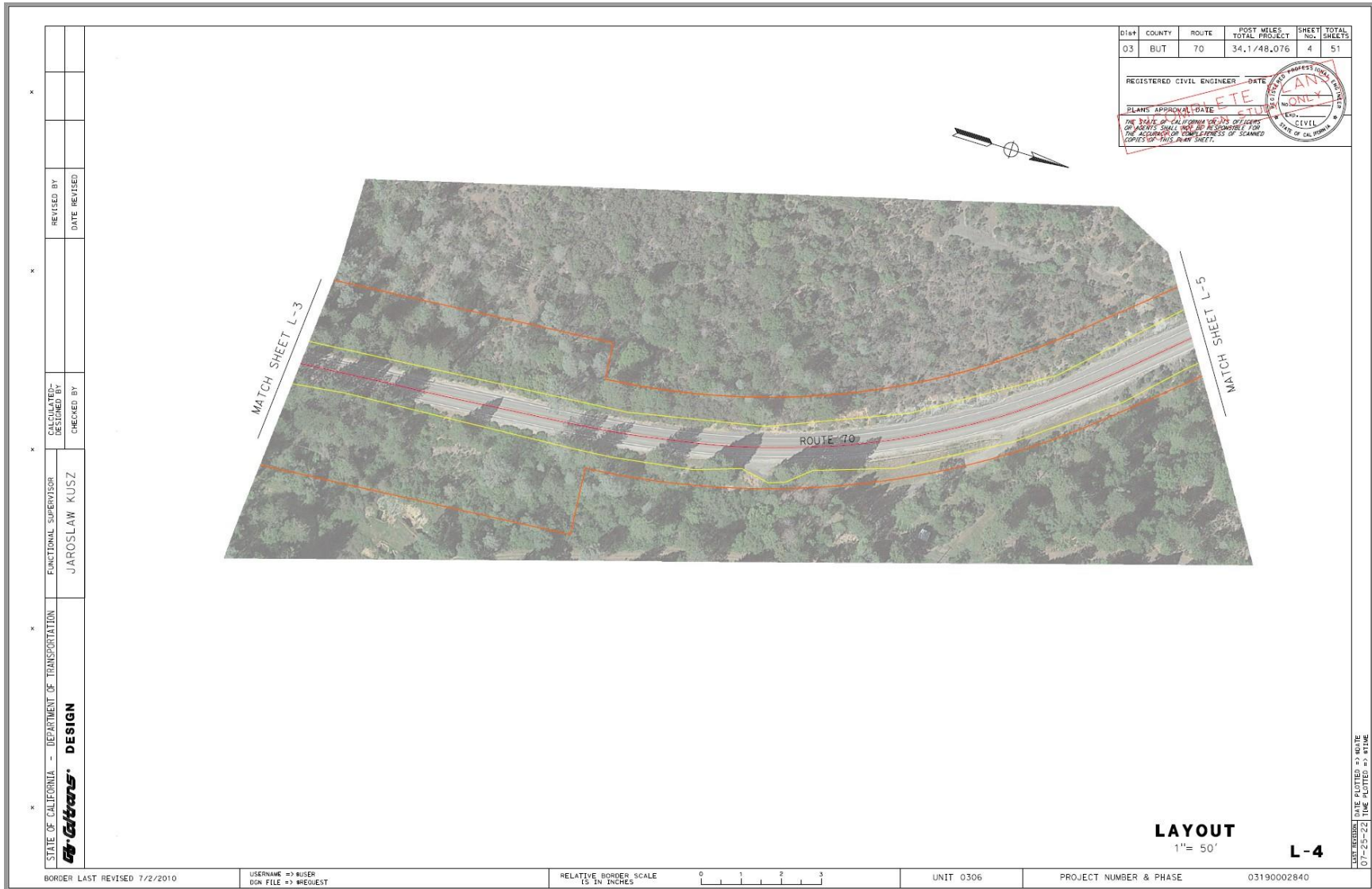


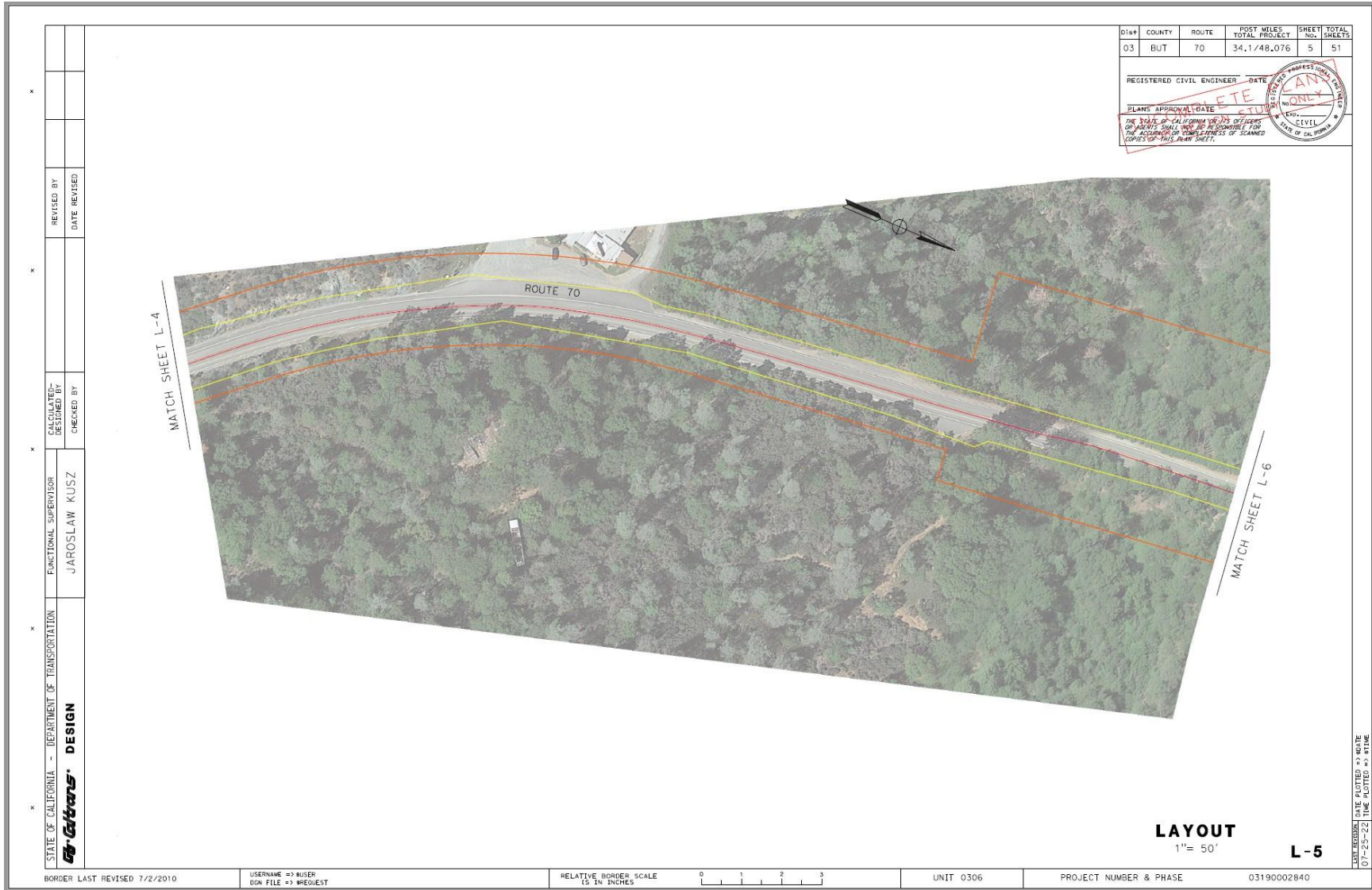
Appendix A. Project Layouts

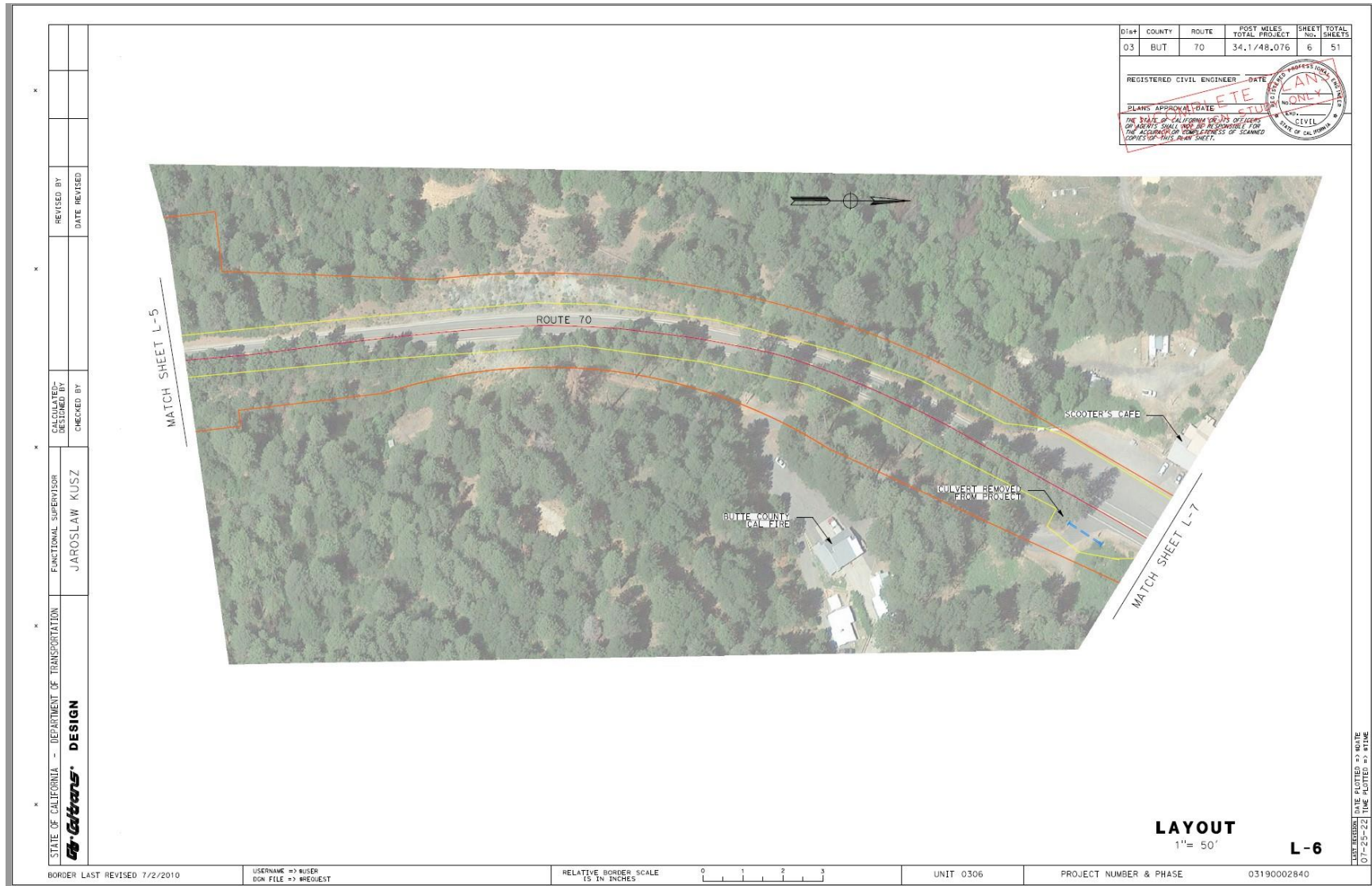
















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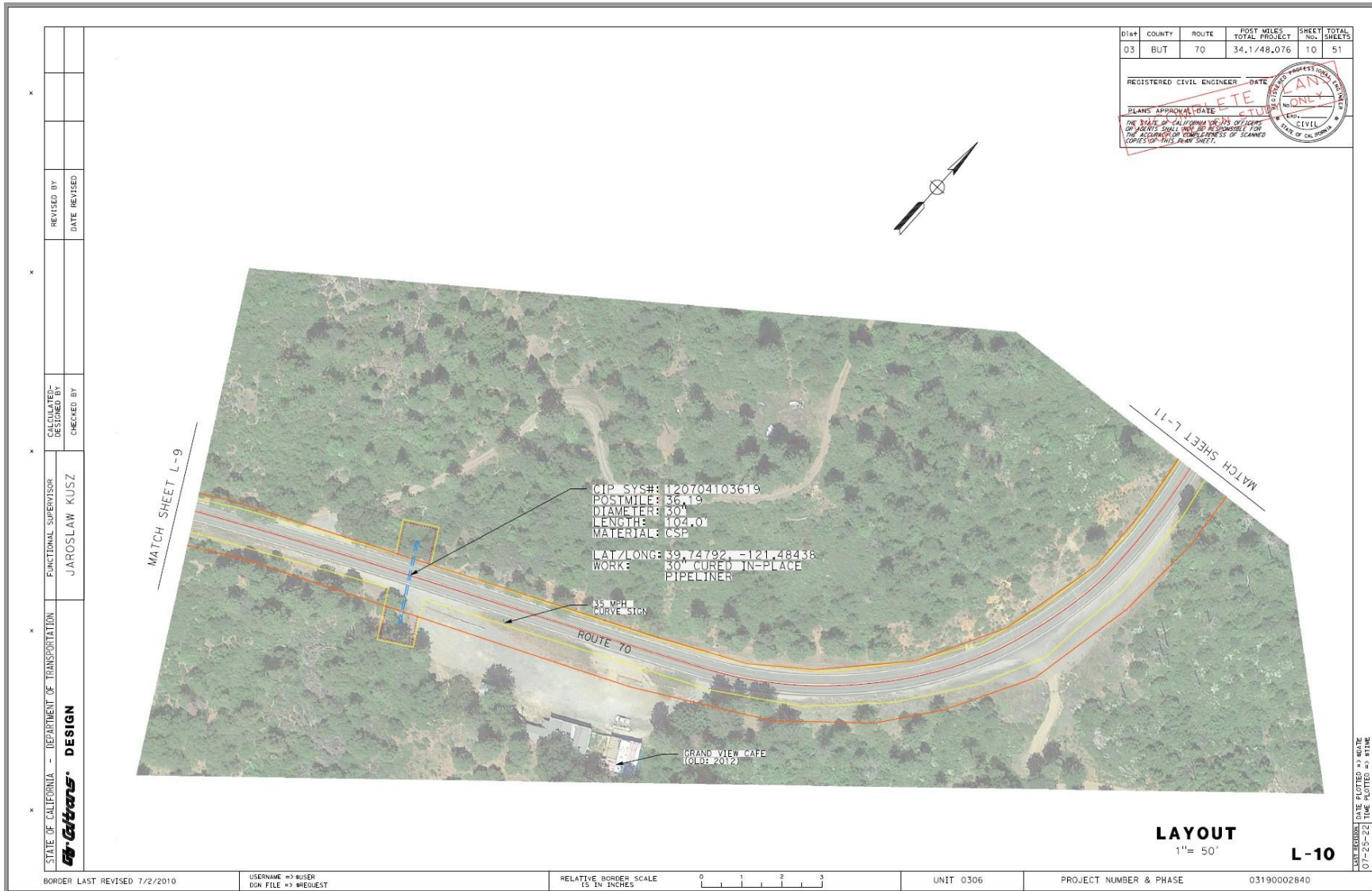
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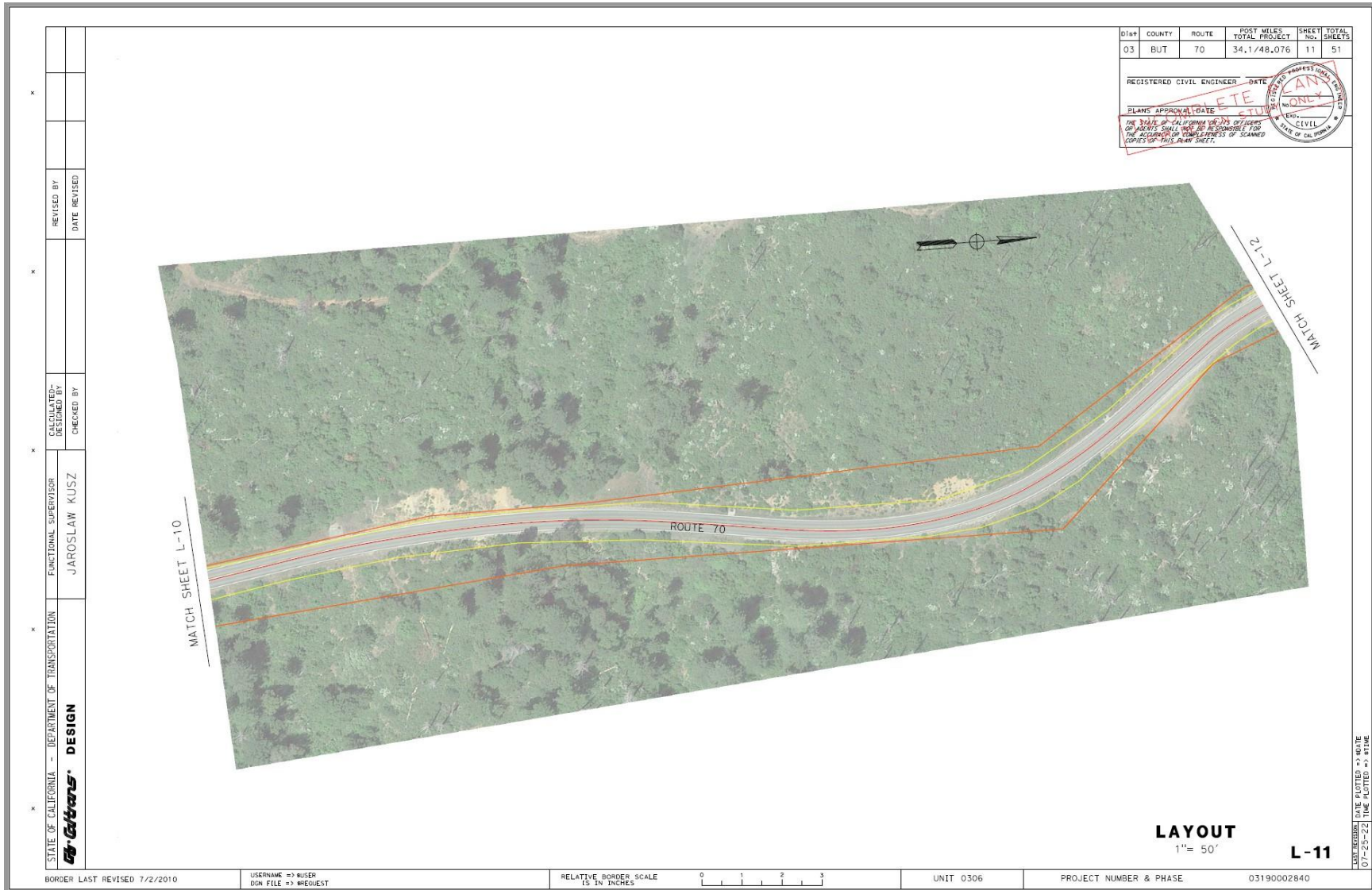
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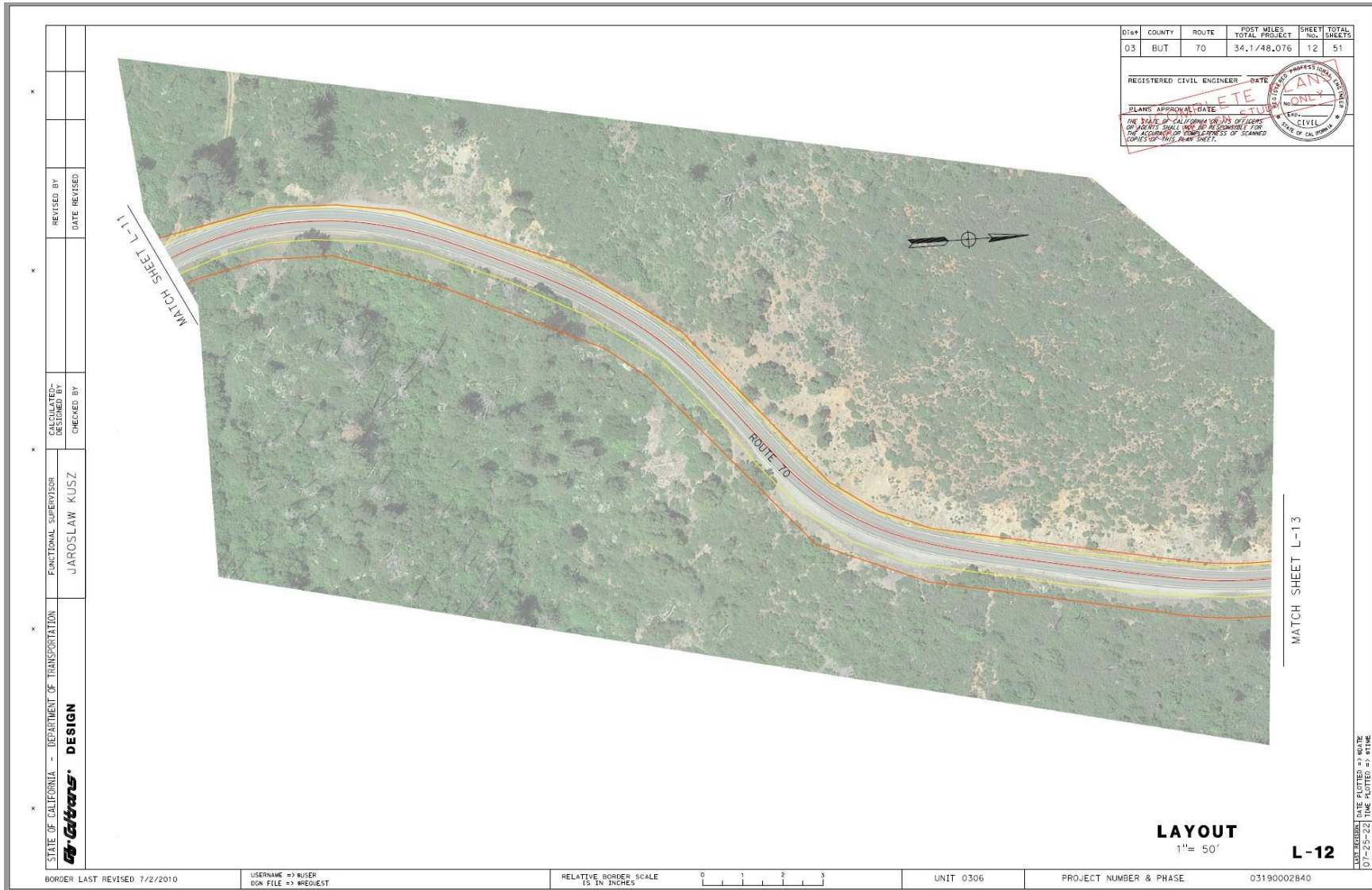
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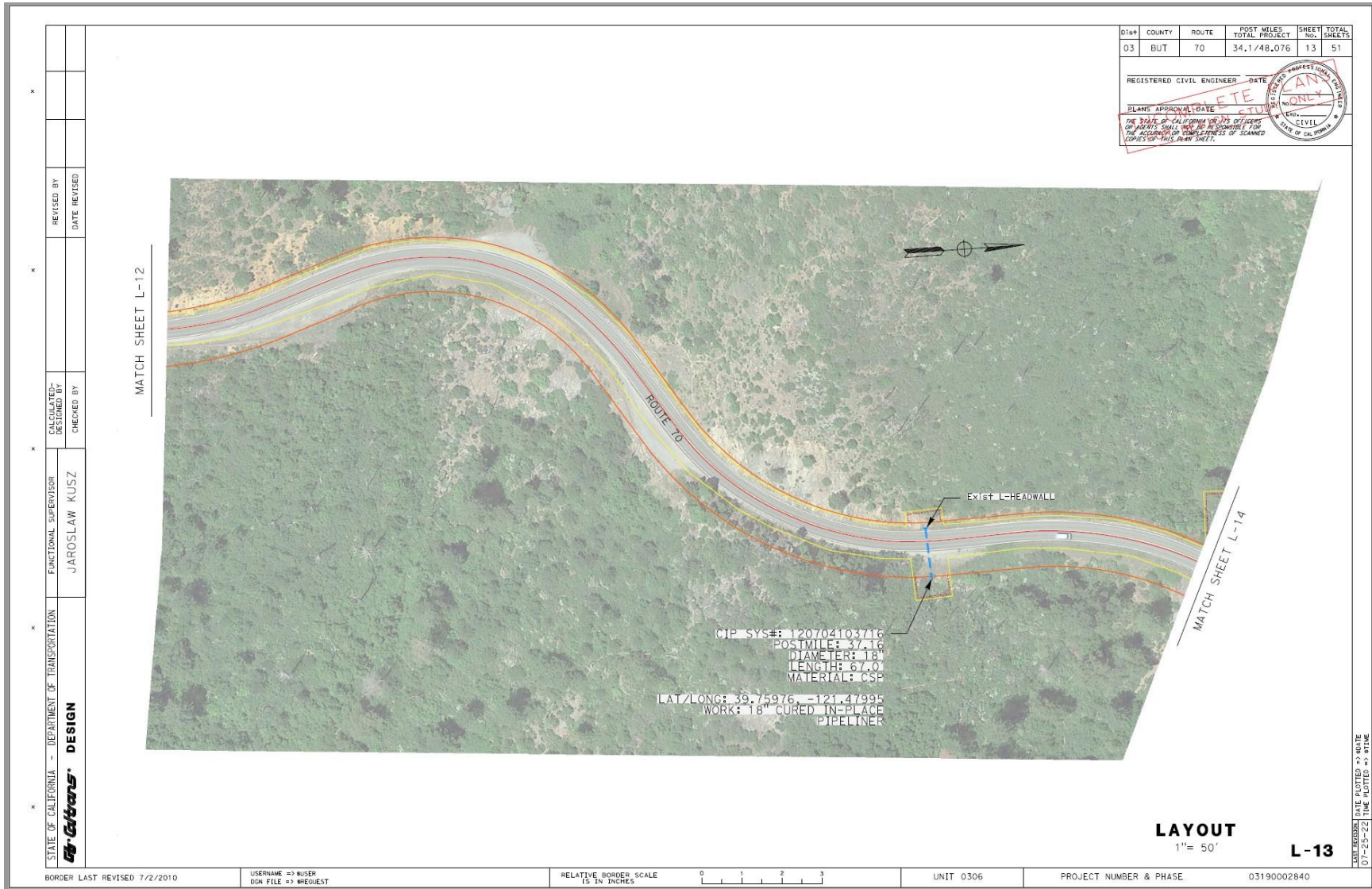
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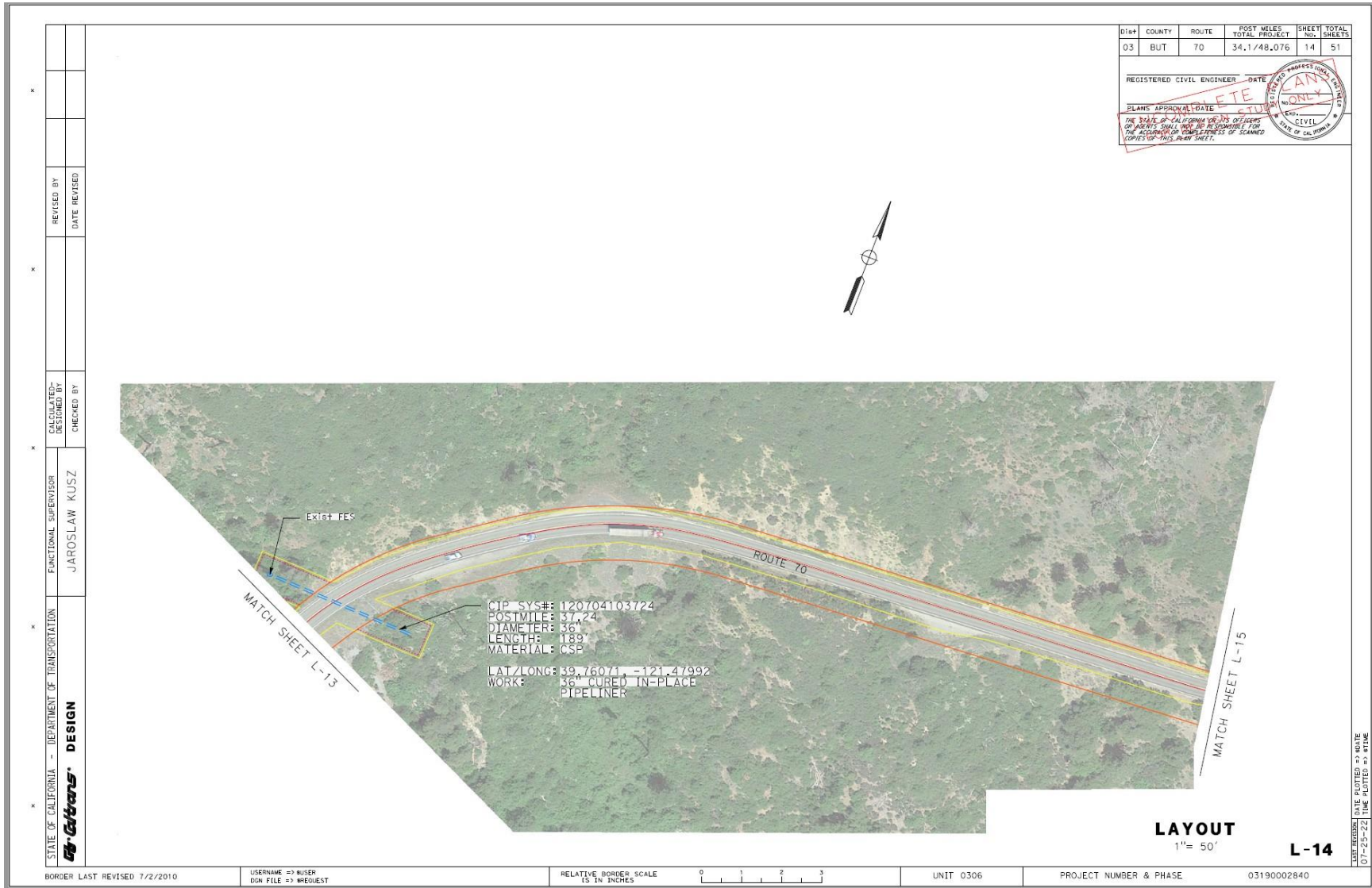


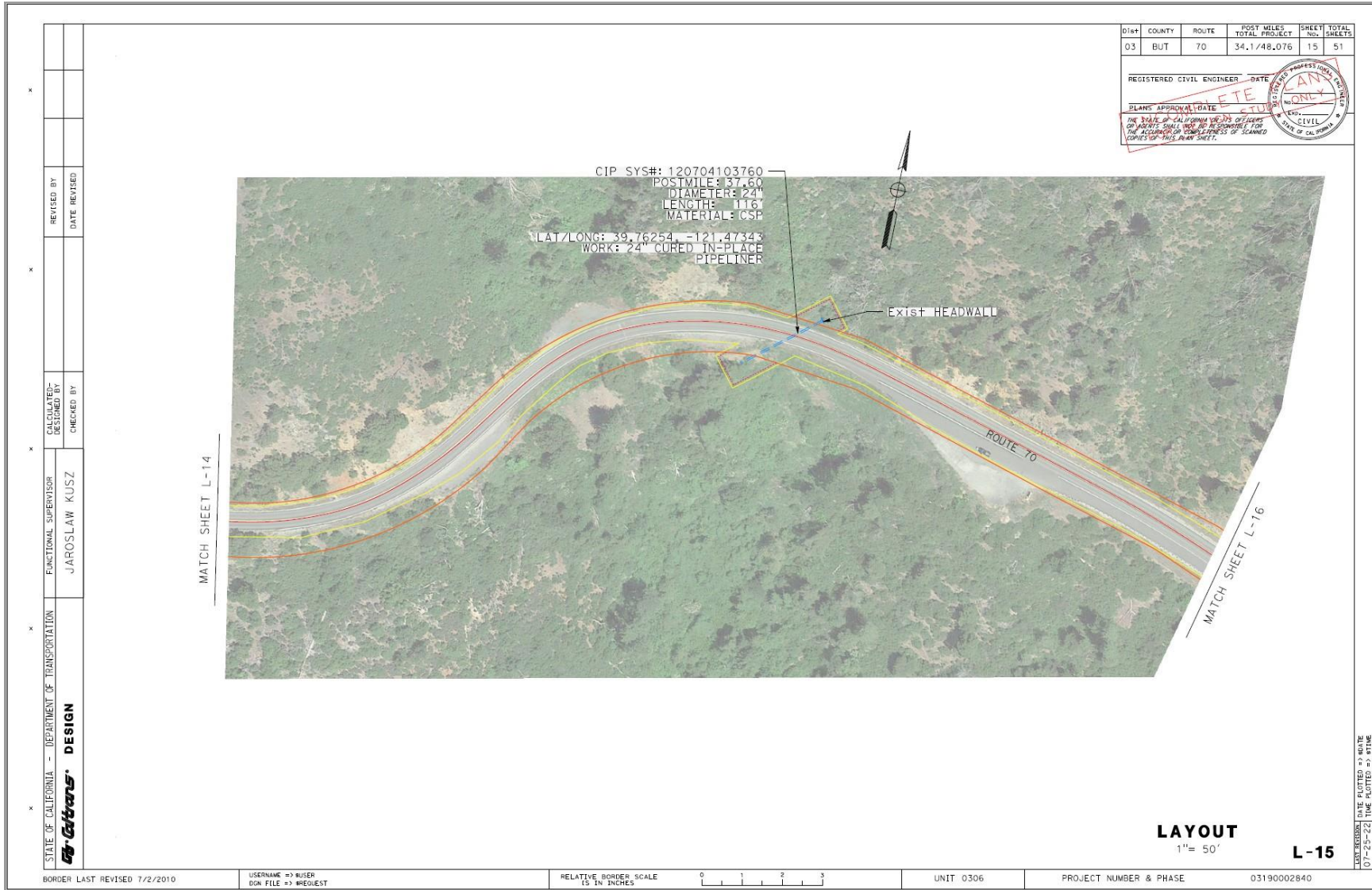


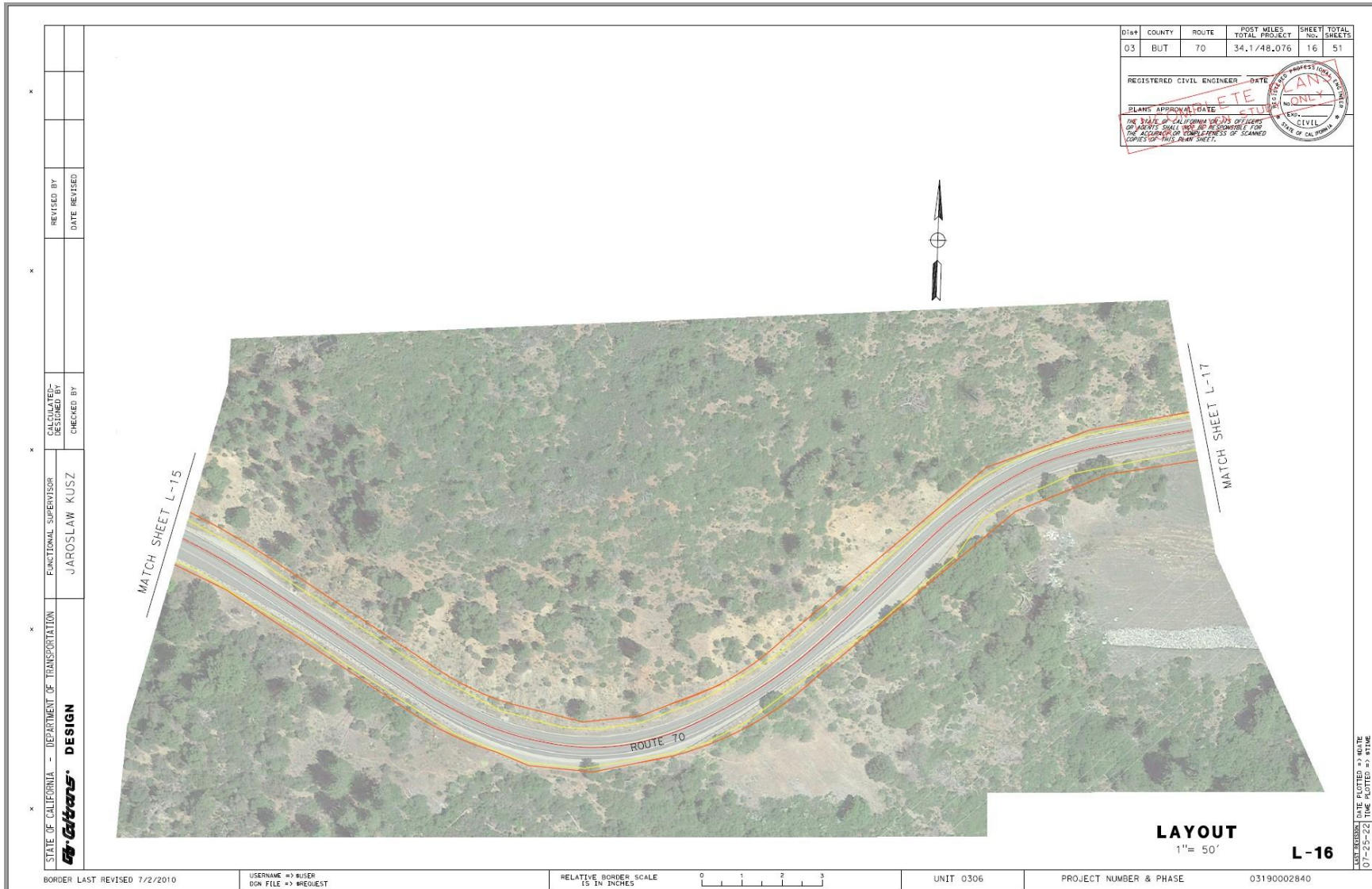












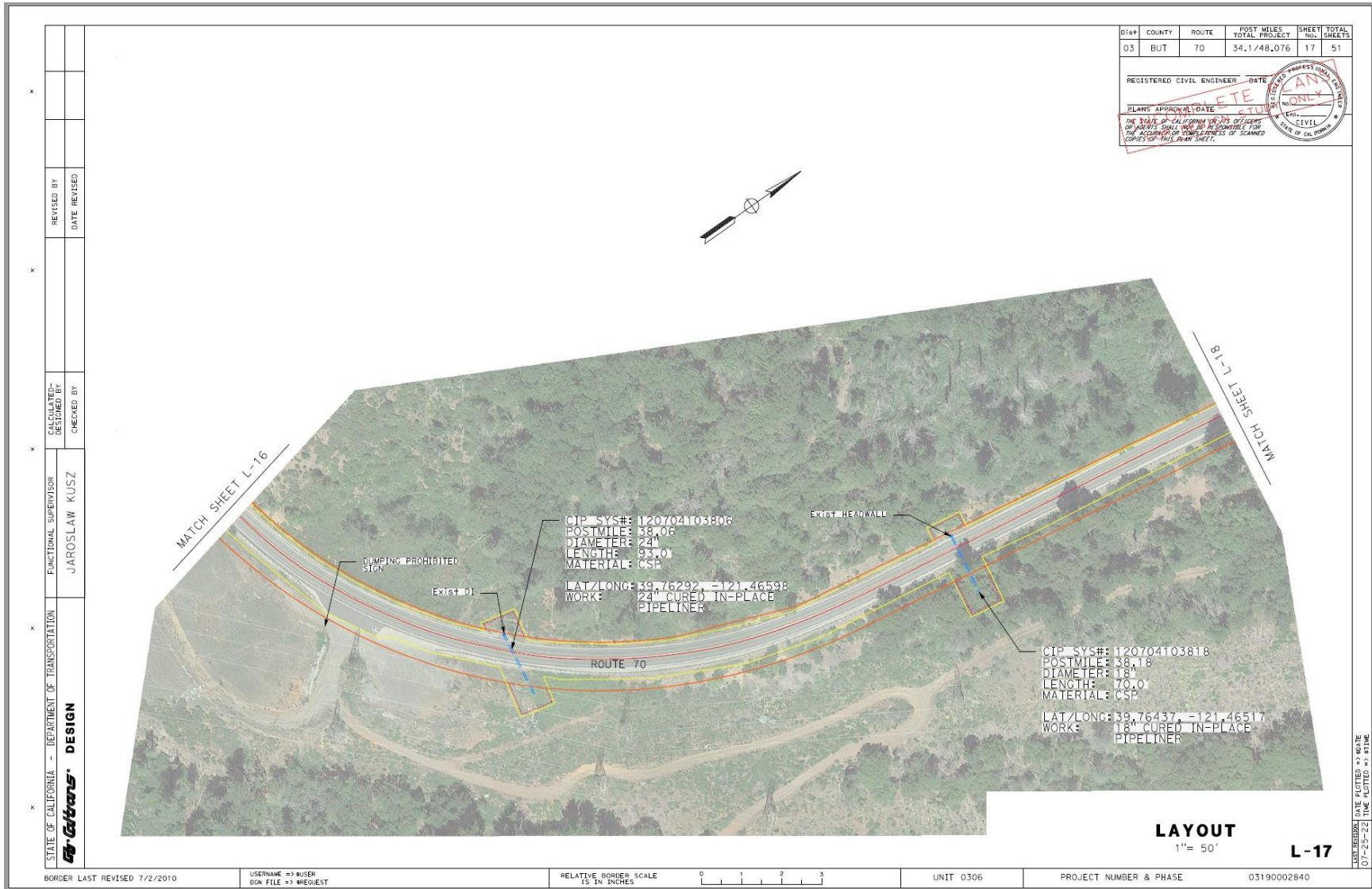
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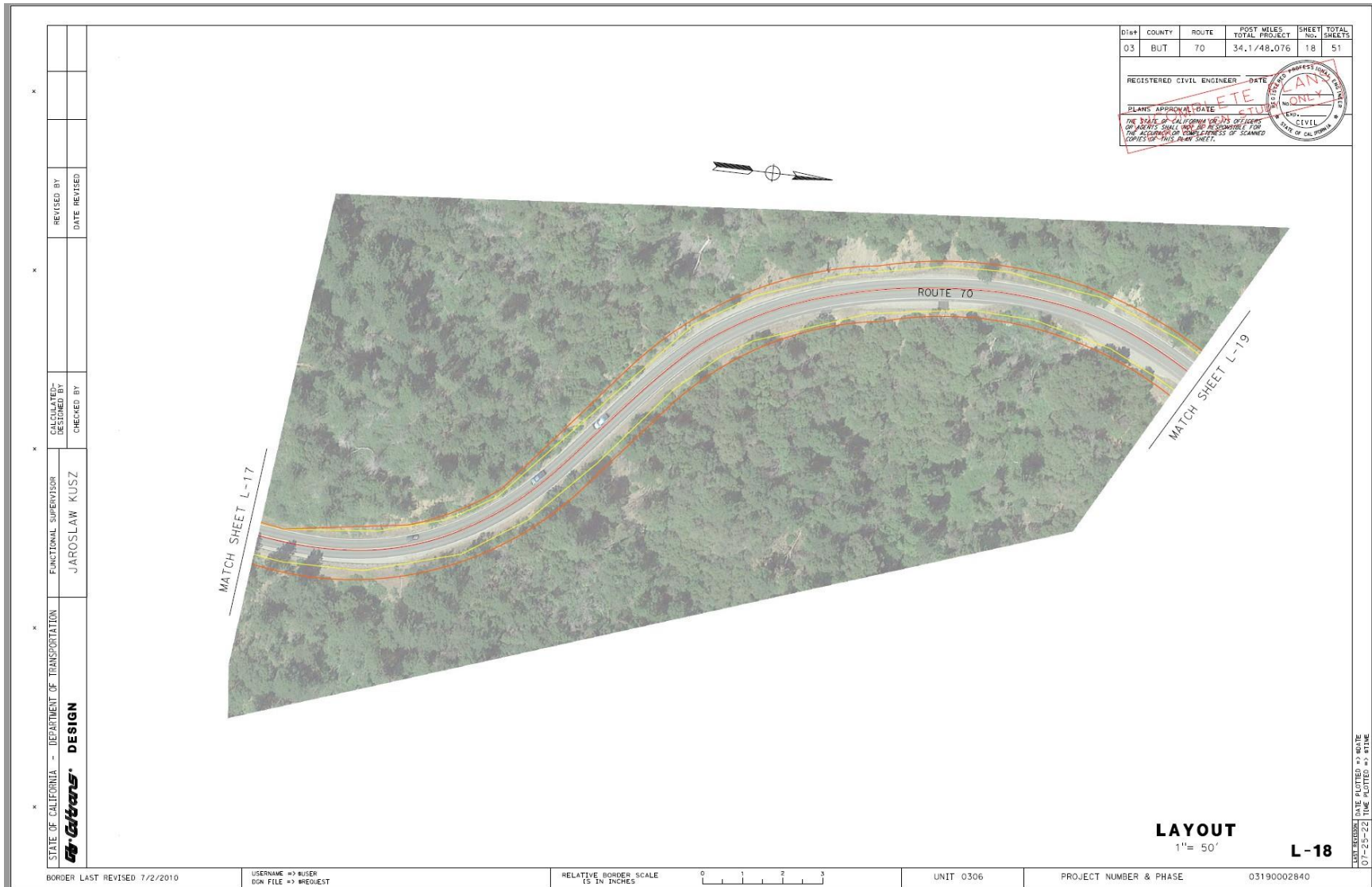
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PLANS APPROVAL DATE	_____

THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA AND ITS OFFICERS OR AGENTS SHALL NOT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ACCURACY OR COMPLETENESS OF SCANNED COPIES OF THIS PLAN SHEET.

STATE OF CALIFORNIA - DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION	FUNCTIONAL SUPERVISOR	JAROSLAW KUSZ
Stantec DESIGN	CALCULATED/DESIGNED BY	CHECKED BY
	REVISOR	DATE

BORDER LAST REVISED 7/2/2010
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 RELATIVE BORDER SCALE IS IN INCHES
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 PROJECT NUMBER & PHASE
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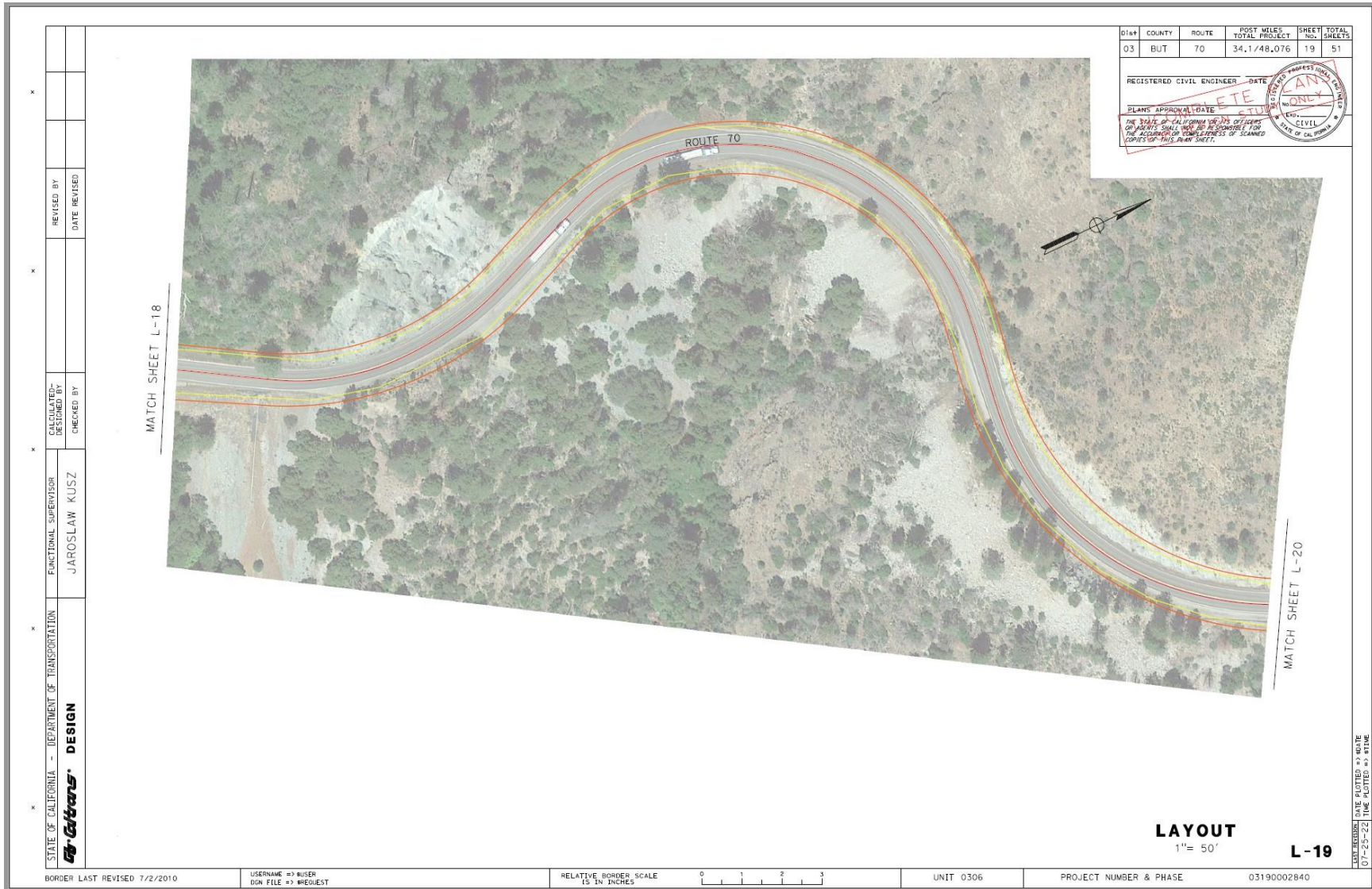
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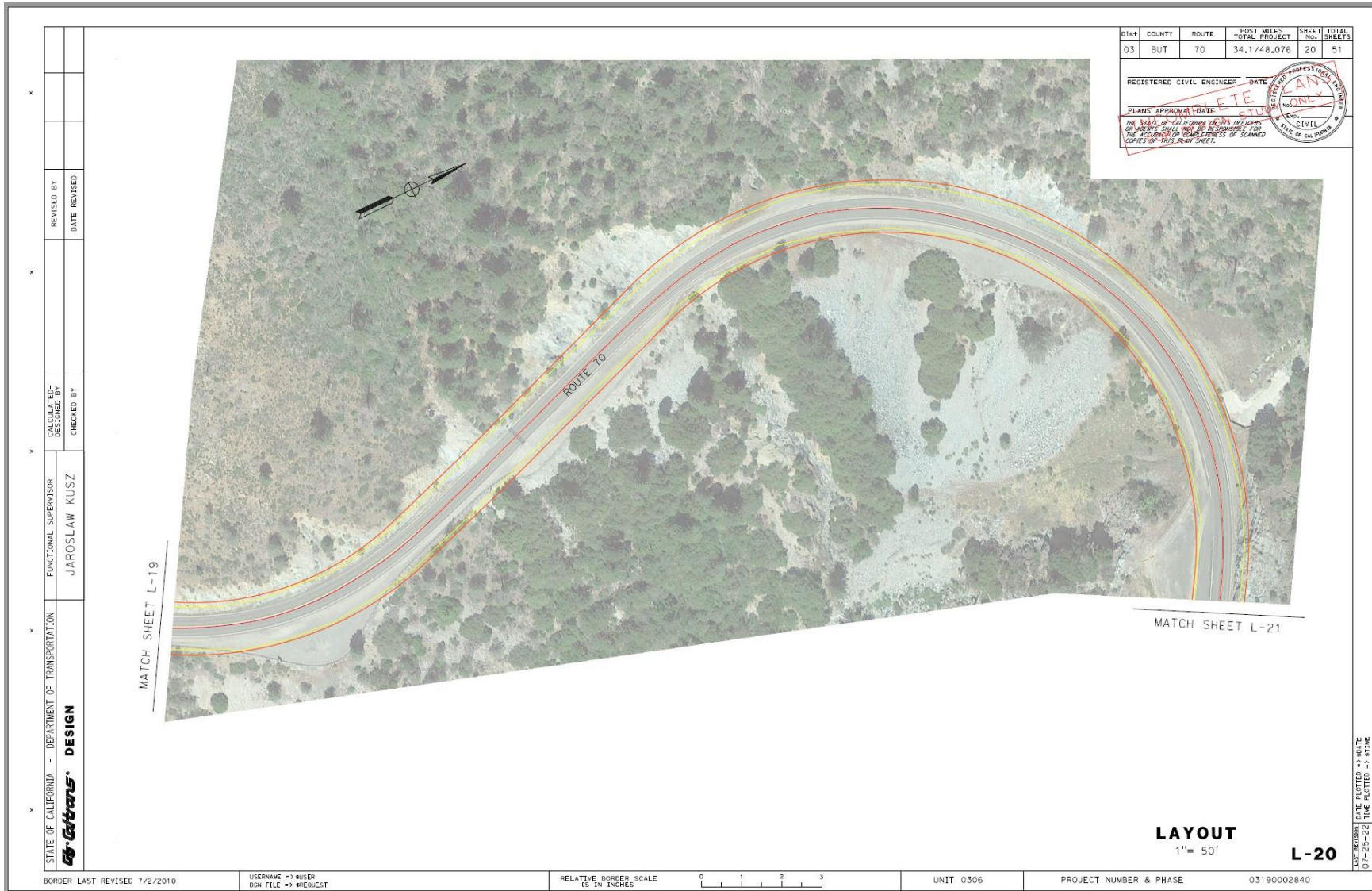
PLANS APPROVAL DATE: 07/23/22

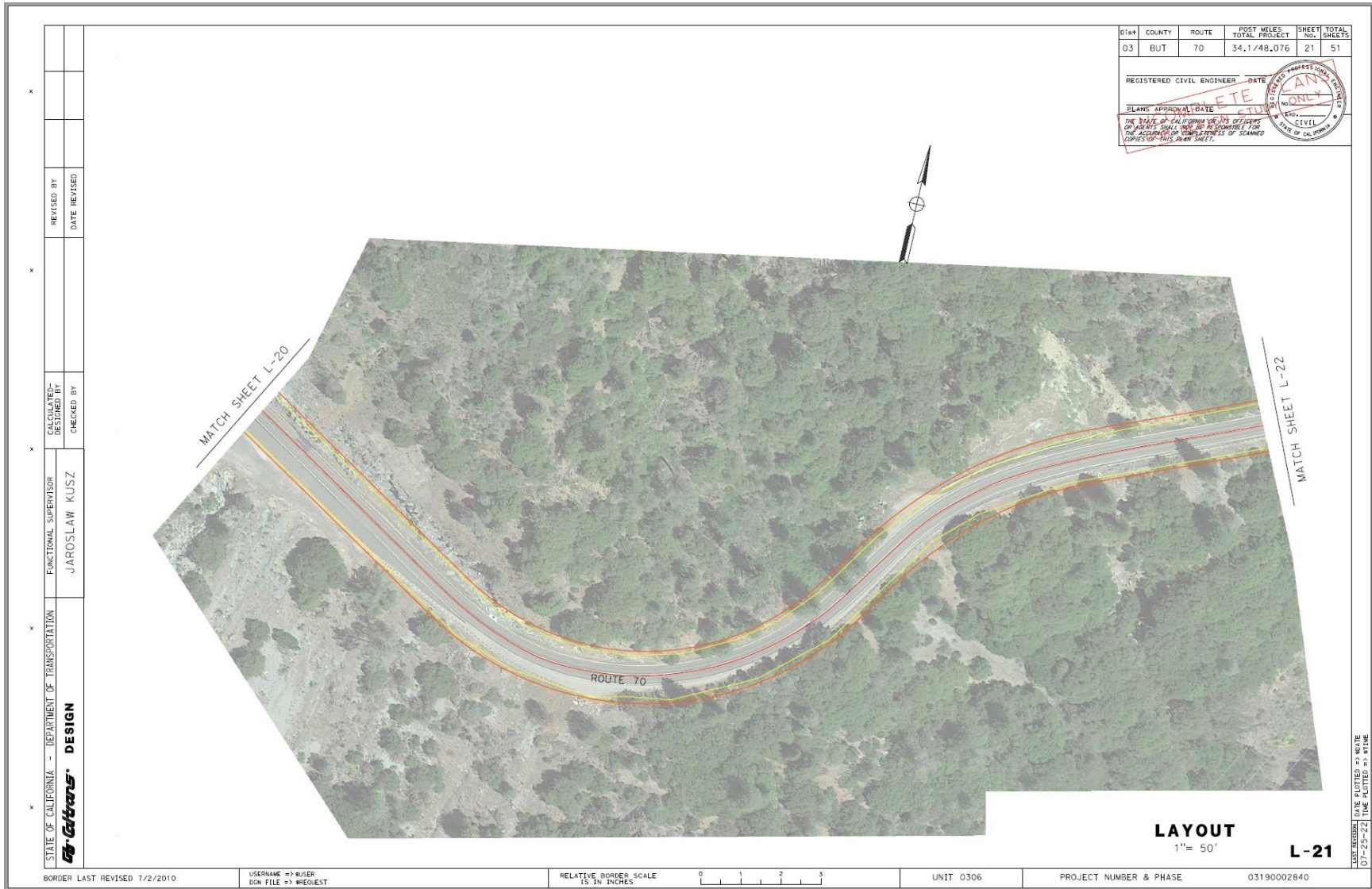
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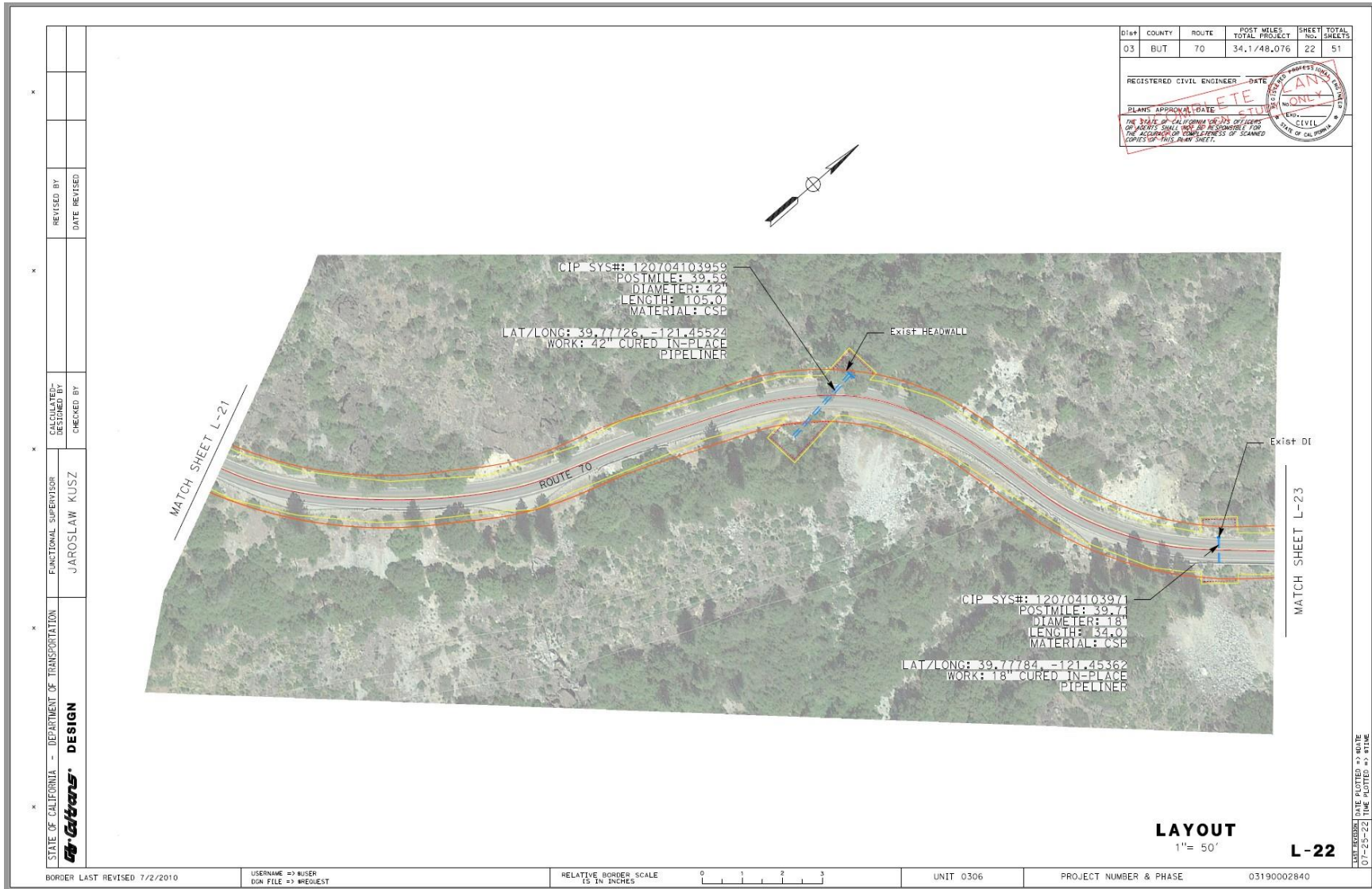
REGISTERED PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER
 CIVIL
 STATE OF CALIFORNIA
 No. 10100

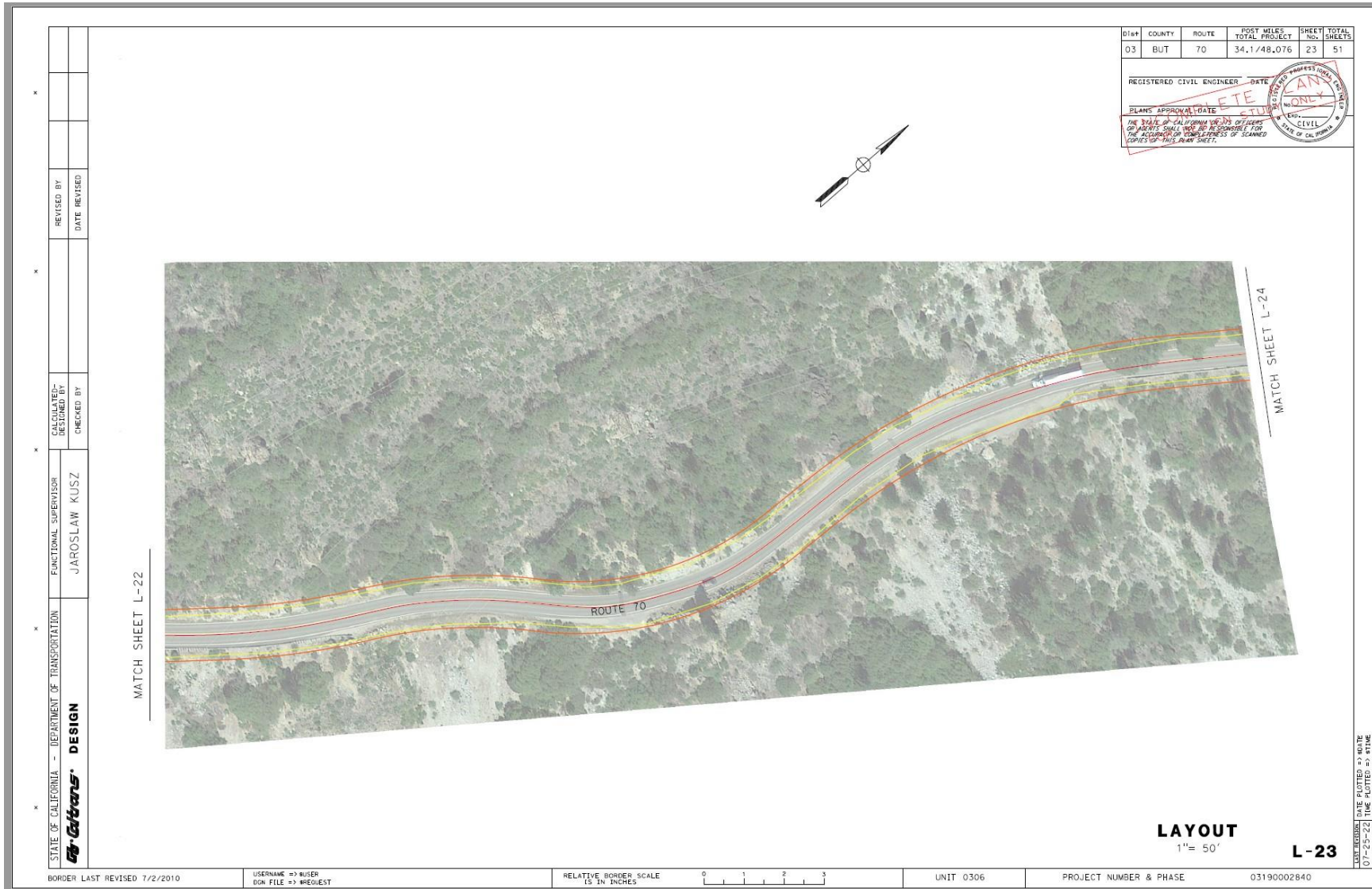
STATE OF CALIFORNIA - DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
Stantec DESIGN
 FUNCTIONAL SUPERVISOR: JAROSLAW KUSZ
 CALCULATED/DESIGNED BY: [Blank]
 CHECKED BY: [Blank]
 REVISED BY: [Blank]
 DATE REVISED: [Blank]

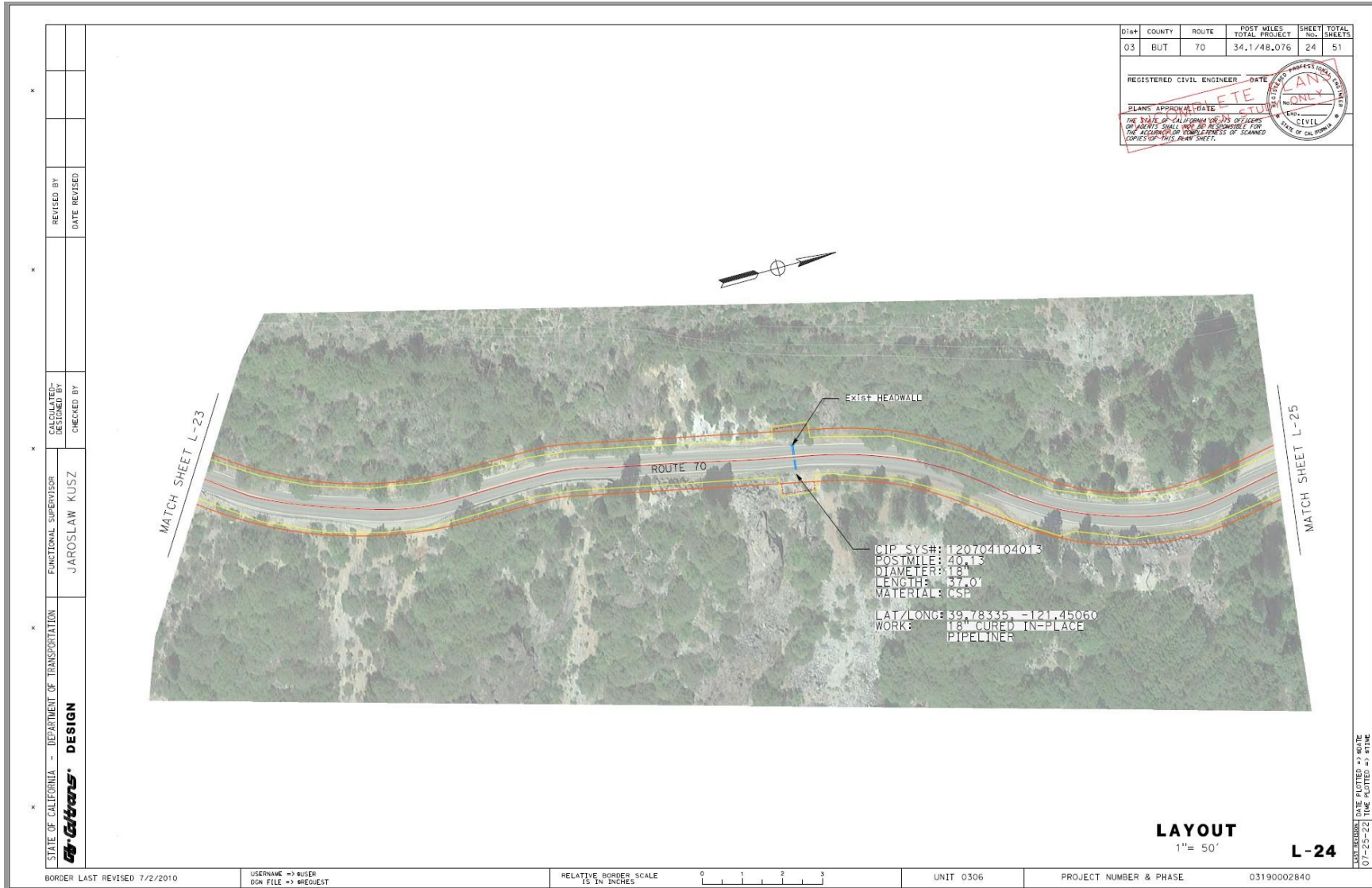




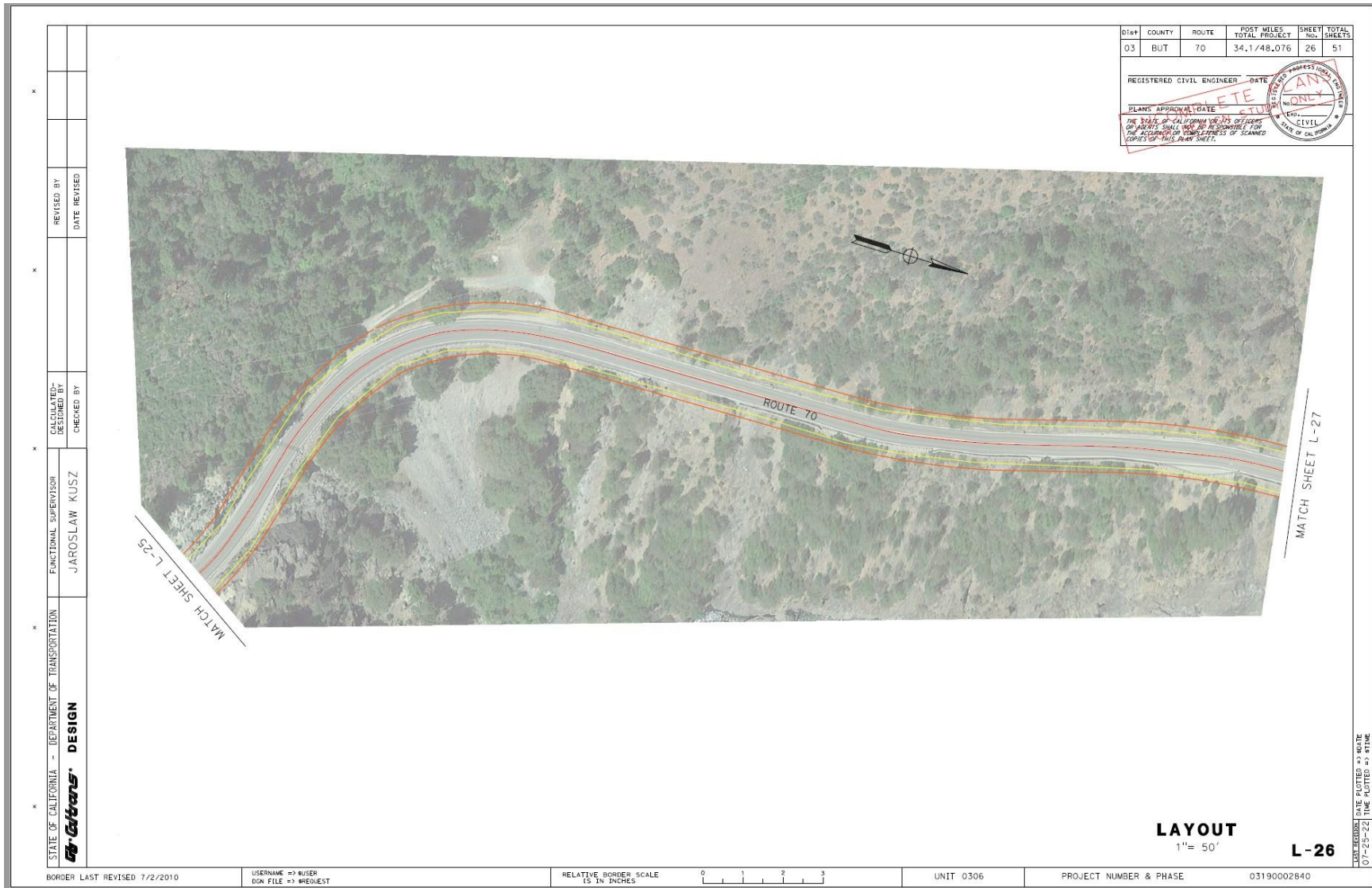




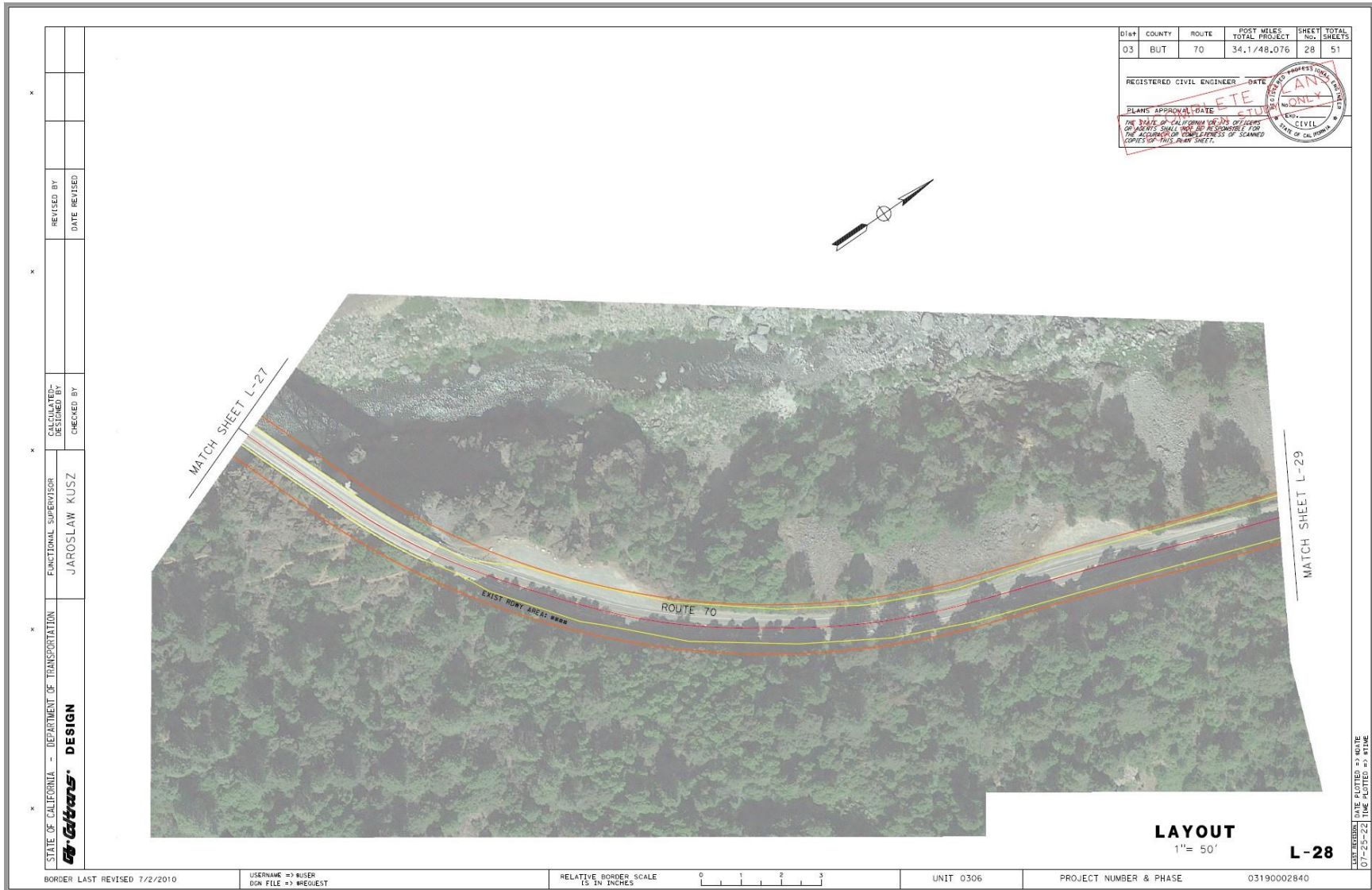






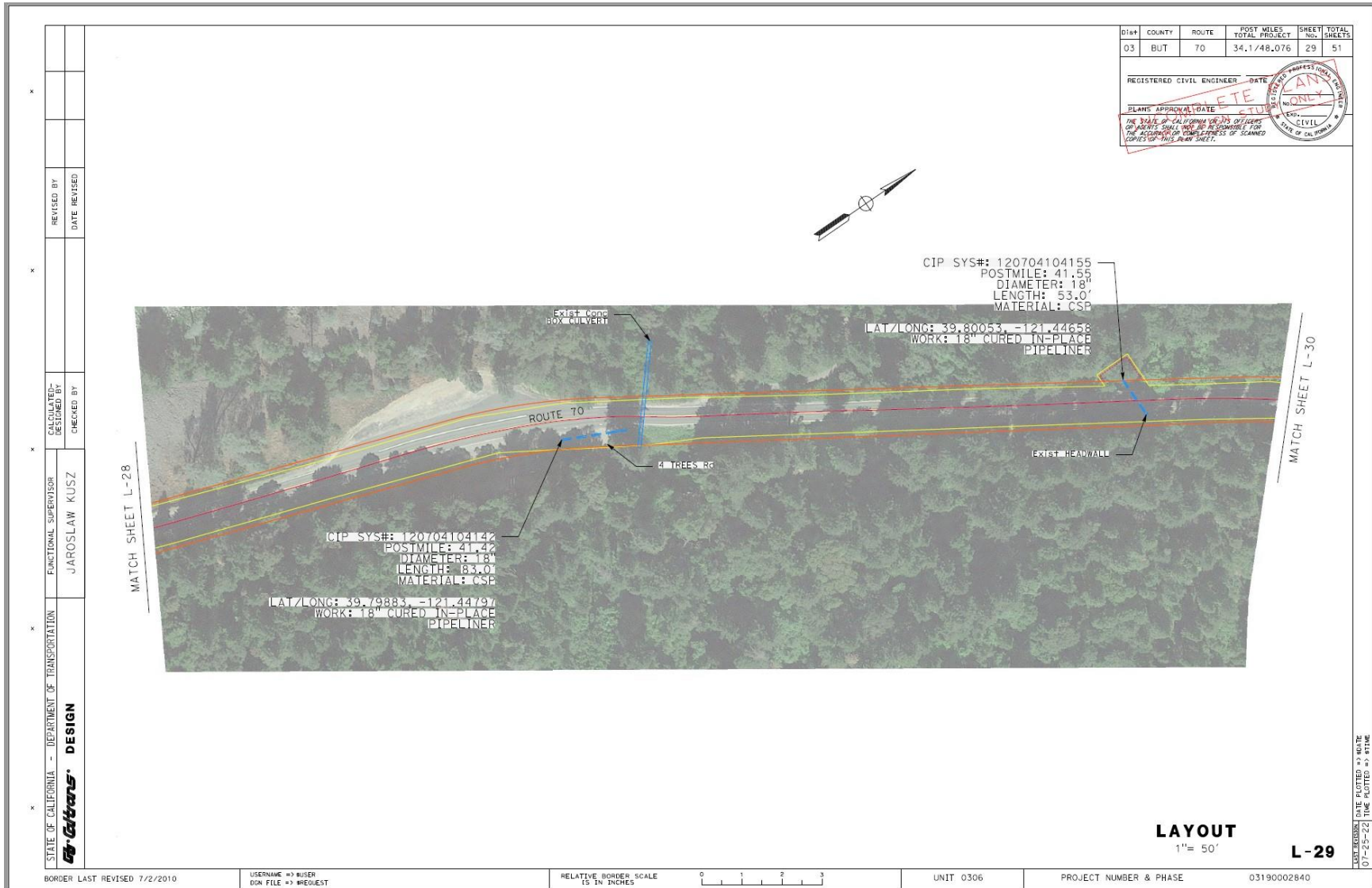


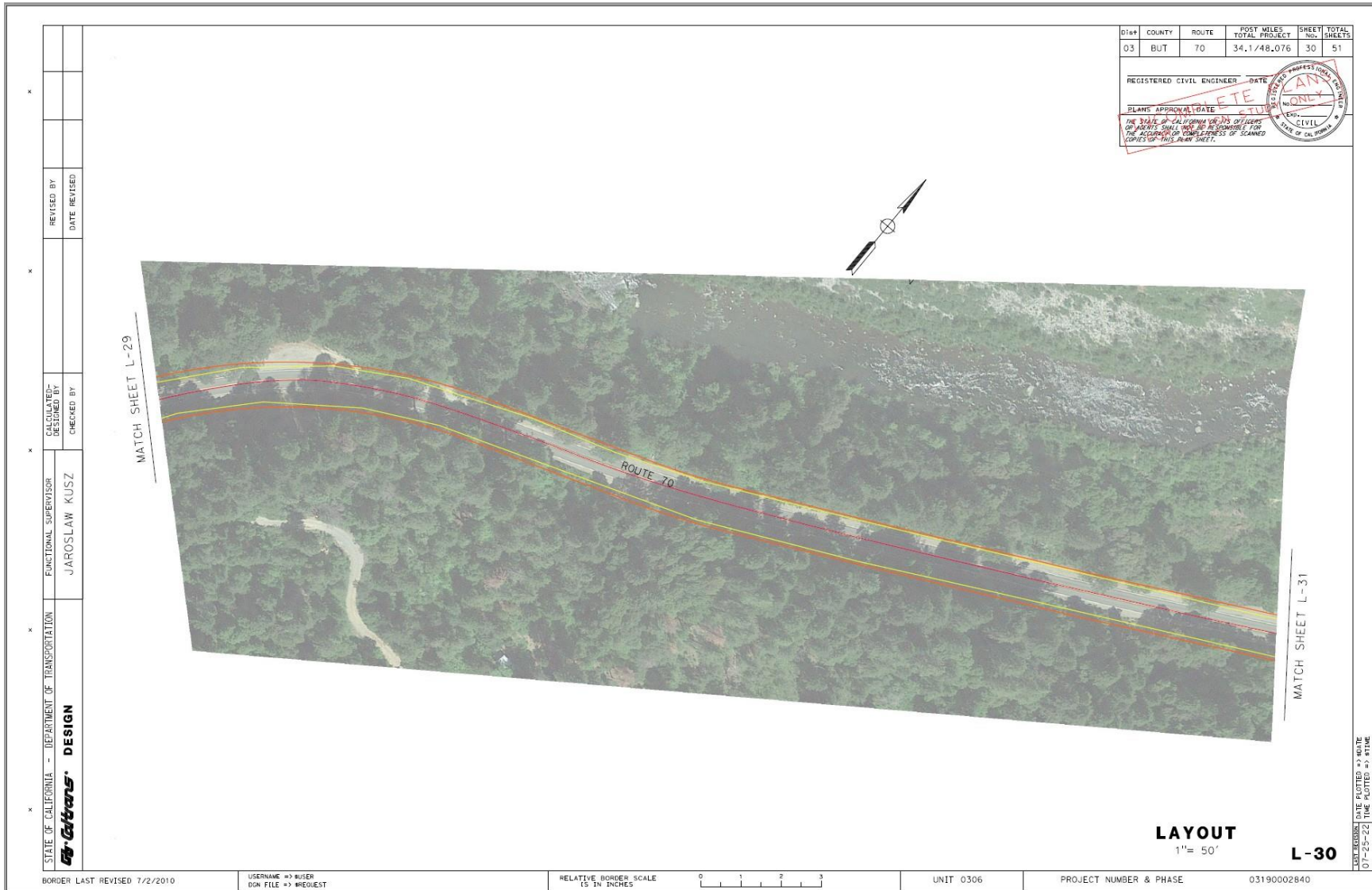


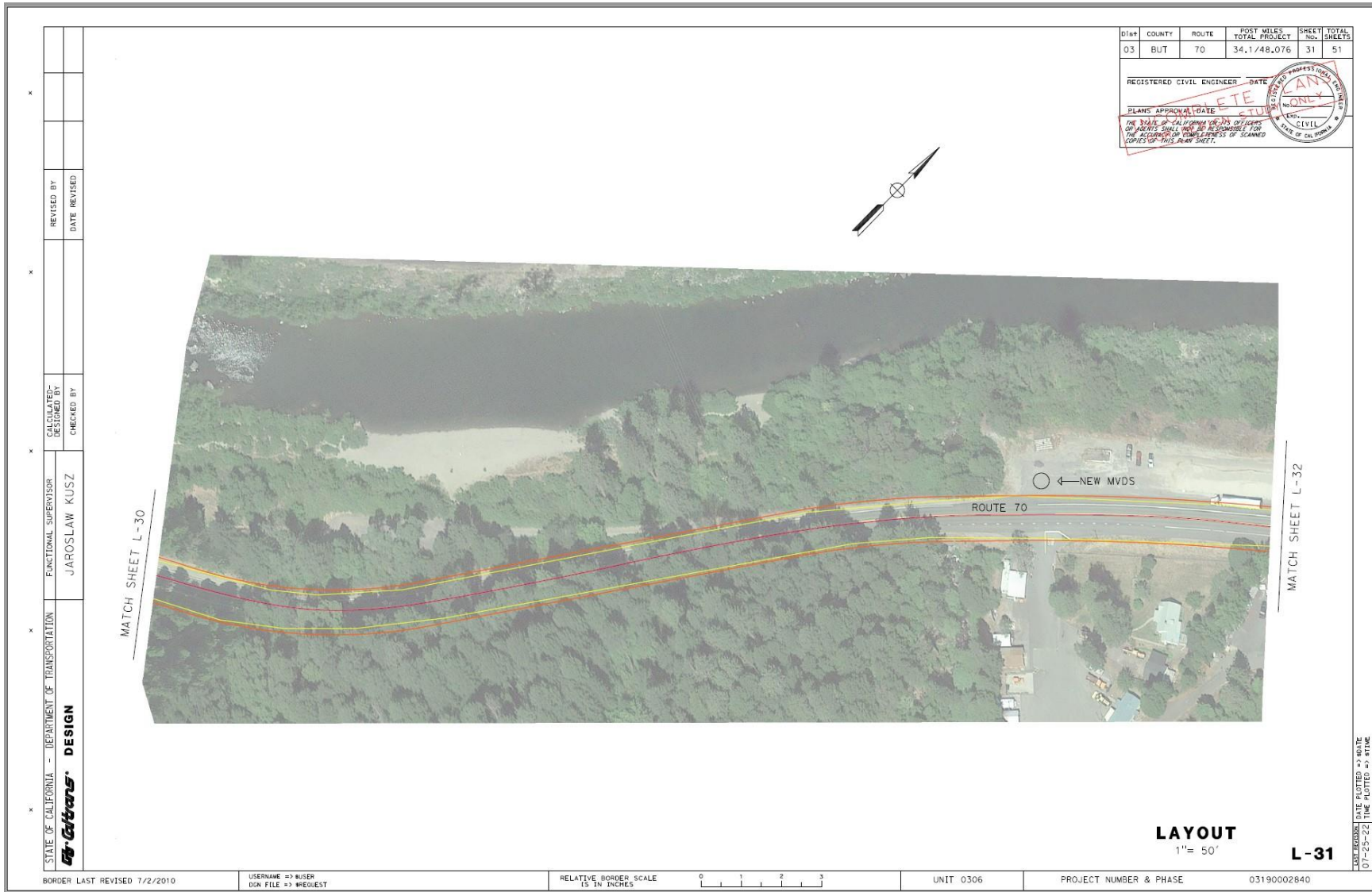


LAYOUT
1" = 50'

L-28







DIST	COUNTY	ROUTE	POST MILES TOTAL PROJECT	SHEET NO.	TOTAL SHEETS
03	BUT	70	34.1/48.076	31	51

REGISTERED CIVIL ENGINEER _____ DATE _____

PLANS APPROVAL DATE _____

FOR THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA THE PDS OFFICERS OR AGENTS SHALL ONLY BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ACCURACY OF COMPLETENESS OF SCANNED COPIES OF THIS PLAN SHEET.



DESIGNED BY	CHECKED BY	FUNCTIONAL SUPERVISOR	REVISIONS
JAROSLAW KUSZ		JAROSLAW KUSZ	

STATE OF CALIFORNIA - DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
Caltrans DESIGN

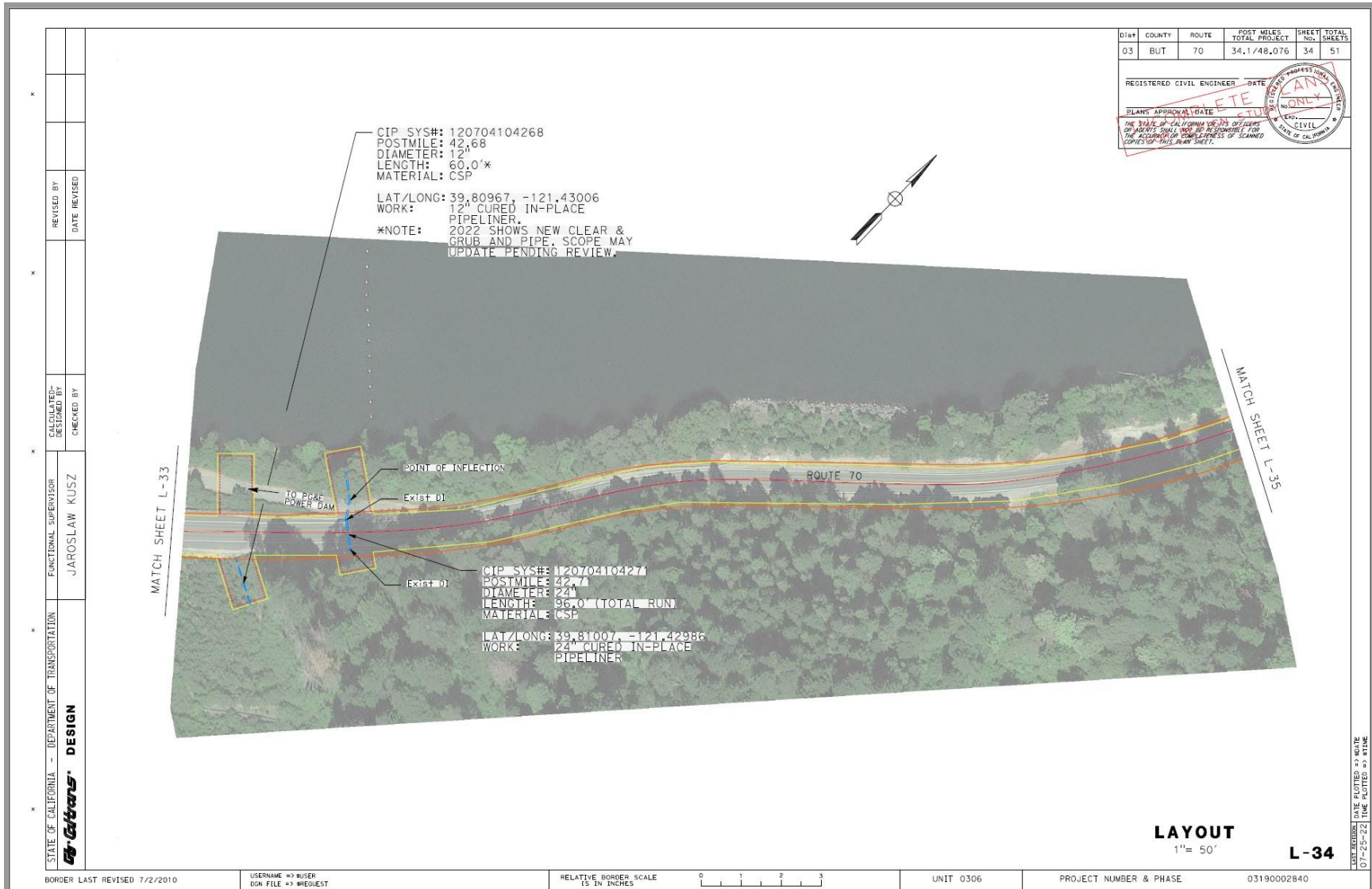
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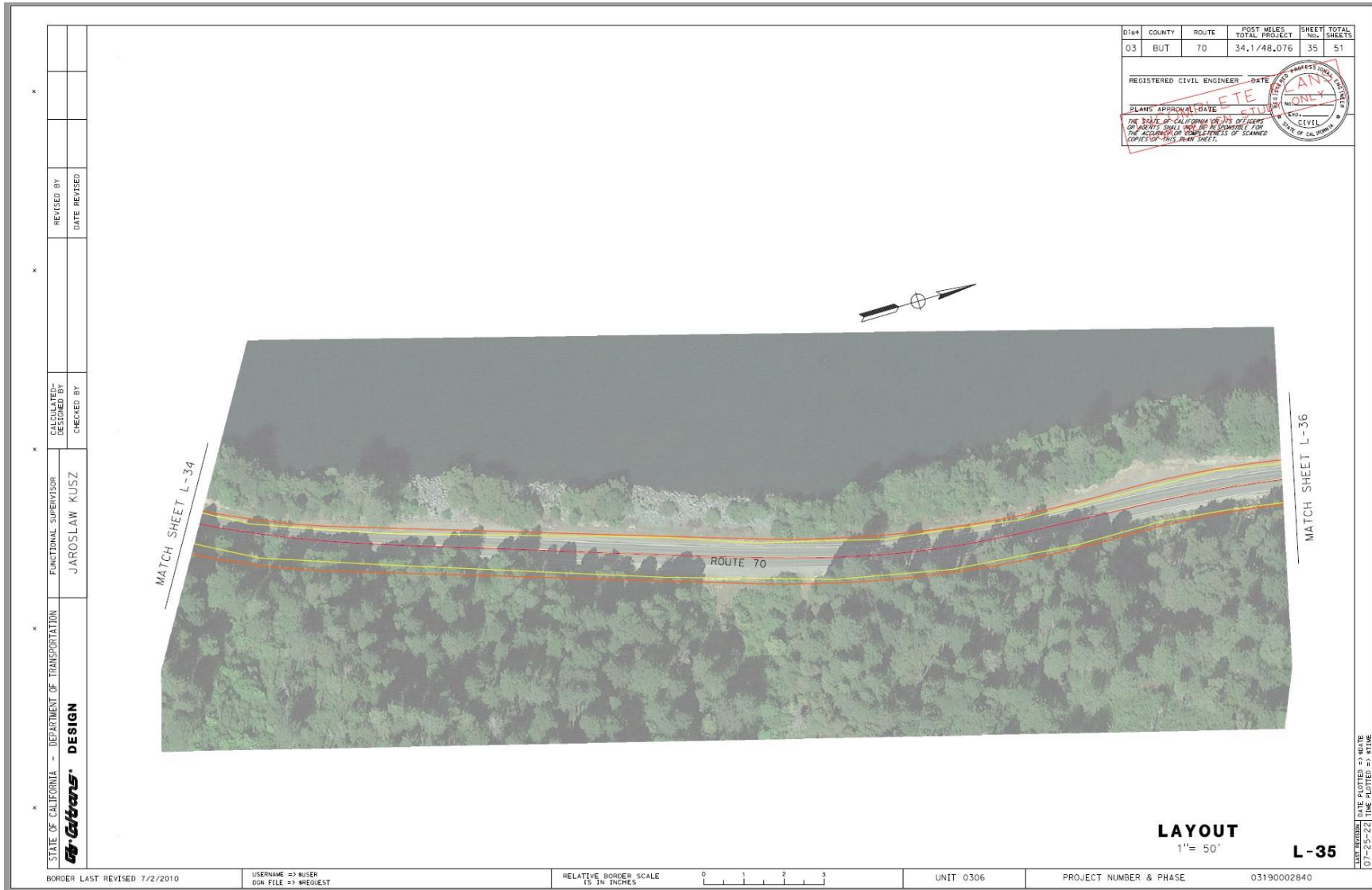
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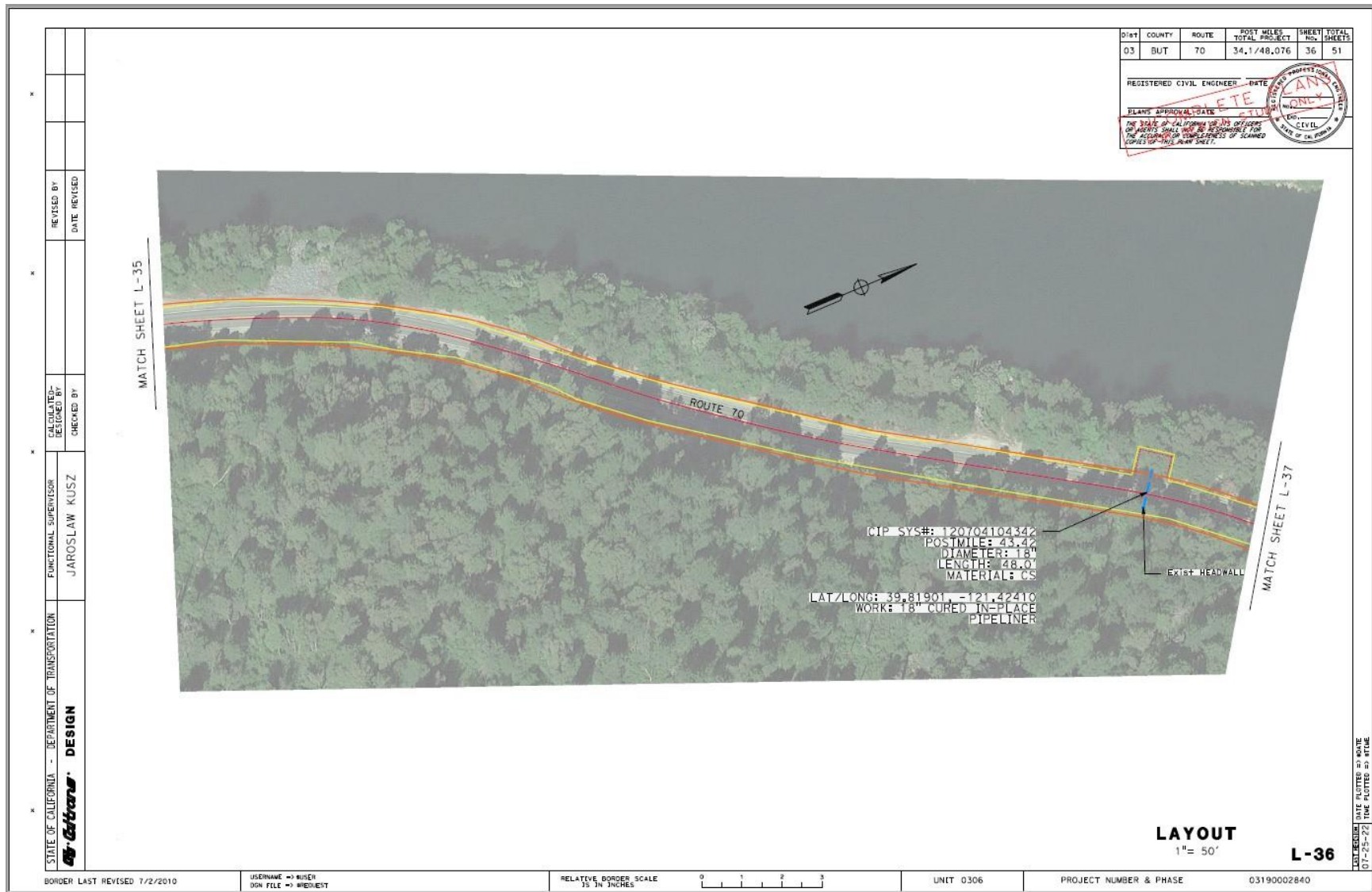
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 07-23-22 TIME PLOTTED => ATIME

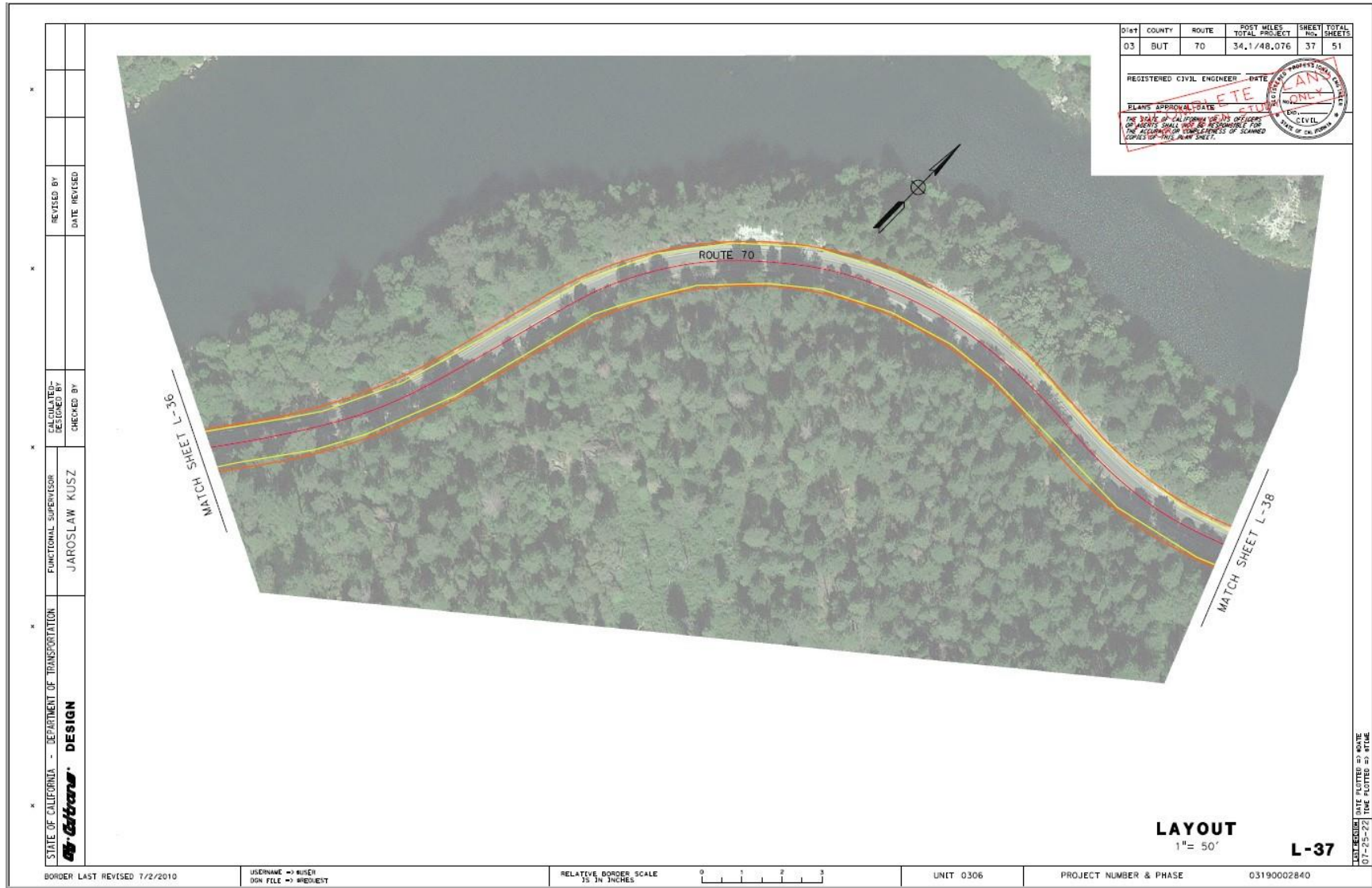












DIST	COUNTY	ROUTE	POST MILES TOTAL PROJECT	SHEET NO.	TOTAL SHEETS
03	BUT	70	34.1/48.076	37	51

REGISTERED CIVIL ENGINEER - DATE

PLANS APPROVAL DATE

FOR THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA THE ENGINEER OR AGENTS SHALL NOT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ACCURACY OR COMPLETENESS OF SCANNED COPIES OF THIS PLAN SHEET.

REGISTERED PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER
 STATE OF CALIFORNIA
 CIVIL
 No. 10000
 Exp. 12/31/2024

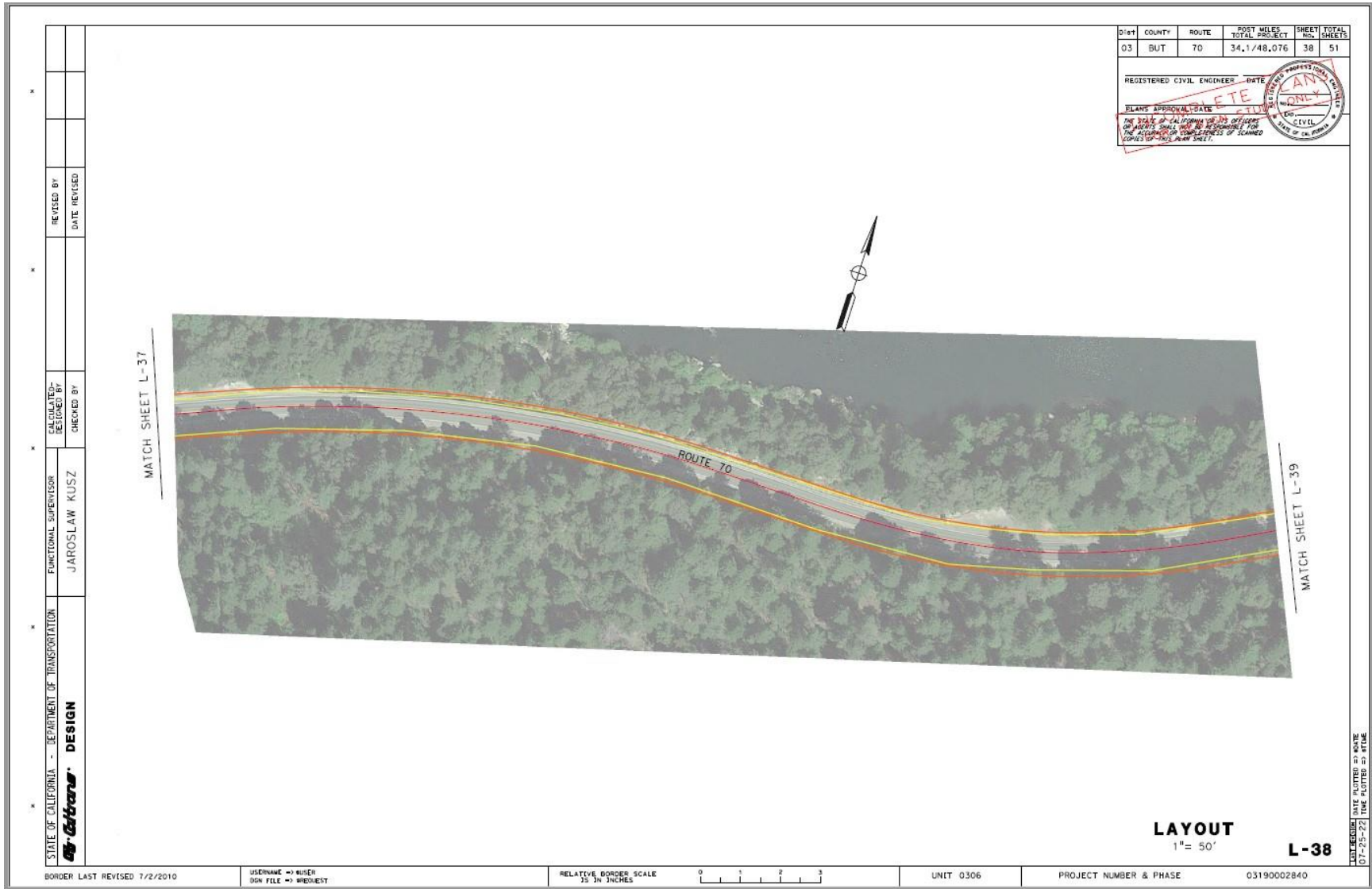
REVISION	DATE	BY	REASON

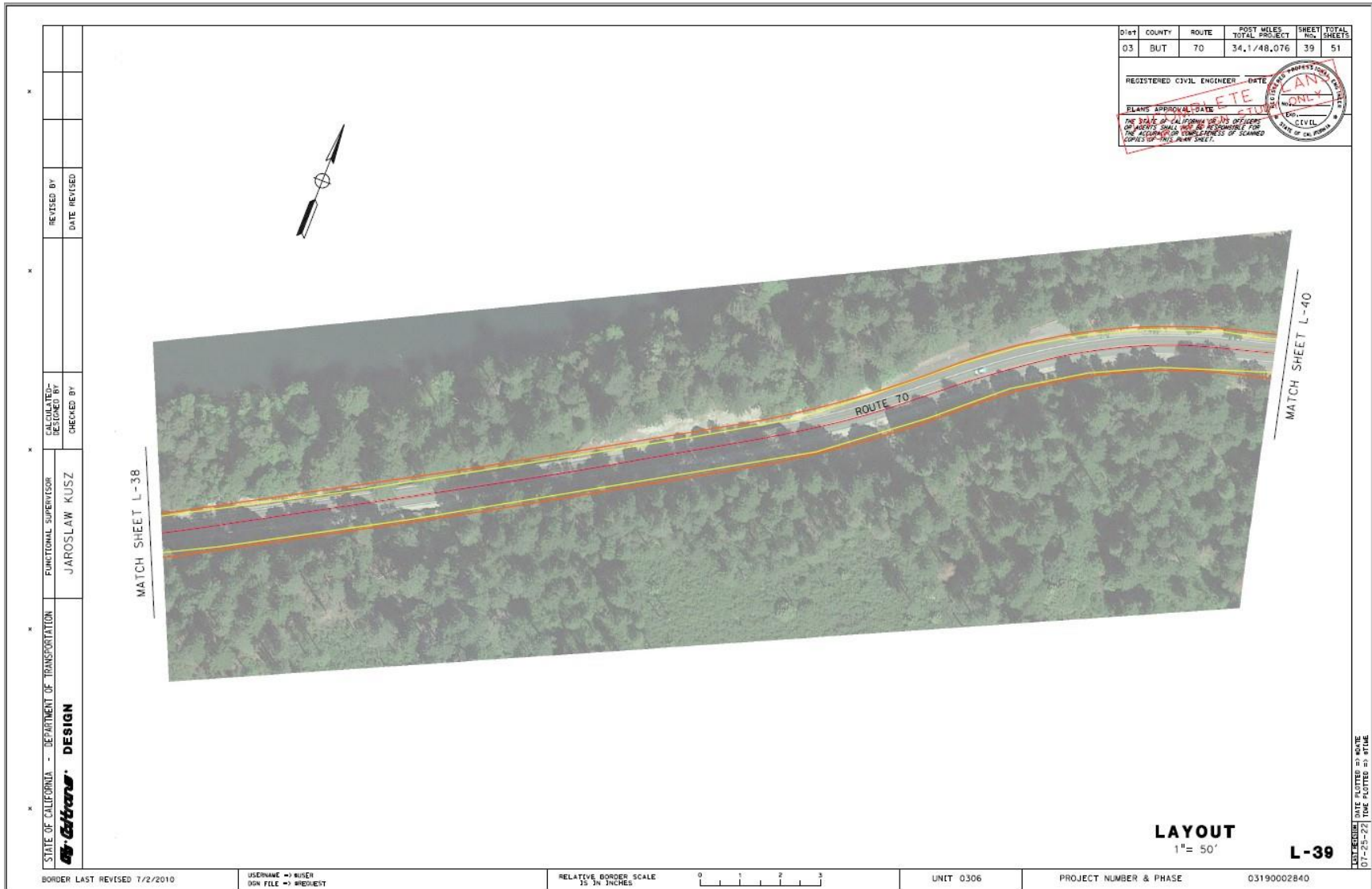
FUNCTIONAL SUPERVISOR
JAROSLAW KUSZ

DESIGN

STATE OF CALIFORNIA - DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

BORDER LAST REVISED 7/2/2010 USERNAME => RUSER RELATIVE BORDER SCALE 1/8" = 10' UNIT 0306 PROJECT NUMBER & PHASE 03190002840





DIST	COUNTY	ROUTE	POST MILES TOTAL PROJECT	SHEET NO.	TOTAL SHEETS
03	BUT	70	34.1/48.076	39	51

REGISTERED CIVIL ENGINEER	DATE
<i>[Signature]</i>	01/25/22

PLANS APPROVAL DATE: 01/25/22

THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA AND ITS OFFICERS OF HIGHWAYS SHALL NOT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ACCURACY OR COMPLETENESS OF SCANNED COPIES OF THIS PLAN SHEET.

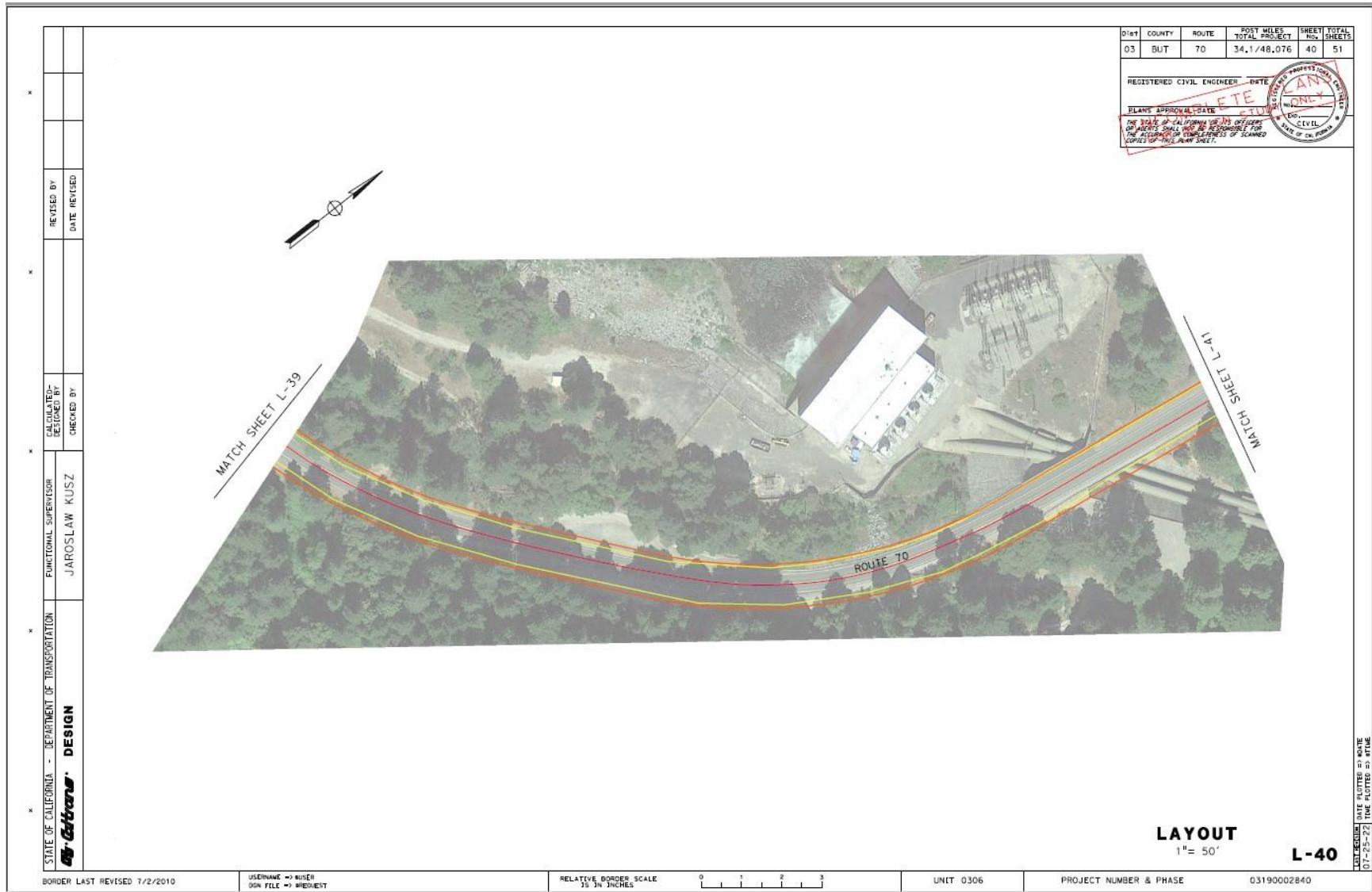
REGISTERED PROFESSIONAL CIVIL ENGINEER
STATE OF CALIFORNIA
No. 10000

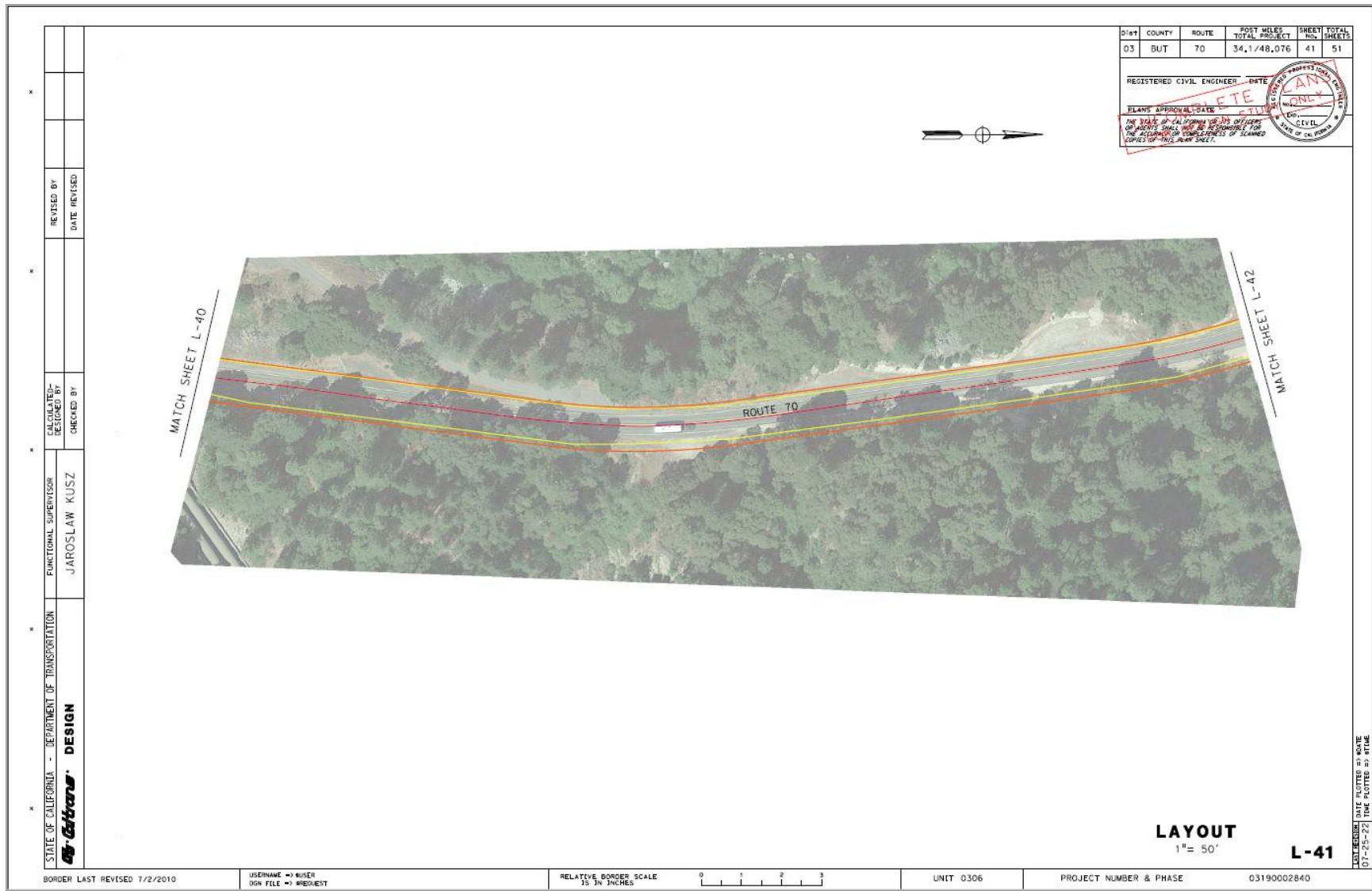
STATE OF CALIFORNIA - DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION	FUNCTIONAL SUPERVISOR	REVISOR
Caltrans DESIGN	JAROSLAW KUSZ	DATE
		REVISOR
		DATE

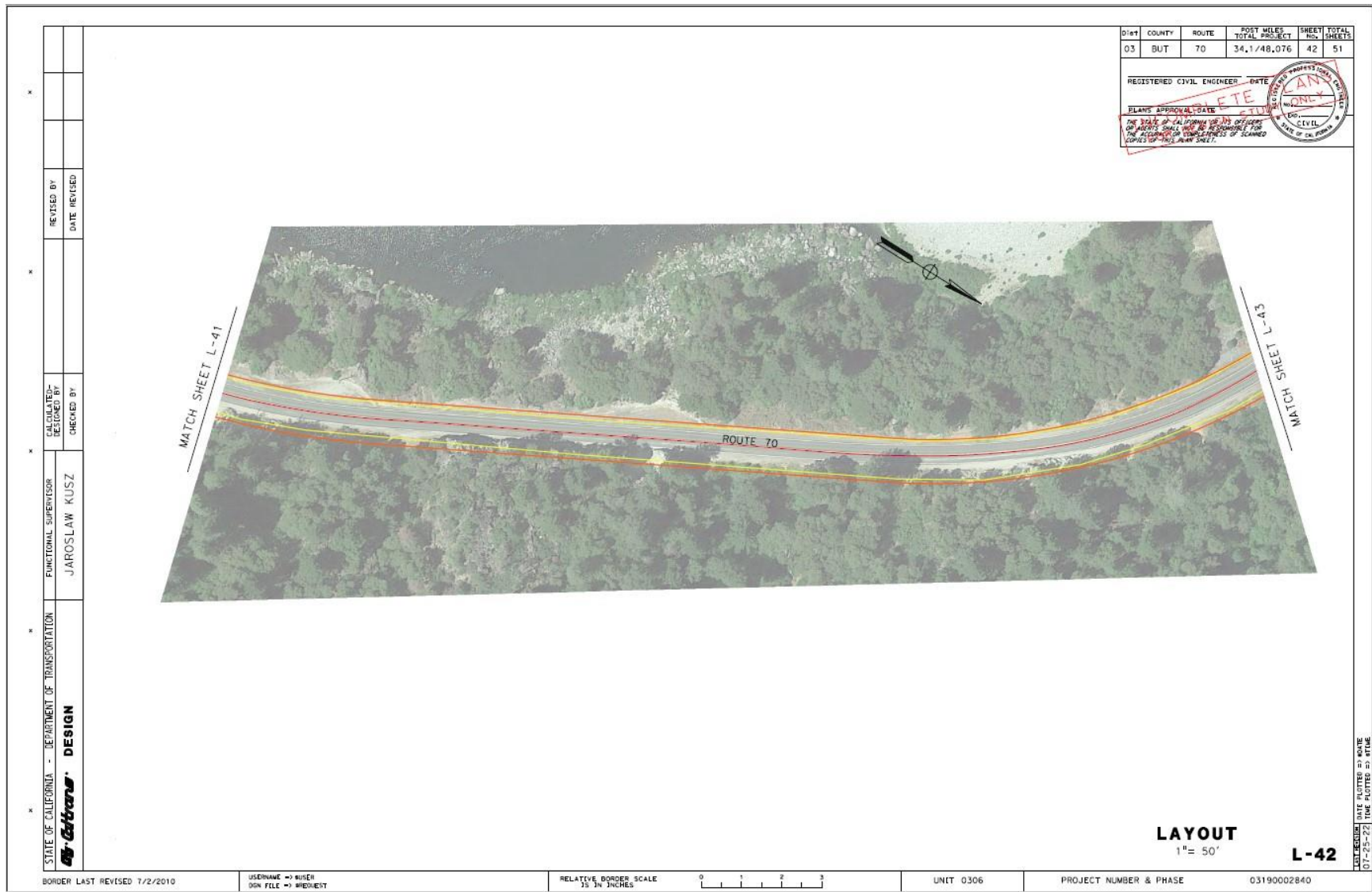
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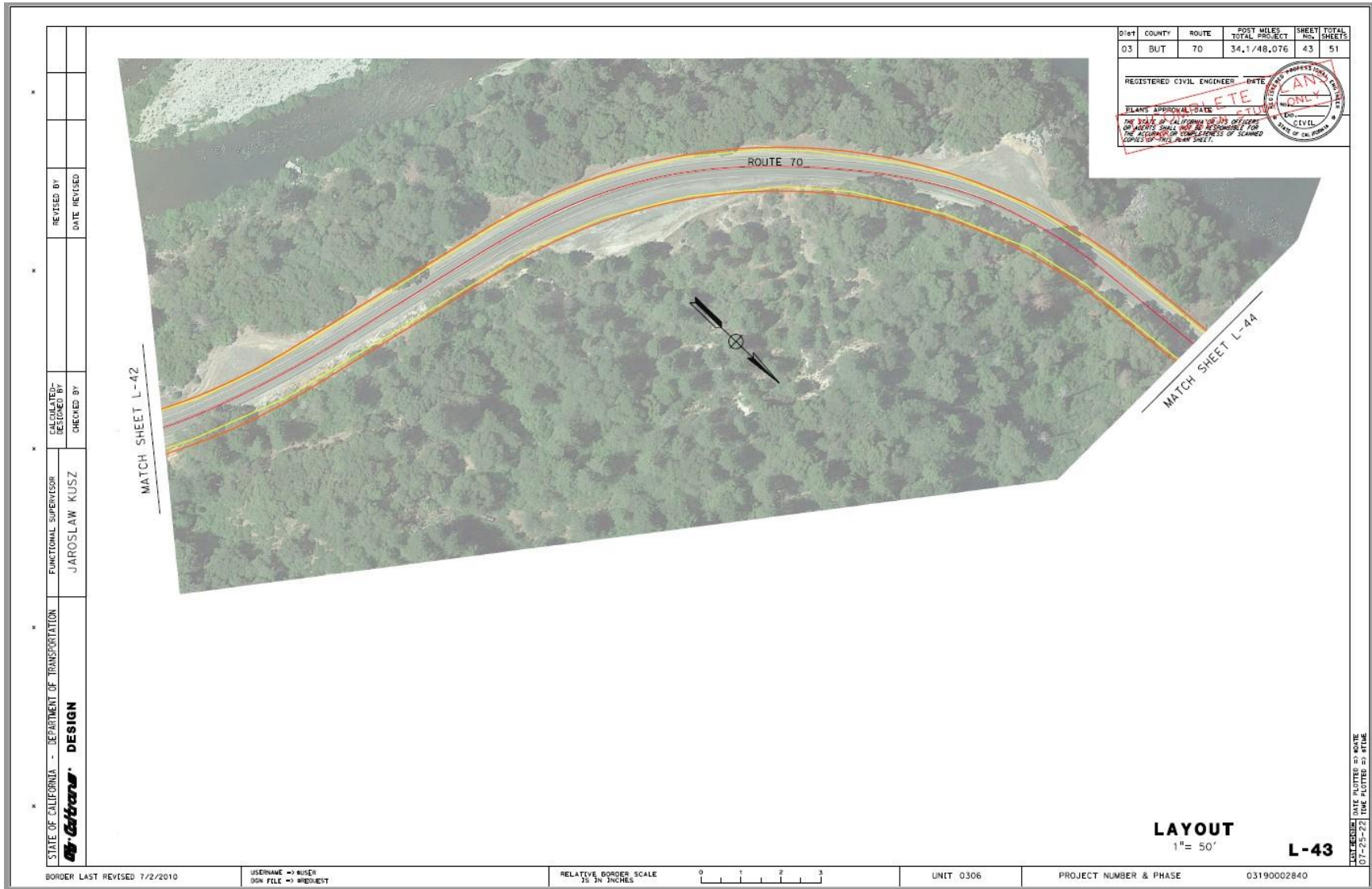
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L-39

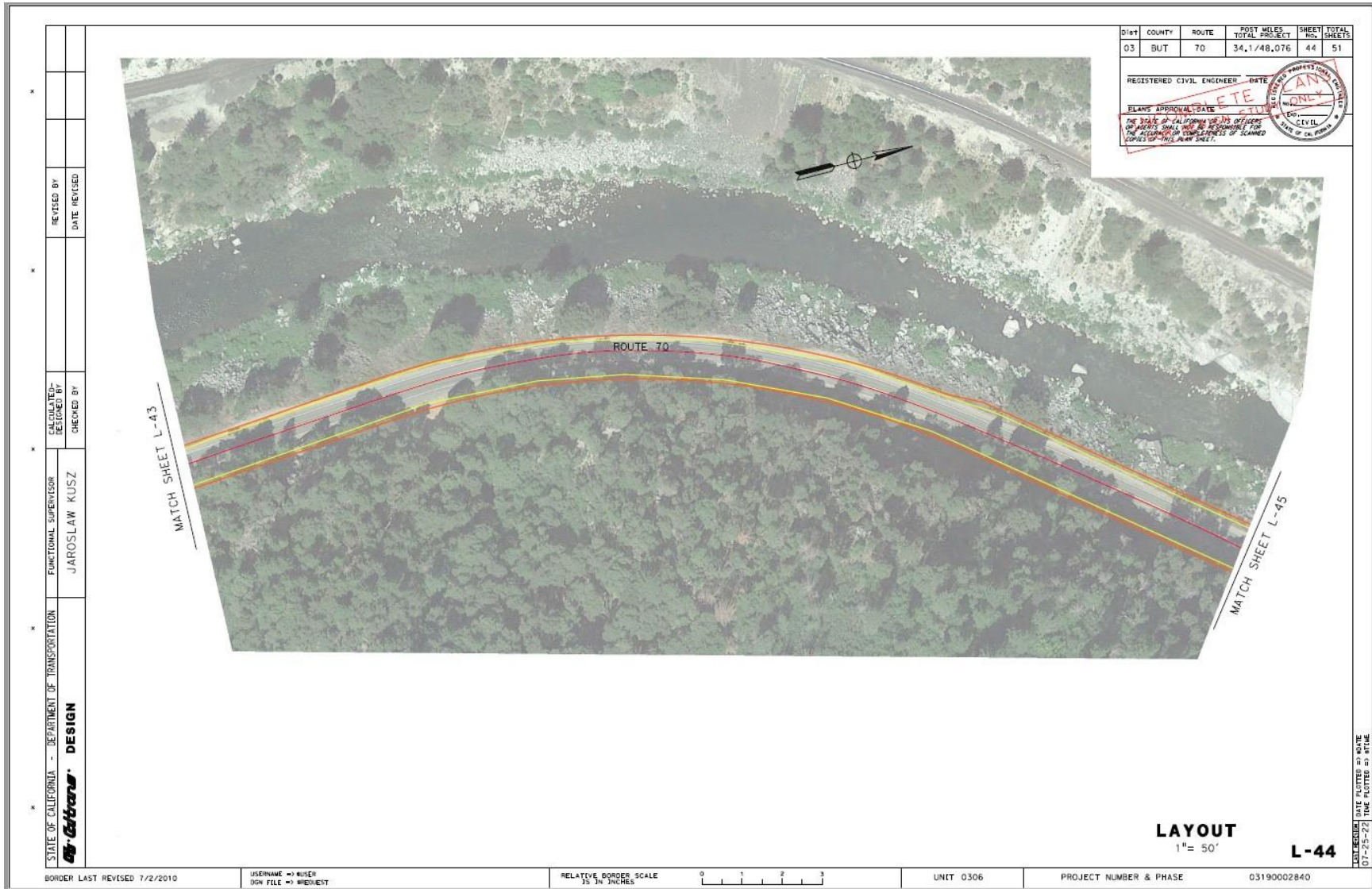
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TIME PLOTTED => NONE











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REGISTERED CIVIL ENGINEER: [REDACTED] DATE: [REDACTED]

PLANS APPROVAL DATE: [REDACTED]

THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA FOR ITS OFFICERS OF HIGHWAYS SHALL NOT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ACCURACY OR COMPLETENESS OF SCANNED COPIES OF THIS PLAN SHEET.

REGISTERED PROFESSIONAL CIVIL ENGINEER
 STATE OF CALIFORNIA
 CIVIL
 [REDACTED]

FUNCTIONAL SUPERVISOR	CALCULATED/DESIGNED BY	REVIEWED BY
JAROSLAW KUSZ		

BORDER LAST REVISED 7/2/2010

USERS: [REDACTED]
 DON FILE: [REDACTED]

RELATIVE BORDER SCALE
 3/8" INCHES



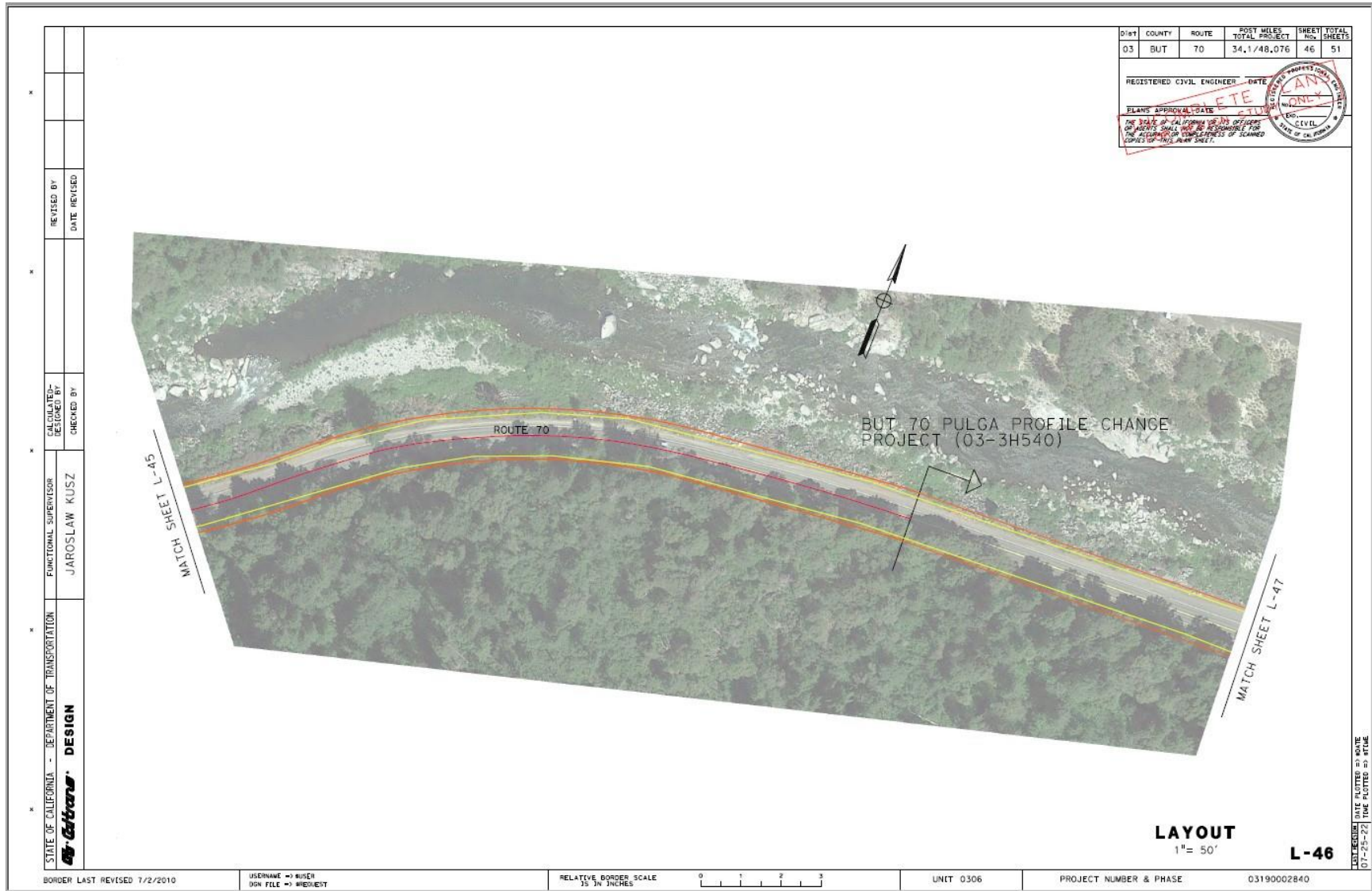
UNIT 0306

PROJECT NUMBER & PHASE

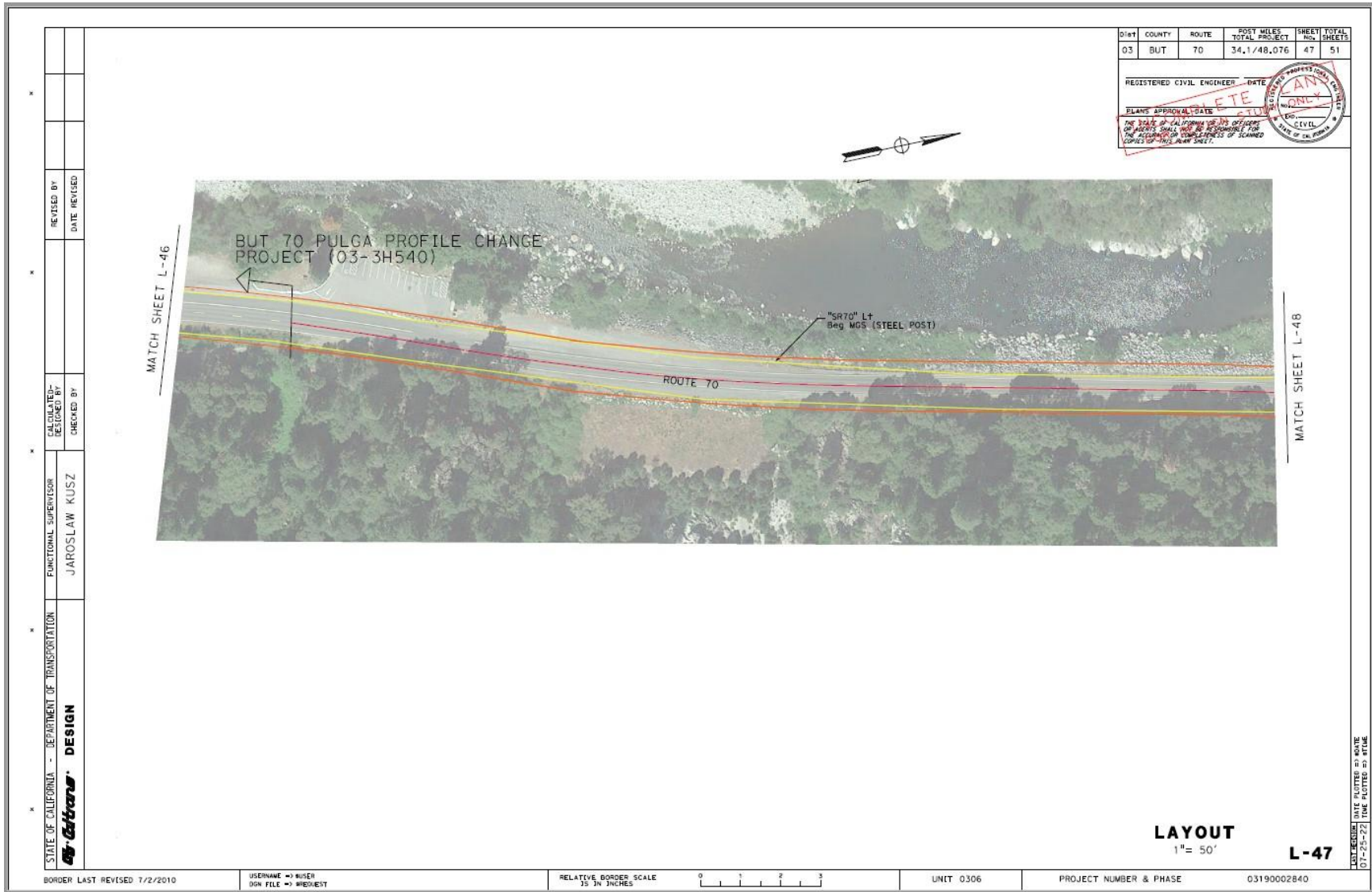
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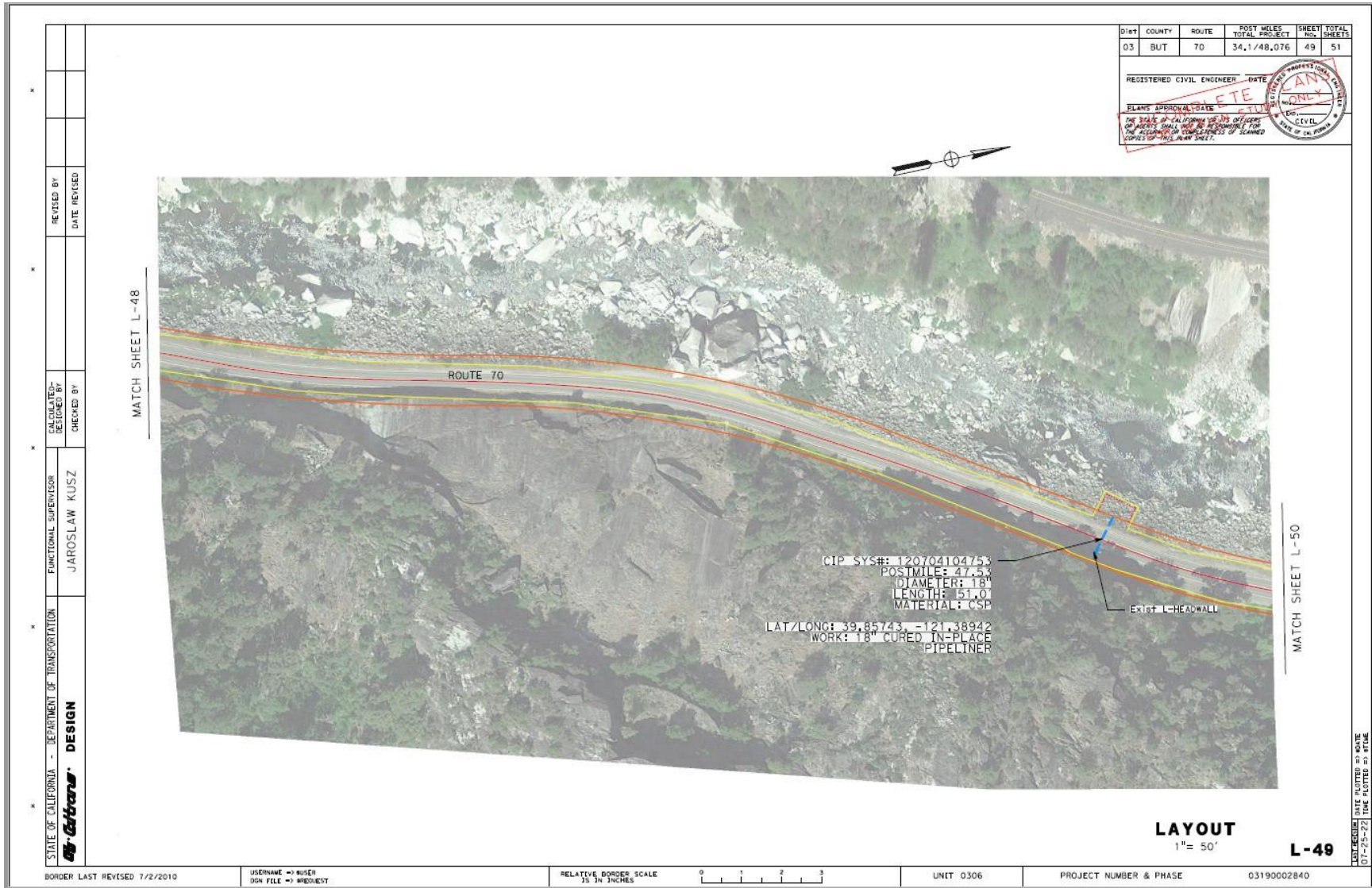
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 1" = 50'
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DATE PLOTTED: 07-25-22
 TIME PLOTTED: 09:17AM



LAST REVISION DATE PLOTTED BY NOTE
01-25-22 TUE PLOTTED BY RTUC





Appendix B. Title VI Policy Statement



California Department of Transportation

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR
P.O. BOX 942873, MS-49 | SACRAMENTO, CA 94273-0001
(916) 654-6130 | FAX (916) 653-5776 TTY 711
www.dot.ca.gov



September 2022

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY STATEMENT

The California Department of Transportation, under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, ensures *"No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance."*

Caltrans will make every effort to ensure nondiscrimination in all of its services, programs and activities, whether they are federally funded or not, and that services and benefits are fairly distributed to all people, regardless of race, color, or national origin. In addition, Caltrans will facilitate meaningful participation in the transportation planning process in a non-discriminatory manner.

Related federal statutes, remedies, and state law further those protections to include sex, disability, religion, sexual orientation, and age.

For information or guidance on how to file a complaint, or obtain more information regarding Title VI, please contact the Title VI Branch Manager at (916) 639-6392 or visit the following web page: <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/civil-rights/title-vi>.

To obtain this information in an alternate format such as Braille or in a language other than English, please contact the California Department of Transportation, Office of Civil Rights, at PO Box 942874, MS-79, Sacramento, CA 94274-0001; (916) 879-6768 (TTY 711); or at Title.VI@dot.ca.gov.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tony Tavares', is written over a white background.

TONY TAVARES
Director

"Provide a safe and reliable transportation network that serves all people and respects the environment"



Appendix C. USFWS, CDFW-CNDDDB, and CNPS Species Lists





United States Department of the Interior



FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Sacramento Fish And Wildlife Office

Federal Building

2800 Cottage Way, Room W-2605

Sacramento, CA 95825-1846

Phone: (916) 414-6600 Fax: (916) 414-6713

In Reply Refer To:
Project Code: 2023-0086405
Project Name: BUT 70 CAP M

September 11, 2023

Subject: List of threatened and endangered species that may occur in your proposed project location or may be affected by your proposed project

To Whom It May Concern:

The enclosed species list identifies threatened, endangered, proposed and candidate species, as well as proposed and final designated critical habitat, that may occur within the boundary of your proposed project and/or may be affected by your proposed project. The species list fulfills the requirements of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) under section 7(c) of the Endangered Species Act (Act) of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*).

New information based on updated surveys, changes in the abundance and distribution of species, changed habitat conditions, or other factors could change this list. Please feel free to contact us if you need more current information or assistance regarding the potential impacts to federally proposed, listed, and candidate species and federally designated and proposed critical habitat. Please note that under 50 CFR 402.12(e) of the regulations implementing section 7 of the Act, the accuracy of this species list should be verified after 90 days. This verification can be completed formally or informally as desired. The Service recommends that verification be completed by visiting the IPaC website at regular intervals during project planning and implementation for updates to species lists and information. An updated list may be requested through the IPaC system by completing the same process used to receive the enclosed list.

The purpose of the Act is to provide a means whereby threatened and endangered species and the ecosystems upon which they depend may be conserved. Under sections 7(a)(1) and 7(a)(2) of the Act and its implementing regulations (50 CFR 402 *et seq.*), Federal agencies are required to utilize their authorities to carry out programs for the conservation of threatened and endangered species and to determine whether projects may affect threatened and endangered species and/or designated critical habitat.

A Biological Assessment is required for construction projects (or other undertakings having similar physical impacts) that are major Federal actions significantly affecting the quality of the human environment as defined in the National Environmental Policy Act (42 U.S.C. 4332(2))

(c)). For projects other than major construction activities, the Service suggests that a biological evaluation similar to a Biological Assessment be prepared to determine whether the project may affect listed or proposed species and/or designated or proposed critical habitat. Recommended contents of a Biological Assessment are described at 50 CFR 402.12.

If a Federal agency determines, based on the Biological Assessment or biological evaluation, that listed species and/or designated critical habitat may be affected by the proposed project, the agency is required to consult with the Service pursuant to 50 CFR 402. In addition, the Service recommends that candidate species, proposed species and proposed critical habitat be addressed within the consultation. More information on the regulations and procedures for section 7 consultation, including the role of permit or license applicants, can be found in the "Endangered Species Consultation Handbook" at:

<https://www.fws.gov/sites/default/files/documents/endangered-species-consultation-handbook.pdf>

Migratory Birds: In addition to responsibilities to protect threatened and endangered species under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), there are additional responsibilities under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (BGEPA) to protect native birds from project-related impacts. Any activity, intentional or unintentional, resulting in take of migratory birds, including eagles, is prohibited unless otherwise permitted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (50 C.F.R. Sec. 10.12 and 16 U.S.C. Sec. 668(a)). For more information regarding these Acts, see <https://www.fws.gov/program/migratory-bird-permit/what-we-do>.

The MBTA has no provision for allowing take of migratory birds that may be unintentionally killed or injured by otherwise lawful activities. It is the responsibility of the project proponent to comply with these Acts by identifying potential impacts to migratory birds and eagles within applicable NEPA documents (when there is a federal nexus) or a Bird/Eagle Conservation Plan (when there is no federal nexus). Proponents should implement conservation measures to avoid or minimize the production of project-related stressors or minimize the exposure of birds and their resources to the project-related stressors. For more information on avian stressors and recommended conservation measures, see <https://www.fws.gov/library/collections/threats-birds>.

In addition to MBTA and BGEPA, Executive Order 13186: *Responsibilities of Federal Agencies to Protect Migratory Birds*, obligates all Federal agencies that engage in or authorize activities that might affect migratory birds, to minimize those effects and encourage conservation measures that will improve bird populations. Executive Order 13186 provides for the protection of both migratory birds and migratory bird habitat. For information regarding the implementation of Executive Order 13186, please visit <https://www.fws.gov/partner/council-conservation-migratory-birds>.

We appreciate your concern for threatened and endangered species. The Service encourages Federal agencies to include conservation of threatened and endangered species into their project planning to further the purposes of the Act. Please include the Consultation Code in the header of this letter with any request for consultation or correspondence about your project that you submit to our office.

Attachment(s):

- Official Species List

OFFICIAL SPECIES LIST

This list is provided pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, and fulfills the requirement for Federal agencies to "request of the Secretary of the Interior information whether any species which is listed or proposed to be listed may be present in the area of a proposed action".

This species list is provided by:

Sacramento Fish And Wildlife Office

Federal Building

2800 Cottage Way, Room W-2605

Sacramento, CA 95825-1846

(916) 414-6600

PROJECT SUMMARY

Project Code: 2023-0086405

Project Name: BUT 70 CAP M

Project Type: Road/Hwy - New Construction

Project Description: Pavement Overlay and replace culverts

Project Location:

The approximate location of the project can be viewed in Google Maps: <https://www.google.com/maps/@39.7936169,-121.45275053800951,14z>



Counties: Butte and Plumas counties, California

ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT SPECIES

There is a total of 7 threatened, endangered, or candidate species on this species list.

Species on this list should be considered in an effects analysis for your project and could include species that exist in another geographic area. For example, certain fish may appear on the species list because a project could affect downstream species.

IPaC does not display listed species or critical habitats under the sole jurisdiction of NOAA Fisheries¹, as USFWS does not have the authority to speak on behalf of NOAA and the Department of Commerce.

See the "Critical habitats" section below for those critical habitats that lie wholly or partially within your project area under this office's jurisdiction. Please contact the designated FWS office if you have questions.

1. [NOAA Fisheries](#), also known as the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), is an office of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration within the Department of Commerce.

BIRDS

NAME	STATUS
California Spotted Owl <i>Strix occidentalis occidentalis</i> Population: Sierra Nevada No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/7266	Proposed Threatened

AMPHIBIANS

NAME	STATUS
California Red-legged Frog <i>Rana draytonii</i> There is final critical habitat for this species. Your location does not overlap the critical habitat. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/2891	Threatened
Foothill Yellow-legged Frog <i>Rana boylei</i> Population: North Feather Distinct Population Segment (North Feather DPS) No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/5133	Proposed Threatened

INSECTS

NAME	STATUS
Monarch Butterfly <i>Danaus plexippus</i> No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9743	Candidate

CRUSTACEANS

NAME	STATUS
Conservancy Fairy Shrimp <i>Branchinecta conservatio</i> There is final critical habitat for this species. Your location does not overlap the critical habitat. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/8246	Endangered
Vernal Pool Fairy Shrimp <i>Branchinecta lynchi</i> There is final critical habitat for this species. Your location does not overlap the critical habitat. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/498	Threatened
Vernal Pool Tadpole Shrimp <i>Lepidurus packardii</i> There is final critical habitat for this species. Your location does not overlap the critical habitat. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/2246	Endangered

CRITICAL HABITATS

THERE ARE NO CRITICAL HABITATS WITHIN YOUR PROJECT AREA UNDER THIS OFFICE'S JURISDICTION.

YOU ARE STILL REQUIRED TO DETERMINE IF YOUR PROJECT(S) MAY HAVE EFFECTS ON ALL ABOVE LISTED SPECIES.

IPAC USER CONTACT INFORMATION

Agency: California Department of Transportation District 3

Name: Sarah-Jane Gerstman

Address: 703 B St.

City: Marysville

State: CA

Zip: 95901

Email sarah-jane.gerstman@dot.ca.gov

Phone: 5307205869



Selected Elements by Scientific Name
California Department of Fish and Wildlife
California Natural Diversity Database



Query Criteria: Quad IS (Pulga (3912174) OR Berry Creek (3912164) OR Storrie (3912183) OR Kimshew Point (3912184) OR Cherokee (3912165))

Species	Element Code	Federal Status	State Status	Global Rank	State Rank	Rare Plant Rank/CDFW SSC or FP
<i>Accipiter gentilis</i> northern goshawk	ABNKC12060	None	None	G5	S3	SSC
<i>Agelaius tricolor</i> tricolored blackbird	ABPBXB0020	None	Threatened	G1G2	S2	SSC
<i>Agrostis hendersonii</i> Henderson's bent grass	PMPOA040K0	None	None	G2Q	S2	3.2
<i>Allium jepsonii</i> Jepson's onion	PMLIL022V0	None	None	G2	S2	1B.2
<i>Ambystoma macrodactylum sigillatum</i> southern long-toed salamander	AAAAA01085	None	None	G5T4	S2	SSC
<i>Anomobryum julaceum</i> slender silver moss	NBMUS80010	None	None	G5?	S2	4.2
<i>Antrozous pallidus</i> pallid bat	AMACC10010	None	None	G4	S3	SSC
<i>Aplodontia rufa californica</i> Sierra Nevada mountain beaver	AMAF01013	None	None	G5T3T4	S2S3	SSC
<i>Bombus crotchii</i> Crotch bumble bee	IIHYM24480	None	Candidate Endangered	G2	S2	
<i>Bombus occidentalis</i> western bumble bee	IIHYM24252	None	Candidate Endangered	G3	S1	
<i>Botrychium crenulatum</i> scalloped moonwort	PPOPH010L0	None	None	G4	S3	2B.2
<i>Botrychium minganense</i> Mingan moonwort	PPOPH010R0	None	None	G5	S4	4.2
<i>Botrychium montanum</i> western goblin	PPOPH010K0	None	None	G3G4	S2	2B.1
<i>Calystegia atriplicifolia ssp. buttensis</i> Butte County morning-glory	PDCON04012	None	None	G5T3	S3	4.2
<i>Cardamine pachystigma var. dissectifolia</i> dissected-leaved toothwort	PDBRA0K1B1	None	None	G3G5T2Q	S2	1B.2
<i>Clarkia gracilis ssp. albicaulis</i> white-stemmed clarkia	PDONA050J1	None	None	G5T3	S3	1B.2
<i>Clarkia mildrediae ssp. mildrediae</i> Mildred's clarkia	PDONA050Q2	None	None	G3T3?	S3?	1B.3
<i>Clarkia mosquinii</i> Mosquin's clarkia	PDONA050S0	None	None	G2	S2	1B.1
<i>Desmocerus californicus dimorphus</i> valley elderberry longhorn beetle	IICOL48011	Threatened	None	G3T3	S3	



Selected Elements by Scientific Name
California Department of Fish and Wildlife
California Natural Diversity Database



Species	Element Code	Federal Status	State Status	Global Rank	State Rank	Rare Plant Rank/CDFW SSC or FP
<i>Emys marmorata</i> western pond turtle	ARAAD02030	None	None	G3G4	S3	SSC
<i>Eremogone cliftonii</i> Clifton's eremogone	PDCAR17010	None	None	G3	S3	1B.3
<i>Eriogonum umbellatum</i> var. <i>ahartii</i> Ahart's buckwheat	PDPGN086UY	None	None	G5T3	S3	1B.2
<i>Erythranthe filicifolia</i> fern-leaved monkeyflower	PDPHR01150	None	None	G2	S2	1B.2
<i>Fritillaria eastwoodiae</i> Butte County fritillary	PMLIL0V060	None	None	G3Q	S3	3.2
<i>Great Valley Cottonwood Riparian Forest</i> Great Valley Cottonwood Riparian Forest	CTT61410CA	None	None	G2	S2.1	
<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i> bald eagle	ABNKC10010	Delisted	Endangered	G5	S3	FP
<i>Juncus leiospermus</i> var. <i>leiospermus</i> Red Bluff dwarf rush	PMJUN011L2	None	None	G2T2	S2	1B.1
<i>Lasionycteris noctivagans</i> silver-haired bat	AMACC02010	None	None	G3G4	S3S4	
<i>Laterallus jamaicensis coturniculus</i> California black rail	ABNME03041	None	Threatened	G3T1	S2	FP
<i>Layia septentrionalis</i> Colusa layia	PDAST5N0F0	None	None	G2	S2	1B.2
<i>Lepidurus packardii</i> vernal pool tadpole shrimp	ICBRA10010	Endangered	None	G3	S3	
<i>Lewisia cantelovii</i> Cantelow's lewisia	PDPOR04020	None	None	G3	S3	1B.2
<i>Monardella venosa</i> veiny monardella	PDLAM18082	None	None	G1	S1	1B.1
<i>Mylopharodon conocephalus</i> hardhead	AFCJB25010	None	None	G3	S3	SSC
<i>Myotis thysanodes</i> fringed myotis	AMACC01090	None	None	G4	S3	
<i>Northern Basalt Flow Vernal Pool</i> Northern Basalt Flow Vernal Pool	CTT44131CA	None	None	G3	S2.2	
<i>Packera eurycephala</i> var. <i>lewisrosei</i> Lewis Rose's ragwort	PDAST8H182	None	None	G4T2	S2	1B.2
<i>Penstemon personatus</i> closed-throated beardtongue	PDSCR1L4Y0	None	None	G2	S2	1B.2
<i>Poa sierrae</i> Sierra blue grass	PMPOA4Z310	None	None	G3	S3	1B.3
<i>Rana boylei</i> pop. 2 foothill yellow-legged frog - Feather River DPS	AAABH01052	Proposed Threatened	Threatened	G3T2	S2	



Selected Elements by Scientific Name
 California Department of Fish and Wildlife
 California Natural Diversity Database



Species	Element Code	Federal Status	State Status	Global Rank	State Rank	Rare Plant Rank/CDFW SSC or FP
<i>Rana cascadae</i> Cascades frog	AAABH01060	None	Candidate Endangered	G3	S3	SSC
<i>Rana draytonii</i> California red-legged frog	AAABH01022	Threatened	None	G2G3	S2S3	SSC
<i>Rana sierrae</i> Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog	AAABH01340	Endangered	Threatened	G1	S2	WL
<i>Rhyacophila spinata</i> spiny rhyacophilan caddisfly	IITRI19080	None	None	G1G2	S3	
<i>Rhynchospora capitellata</i> brownish beaked-rush	PMCYP0N080	None	None	G5	S1	2B.2
<i>Sagittaria sanfordii</i> Sanford's arrowhead	PMALI040Q0	None	None	G3	S3	1B.2
<i>Scytinium siskiyouense</i> Siskiyou jellyskin lichen	NLTES34580	None	None	G2G3	S1	1B.1
<i>Sedum albomarginatum</i> Feather River stonecrop	PDCRA0A030	None	None	G2	S2	1B.2
<i>Sidalcea robusta</i> Butte County checkerbloom	PDMAL110P0	None	None	G2	S2	1B.2
<i>Spea hammondi</i> western spadefoot	AAABF02020	None	None	G2G3	S3S4	SSC
<i>Stellaria obtusa</i> obtuse starwort	PDCAR0X0U0	None	None	G5	S4	4.3
<i>Utricularia intermedia</i> flat-leaved bladderwort	PDLNT020A0	None	None	G5	S3	2B.2

Record Count: 52

California Native Plant Society Rare Plant Inventory

<i>Scientific Name</i>	<i>Common Name</i>	<i>CRPR</i>	<i>CESA</i>	<i>FESA</i>
<i>Agrostis hendersonii</i>	Henderson's bent grass	3.2	None	None
<i>Allium jepsonii</i>	Jepson's onion	1B.2	None	None
<i>Allium sanbornii</i> var. <i>sanbornii</i>	Sanborn's onion	4.2	None	None
<i>Anomobryum julaceum</i>	slender silver moss	4.2	None	None
<i>Arctostaphylos mewukka</i> ssp. <i>truei</i>	True's manzanita	4.2	None	None
<i>Aspidotis carlotta-halliae</i>	Carlotta Hall's lace fern	4.2	None	None
<i>Astragalus pauperculus</i>	depauperate milk-vetch	4.3	None	None
<i>Astragalus pulsiferae</i> var. <i>pulsiferae</i>	Pulsifer's milk-vetch	1B.2	None	None
<i>Astragalus whitneyi</i> var. <i>lenophyllus</i>	woolly-leaved milk-vetch	4.3	None	None
<i>Botrychium crenulatum</i>	scalloped moonwort	2B.2	None	None
<i>Botrychium minganense</i>	Mingan moonwort	4.2	None	None
<i>Botrychium montanum</i>	western goblin	2B.1	None	None
<i>Brodiaea rosea</i> ssp. <i>vallicola</i>	valley brodiaea	4.2	None	None
<i>Brodiaea sierrae</i>	Sierra foothills brodiaea	4.3	None	None
<i>Bulbostylis capillaris</i>	thread-leaved beakseed	4.2	None	None
<i>Calycadenia oppositifolia</i>	Butte County calycadenia	4.2	None	None
<i>Calystegia atriplicifolia</i> ssp. <i>buttensis</i>	Butte County morning-glory	4.2	None	None
<i>Cardamine pachystigma</i> var. <i>dissectifolia</i>	dissected-leaved toothwort	1B.2	None	None
<i>Clarkia gracilis</i> ssp. <i>albicaulis</i>	white-stemmed clarkia	1B.2	None	None

Scientific Name	Common Name	CRPR	CESA	FESA
<i>Clarkia mildrediae</i> ssp. <i>lutescens</i>	golden-anthered clarkia	4.2	None	None
<i>Clarkia mildrediae</i> ssp. <i>mildrediae</i>	Mildred's clarkia	1B.3	None	None
<i>Clarkia mosquinii</i>	Mosquin's clarkia	1B.1	None	None
<i>Claytonia parviflora</i> ssp. <i>grandiflora</i>	streambank spring beauty	4.2	None	None
<i>Cypripedium californicum</i>	California lady's-slipper	4.2	None	None
<i>Cypripedium fasciculatum</i>	clustered lady's-slipper	4.2	None	None
<i>Engellaria obtusa</i>	obtuse starwort	4.3	None	None
<i>Eremogone cliftonii</i>	Clifton's eremogone	1B.3	None	None
<i>Erigeron petrophilus</i> var. <i>sierrensis</i>	northern Sierra daisy	4.3	None	None
<i>Eriogonum umbellatum</i> var. <i>ahartii</i>	Ahart's buckwheat	1B.2	None	None
<i>Eriophorum gracile</i>	slender cottongrass	4.3	None	None
<i>Erythranthe filicifolia</i>	fern-leaved monkeyflower	1B.2	None	None
<i>Erythranthe glaucescens</i>	shield-bracted monkeyflower	4.3	None	None
<i>Erythranthe inconspicua</i>	small-flowered monkeyflower	4.3	None	None
<i>Frangula purshiana</i> ssp. <i>ultramafica</i>	Caribou coffeeberry	1B.2	None	None
<i>Fritillaria eastwoodiae</i>	Butte County fritillary	3.2	None	None
<i>Githopsis pulchella</i> ssp. <i>serpentinicola</i>	serpentine bluecup	4.3	None	None
<i>Hesperervax caulescens</i>	hogwallow starfish	4.2	None	None

Scientific Name	Common Name	CRPR	CESA	FESA
<i>Juncus leiospermus</i> var. <i>leiospermus</i>	Red Bluff dwarf rush	1B.1	None	None
<i>Layia septentrionalis</i>	Colusa layia	1B.2	None	None
<i>Lewisia cantelovii</i>	Cantelow's lewisia	1B.2	None	None
<i>Lilium humboldtii</i> ssp. <i>Humboldtii</i>	Humboldt lily	4.2	None	None
<i>Mielichhoferia elongata</i>	elongate copper moss	4.3	None	None
<i>Monardella venosa</i>	veiny monardella	1B.1	None	None
<i>Packera eurycephala</i> var. <i>lewisrosei</i>	Lewis Rose's ragwort	1B.2	None	None
<i>Peltigera gowardii</i>	western waterfan lichen	4.2	None	None
<i>Penstemon personatus</i>	closed-throated beardtongue	1B.2	None	None
<i>Perideridia bacigalupii</i>	Bacigalupi's yampah	4.2	None	None
<i>Piperia colemanii</i>	Coleman's rein orchid	4.3	None	None
<i>Poa sierrae</i>	Sierra blue grass	1B.3	None	None
<i>Polygonum bidwelliae</i>	Bidwell's knotweed	4.3	None	None
<i>Rhamnus alnifolia</i>	alder buckthorn	2B.2	None	None
<i>Rhynchospora capitellata</i>	brownish beaked-rush	2B.2	None	None
<i>Sagittaria sanfordii</i>	Sanford's arrowhead	1B.2	None	None
<i>Scytinium siskiyouense</i>	Siskiyou jellyskin lichen	1B.1	None	None
<i>Sedum albomarginatum</i>	Feather River stonecrop	1B.2	None	None
<i>Sidalcea gigantea</i>	giant checkerbloom	4.3	None	None
<i>Sidalcea robusta</i>	Butte County checkerbloom	1B.2	None	None

Scientific Name	Common Name	CRPR	CESA	FESA
<i>Silene occidentalis</i> ssp. <i>occidentalis</i>	Western campion	4.3	None	None
<i>Streptanthus drepanoides</i>	sickle-fruit jewelflower	4.3	None	None
<i>Streptanthus longisiliquus</i>	long-fruit jewelflower	4.3	None	None
<i>Utricularia intermedia</i>	flat-leaved bladderwort	2B.2	None	None
<i>Vaccinium coccineum</i>	Siskiyou Mountains huckleberry	3.3	None	None
<i>Viola tomentosa</i>	felt-leaved violet	4.2	None	None

Appendix D. Plant and Animal Species Tables



Special Status Plant Species Potentially Occurring or Known to Occur within the Environmental Study Limits

AMPHIBIANS

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status¹/ Federal/State	Habitat	Habitat Present/ Absent	Rationale
<i>Ambystoma macrodactylum sigillatum</i>	Southern long-toed salamander	--/SSC	Subterranean species most of the year, utilizing mammal burrows, rock fissures, etc. Breeds primarily in ponds formed by winter/spring rains and snowmelt. Breeding migration is less than 1000 m in most localities.	Absent	Suitable breeding habitat (ponds) are not present or within 1000 m of breeding habitat for the species.
<i>Rana boylei (pop.2)</i>	Foothill yellow-legged frog–North Feather River DPS	FT/ST	Creeks or rivers in woodlands or forests with rock and gravel substrate and low overhanging vegetation along the edge.	Present	Based on recent CNDDDB occurrences and existing USFS field survey data, this species is anticipated to be present. Avoidance and minimization measures will be utilized.
<i>Rana cascadae</i>	Cascades frog	--/SCE, SSC	In California, the cascades frog is found in two locations, namely Siskiyou County and further south near Lassen Peak. Its elevational range extends from 230 m - 2,500 m. This species can be found in water and surrounding vegetation in mountain lakes, small streams, and ponds in meadows up to timber line. It is closely restricted to water.	Absent	This project is outside of the species range; not found within the ESL.
<i>Rana draytonii</i>	California red-legged frog	FT/SSC	Permanent and semi-permanent aquatic habitats such as creeks and cold	Absent	Suitable habitat is not present. This species is not expected to be found within the ESL and no species

			water ponds, with emergent and submergent vegetation.		occurrences have been documented within 1 mile of the ESL.
<i>Rana sierrae</i>	Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog	FE/ST	Occurs in the Sierra Nevada from Plumas County to Fresno County. Populations north of a ridge dividing the middle and south forks of the Kings River and those east of the Sierra Nevada crest are considered to be the Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog. Elevation range in the Sierra extends from 4,500 feet (1,370 meters to over 11,980 feet (3,650 meters. This species is associated with streams, lakes and ponds in montane riparian, lodgepole pine, subalpine conifer, and wet meadow habitats.	Absent	The project is outside of the elevational range of the species; not found within the ESL.
<i>Spea hammondi</i>	Western spadefoot	--/SSC	Grassland habitats, valley and foothill hardwood woodland. Vernal pools for egg laying.	Absent	Suitable breeding habitat (vernal pools) is not present near or within for the species.

BIRD

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status ¹ / Federal/State	Habitat	Habitat Present/ Absent	Rationale
<i>Accipiter gentilis</i>	Northern goshawk	--/SSC	Nests and roosts in older stands of red fir, Jeffrey pine, Ponderosa pine, lodgepole pine, Douglas fir, and mixed conifer forests.	Absent	No suitable habitat within the ESL.
<i>Agelaius tricolor</i>	Tricolored blackbird	--/ST, SSC	Nests in emergent wetland vegetation such as tules or cattails, or at upland sites with blackberry shrubs, nettles, and thistles.	Absent	There is no suitable nesting habitat within the ESL.
<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	Bald eagle	--/SE, FP	Nests and roosts in coniferous forests within 1 mile of a lake, reservoir, or stream.	Absent	Although habitat exists in the greater vicinity, there is no suitable habitat within the ESL.
<i>Laterallus jamaicensis coturniculus</i>	California black rail	--/ST, FP	Freshwater marshes, wet meadows, and shallow margins of saltwater marshes bordering larger bays.	Absent	There is no suitable habitat within the ESL.
<i>Strix occidentalis occidentalis</i>	California spotted owl	FPT/--	Dense old-growth or mature forests dominated by conifers with topped trees or oaks available for nesting crevices.	Absent	Although habitat occurs in the greater vicinity, there is no suitable habitat within the ESL.

FISH

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status ¹ / Federal/State	Habitat	Habitat Present/ Absent	Rationale
<i>Mylopharodon conocephalus</i>	Hardhead	--/SSC	Low to mid-elevation streams in the Sacramento-San Joaquin drainage. Also present in the Russian River. Clear, deep pools with sand-gravel-boulder bottoms and slow water velocity. Not found where exotic centrarchids predominate.	Absent	There is no suitable habitat within the ESL, however suitable habitat exists in the greater vicinity.

INVERTEBRATES

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status ¹ / Federal/State	Habitat	Habitat Present/ Absent	Rationale
<i>Bombus crotchii</i>	Crotch bumble bee	--/SCE	Coastal California, east to the Sierra-/Cascade crest and south into Mexico.	Absent	The ESL does not have the botanical requirements for this species. The ESL is located just outside this species known range.
<i>Bombus occidentalis</i>	Western bumble bee	--/SCE	Open grassy areas, urban parks and gardens, chaparral, meadows. Generalist forager. Nests above or underground.	Absent	There are no abundant meadows or grasslands within the ESL and impacts to vegetation are minimal within this project.
<i>Branchinecta conservatio</i>	Conservancy fairy shrimp	FE/--	Vernal pools in Central Valley.	Absent	Suitable habitat not present; there are no vernal pools within the ESL.
<i>Branchinecta lynchi</i>	Vernal pool fairy shrimp	FT/--	Vernal pools.	Absent	Suitable habitat not present; there are no vernal pools within the ESL.

<i>Danaus plexippus</i>	Monarch butterfly	FC/--	Open habitats including fields, meadows, weedy areas, marshes, and roadsides.	Absent	Milkweed (host plant) was not present
<i>Desmocerus californicus dimorphus</i>	Valley elderberry longhorn beetle	FT/--	Found only in association with <i>Sambucus</i> spp. in the Central Valley.	Absent	ESL is outside of species known range and suitable habitat is not present. This species is not expected to be found within the ESL.
<i>Lepidurus packardii</i>	Vernal pool tadpole shrimp	FE/--	Vernal pools in the Central Valley.	Absent	Suitable habitat not present; there are no vernal pools within the ESL.

MAMMALS

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status ¹ / Federal/State	Habitat	Habitat Present/ Absent	Rationale
<i>Antrozous pallidus</i>	Pallid bat	--/SSC	Day roosts in caves, crevices, mines, and occasionally hollow trees. Prefers rocky outcrops, cliffs, and crevices with access to open habitats for foraging.	Absent	Although the project ESL exists within the species range, suitable maternity roosting sites do not exist within the project area. No work would occur in rocky outcrops.
<i>Aplodontia rufa californica</i>	Sierra Nevada mountain beaver	--/SSC	Typical habitat in the Sierra Nevada is montane riparian; in the Coast Ranges, most populations occur below 900 m. Burrows and dense understory provide cover. Frequents dense riparian-deciduous vegetation.	Present	Based on habitat requirements and the presence of minimal potential suitable habitat within the ESL, it is anticipated the species could be present. However, the species was not observed during field surveys. With limited scope of work not anticipated to be present.

<i>Lasionycteris noctivagans</i>	Silver-haired bat	--/--	Primarily a coastal and montane forest dweller feeding over streams, ponds, and open brushy areas. Roosts in hollow trees, beneath exfoliating bark, abandoned woodpecker holes and rarely under rocks. Needs drinking water.	Present	Although the project ESL exists within the species range, suitable maternity roosting sites do not exist within the project area. No tree removal is proposed.
<i>Myotis thysanodes</i>	Fringed myotis	--/--	In a wide variety of habitats, optimal habitats are pinyon-juniper, valley foothill hardwood, and hardwood-conifer. Uses caves, mines, buildings, or crevices for maternity colonies and roosts.	Present	Although the project ESL exists within the species range, suitable maternity roosting sites do not exist within the project area. No tree removal is proposed.

REPTILES

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status¹/ Federal/State	Habitat	Habitat Present/ Absent	Rationale
<i>Emys marmorata</i>	Western pond turtle	--/SSC	Permanent or mostly permanent waters in a variety of habitats.	Present	Based on habitat requirements and the presence of potential suitable habitat within the ESL, it is anticipated the species could be present. However, the species was not observed during field surveys. No work is proposed in any perennial streams or permanent waters.

<p>¹Status Explanations:</p> <p>Federal Status (pursuant to the Federal Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended)</p> <p>FE = endangered. Listed as being in danger of extinction.</p> <p>FT = threatened. Listed as likely to become endangered within the foreseeable future.</p> <p>FP = proposed. Proposed for listing as threatened or endangered, or for delisting.</p> <p>FC = candidate. Candidate that may become a proposed species.</p> <p>D = delisted.</p> <p>-- = no listing status under the Federal Endangered Species Act.</p>	<p>State Status (pursuant to § 1904 (Native Plant Protection Act of 1977) and § 2074.2 and § 2075.5 (California Endangered Species Act of 1984) of the Fish and Game Code)</p> <p>SE = listed as endangered under the California Endangered Species Act.</p> <p>ST = listed as threatened under the California Endangered Species Act.</p> <p>SC = candidate. Candidate that may become threatened, endangered, or delisted.</p> <p>D = delisted.</p> <p>-- = no listing.</p> <p>SSC = Species of Special Concern. Animals not listed under the Federal Endangered Species Act or the California Endangered Species Act but which are declining at a rate that could result in listing, or historically occurred in low numbers and known threats to their persistence currently exist.</p> <p>FP = Fully Protected. Fully Protected species may not be taken or possessed at any time and no licenses or permits may be issued for their take except for collecting these species for necessary scientific research and relocation of the bird species for the protection of livestock.</p> <p>WL = Watch List. Species that do not meet the criteria of SC, but for which there is concern and a need for additional information to clarify status.</p>
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