

Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration
for the Badger Forest Fire Station
Replacement Project

Executive Summary

Prepared by:

H. T. Harvey & Associates

In partnership with:

Past Forward, Inc.

URS Corporation

Prepared for:

Department of General Services

Real Estate Services Division

Environmental Services Section

707 3rd Street, 3rd Floor

West Sacramento, CA 95605

March 2013

Notice of Intent



**NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY AND INTENT TO ADOPT A MITIGATED NEGATIVE
DECLARATION / INITIAL STUDY BY THE CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF
FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION FOR THE BADGER FOREST FIRE STATION
REPLACEMENT PROJECT**

In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Public Resources Section 21000 et seq.) and the CEQA Guidelines (Title 14 Code of Regulations Section 15000 et seq.), an Initial Study was prepared for the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) Badger Forest Fire Station Replacement Project that identifies and evaluates the potential environmental impacts of the proposed project. Based on the Initial Study, it has been determined that a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) is appropriate for the project. This is a Notice of Intent to adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration for this project under provisions of CEQA 14 CCR Section 15072.

Project Title: Badger Forest Fire Station Replacement Project

Lead Agency: California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

Project Location: 50601 Highway 245, Miramonte, California

Project Description: The project would replace the existing barracks, apparatus buildings, and septic tank with newly constructed facilities. The project footprint would include 2.28 acres of a 7.34 acre parcel.

An Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration has been prepared for the project and is available for review at the following locations during normal business hours:

California Department of General Services
Real Estate Services Division, Environmental Services Section
707 3rd Street, Suite 2-305
West Sacramento, CA 95605

Tulare County Clerk's Office
County Civic Center
Courthouse, Room 105
221 South Mooney Boulevard
Visalia, CA 93291

Tulare County Library
Visalia Branch Library (Main Library)
200 West Oak Avenue
Visalia, CA 93291

The Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration is also available online at:
http://www.fire.ca.gov/resource_mgt/resource_mgt_EPRP_PublicNotice.php.





H. T. HARVEY & ASSOCIATES
ECOLOGICAL CONSULTANTS

Public Review Period: March 15 to April 13, 2013

Public agencies and interested members of the public are invited to review and comment on the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration. Written comments should be submitted no later than 5:00 p.m. on April 13, 2013.

Written comments may be sent by mail to:

Tiffany A. Schmid, Senior Environmental Planner
Department of General Services, Real Estate Services Division
Professional Services Branch, Environmental Services Section
PO Box 989052
MS-509
West Sacramento, CA 95798-9052
(916) 376-1609

Comments may also be submitted electronically at:
Environmental@DGS

Your views and comments on how the project may affect the environment will be welcomed.



Notice of Completion

Notice of Completion & Environmental Document Transmittal

Mail to: State Clearinghouse, P.O. Box 3044, Sacramento, CA 95812-3044 (916) 445-0613
For Hand Delivery/Street Address: 1400 Tenth Street, Sacramento, CA 95814

SCH #

Project Title: Badger Forest Fire Station Replacement Project

Lead Agency: CAL FIRE, Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Contact Person: Tiffany A. Schmid (Dept. of Gen
Mailing Address: 707 3rd Street, 3rd Floor Phone: (916) 376-1609
City: West Sacramento Zip: 95605 County: Sacramento

Project Location: County: Tulare City/Nearest Community: Badger
Cross Streets: Wildhog Canyon and Highway 245 Zip Code: 93641-9709
Longitude/Latitude (degrees, minutes and seconds): 36 ° 38 ' 54.55" N / 119 ° 00 ' 52.42" W Total Acres: 2.28
Assessor's Parcel No.: 07-05-52 Section: 2 Twp.: 15S Range: 27E Base: MDBM
Within 2 Miles: State Hwy #: 245 Waterways:
Airports: Railways: Schools: Sierra School

Document Type:

CEQA: NOP Draft EIR NEPA: NOI Other: Joint Document
 Early Cons Supplement/Subsequent EIR EA Final Document
 Neg Dec (Prior SCH No.) Draft EIS Other:
 Mit Neg Dec Other:

Local Action Type:

General Plan Update Specific Plan Rezone Annexation
 General Plan Amendment Master Plan Prezone Redevelopment
 General Plan Element Planned Unit Development Use Permit Coastal Permit
 Community Plan Site Plan Land Division (Subdivision, etc.) Other:

Development Type:

Residential: Units _____ Acres _____ Transportation: Type _____
 Office: Sq.ft. _____ Acres _____ Employees _____ Mining: Mineral _____
 Commercial: Sq.ft. _____ Acres _____ Employees _____ Power: Type _____ MW _____
 Industrial: Sq.ft. _____ Acres _____ Employees _____ Waste Treatment: Type _____ MGD _____
 Educational: _____ Hazardous Waste: Type _____
 Recreational: _____ Other: Public Facility (Fire Station)
 Water Facilities: Type _____ MGD _____

Project Issues Discussed in Document:

Aesthetic/Visual Fiscal Recreation/Parks Vegetation
 Agricultural Land Flood Plain/Flooding Schools/Universities Water Quality
 Air Quality Forest Land/Fire Hazard Septic Systems Water Supply/Groundwater
 Archeological/Historical Geologic/Seismic Sewer Capacity Wetland/Riparian
 Biological Resources Minerals Soil Erosion/Compaction/Grading Growth Inducement
 Coastal Zone Noise Solid Waste Land Use
 Drainage/Absorption Population/Housing Balance Toxic/Hazardous Cumulative Effects
 Economic/Jobs Public Services/Facilities Traffic/Circulation Other:

Present Land Use/Zoning/General Plan Designation:

The State of California owns the project site location, APN 07-05-52.

Project Description: (please use a separate page if necessary)

The project would replace the existing barracks, apparatus building, and septic tank within the existing Badger Forest Fire Station with newly constructed facilities. The project footprint would include 2.28 acres of a 7.34 acre parcel.

Note: The State Clearinghouse will assign identification numbers for all new projects. If a SCH number already exists for a project (e.g. Notice of Preparation or previous draft document) please fill in.

Reviewing Agencies Checklist

Lead Agencies may recommend State Clearinghouse distribution by marking agencies below with an "X".
If you have already sent your document to the agency please denote that with an "S".

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Air Resources Board | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Office of Historic Preservation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Boating & Waterways, Department of | <input type="checkbox"/> Office of Public School Construction |
| <input type="checkbox"/> California Emergency Management Agency | <input type="checkbox"/> Parks & Recreation, Department of |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> California Highway Patrol | <input type="checkbox"/> Pesticide Regulation, Department of |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Caltrans District # <u>6</u> | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Utilities Commission |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Caltrans Division of Aeronautics | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Regional WQCB # <u>CV</u> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Caltrans Planning | <input type="checkbox"/> Resources Agency |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Central Valley Flood Protection Board | <input type="checkbox"/> Resources Recycling and Recovery, Department of |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Coachella Valley Mtns. Conservancy | <input type="checkbox"/> S.F. Bay Conservation & Development Comm. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Coastal Commission | <input type="checkbox"/> San Gabriel & Lower L.A. Rivers & Mtns. Conservancy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Colorado River Board | <input type="checkbox"/> San Joaquin River Conservancy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation, Department of | <input type="checkbox"/> Santa Monica Mtns. Conservancy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Corrections, Department of | <input type="checkbox"/> State Lands Commission |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Delta Protection Commission | <input type="checkbox"/> SWRCB: Clean Water Grants |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Education, Department of | <input type="checkbox"/> SWRCB: Water Quality |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Energy Commission | <input type="checkbox"/> SWRCB: Water Rights |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fish & Game Region # <u>4</u> | <input type="checkbox"/> Tahoe Regional Planning Agency |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Food & Agriculture, Department of | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Toxic Substances Control, Department of |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Forestry and Fire Protection, Department of | <input type="checkbox"/> Water Resources, Department of |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> General Services, Department of | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other: <u>San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District</u> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health Services, Department of | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Housing & Community Development | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Native American Heritage Commission | |

Local Public Review Period (to be filled in by lead agency)

Starting Date _____ Ending Date _____

Lead Agency (Complete if applicable):

Consulting Firm: <u>H. T. Harvey and Associates</u>	Applicant: <u>Cal Fire, Department of Forestry & Fire Protection</u>
Address: <u>7815 North Palm Avenue</u>	Address: <u>P.O. Box 944246</u>
City/State/Zip: <u>Fresno, CA 93711</u>	City/State/Zip: <u>Sacramento, CA 94244-2460</u>
Contact: <u>Brian Boroski</u>	Phone: _____
Phone: <u>559.476.3160</u>	

Signature of Lead Agency Representative: *William E. Prude* Date: 3/12/13

Authority cited: Section 21083, Public Resources Code. Reference: Section 21161, Public Resources Code.

Introduction

This Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) has been prepared by the California Department of General Services (DGS) on behalf of the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) to evaluate the potential environmental effects of the proposed Badger Forest Fire Station Replacement Project (Project), near the community of Badger in eastern Tulare County, California. This document has been prepared in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA, Public Resources Code §21000 *et seq.*) and the State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations §15000 *et seq.*).

Purpose and Use of the Initial Study

As defined by §15063 of the CEQA guidelines, this Initial Study (IS) has been prepared to provide CAL FIRE, as Lead Agency, with the information necessary to determine whether a Negative Declaration (ND), Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND), or an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) would be the appropriate form of environmental documentation for the Project. According to §15065, an EIR is required for a project when there is substantial evidence, in light of the whole record, that any of the following may occur:

- The proposed Project has the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment.
- The proposed Project has the potential to achieve short-term environmental goals to the disadvantage of long-term environmental goals.
- The proposed Project has possible environmental effects that are individually limited but cumulatively considerable.
- The proposed Project could cause direct or indirect adverse effects on human beings.

According to §15070(a), a ND is appropriate if the IS shows that there is no substantial evidence, in light of the whole record, that the proposed project may have a significant effect on the environment. A MND is appropriate, according to §15070(b), if available mitigation measures reduce potentially significant effects to levels that are less than significant. Specific mitigation measures should be developed and agreed to before, rather than following, project approval. In this circumstance, the Lead Agency prepares a written statement describing its reasons for concluding that the proposed project would not have a significant effect on the environment and, therefore, does not require the preparation of an EIR. This IS/MND conforms to these requirements and to the content requirements of State CEQA Guidelines §15071.

CAL FIRE has primary authority for carrying out the proposed Project and is the Lead Agency under CEQA. The purpose of this IS/MND is to present to the public the environmental consequences of implementing the proposed Project and describe the mitigation measures adopted to reduce significant and potentially significant impacts. This document follows the format of the “CEQA Appendix G: Environmental Checklist Form,” as compiled by the Association of Environmental Professionals (2011).

This IS/MND document is being made available to the public for review and comment for 30 days. Written comments (including via e-mail) must be postmarked within 30 days of public release of this document.

Comments may be addressed to:

Tiffany A. Schmid
California Department of General Services
707 3rd Street, 3rd Floor
West Sacramento, CA 95605
(916) 376-1609
Environmental@dgs.ca.gov

After comments are received from the public and reviewing agencies, CAL FIRE may (1) adopt the MND and approve the proposed Project, (2) undertake additional environmental studies, or (3) not adopt the Project. If the Project is approved and funded, DGS in coordination with CAL FIRE could design and construct all or part of the Project.

This IS/MND is available for public review at the following locations:

California Department of General Services
Real Estate Services Division, Environmental Services Section
707 3rd Street, Suite 2-305
West Sacramento, CA 95605

Tulare County Clerk's Office
County Civic Center
Courthouse, Room 105
221 South Mooney Boulevard
Visalia, CA 93291

Tulare County Library
Visalia Branch Library (Main Library)
200 West Oak Avenue
Visalia, CA 93291

Summary of Findings

The analysis and discussion of potential environmental impacts of the proposed Project are discussed in detail below. Based on the issues evaluated in that chapter, it was determined that the proposed Project would have no impact related to the following issue areas:

- Agricultural Resources
- Geology and Soils
- Mineral Resources
- Population and Housing
- Public Services
- Recreation

Impacts of the proposed Project would be less than significant for the following issue areas:

- Aesthetics
- Air Quality
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use
- Noise
- Utilities and Service Systems

Impacts of the proposed Project to the following issue areas would be less than significant with the incorporation of the mitigation measures described in detail below:

- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Transportation and Traffic

Project Description

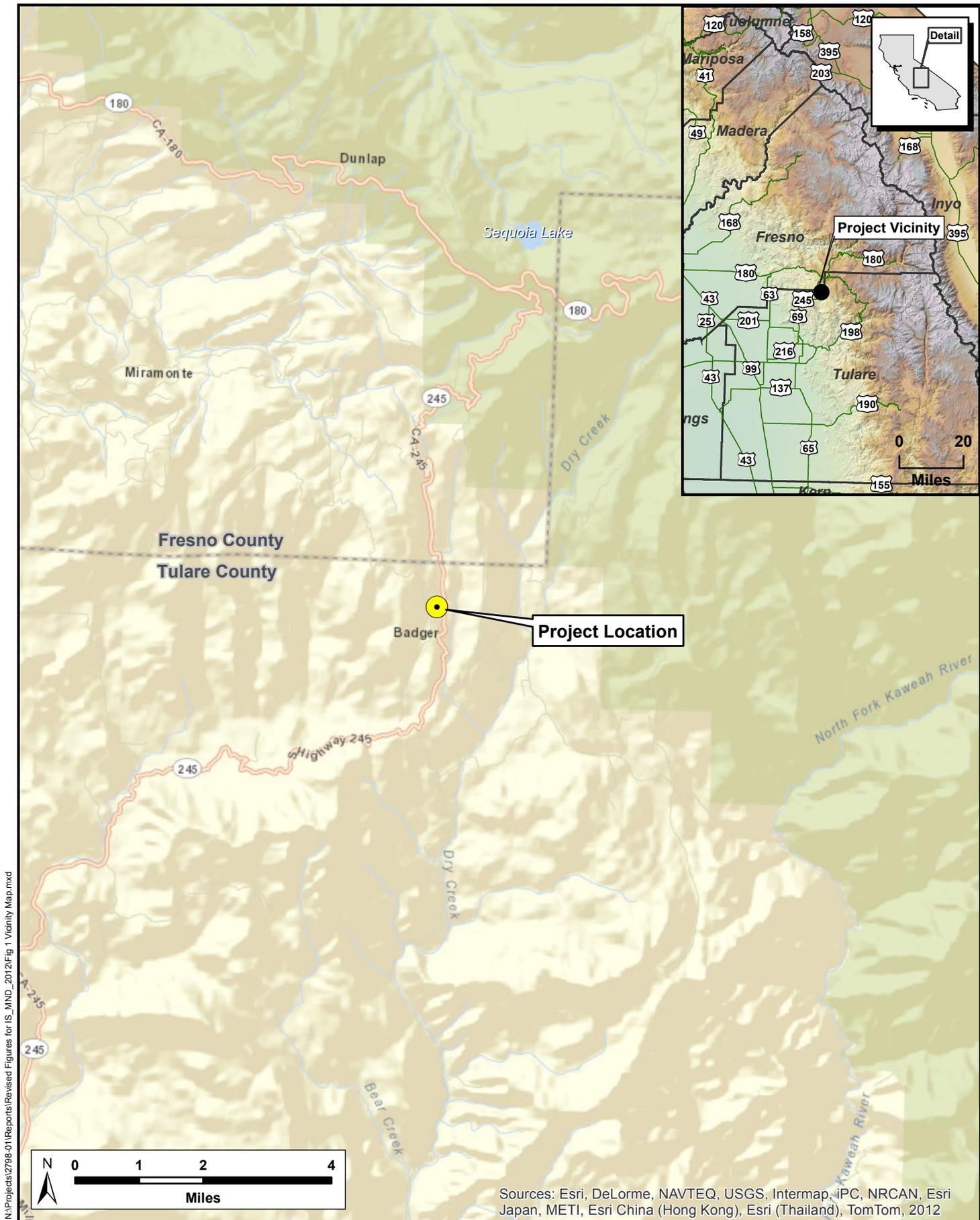
CAL FIRE is proposing to replace the barracks, apparatus building, and septic tank within the existing Badger Forest Fire Station near the community of Badger in Tulare County, California (Figures 1 and 2). The newly constructed improvements would include barracks/mess hall, apparatus building, pump house, a new septic system, an extension of the existing access road, utilities, and landscaping. The purpose of the Project is to provide new buildings and support facilities that will meet current building codes and have adequate space for future operation (Figure 2). This is an existing CAL FIRE facility that serves the Central Sierra Nevada and eastern Tulare County. The Project is expected to occur within the boundaries of the existing state-owned fire station and access road. CAL FIRE will be acting as the state Lead Agency for purposes of CEQA review. The DGS will be responsible for the planning, design, construction, and implementation of recommended avoidance and mitigation measures for the Project on behalf of CAL FIRE.

Construction of the Project would involve demolishing existing structures, grubbing and clearing, grading and paving using heavy-duty and light-duty equipment, and construction of Project-related structures. Construction equipment would include scrapers/earthmovers, wheeled dozers and loaders, a motor grader, double-axle dump trucks, and concrete trucks accommodating a 7–9-yard load. All construction equipment and materials associated with the Project would enter the property from State Route (SR) 245, approximately 9.5 mi south of SR 180. Construction of the Project is anticipated to begin in March 2014 and would take approximately 24 months. Fire protection services will be maintained during the Project construction period by utilizing a phased schedule during the entire construction process.

Environmental Permits

The proposed Project would require the following permit and DGS would be required to comply with the following State regulations:

- Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board, National Pollution Discharge Permit. Construction of the project and alternatives would disturb a surface area greater than 1 acre, so the project sponsor would be required to obtain a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit from the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board. As part of this permit, a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) would be developed and implemented.



N:\Projects\2798-01\Reports\Revised Figures for IS_MND_2012\Fig 1 Vicinity Map.mxd

Sources: Esri, DeLorme, NAVTEQ, USGS, Intermap, iPC, NRCAN, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), Esri (Thailand), TomTom, 2012



H. T. HARVEY & ASSOCIATES
 ECOLOGICAL CONSULTANTS

Figure 1: Vicinity Map
 Badger Forest Fire Station Replacement Project (2798-01)
 March 2013



N:\Projects\2798-01\Reports\Revised Figures for IS_MND_2012\Fig 2_Site Plan for Badger Forest Station Facilities.mxd

Environmental Checklist

This environmental checklist is dated 2009 and appears in the Association of Environmental Professionals' "CEQA Statute and Guidelines" (2011).

Project Title:	Badger Forest Fire Station Replacement Project
Lead agency name and address:	CAL FIRE California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection P.O. Box 944246 Sacramento, CA 94244-2460
Contact person and phone number:	Brian Boroski, Vice President H. T. Harvey & Associates 7815 North Palm Avenue Fresno, CA 93711 (559) 476-3160
Project Location:	50601 Highway 245, Miramonte, CA, APN 007-050-052
Project sponsor's name and address:	Tiffany A. Schmid California Department of General Services Real Estate Services Division, Environmental Services Section 707 3 rd Street, 3 rd Floor West Sacramento, CA 95605 (916) 376-1609
General plan description:	Great Western Divide N ½
Zoning:	Planned Development-Foothill-Mobile Home
Description of project: (Describe the whole action involved, including but not limited to later phases of the project, and any secondary, support, or off-site features necessary for its implementation.)	See Project Description above.
Surrounding land uses and setting; briefly describe the project's surroundings:	Land uses adjacent to the Project site consist primarily of public and private rangelands. An existing CAL FIRE-operated fire station is present on the site.

Other public agencies whose approval is required (e.g. permits, financial approval, or participation agreements):	RWQCB State General Construction Activity Storm Water Permit
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The CEQA Environmental Checklist prompts the evaluator to determine whether and to what degree the Project could impact each environmental factor (for example, aesthetics, cultural resources, or biological resources). Each impact is determined to present either no impact, less than significant impact, less than significant with mitigation, or potentially significant. The following sections summarize the environmental settings of each factor, and then discuss the degree of impact posed by the Project on that factor. After all environmental factors have been discussed, an overall Project Determination is provided, which suggests whether the proper CEQA permitting pathway is via a Negative Declaration (ND), a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND), or an Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages. If the "Potentially Significant Impact" cannot be mitigated to a less than significant impact, then the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report would be required.

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



 William Snyder, Deputy Director, Resource Management
 California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

3/12/13

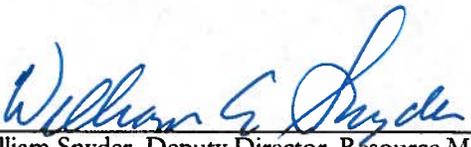
 Date

Determination

Determination: (To Be Completed by the Lead Agency)

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

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



William Snyder, Deputy Director, Resource Management
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

3/12/13

Date