

RECLAMATION

Managing Water in the West

Bella Vista Water District Solar Energy Project

Environmental Assessment



Mission Statements

The Department of the Interior protects and manages the Nation's natural resources and cultural heritage; provides scientific and other information about those resources; and honors its trust responsibilities or special commitments to American Indians, Alaska Natives, and affiliated island communities.

The mission of the Bureau of Reclamation is to manage, develop, and protect water and related resources in an environmentally and economically sound manner in the interest of the American public.

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Appendix A USFWS Official Species List – Canby Road Site

Appendix B Cultural Resources Compliance

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

APN	Assessor's Parcel Number
BAMM	Best Available Mitigation Measures
CAA	Clean Air Act
CAAQS	California Ambient Air Quality Standards
CalEEMOD	California Emissions Estimator Model
CDFW	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
CEQ	Council on Environmental Quality
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CNDDDB	California Natural Diversity Database
CO	Carbon monoxide
CO ₂	Carbon dioxide
DOI	U.S. Department of the Interior
EA	Environmental Assessment
GHG	Greenhouse gases
ITAs	Indian Trust Assets
IS/MND	Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration
kW	Kilowatts
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NAHC	Native American Heritage Commission
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
NO _x	Nitrogen oxide
PG&E	Pacific Gas and Electric Company
PM 2.5	Particulate matter less than 2.5 micrometers in diameter
PM ₁₀	Particulate matter less than 10 micrometers in diameter
PV	Photovoltaic
PVC	Polyvinyl chloride
Reclamation	U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
REU	Redding Electrical Utility
RES-BCT	Renewable Energy Self-Generation Bill Credit Transfer program
ROG	Reactive organic gases
SCAQMD	Shasta County Air Quality Management District
SMM	Standard Mitigation Measures
SIP	State Implementation Plan
SO ₂	Sulfur dioxide
SWPPP	Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan
USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
VELB	Valley elderberry longhorn beetle
VOC	Volatile organic compounds

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

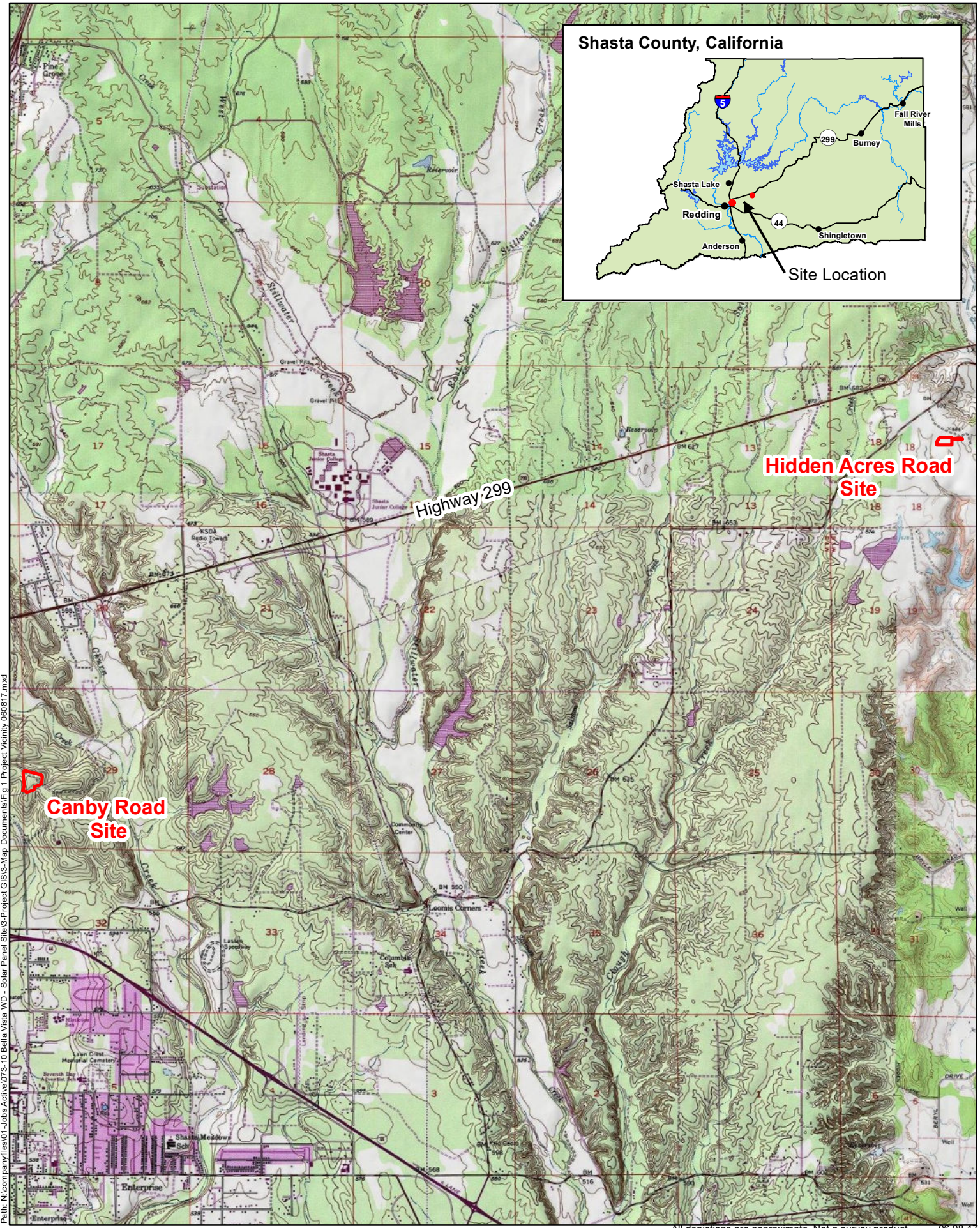
The Bella Vista Water District (District) is proposing to install two solar photovoltaic (PV) power generation facilities that would provide up to 608 kilowatts (kW) of combined energy to offset the District's operating energy costs. The proposed facilities would consist of solar PV panels, inverters, and related electrical equipment (e.g., electrical lines, circuit breakers). Other improvements include minor grading, gravel placement, and fence installation to facilitate on-going operations and maintenance activities. As shown in Figure 1, the project is composed of two sites: the Hidden Acres Road site which is located west of the Bureau of Reclamation Regulation Station property on Hidden Acres Road, in the community of Bella Vista, and the Canby Road site which is at the District's Water Treatment Plant on Canby Road in Redding. Both locations are in Shasta County, California.

An Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) was prepared to address installation of solar panels at the Hidden Acres Road site and is referenced in the below sections. The District's Board of Directors approved the IS/MND on October 24, 2016; mitigation measures were also adopted at that time. An Addendum to the IS/MND was prepared in March 2017 to address installation of solar panels at the Canby Road site. A second Addendum to the IS/MND was prepared in June 2017 to address a modified site boundary at the Hidden Acres Road site. The IS/MND and the two Addenda are available for reference on the District's website at <http://www.bvwd.org/current-projects>.

Reclamation has reviewed the IS/MND and Addenda determined that they would sufficiently meet National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements for the proposed project with the addition of supplemental analysis related to potential effects on cultural resources, air quality, Indian Trust Assets, Indian Sacred Sites, and Environmental Justice, all of which are discussed in this environmental assessment (EA). This EA has been prepared in compliance with the provisions of NEPA (42 U.S.C. §4321-4370), Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations (40 CFR 1500-1508), and U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) Regulations (43 CFR Part 46).

1.2 Need for Action

The District owns and operates nine pump stations, five groundwater wells, a surface water treatment plant, an administrative office, and a maintenance yard. All of these facilities, including the pump stations, require electricity. Pumping of water is a major expense for the District. Electricity usage averages approximately 1,000,000 kW hours annually and costs the District more than \$200,000 a year.



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Hidden Acres Road Site

Canby Road Site

Highway 299

Figure 1

Project Vicinity

All depictions are approximate. Not a survey product. 06.08.17



Excluding the Wintu Pump Station, which is owned and powered by the Central Valley Project, the District's energy needs are currently met by a combination of Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) and Redding Electrical Utility (REU). Two pump stations, two wells, and the District's Water Treatment Plant are served by REU. The remaining seven pump stations, three wells, the District's administrative office and maintenance yard, as well as three water storage tanks, are served by PG&E.

To save on annual energy costs, the District's goal is to meet approximately 80 percent of its energy needs through the installation of solar PV power generation facilities.

2 Alternatives Including the Proposed Action

2.1 No Action

Under the No Action Alternative, the District would not save on its annual energy costs with a renewable energy source. The District would continue to meet its energy needs through PG&E and REU service. The Hidden Acres Road site would likely remain privately owned and continue to be seasonally grazed by cattle. The Canby Road site would continue to operate as a water treatment plant only.

2.2 Proposed Action

The District is proposing to install solar PV panels, inverters, and related electrical equipment (e.g., electrical line, circuit breakers) at various locations shown on Figure 2 and Figure 3, to produce up to 608 kW of power, which is enough to offset approximately 80 percent of the District's annual energy consumption.

At the Canby Road site, of the four solar panel locations shown in Figure 3, it is likely that only three locations would be utilized. Panels would be installed along the north and south banks of a backwash pond; the third set of panels would either be installed on top of the water filters, which would help shade electrical equipment below, or be installed adjacent to the filters, on the ground.

At both the Hidden Acres Road and Canby Road sites, the solar PV panels would be non-reflective and would convert sunlight directly into electricity. Although the exact site design and layout of the solar PV panels is yet to be determined, the panels would be mounted in uniform rows on steel piers and, with the exception of the panels installed on top of the water filters, are not expected to exceed 8 feet tall. The panels on top of the water filters are not expected to exceed 20 feet tall. The panels either would be fixed in a tilted position and oriented to maximize absorption of sunlight, or alternatively, would be integrated with a single-axis, horizontal solar tracking system configured to optimize energy production by following the path

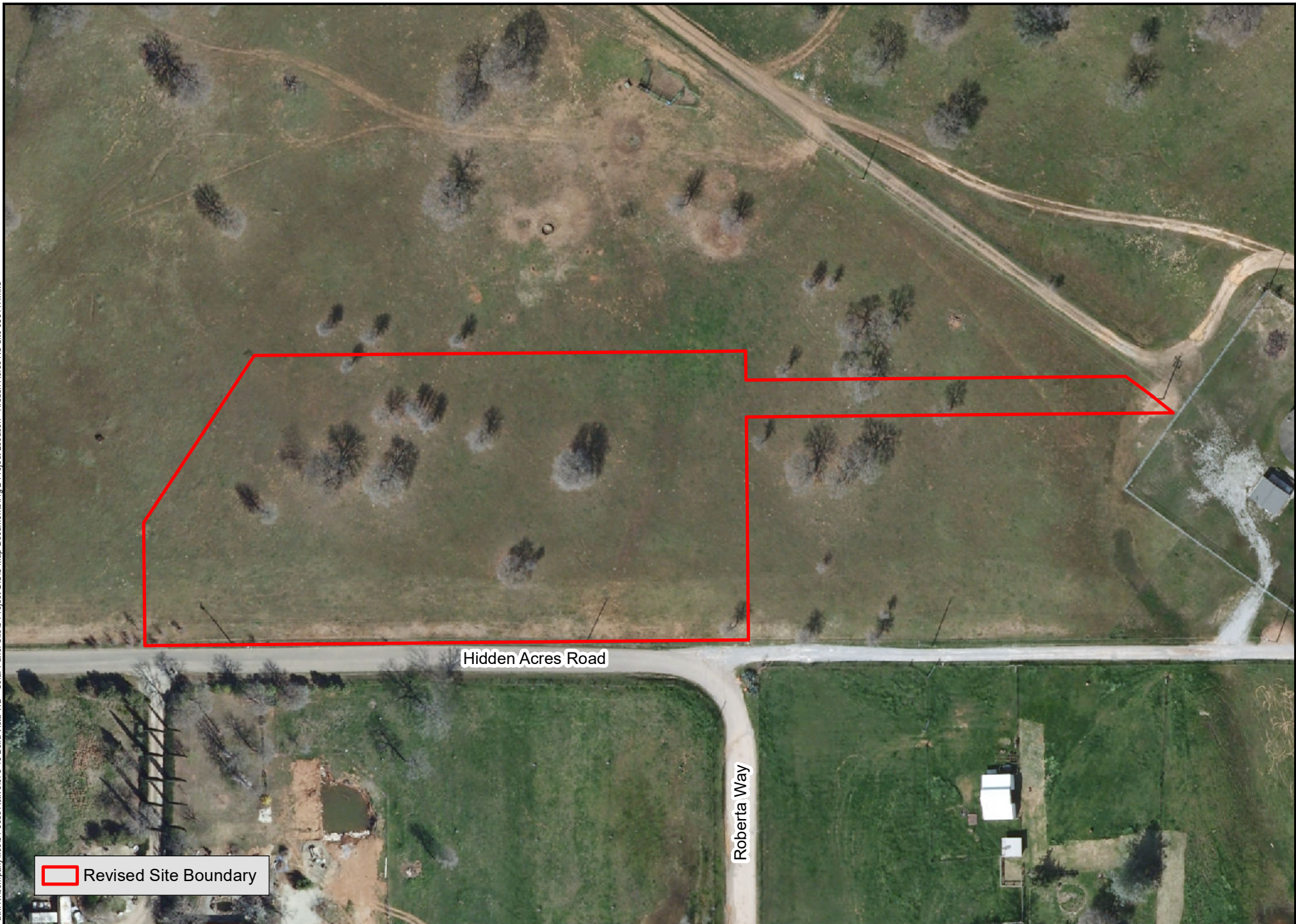


Figure 2
Project Location - Hidden Acres Road Site

All depictions are approximate. Not a survey product. 08.01.17



Figure 3

All depictions are approximate. Not a survey product. 06.08.17

Project Location - Canby Road Site

of the sun throughout the day. An equipment pad containing inverters and a switchgear would be connected to the solar PV panels via underground polyvinyl chloride (PVC) conduits. At the Hidden Acres Road site, the equipment pad would be connected via an overhead or underground electrical line to a nearby PG&E pole-mounted transformer. At the Canby Road site, equipment pads would be connected to one of the existing electrical boxes on the Water Treatment Plant site. Figure 4 shows a typical configuration of ground-mounted solar PV panels.

At the Hidden Acres Road site, with the exception of the eastern “arm” of the site, where work would be limited to possible installation of power lines, the site would be graveled to facilitate maintenance activities. The site would be enclosed by a chain link fence, with a locked gate installed along Hidden Acres Road. The Canby Road site is already graveled and the treatment plant is entirely fenced.



Figure 4. Typical Ground-Mounted Solar PV Panels. Source: Patriot Solar Group 2016 <http://patriotsolargroup.com/solar-projects/manchester-mi-solar-installation/>.

Construction Considerations

Project construction is expected to begin during the summer of 2017 and occur over a period of six months, with active construction for approximately 3 to 4 months. At the Hidden Acres Road site, grubbing, minor grading, compacting, trenching, and gravel placement would be conducted throughout the majority of the project site, excluding the eastern arm. The Canby Road site would require less site preparation due to its development as a water treatment plant. At both sites, anchors would be augered or driven into the ground (up to six feet below grade) for the steel support structures, panels would be erected, and an electrical equipment pad would be installed. The inverters and switchgear would also be installed, followed by trenching and installation of PVC conduit between the equipment pad and solar PV panels. Construction equipment likely to be used would include: a bulldozer, track excavator with vibratory equipment, dump truck for delivering gravel, back-hoe, concrete truck, boring equipment, augering equipment, a crane, a Bobcat to install perimeter fencing (at Hidden Acres Road only), water trucks, and pick-up trucks. Ongoing raw material and equipment deliveries to the site would take place throughout the construction period.

At the Hidden Acres road site, a power line would need to be extended from the solar panels to a nearby PG&E utility pole. As described in the IS/MND, this would be via an overhead or underground power line. If installed underground and to the transformer pole next to Reclamation's Regulation Station, the conduit would be installed via directional drilling to avoid any effects to the wet swale. District staff also have the option to install a power line connecting the solar panels to an existing pole on Hidden Acres Road to the south, or to the north, to an existing pole along a dirt road. Any of these options would fully avoid any potential effects to the wet swale located to the east of the project site.

Site Drainage

At the Hidden Acres Road site, the majority of the site slopes gently to the southwest, south, and southeast. The northeastern most portion of the site, including the utility easement, slopes gently to the southeast. Runoff from this limited area flows to a wet swale located approximately 270 feet east of the proposed solar panel field, or flows to Hidden Acres Road and then east in a roadside drainage ditch to the wet swale. The swale flows to the southeast, where it enters a pond on the adjoining parcel. Any pond overflow passes through several small drainages and discharges to a larger reservoir. Any overflow from the reservoir ultimately enters Little Cow Creek approximately three miles downstream of the project site.

Site grading would be minor, and would leave the site topography and drainage patterns relatively unchanged, with stormwater continuing to drain southwest, south, and southeast. At the Canby Road site, site drainage would be unchanged.

Access

The Hidden Acres Road site, which is a portion of Assessor's Parcel Number (APN) 061-470-080, is being acquired in fee, from a private landowner. Access to the site would be provided by Hidden Acres Road or via an existing easement across APN 061-470-080. Access at the Canby Road site will be unchanged from normal access associated with water treatment plant operations.

Operations

The Proposed Action at Hidden Acres Road would utilize PG&E's Renewable Energy Self-Generation Bill Credit Transfer (RES-BCT) program. The RES-BCT program (formerly AB 2466) was established by the Legislature effective January 1, 2009, and is codified in Section 2830 of the Public Utilities Code. It allows a local government, such as the District, with one or more eligible renewable generating facilities to export energy to the grid and receive generation credits to benefitting accounts of the same local government. Using RES-BCT, the District can take advantage of cost-effective, ground-mounted solar photovoltaic systems as opposed to higher-cost carport or rooftop systems. The District can also employ larger system sizes (up to 5 megawatts), which further increase cost-effectiveness.

Electrical power at the Canby Road site is provided by REU. Under REU's Solar Photovoltaic (PV) Program, the Proposed Action at Canby Road may be eligible for rebate vouchers for customer-installed PV systems. Additionally, the District may be considered a "net energy generator" where AB 920 requires public utilities such as REU to pay for excess electric power that flows from an outside system back onto the grid.

Project implementation would require a General Construction Activity Storm Water Permit from the State Water Resources Control Board and a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) would be prepared. Under Government Code Section 53091, the District is not subject to building ordinances or zoning ordinances for the location or construction of facilities for the production or generation of electrical energy.

3 Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences

This section consists of a summary of project impacts from the IS/MND, additional air quality analysis, and a discussion of resources that were not analyzed pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) that are required by CEQ and DOI regulations for implementing NEPA.

As described in Section II, “Environmental Setting,” of the IS/MND, the Hidden Acres Road site is situated in a semi-rural part of Shasta County. Surrounding land uses are predominantly residential with small areas of agriculture and cattle ranching. Natural communities in the project site are limited to a sparse blue oak woodland with an annual grassland understory. Seasonally wet swales are located in the vicinity of the project site, but are over 250 feet from the proposed solar panels.

The Canby Road site is entirely developed/disturbed and is situated in an urban part of Redding. Surrounding land uses are predominately residential and commercial.

Environmental issues associated with the proposed sites include the potential to disturb nesting migratory birds, disturb subsurface cultural resources (if present), increase soil erosion and water quality degradation, and temporarily increase noise levels during construction. The potential for adverse effects would be avoided or reduced to an acceptable level through design features incorporated into the Proposed Action, compliance with existing regulations and permit conditions, and through implementation of the mitigation measures developed during the CEQA review process. Potential effects, applicable regulations, and avoidance/mitigation measures are described in more detail below.

3.1 Summary of Impacts from the Initial Study

3.1.1 Air Quality

Aside from nitrogen oxide (NO_x) emissions, construction and operation of the Proposed Action would not generate emissions for criteria pollutants that would exceed the thresholds established by the Shasta County Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD); the increased emissions would remain well below the Level “A” thresholds. With respect to NO_x emissions, as discussed in the IS/MND, with implementation of Standard Mitigation Measures and adherence

to the In-Use Off-Road Diesel Vehicle Regulation, potential construction impacts would be minimized.

With respect to the potential release of diesel fumes, or other potentially objectionable odors, the distances to the nearest sensitive uses (approximately 140 feet from the Canby Road and approximately 230 feet from Hidden Acres Road site), provide adequate separation between construction activities and the sensitive receptors. Given the distance separation and the limited exposure time, potentially objectionable odors resulting from construction of the Proposed Action (e.g., diesel exhaust) would be minimal.

In terms of operational impacts, the Proposed Action would have beneficial impacts in the long-term because the power generated by the project would reduce the demand for fossil fuel-fired facilities.

3.1.2 Biology

The results of the biological evaluation for the Hidden Acres Road site are contained in the IS/MND and CEQA Addendum 2. The results of the biological review for the Canby Road site are contained in CEQA Addendum 1. A U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) official species list for the Canby Road site is provided in Appendix A of this document; the official species list for the Hidden Acres Road site is contained in Appendix A of the IS/MND. Review of USFWS and California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB) records showed that no critical habitat for federally listed species has been designated in or adjacent to the project sites and no special-status species have been previously reported on or adjacent to the project sites. However, 12 federally listed animal species are reported as potentially occurring within, or being affected by activities on, the project sites: bald eagle, valley elderberry longhorn beetle (VELB), Central Valley spring-run Chinook salmon, Sacramento River winter-run Chinook salmon, Central Valley steelhead, California red-legged frog, Northern spotted owl, Conservancy fairy shrimp, Shasta crayfish, vernal pool fairy shrimp, vernal pool tadpole shrimp, and delta smelt. One federally listed plant species, slender Orcutt Grass, is reported as potentially occurring within or being affected by activities on the Canby Road site.

Bald eagles typically nest in large trees near fish-bearing water bodies. No bald eagle nests were observed during the field surveys and no suitable nesting habitat is present; the bald eagle would not be affected by the Proposed Action. No elderberries are present on or near the project sites; thus, VELB would not be affected by the Proposed Action. Because no fish-bearing streams are present on the sites, and erosion control measures will be implemented, the listed fish species would not be directly or indirectly affected by the proposed action. The nearest known red-legged frog occurrence is roughly 80 miles from the project sites and no suitable habitat occurs on or near the sites; thus, the frog would not be affected by the proposed action. Northern spotted owls nest in coniferous forest habitat; because no suitable habitat is present, the owl would not be present. The Conservancy fairy shrimp does not occur in Shasta County and would not be affected by the Proposed Action. No suitable habitat for slender Orcutt grass is present at either project site.

Potentially suitable habitat for vernal pool tadpole shrimp and vernal pool fairy shrimp is present in wet swales near the Hidden Acres Road site. Because the wet swales are located more than

270 feet away from the solar panel site, these species would not be affected solar panel installation or operation. As noted above, an overhead or underground power line would need to be extended from the solar panels to a nearby PG&E utility pole. If installed underground and to the transformer pole next to Reclamation's Regulation Station, the conduit would be installed via directional drilling to avoid any effects to vernal pool fairy shrimp and tadpole shrimp. District staff also have the option connect the power line to an existing pole on Hidden Acres Road to the south, or to the north, to an existing pole along a dirt road. These options would fully avoid any potential effects to the wet swale located to the east of the project site. Therefore, the Proposed Action would not affect any listed or proposed threatened or endangered species.

Construction of the Proposed Action could impact nesting birds. Ground-nesting birds such as Canada goose and killdeer (both species were observed during ENPLAN's field visit at the Canby Road site) could potentially occupy the work area at the time construction is initiated, and other birds could nest on nearby vegetation, buildings, or structures. Implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.2 from the IS/MND would ensure compliance with the requirements of the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act, and minimize potential effects on nesting migratory birds.

3.1.3 Water Quality

The Proposed Action has the potential to temporarily degrade water quality due to increased erosion during project construction, and in the long-term operation of the project. However, as previously described in the IS/MND, Best Management Practices (BMPs) would be implemented to provide soil stabilization, sediment control, and spill prevention throughout the duration of project construction to minimize impacts to water quality.

3.1.4 Noise

Implementation of the Proposed Action has the potential to increase noise levels in the short term during project construction, but would not result in an increase in noise levels once construction is complete. Work would not involve the use of explosives, pile driving, or other intensive construction techniques that could generate significant groundborne noise or vibration.

The nearest noise sensitive land uses are residences located approximately 140 feet from the Canby Road project site, along Whet Owl Way; and two residences located approximately 230 and 330 feet from the Hidden Acres Road project site. These receptors would experience increased noise levels associated with construction activities. However, given the temporary nature of the construction activities, and with construction confined to daytime hours (Mitigation Measure 12.1 of the IS/MND), temporary construction noise level increases would be minimized.

3.1.5 Traffic

With implementation of the Proposed Action, the short-term increases in traffic volume would occur on Canby Road and Churn Creek Road (Canby Road site) and Hidden Acres Road and Old Alturas Road (Hidden Acres Road site) during construction activities. This traffic would consist of construction workers traveling to and from the site, truck trips to haul materials and supplies to the project site, as well as truck trips to haul debris off-site for disposal. However, because of

the small scale and temporary nature of the construction activities, the modified project would not cause a substantial increase in the number of vehicle trips on local roadways, highways, or freeways.

Implementation of the Proposed Action would entail installation of solar PV panels. No long-term increase in traffic volume would occur as a result of installation of solar PV panels.

3.2 Air Quality Conformity

This section supplements the air quality analysis in the IS/MND. Section 176 (c) of the Clean Air Act (CAA) (42 USC 7506 (c)) requires that any entity of the Federal government that engages in, supports, or in any way provides financial support for, licenses or permits, or approves any activity to demonstrate that the action conforms to the applicable State Implementation Plan (SIP) required under Section 110 (a) of the CAA (42 USC 7401 (a)) before the action is otherwise approved. In this context, conformity means that such federal actions must be consistent with a SIP's purpose of eliminating or reducing the severity and number of violations of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) and achieving expeditious attainment of those standards. Each federal agency must determine that any action that is proposed by the agency and that is subject to the regulations implementing the conformity requirements would, in fact conform to the applicable SIP before the action is taken. Shasta County is in compliance with the Federal Clean Air Act for all criteria pollutants (considered attainment or unclassified). With respect to the California Clean Air Act, Shasta County is considered non-attainment for ozone (O₃) and particulate matter (PM₁₀).

The Shasta County Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) has developed air quality thresholds for evaluating air quality impacts and establishing appropriate mitigation (Table 1). As described in the Shasta County General Plan, in addition to these thresholds, Shasta County will use a uniform method for applying mitigation measures which address air quality impacts. These mitigation measures are described as Standard Mitigation Measures (SMM) and Best Available Mitigation Measures (BAMM). Application of appropriate SMM and BAMM will be decided during Shasta County's environmental review process for approval of a grading permit for the Proposed Action (if applicable).

In terms of operational impacts, solar panel installation would have beneficial impacts in the long-term because the power generated by the project would reduce the demand for fossil fuel-fired facilities.

However, the Proposed Action would result in short-term emissions during project construction. Construction emissions would vary from day to day and by activity, timing and intensity, and wind speed and direction. Generally, air quality impacts from the Proposed Action would be localized in nature.

Short-term air quality impacts would generally arise from dust generation (fugitive dust) and operation of construction equipment. Fugitive dust results from land clearing, grading,

excavation, concrete work, and vehicle traffic on paved and unpaved roads. Fugitive dust is a source of airborne particulates, including PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}.

Earth-moving equipment, trucks, and other mobile sources powered by diesel or gasoline are also sources of combustion emissions, including nitrogen dioxide (NO_x), carbon monoxide (CO), reactive organic gases (ROG)/volatile organic compounds (VOC), sulfur dioxide (SO₂), and small amounts of air pollutants. The types of equipment that will potentially be used to construct the Proposed Action, as well the estimated duration of operation are shown in Table 2. To estimate emissions resulting from project construction, the CalEEMod air emissions modeling program (CalEEMod 2013.2.2) was employed. The software provides results for NO_x, PM_{2.5}, PM₁₀, SO₂, CO, ROG/VOC, and carbon dioxide (CO₂). Estimated construction emissions are included in Table 3.

As part of the significance determination, project emissions were compared to air quality thresholds utilized by SCAQMD and well as thresholds used to ensure compliance with Federal conformity rules. As shown in Table 4, based on the results of the CalEEMod Analysis, estimated project emissions are below established thresholds. Therefore, a Federal general conformity analysis report is not required.

As shown in Table 5, with the exception of NO_x, construction emissions would not exceed the Level “A” thresholds listed in Table 1. Although the thresholds of significance adopted by Shasta County apply to operational emissions, the SCAQMD recommends various mitigation measures to reduce construction emissions. For projects that do not exceed Level “A” thresholds, implementation of SMMs as defined by SCAQMD, (e.g., fugitive dust suppression), would provide appropriate air quality controls during project construction. Regarding NO_x emissions, adherence to the In-Use Off-Road Diesel Vehicle Regulation, adopted by the California Air Resources Control Board (CARB) in 2008, would sufficiently mitigate for NO_x emissions resulting from project construction (Ross Bell, Air Quality District Manager, pers. comm.).

**Table 1
Thresholds of Significance for Criteria Pollutants of Concern (lbs/day)**

Pollutants	Level A	Level B
NO _x	>25	>137
ROG	>25	>137
PM ₁₀	>80	>137

Source: Shasta County General Plan, Air Quality

**Table 2
Type of Equipment and Estimated Duration of Operation**

Type of Equipment	Proposed Use	Number of Equipment	Duration of Operation ¹
Grader	Digging and material handling	1	9 days
Tractor/Loader/Backhoe	Digging and material handling	2	30 days
Rubber Tired Dozer	Digging and material handling	1	6 days
Crane	Lifting in equipment into areas, off-loading equipment form transport trucks	1	30 days
Forklift	Lifting in equipment into areas, off-loading equipment form transport trucks	2	30 days
Scraper	Final grading of area	1	3 days

¹ Equipment operated 6-8 hours/day for 5 days/week for the duration shown

**Table 3
Projected Construction Emissions (lbs/day)**

NO _x	PM _{2.5}	PM ₁₀	SO ₂	CO	ROG/VOC	CO ₂
38.74	2.77	4.17	0.06	25.98	3.70	5,887.90

**Table 4
Estimated Project Emissions for Criteria Air Pollutants in Nonattainment, and Federal Thresholds in Tons/Year**

Pollutant	SCAQMD Attainment Status	Federal Attainment Status	Thresholds for Federal Conformity Determinations ¹	Estimated Project Emissions
ROG (as an ozone precursor)	Non-attainment	Attainment/ Unclassified	10	0.06
PM ₁₀	Non-attainment	Unclassified	100	0.04

¹ De Minimis Emission Levels maintained by EPA

**Table 5
Estimated Project Emissions During Construction and Local Thresholds in lbs/day**

Pollutant	NSAQMD Thresholds of Significance for New Projects ^a	Estimated Project Emissions
ROG (as an ozone precursor)	Level A: >25 lbs/day Level B: >137 lbs/day	3.70
NO _x (as an ozone precursor)	Level A: >25 lbs/day Level B: >137 lbs/day	38.74
PM ₁₀	Level A: >80 lbs/day Level B: >137 lbs/day	4.17

3.3 Cultural Resources

No cultural resources would be adversely affected by the Proposed Action. Cultural resources studies, including record searches, informal consultation with Native Americans, and field surveys, were completed for the project by ENPLAN. A cultural resources study report was prepared for the Hidden Acres Road site (addressing both the original and the revised sites) and an addendum to the study report was prepared for the Canby Road site. The results of these studies are contained in the *Cultural Resources Inventory, Bella Vista Water District Solar Panel Site*, and in a corresponding addendum, on file with Reclamation.

The record searches included review of data filed with the California Historical Resources Information System, Northeast Information Center, at California State University, Chico. For the Hidden Acres Road site, the records search revealed that two archaeological surveys have previously been conducted within a half-mile radius of the site's Area of Potential Effects (APE) and the entire APE has been previously surveyed. The search also revealed two previously recorded sites within a half-mile radius of the APE. There are no previously recorded cultural resources within the Hidden Acres Road APE. The records search for the Canby Road site revealed that 17 archaeological surveys have previously been conducted within a half-mile radius of the site's APE and the entire APE has been previously surveyed. The search also revealed two previously recorded sites within a half-mile radius of the APE. There are no previously recorded cultural resources within the Canby Road APE.

Coordination with the Native American Heritage Commission did not reveal any known sacred sites or cultural resources in the project areas. Reclamation sent correspondence to the Pit River Tribe of California and the Redding Rancheria, on July XX, 2017 asking for the tribe's participation in the Section 106 process for both APES, and requested information regarding the identification of, or concerns with, cultural resources, including sites of religious and cultural significance. Reclamation also sent a letter on July XX, 2017 to Mr. Matt Root, requesting assistance in the identification of cultural resources of concern in the APES that may be affected by this undertaking.

As discussed in Section III.C.5, "Cultural Resources," in the IS/MND and in the CEQA Addenda, because the project area is considered moderately sensitive for the presence of historic and prehistoric features, it is possible that undocumented cultural remains could be encountered during subsurface excavations. Implementation of Mitigation Measures 5.1 and 5.2 below would ensure that potential impacts associated with the Proposed Action would be minimized.

MM 5.1. If any human remains are encountered during any phase of construction, all earth-disturbing work shall stop within 50 feet of the find. The county coroner shall be contacted to determine whether investigation of the cause of death is required as well as to determine whether the remains may be Native American in origin. Should Native American remains be discovered, the county coroner must contact the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC). The NAHC will then determine those persons it believes to be most likely descended from the deceased Native American(s). Together with representatives of the people of most likely descent, a qualified archaeologist shall make

an assessment of the discovery and recommend/implement mitigation measures as necessary.

MM 5.2. If any previously unevaluated cultural resources (i.e., burnt animal bone, midden soils, projectile points or other humanly-modified lithics, historic artifacts, etc.) are encountered, all earth-disturbing work shall stop within 50 feet of the find until a qualified archaeologist can make an assessment of the discovery and recommend/implement mitigation measures as necessary.

3.4 Indian Trust Assets

Indian Trust Assets (ITAs) are legal interests in assets that are held in trust by the United States for federally recognized Indian tribes or individuals. As shown in the ITAs Requests (Appendix C), no ITAs will be affected by the Proposed Action at the Hidden Acre Road site. The closest ITAs are 8.44 miles northwest from the Hidden Acre Road site and 6.34 southwest from the Canby Road site.

3.5 Indian Sacred Sites

Executive Order 13007 (May 24, 1996) requires that federal agencies accommodate access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites by Indian religious practitioners, and avoid adversely affecting the physical integrity of such sacred sites. Consultation with the NAHC and local Native American community did not reveal any known sacred sites in the project area. With the exception of the regulation station site adjacent to the Hidden Acres Road site, which is fenced for security purposes, review of land ownership data did not identify any federally owned lands in the project vicinity. Therefore, the proposed action would not limit access to, or ceremonial use of, Indian sacred sites on Federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites.

3.6 Environmental Justice

Executive Order 12898 requires each Federal agency to identify and address disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects, including social and economic effects of its program, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations. Reclamation has not identified adverse human health or environmental effects on any population as a result of implementing the Proposed Action. Field review by ENPLAN staff did not identify any potentially disproportionate effects that project implementation could have on low income or minority populations. Further, data from the 2015 American Community Survey (5 year estimates) shows that the census tract that includes the Hidden Acres Road site is in a low to moderate state of poverty, with only 14.8 percent of its population below poverty level. The same Survey shows that the census tract that includes the Canby Road site is in a low to

moderate state of poverty, with only 18.3 percent of its population below poverty level. Other census tracts in Shasta County report up to 35 percent of the population as being below poverty level. In addition, the Hidden Acres Road site is located in a census tract where the ethnic makeup is 85.9 percent white. The Canby Road site is located in census tract where the ethnic makeup is 73.4 percent white. Other census tracts in the County average 72.9 percent white; thus, the project sites are located in areas that have fewer to average numbers of minorities. Implementation of the proposed action would not have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations.

3.7 Cumulative Impacts

According to Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations for implementing the procedural provisions of NEPA, a cumulative impact is defined as *the impact on the environment which results from the incremental impact of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions regardless of what agency (Federal or non-Federal) or person undertakes such other actions. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor but collectively significant actions taking place over a period of time* (40 CFR 1508.7).

Potentially cumulative impacts associated with the Proposed Action are limited to air quality emissions. Past, present, and future development projects contribute to a region's air quality conditions on a cumulative basis; therefore, by its very nature, air pollution is largely a cumulative impact. If a project's individual emissions contribute toward exceedance of the NAAQS or the California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS), then the project's cumulative impact on air quality would be considered significant.

In developing attainment designations for criteria pollutants, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency considers the region's past, present, and future emission levels. In addition, AQMDs determine suitable significance thresholds based on an area's designated nonattainment status, which also considers the region's past, present, and future emissions levels.

Implementation of the Proposed Action combined with future development within the Action area could lead to cumulative impacts to air quality. The Proposed Action has the potential to impact air quality through emissions of the criteria pollutants of most concern from ground disturbance and construction equipment. As previously described, Shasta County is in compliance with the Federal Clean Air Act for all criteria pollutants; however, the County is considered non-compliant for O₃ and PM₁₀. As previously documented, the estimated project emissions are below Federal thresholds; therefore, the Proposed Action is exempt from a Federal general conformity analysis report. With respect to local emission thresholds, adherence to the In-Use Off-Road Diesel Vehicle Regulation, adopted by the CARB in 2008, would sufficiently mitigate for project emissions. Further, because the Proposed Action consists of solar panel installation, and would reduce the District's reliance on electrical energy generated by fossil fuels, the project would result in a long-term improvement of air quality by a reduction in greenhouse gases.

4 Consultation and Coordination

4.1 Public Involvement

Public and agency input regarding the proposed project was solicited by the District as part of the CEQA environmental review process. To solicit such input, a Notice of Availability and Intent to Adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration for the project was posted at the Shasta County Clerk's office, Redding public library, in the Record Searchlight newspaper, and via the State Clearinghouse. The Shasta County Air Quality Management District was also contacted directly by the District's environmental consultant. Agencies notified by the State Clearinghouse included the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (Region 1), California Department of Parks and Recreation, California Department of Water Resources, California Highway Patrol, Caltrans (District 2), California Air Resources Board, Regional Water Quality Control Board (Region 5, Redding), California Energy Commission, Native American Heritage Commission, and California Public Utilities Commission. The agency review period managed by the State Clearinghouse ended October 17, 2016; the general public review period ended October 20, 2016. A publicly noticed hearing was also held by the District on October 24, 2016. Comments received were limited to written comments from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). The comments were considered prior to the District's approval of the Proposed Action.

Consultation with the Native American Heritage Commission and local Native American community was also conducted with respect to the Proposed Action.

Reclamation is making this EA available for public comment for two weeks.

4.2 National Historic Preservation Act (16 U.S.C. § 470 et seq.)

54 U.S.C. § 304108, commonly known as Section 106 of the NHPA, requires that Federal agencies take into consideration the effects of their undertakings on historic properties. Historic properties are cultural resources that are included in, or eligible for inclusion in, the National Register. The 36 CFR Part 800 regulations implement Section 106 of the NHPA and outline the procedures necessary for compliance with the NHPA. Compliance with the Section 106 process follows a series of steps that are designed to identify if significant cultural resources are present in the proposed action project area and to what level they would be affected by the proposed Federal undertaking.

Reclamation determined that the Proposed Action is the type of activity that has the potential to cause effects on historic properties. Reclamation sent a letter to the California State Historic Preservation Officer on October 3, 2017 to consult on a finding of no historic properties affected, pursuant to 36 CFR § 800.4(d)(1).

5 References

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Appendix A USFWS Official Species List – Canby Road Site

(Refer to IS/MND Appendix A for Official Species List for the Hidden Acres Road site)



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
PHONE: (916)414-6600 FAX: (916)414-6713

Consultation Code: 08ESMF00-2017-SLI-1281

February 28, 2017

Event Code: 08ESMF00-2017-E-03111

Project Name: BVWD Solar Panel Project

Subject: List of threatened and endangered species that may occur in your proposed project location, and/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, under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) 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 Service under section 7(c) of the Endangered Species Act (Act) of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*).

Please follow the link below to see if your proposed project has the potential to affect other species or their habitats under the jurisdiction of the National Marine Fisheries Service:

http://www.nwr.noaa.gov/protected_species/species_list/species_lists.html

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 ECOS-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 ECOS-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:

<http://www.fws.gov/endangered/esa-library/pdf/TOC-GLOS.PDF>

Please be aware that bald and golden eagles are protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (16 U.S.C. 668 *et seq.*), and projects affecting these species may require development of an eagle conservation plan (http://www.fws.gov/windenergy/eagle_guidance.html). Additionally, wind energy projects should follow the wind energy guidelines (<http://www.fws.gov/windenergy/>) for minimizing impacts to migratory birds and bats.

Guidance for minimizing impacts to migratory birds for projects including communications towers (e.g., cellular, digital television, radio, and emergency broadcast) can be found at: <http://www.fws.gov/migratorybirds/CurrentBirdIssues/Hazards/towers/towers.htm>; <http://www.towerkill.com>; and <http://www.fws.gov/migratorybirds/CurrentBirdIssues/Hazards/towers/comtow.html>.

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 Tracking Number in the header of this letter with any request for consultation or correspondence about your project that you submit to our office.

Attachment



United States Department of Interior
Fish and Wildlife Service

Project name: BVWD Solar Panel Project

Official Species List

Provided by:

Sacramento Fish and Wildlife Office
FEDERAL BUILDING
2800 COTTAGE WAY, ROOM W-2605
SACRAMENTO, CA 95825
(916) 414-6600

Consultation Code: 08ESMF00-2017-SLI-1281

Event Code: 08ESMF00-2017-E-03111

Project Type: DEVELOPMENT

Project Name: BVWD Solar Panel Project

Project Description: The Bella Vista Water District (District) is proposing to install a two solar photovoltaic (PV) power generation facilities of up to 500 608 kilowatts (kW) of combined energy to offset the District's energy costs. The facilities would consist of solar PV panels, inverters, and related electrical equipment (e.g., electrical lines, circuit breakers). Other improvements to the sites including minor grading, gravel placement, and fence installation to facilitate on-going operations and maintenance activities.

Please Note: The FWS office may have modified the Project Name and/or Project Description, so it may be different from what was submitted in your previous request. If the Consultation Code matches, the FWS considers this to be the same project. Contact the office in the 'Provided by' section of your previous Official Species list if you have any questions or concerns.

<http://ecos.fws.gov/ipac>, 02/28/2017 03:42 PM

1



United States Department of Interior
Fish and Wildlife Service

Project name: BVWD Solar Panel Project

Project Location Map:



Project Coordinates: MULTIPOLYGON (((-122.35291242599489 40.59981227225613, -122.35247254371644 40.599795980013624, -122.35161423683168 40.599600472793924, -122.35151767730714 40.5995353035936, -122.35143184661867 40.59938867266064, -122.3513674736023 40.59920945663913, -122.35135674476624 40.598973216603945, -122.35143184661867 40.59885916939162, -122.35175371170045 40.59859848931854, -122.35187172889711 40.59841927117865, -122.35280513763429 40.59797937007104, -122.35329866409303 40.597849028446234, -122.35358834266664 40.597873467520245, -122.35360980033876 40.598036394451995, -122.35356688499452 40.5981667357115, -122.35355615615846 40.598671805691836, -122.35342741012575 40.599005801486015, -122.35345959663391 40.59930721089223, -122.35357224941255 40.59977154164243, -122.35351860523225 40.59990595257346, -122.35291242599489 40.59981227225613)))

Project Counties: Shasta, CA

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United States Department of Interior
Fish and Wildlife Service

Project name: BVWD Solar Panel Project

Endangered Species Act Species List

There are a total of 9 threatened or endangered species on your 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. Critical habitats listed under the **Has Critical Habitat** column may or may not lie within your project area. See the **Critical habitats within your project area** section further below for critical habitat that lies within your project. Please contact the designated FWS office if you have questions.

Amphibians	Status	Has Critical Habitat	Condition(s)
California red-legged frog (<i>Rana draytonii</i>) Population: Wherever found	Threatened	Final designated	
Birds			
Northern Spotted owl (<i>Strix occidentalis caurina</i>) Population: Wherever found	Threatened	Final designated	
Crustaceans			
Conservancy fairy shrimp (<i>Branchinecta conservatio</i>) Population: Wherever found	Endangered	Final designated	
Vernal Pool fairy shrimp (<i>Branchinecta lynchi</i>) Population: Wherever found	Threatened	Final designated	
Vernal Pool tadpole shrimp (<i>Lepidurus packardii</i>) Population: Wherever found	Endangered	Final designated	
Fishes			

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United States Department of Interior
Fish and Wildlife Service

Project name: BVWD Solar Panel Project

Delta smelt (<i>Hypomesus transpacificus</i>) Population: Wherever found	Threatened	Final designated	
steelhead (<i>Oncorhynchus (=salmo) mykiss</i>) Population: Northern California DPS	Threatened	Final designated	
Flowering Plants			
Slender Orcutt grass (<i>Orcuttia tenuis</i>) Population: Wherever found	Threatened	Final designated	
Insects			
Valley Elderberry Longhorn beetle (<i>Desmocerus californicus dimorphus</i>) Population: Wherever found	Threatened	Final designated	

<http://ecos.fws.gov/ipac>, 02/28/2017 03:42 PM



United States Department of Interior
Fish and Wildlife Service

Project name: BVWD Solar Panel Project

Critical habitats that lie within your project area

There are no critical habitats within your project area.

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5

Appendix B Cultural Resources Compliance

To be inserted

Appendix C Indian Trust Assets Compliance

**Indian Trust Assets
Request Form (MP Region)**

Submit your request to your office's ITA designee or to MP-400, attention Kevin Clancy.

Date:

Requested by (office/program)	Doug Kleinsmith
Fund	17XR0680A1
WBS	RY30180006BVWCA1E
Fund Cost Center	2015200
Region # (if other than MP)	
Project Name	HIDDEN ACRES ROAD SOLAR ENERGY PROJECT
CEC or EA Number	
Project Description (attach additional sheets if needed and include photos if appropriate)	The Bella Vista Water District) is proposing to install a solar photovoltaic power generation facility of up to 500 kilowatts to offset the District's energy costs. The facility would consist of solar PV panels, inverters, and related electrical equipment (e.g., electrical line, circuit breakers). Other improvements to the site including minor grading, gravel placement, and fence installation to facilitate on-going operations and maintenance activities. The project site is located on Hidden Acres Road, in the community of Bella Vista, in Shasta County, California. (see attached map.). Reclamation proposes to provide a grant to help finance the project.

<p>*Project Location (Township, Range, Section, e.g., T12 R5E S10, or Lat/Long cords, DD-MM-SS or decimal degrees). Include map(s)</p>	<p>- 122.2417 longitude and 40.6359 latitude (See figure below).</p>
---	--

/s/ Doug Kleinsmith
Signature

Doug Kleinsmith
Printed name of preparer

11/28/16
Date

ITA Determination:

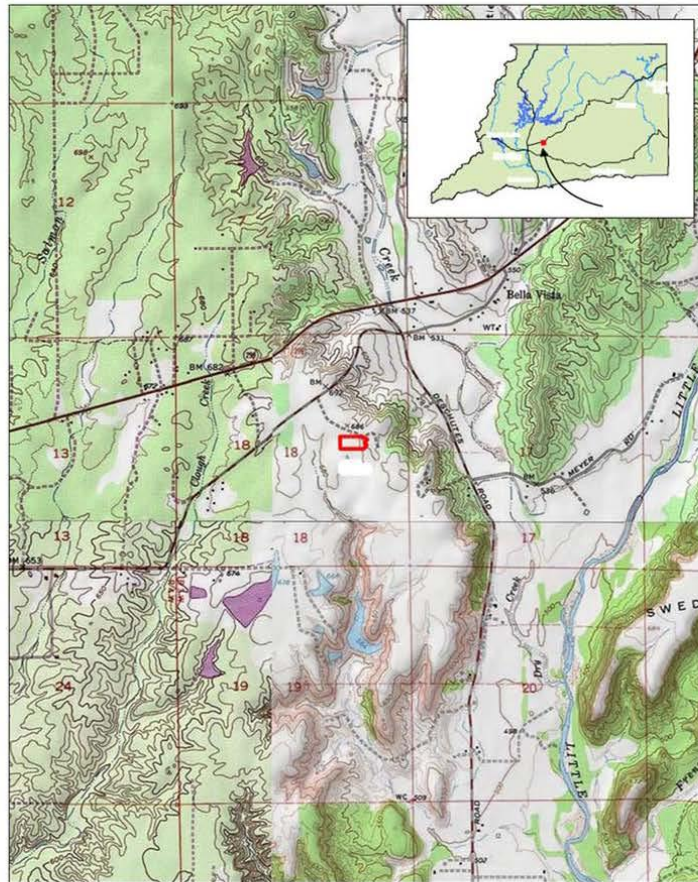
The closest ITA to the proposed Hidden Acres Solar Project is public land allotment (a parcel of land or real estate holding, that may or may not be affiliated with a particular tribe or is in the process of being recorded) which is 8.44 miles northwest of the project site. (See attached image).

Based on the nature of the planned work it does not appear to be in an area that will impact Indian hunting or fishing resources or water rights nor is the proposed activity on actual Indian lands. It is reasonable to assume that the proposed action will not have any impacts on ITAs.

K. Clancy
Signature

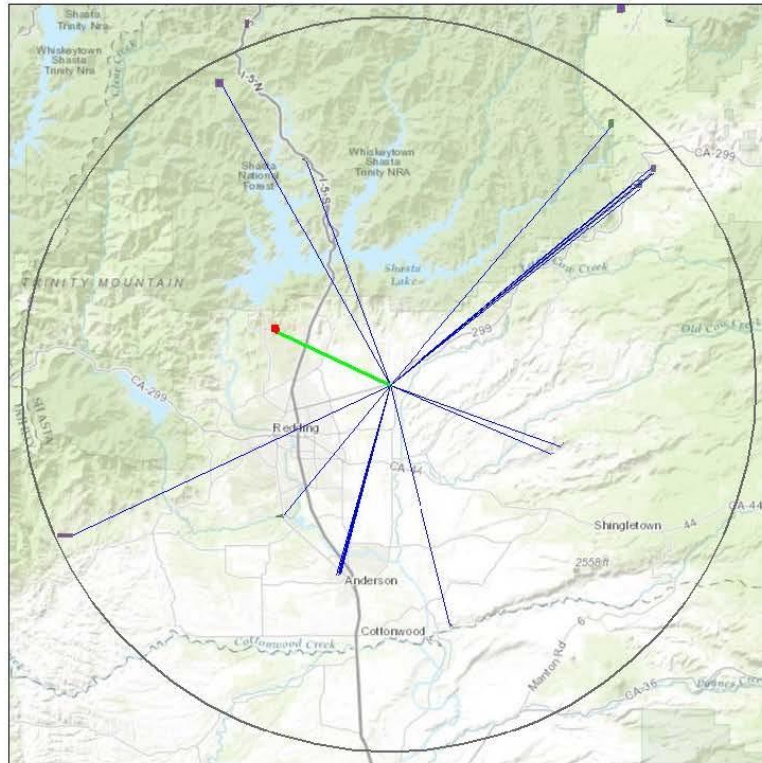
Kevin Clancy
Printed name of approver

11/28/2016
Date



Location of Hidden Acres Solar Project Site

HIDDEN ACRES ROAD SOLAR ENERGY PROJECT ITAS



Native American Lands FL

- PDA
- Rancheria
- Reservation

Native American Lands

- <all other values>
- Alaska Native Regional Corporation
- Alaska Native Village Statistical Area
- American Indian Reservation
- Other

0 4.75 9.5 19 Miles

RECLAMATION
Managing Water in the West

**Indian Trust Assets
Request Form (MP Region)**

Submit your request to your office's ITA designee or to MP-400, attention Kevin Clancy.

Date:

Requested by <i>(office/program)</i>	Doug Kleinsmith
Fund	17XR0680A1
WBS	RY30180006BVWCA1E
Fund Cost Center	2015200
Region # <i>(if other than MP)</i>	
Project Name	Canby ROAD SOLAR ENERGY PROJECT
CEC or EA Number	
Project Description (attach additional sheets if needed and include photos if appropriate)	<p>The Bella Vista Water District is proposing to install a solar photovoltaic power generation facility to offset the District's energy costs. The facility would consist of solar PV panels, inverters, and related electrical equipment (e.g., electrical line, circuit breakers). Other improvements to the site including minor grading, gravel placement, and fence installation to facilitate on-going operations and maintenance activities. The project site is located on Canby Road, in Redding, in Shasta County, California. (see attached map.). Reclamation proposes to provide a grant to help finance the project. I already sent you a request in 2016 (and you responded) for Hidden Acres Solar Project which is part of the same grant.</p>

<p>*Project Location (Township, Range, Section, e.g., T12 R5E S10, or Lat/Long cords, DD-MM-SS or decimal degrees). Include map(s)</p>	<p>- 122.35 longitude and 40.59 latitude (See figure below).</p>
---	--

/s/ Doug Kleinsmith Doug Kleinsmith 7/18/17
 Signature Printed name of preparer Date

ITA Determination:

The closest ITA to the proposed Hidden Acres Solar Project is Redding Rancheria which is 6.34 miles southwest of the project site. (See attached image).

Based on the nature of the planned work it does not appear to be in an area that will impact Indian hunting or fishing resources or water rights nor is the proposed activity on actual Indian lands. It is reasonable to assume that the proposed action will not have any impacts on ITAs.

K.Clancy Kevin Clancy 7/27/2017
 Signature Printed name of approver Date

Location of Hidden Acres Solar Project Site

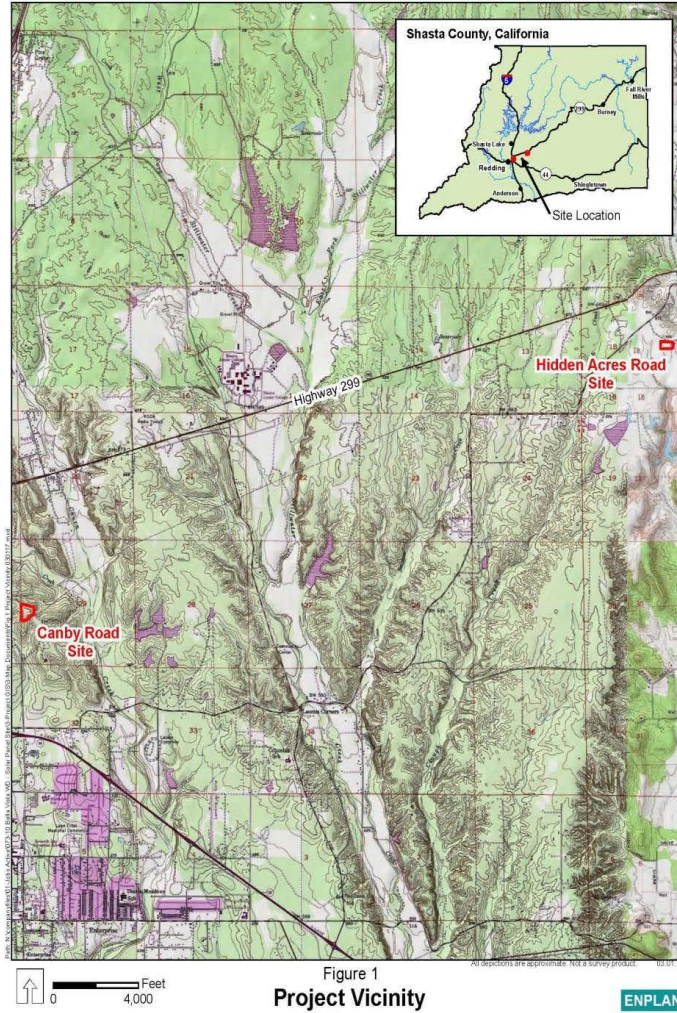


Figure 1
Project Vicinity

RECLAMATION | tessel

Scale: 577,991 | Long: 123.846061 Lat: 48.58417

Native American Lands

Choropleth

This application locates Native American Lands trust assets within the selected search radius and lists the results with addresses.

Step 1. Select a search radius (miles)

25

Step 2. Longitude and latitude

If you click on the map, the coordinates for the location will be inserted below. Or, you can type them manually.

Longitude:

Latitude:

Step 3. Find closest Native American Lands

Clicking to display only a specific field is 24 miles

Name Address
 Name Address
 Time Address
 Time Address

Help

CEC/DOI meet and greet