UC Regents Findings and Statement of Overriding Considerations for CEQA Project-Specific Analysis and Addendum Regarding the Grouse Ridge Vegetation Treatment Project

INTRODUCTION

The Board of the Regents of the University of California, referred to herein as "Project Proponent" or "UC Regents," in the exercise of its independent judgment, makes and adopts the following findings regarding its decision to approve the Grouse Ridge Vegetation Treatment Project, referred to herein as "vegetation treatment project," within the scope of the California Vegetation Treatment Program (CalVTP). In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (Pub. Resources Code, Sections 21000 et seq.) (CEQA) and the CEQA Guidelines (Cal. Code Regs., Tit. 14, Sections 15000 et seq.), UC Regents has considered the Program Environmental Impact Report prepared for the CalVTP, State Clearinghouse Number 2019012052, which was certified by the California Board of Forestry and Fire Protection in December 2019 ("CalVTP PEIR"), and the Addendum thereto, dated November 2020, for the UC Regents' approval of the Grouse Ridge Vegetation Treatment Project ("Addendum November 2020").

The CalVTP PEIR, including the information contained in the Addendum dated November 2020, contains the environmental analysis and information necessary to support approval of the Grouse Ridge Vegetation Treatment Project (hereafter, the "Project"), as set forth below.

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS FOR FINDINGS

Public Resources Code Section 21002 provides that "public agencies should not approve projects as proposed if there are feasible alternatives or feasible mitigation measures available which would substantially lessen the significant environmental effects of such projects[.]" The same section provides that the procedures required by CEQA "are intended to assist public agencies in systematically identifying both the significant effects of projects and the feasible alternatives or feasible mitigation measures which will avoid or substantially lessen such significant effects." (Pub. Resources Code, Section 21002.) Section 21002 goes on to provide that "in the event [that] specific economic, social, or other conditions make infeasible such project alternatives or such mitigation measures, individual projects may be approved in spite of one or more significant effects thereof."

The mandate and principles announced in Public Resources Code Section 21002 are implemented, in part, through the requirement that agencies must adopt findings before approving projects for which EIRs are required. (See Pub. Resources Code, Section 21081, subd. (a); CEQA Guidelines, Section 15091, subd. (a).) For each significant environmental effect identified in an EIR for a project, the approving agency must issue a written finding reaching one or more of three permissible conclusions:

(1) Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project which avoid or substantially lessen the significant environmental effect as identified in the final EIR.

(2) Such changes or alterations are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency and not the agency making the finding. Such changes have been adopted by such other agency or can and should be adopted by such other agency.

(3) Specific economic, legal, social, technological, or other considerations, including provision of employment opportunities for highly trained workers, make infeasible the mitigation measures or project alternatives identified in the final EIR.

(CEQA Guidelines, Section 15091, subd. (a); Pub. Resources Code, Section 21081, subd. (a).) Public Resources Code Section 21061.1 defines "feasible" to mean "capable of being accomplished in a successful manner within a reasonable period of time, taking into account economic, environmental, social, legal, and technological factors." (See also *Citizens of Goleta Valley v. Bd. of Supervisors* (1990) 52 Cal.3d 553, 565.)

With respect to a project for which significant impacts are not avoided or substantially lessened, a public agency, after adopting proper findings, may nevertheless approve the project if the agency first adopts a Statement of Overriding Considerations setting forth the specific reasons why the agency found that the project's "benefits" rendered "acceptable" its "unavoidable adverse environmental effects." (CEQA Guidelines, Sections 15093, 15043, subd. (b); see also Pub. Resources Code, Section 21081, subd. (b).) The California Board of Forestry and Fire Protection (the Board), adopted Findings and a Statement of Overriding Considerations on December 30, 2019.

Here, as explained in the Board's Findings and the Draft Program Environmental Impact Report (Draft PEIR) and the Final PEIR (collectively, the "PEIR"), the CalVTP would result in significant and unavoidable environmental effects to the following: Aesthetics; Air Quality; Archaeological, Historical, and Tribal Cultural Resources; Biological Resources; Greenhouse Gas Emissions; Public Services, Utilities, and Service Systems; and Transportation. For reasons set forth in the Board's Statement of Overriding Considerations, however, the Board determined that overriding economic, social, and other considerations outweigh the significant, unavoidable effects of the CalVTP.

When a responsible agency approves a vegetation treatment project using a within the scope finding for all environmental impacts, it must adopt its own CEQA findings pursuant to Section 15091 of the State CEQA Guidelines, and if needed, a statement of overriding considerations, pursuant to Section 15093 of the State CEQA Guidelines. (See CEQA Guidelines section 15096(h).) According to case law, a responsible agency's findings need only address environmental impacts "within the scope of the responsible agency's jurisdiction." (*Riverwatch v. Olivenhain Municipal Water District* (2009) 170 Cal.App.4th 1186, 1202.) When a responsible agency approves a vegetation treatment project using an addendum, it must also adopt its own CEQA findings pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15164. Although each responsible agency must adopt its own findings, such agencies have the option of reusing, incorporating, or adapting all or part of the findings adopted by the Board for the CalVTP PEIR to meet the agency's own requirements to the extent the findings are applicable to the proposed vegetation treatment project. The following document sets forth the required findings for an agency's project-specific approval that relies on and implements the CalVTP PEIR.

The UC Regents adopts these findings to document its exercise of its independent judgment regarding the potential environmental effects analyzed in the PEIR and to document its reasoning for approving the vegetation treatment project under the CalVTP in spite of these effects.

BACKGROUND AND PROJECT DESCRIPTION

BACKGROUND

The Board is developing CalVTP training modules to support implementation of vegetation treatment projects found to be within the scope of CalVTP PEIR, including example Project-Specific Analysis (PSA) documents to help guide state and local agencies in preparing their own PSAs under the CalVTP PEIR.

In July 2020, the Project Proponent submitted information regarding proposed vegetation treatments in the Grouse Ridge Research Forest (GRRF) to the Board to be considered for use as an example PSA in the statewide CalVTP training module. The Board selected the UC Regents' proposed vegetation treatment project to be used to prepare a PSA that will provide both California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) compliance for the Project Proponents to approve and implement the project as well as serve as an example PSA for other agencies seeking to use the CalVTP PEIR to accelerate approval of their own vegetation treatment projects.

The GRRF was acquired by Berkeley Forests in 2016 through Pacific Gas and Electric's land conservation program. The area has a history of logging, wildfire, and recent regeneration and is primarily used for research. The predominant research project at GRRF currently is the Adaptive Management Experiment (AMEX), which is a large-scale, replicated

experiment designed to generate and track long-term changes in forest composition, structure, and function resulting from climate change (Berkeley Forests 2020).

Portions of the Grouse Ridge treatment areas extend outside of the CalVTP treatable landscape described in the PEIR. In total, the area outside of the treatable landscape is 405.8 acres; however, it is dispersed in small sections of the treatment areas. This scattered array of acres is located outside of the CalVTP treatable landscape because the boundary of the CalVTP treatable landscape was digitally developed and the large scale of the area did not allow high mapping resolution. If the areas of the proposed project outside of the CalVTP treatable landscape have essentially the same, or at least substantially similar, landscape conditions as the adjacent areas within the treatable landscape, the environmental analysis in the PEIR would be applicable.

An Addendum to an EIR is appropriate when a previously certified EIR has been prepared and some changes or revisions to the project are proposed, or the circumstances surrounding the project have changed, but none of the changes or revisions would result in new or substantially more severe significant environmental impacts, consistent with CEQA Section 21166 and CEQA Guidelines Sections 15162, 15163, 15164, and 15168. In this case, there are no changed circumstances, but the proposed revision to or change in the project, compared to the PEIR, is the inclusion of areas outside of the CalVTP treatable landscape.

Therefore, the Project Proponent prepared a PSA/Addendum to analyze the entirety of the proposed project in compliance with CEQA.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Grouse Ridge Vegetation Treatment Project (project) is proposed to improve overall forest health and provide watershed benefits. Objectives for the vegetation treatments are to:

- reforest and improve fire-damaged areas;
- reduce long-term fuel loading and improve habitat continuity;
- increase individual tree health and spacing;
- create a heterogeneous forest structure resilient to future natural disturbances and climate scenarios; and
- support and facilitate current, proposed, and future research and demonstration projects.

Proposed treatment types are fuel break and ecological restoration, and treatment activities would include mechanical and manual treatments, herbicide application, and prescribed burning. Herbicides proposed for use are glyphosate and imazapyer, and herbicide application would be limited to ground-based methods, such as using a backpack sprayer or painting herbicide onto cut stems. No aerial spraying of herbicides would occur. The following equipment would be used to implement the proposed treatments:

- Mastication – up to three compact tracked loaders with mulching head and up to three excavators with masticating head;
- Pile burn – one excavator with rack and thumb and one dozer with blade;
- Prescribed burn – one compact tracked loader with blade; and
- Site preparation – up to two excavators with rack and thumb, up to two dozers with blade, and one compact tracked loader with blade.

Implementation of initial treatments would require up to 10 crew members, along with their associated vehicles to travel to and from the treatment areas. Biomass from treatments would be disposed of either with pile burning consisting of igniting biomass piles constructed either manually by hand-cut and hand-pile or mechanically with a dozer or excavator, or by lopping and scattering biomass in areas where material cannot safely be burned. The proposed treatments are described in more detail below.

Ecological Restoration

Ecological restoration treatments would seek to return the landscape closer to native conditions where natural fire processes can be reestablished and habitat quality can be improved, including controlling and eliminating nonnative, invasive plants and excess fire fuel buildup from fire exclusion practices.

AMEX Mastication Treatment – AMEX mastication treatments would be conducted to support the ongoing long-term AMEX located in GRRF. The AMEX mastication treatment would occur on approximately 230.5 acres divided over three areas. Approximately 85 acres of this treatment area would be within the treatable landscape. Mastication and thinning would be used to treat understory trees and brush, reduce wildfire hazard, and increase carbon in residual trees. No trees greater than 10 inches dbh would be removed. Mastication would assist in moving this area from a Condition Class 3 fire return interval departure (i.e., greater than 67 percent departed) to a more natural condition while simultaneously reducing surface and ladder fuels. Condition class is a function of the degree of departure from historical fire regimes. Condition Class 3 areas have the greatest departure from historic conditions, where fire behavior is uncharacteristic and vegetation composition is altered from the loss of the key components of an ecosystem. Treatments would reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire while also allowing the regeneration of trees for rapid carbon sequestration over the next 5 years. Mastication would focus on live and dead ladder fuels up to 10 inches dbh (with the exception of rock outcrops and protected/retention trees). The masticated fuel bed would have a depth of no more than 18 inches. In areas with sparse trees greater than 8 inches dbh (i.e., no canopy trees), smaller trees of the best vigor would be retained with approximately 16-foot spacing between retained trees. Biomass would be disposed of through the process of mastication, which would chip and distribute removed vegetation. In some areas, vegetation would be removed through the use of prescribed burning to consume masticated material. This treatment is anticipated to occur in 2021; prescribed burning would occur in 2021, 2022, and 2023.

Mastication Treatment – Mastication of approximately 23 acres, 20 acres of which is within the treatable landscape, would occur to connect the fuel break treatments along Bowman-Spaulding Canal (see description below). Within this 25-acre area, the understory component of woody shrubs and seedlings would be masticated. Biomass would be disposed of through the process of mastication, which would chip and distribute removed vegetation. This treatment is expected to occur in 2021.

Prescribed Burn Treatment – Prescribed burning would be used to further reduce fuel loading in two distinct areas. Approximately 587.3 acres would be treated using prescribed burning, and 215.1 acres of the treatment area are within the treatable landscape. Pretreatment of vegetation would occur in all areas proposed for prescribed burning by mastication or manual treatments. All burning would occur in accordance with regulations regarding the use of prescribed fire. This would include preparation and implementation of a burn plan to be approved by Berkeley Forests; the University of Nevada, Reno; the landowner; and the University of California Cooperative Extension. It also would involve preparation and implementation of a burn permit from the Northern Sierra Air Quality Management District (NSAQMD) and a smoke management plan. This treatment is expected to occur in 2021, 2022, and 2023.

Reforestation Treatment – This treatment would restore approximately 253 acres of fire-damaged lands. Approximately 232 acres of this treatment area are within the treatable landscape. Following wildfire in 2008, planting and follow-up vegetation treatments implemented previously in this area were limited in their effectiveness, resulting in two forest structures: one dominated by shrubs and few trees, and the other an overly dense monoculture of ponderosa pine. The objectives of this treatment are to enhance long-term carbon storage potential and restore the area's forest-dominated, mixed-species structure. Treatment activities within this area would include mastication, planting using manual methods, and herbicide application. This is the only treatment area where herbicides would be used, and their use would be limited to the types and application methods described above. Planting would focus on the desired mix of species for forest structure, such as white fir, incense cedar, and sugar pine. Biomass for this treatment area would be piled using equipment and burned. Mastication and planting are expected to occur in 2021, and herbicide treatments are expected to occur in 2022 and 2023.

Fuel Breaks

In strategic locations, fuel breaks create zones of vegetation removal and ongoing maintenance, often in a linear layout, that reduce wildfire risk and support fire suppression by providing responders with a staging area or access to a remote landscape for fire control actions. Only shaded fuel breaks would be implemented within the treatment areas. In forested areas, the tree canopy would be thinned to reduce the potential for a crown fire to move through the canopy; however, larger trees would remain.

Canal and Roadside Fuel Reduction Treatment – Shaded fuel breaks would be created along Grouse Ridge Road and the Bowman-Spaulding Canal to strategically reduce wildfire risk by using these existing features for fuel breaks, reduce damage to the canal, and improve evacuation capacity along the road during a wildfire. Treatments along Grouse Ridge Road would total approximately 27 acres and have an average width of 300 feet. Treatments along the canal would be approximately 38 acres and have an average width of 200 feet. Approximately 62 acres of this treatment area would be within the treatable landscape. The portion of forestland bordering the canal presents management challenges related to maintaining water quality. Historically, treatments have not occurred in the watercourse or domestic water buffer zones, creating a buildup of fuels. Treatments in this area would minimize woody debris and sediment deposition into the Bowman-Spaulding Canal. Treatment activities would include hand thinning, and biomass would be disposed of using hand piling and burning. In areas where burning of piles may not be logistically feasible, biomass would be removed by lopping and scattering the removed vegetation. No herbicide treatments would occur in riparian areas. Treatments along the canal are expected to occur in 2021 through 2022, and treatments along Grouse Ridge Road are expected to occur in 2022.

Rucker Fuel Break Treatment – The treatment area is in a popular recreation area just north and upslope of Rucker Lake with Grouse Ridge Campground, Carr Lake Campground, and Rucker Lake LDS Camp, which is a youth camp. High levels of human activity in this area increase wildfire ignition potential. A shaded fuel break would be created near potential ignition source locations (i.e., campground and youth camp). This treatment would reduce wildfire risk by creating a forest structure in which fire spread would be slowed, and it would increase the potential for success during the initial attack on wildfires. The fuel break would cover approximately 206 acres and have an average width of 1,250 feet. Approximately 200 acres of this treatment area is within the treatable landscape. Proposed treatment activities for this fuel break are mastication and hand thinning. Biomass would be piled using equipment or hand crews and burned. In areas where burning of piles may not be logistically feasible, biomass would be removed by lopping and scattering the removed vegetation. This treatment is anticipated to occur in 2022 and 2023.

Treatment Maintenance

AMEX Mastication Maintenance Treatment – Whether use of prescribed burning for maintenance of the AMEX mastication area occurs would be determined in collaboration with the AMEX study. A combination of mastication and prescribed fire would be used at an interval of approximately every 5–10 years dependent on fuel conditions.

Canal and Roadside Maintenance Treatment – Maintenance of treatments along Grouse Ridge Road and the Bowman-Spaulding Canal would include mastication approximately every 10 years and potentially prescribed burning depending on fuel and forest conditions. Prescribed burns could occur as soon as 1 year after treatment and up to 5 years after treatment.

Mastication Maintenance Treatment – Maintenance treatments in this area would be the same as described above for Canal and Roadside Maintenance Treatments.

Prescribed Burn Maintenance Treatment – Maintenance treatments in these areas would be the same as described for the AMEX Mastication Maintenance Treatment, above.

Reforestation Maintenance Treatment – Depending on the success of initial treatments in this treatment area, follow-up herbicide and mastication treatments may be used. Herbicide use is likely to occur between two and five growing seasons after planting. No herbicide use is planned in this treatment area after five growing seasons.

Rucker Fuel Break Maintenance Treatment – Maintenance of the Rucker Fuel Break would include mastication treatments where operationally feasible approximately every 10 years and potentially prescribed burning depending on fuel and forest conditions. Prescribed burning could occur as soon as 1 year after mastication up to 5 years after mastication. Pile burning may also be used in maintenance of the Rucker Fuel Break.

Equipment that would be used to implement treatment maintenance would include compact tracked loaders with mulching heads, excavators with masticating heads, excavators with rack and thumb, a dozer with a blade, and compact tracked loaders with a blade. Maintenance treatments would require up to 10 crew members to implement, along with their associated vehicles to travel to and from the project area.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS

The Grouse Ridge Vegetation Treatment Project PSA/Addendum was prepared in compliance with CEQA to document UC Regents' determination that the portions of the project area that are within the CalVTP treatable landscape are within the scope of the CalVTP PEIR and that a subsequent or supplemental EIR is not required for the portions of the project area that extend outside of the CalVTP treatable landscape. The PSA/Addendum contains a detailed and comprehensive review of the project and the resulting impacts, and concludes that implementation of the project would not cause any new significant environmental impacts nor an increase in the severity of significant impacts previously identified and studied in the CalVTP PEIR. There have not been any substantial changes with respect to the circumstances under which implementation of the project would be undertaken that would require major revisions to the previously certified CalVTP PEIR. In addition, there is no new information of substantial importance, which was not known and could not have been known at the time that the CalVTP PEIR was certified, showing that new or more severe environmental impacts not addressed in the CalVTP PEIR would occur, that mitigation measures or alternatives found infeasible in the CalVTP PEIR would in fact be feasible, or that different mitigation measures or alternatives from those analyzed in the CalVTP PEIR would substantially reduce one or more significant impacts.

The PSA/Addendum analyzes the environmental effects of the project in relation to the environmental analysis in the CalVTP PEIR with regard to the following environmental topic areas: Aesthetics; Agricultural and Forestry Resources; Air Quality; Archeological, Historical, and Tribal Cultural Resource; Biological Resources; Energy; Geology and Soils; Greenhouse Gas Emissions; Hazards and Hazardous Materials; Hydrology and Water Quality; Land Use and Planning and Population and Housing; Noise; Public Services, Utilities, and Service Systems; Recreation; Transportation; and Wildfire. It also identifies standard project requirements (SPRs) and mitigation measures adopted as part of the CalVTP PEIR relevant to the project that have been incorporated into and must be implemented as part of the project. All SPRs and mitigation measures in the CalVTP PEIR relevant to the project, as well as all components of the project described in the PSA/Addendum, are included in the Approval and are made conditions of the project.

The Project Proponent followed the evaluation and reporting process required under the CalVTP.

On October 5, 2020, the Project Proponent submitted to CAL FIRE the required information regarding this project when it began preparing the PSA/Addendum. The submittal included:

- GIS data that included project location (as a point);
- project size;
- planned treatment types and activities; and
- contact information for a representative of the project proponent.

Upon adoption of these findings and approval of the project, Project Proponent will submit this completed PSA/Addendum and associated geospatial data to CAL FIRE at the time a Notice of Determination is filed. The submittal will include the following:

- The completed PSA/Addendum Environmental Checklist;

- The completed Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (using Attachment A to the Environmental Checklist);
- GIS data that include:
  - a polygon(s) of the project area, showing the extent of each treatment type included in the project (ecological restoration, fuel break, WUI fuel reduction)

As required under the CalVTP, Project Proponent will submit the following information to CAL FIRE after implementation of the treatment:

- GIS data that include a polygon(s) of the treated area, showing the extent of each treatment type implemented (ecological restoration, fuel break, WUI fuel reduction)
- A post-project implementation report (referred to by CAL FIRE as a Completion Report) that includes
  - Size of treated area (typically acres);
  - Treatment types and activities;
  - Dates of work;
  - A list of the SPRs and mitigation measures that were implemented; and
  - Any explanations regarding implementation if required by SPRs and mitigation measures (e.g., explanation for feasibility determination required by SPR BIO-12; explanation for reduction of a no-disturbance buffer below the general minimum size described in Mitigation Measures BIO-1a and BIO-2b.

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

In accordance with Public Resources Code Section 21167, subdivision (e), the record of proceedings for the Project Proponent's decision to approve the vegetation treatment project under the CalVTP includes the following documents at a minimum:

- The certified Final PEIR for the CalVTP, including the Draft PEIR, responses to comments on the Draft PEIR, and appendices;
- All recommendations and findings adopted by the Board in connection with the CalVTP and all documents cited or referred to therein;
- All reports, studies, memoranda, maps, staff reports, or other planning documents relating to the treatment project prepared by the Project Proponent, consultants to the Project Proponent, or responsible or trustee agencies with respect to the Project Proponent's compliance with the requirements of CEQA and with respect to the Project Proponent's action on the CalVTP;
- Matters of common knowledge to the Project Proponent, including but not limited to federal, state, and local laws and regulations;
- Any documents expressly cited in these findings, in addition to those cited above; and
- Any other materials required for the record of proceedings by Public Resources Code section 21167.6, subdivision (e).

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15091, subdivision (e), the documents constituting the record of proceedings are available for review online at https://capitalstrategies.berkeley.edu/resources-notices/public-notices. The custodian of these documents is Ariel Thomson Roughton, Berkeley Forests, athomson@berkeley.edu or (530) 333-4475.

MITIGATION MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRAM

A Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) was adopted by the Board for the CalVTP, and the applicable mitigation measures for this treatment project have been identified in the PSA/Addendum. The Project Proponent will use the MMRP to track compliance with the CalVTP mitigation measures and standard project requirements. The MMRP will remain available for public review during the compliance period. The Final MMRP is attached to and is approved in conjunction with the approval of the treatment project and adoption of these Findings.

FINDINGS FOR DETERMINATIONS OF LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT

The Project Proponent has reviewed and considered the information in the Final PEIR for the CalVTP addressing potential environmental effects, proposed mitigation measures, and alternatives. The Project Proponent, relying on the facts and analysis in the Final PEIR and the treatment project PSA/Addendum, which were presented to the UC Regents and reviewed and considered prior to any approvals, concurs with the conclusions of the Final PEIR and the treatment project PSA/Addendum regarding the potential environmental effects of the CalVTP and the treatment project.

The Project Proponent concurs with the conclusions in the Final PEIR and treatment project PSA/Addendum that all of the following impacts will be less than significant:

AESTHETICS AND VISUAL RESOURCES

- Impact AES-1: Result in Short-Term, Substantial Degradation of a Scenic Vista or Visual Character or Quality of Public Views, or Damage to Scenic Resources in a State Scenic Highway from Treatment Activities
- Impact AES-2: Result in Long-Term, Substantial Degradation of a Scenic Vista or Visual Character or Quality of Public Views, or Damage to Scenic Resources in a State Scenic Highway from WUI Fuel Reduction, Ecological Restoration, or Shaded Fuel Break Treatment Types

AGRICULTURAL AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

- Impact AG-1: Directly Result in the Loss of Forest Land or Conversion of Forest Land to a Non-Forest Use or Involve Other Changes in the Existing Environment Which, Due to Their Location or Nature, Could Result in Conversion of Forest Land to Non-Forest Use

AIR QUALITY

- Impact AQ-2: Expose People to Diesel Particulate Matter Emissions and Related Health Risk
- Impact AQ-5: Expose People to Objectionable Odors from Diesel Exhaust

ARCHAEOLOGICAL, HISTORICAL, AND TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

- Impact CUL-1: Cause a Substantial Adverse Change in the Significance of Built Historical Resources
- Impact CUL-3: Cause a Substantial Adverse Change in the Significance of a Tribal Cultural Resource
- Impact CUL-4: Disturb Human Remains

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

- Impact BIO-5: Interfere Substantially with Wildlife Movement Corridors or Impede Use of Nurseries
- Impact BIO-6: Substantially Reduce Habitat or Abundance of Common Wildlife
- Impact BIO-7: Conflict with Local Policies or Ordinances Protecting Biological Resources

ENERGY RESOURCES

- Impact ENG-1: Result in Wasteful, Inefficient, or Unnecessary Consumption of Energy

GEOLOGY AND SOILS

- Impact GEO-1: Result in Substantial Erosion or Loss of Topsoil
- Impact GEO-2: Increase Risk of Landslide

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

- Impact GHG-1: Conflict with Applicable Plan, Policy, or Regulation of an Agency Adopted for the Purpose of Reducing the Emissions of GHGs

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS, PUBLIC HEALTH, AND SAFETY

- Impact HAZ-1: Create a Significant Health Hazard from the Use of Hazardous Materials
- Impact HAZ-2: Create a Significant Health Hazard from the Use of Herbicides

HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

- Impact HYD-1: Violate Water Quality Standards or Waste Discharge Requirements, Substantially Degrade Surface or Ground Water Quality, or Conflict with or Obstruct the Implementation of a Water Quality Control Plan Through the Implementation of Prescribed Burning
- Impact HYD-2: Violate Water Quality Standards or Waste Discharge Requirements, Substantially Degrade Surface or Ground Water Quality, or Conflict with or Obstruct the Implementation of a Water Quality Control Plan Through the Implementation of Manual or Mechanical Treatment Activities
- Impact HYD-4: Violate Water Quality Standards or Waste Discharge Requirements, Substantially Degrade Surface or Ground Water Quality, or Conflict with or Obstruct the Implementation of a Water Quality Control Plan Through the Ground Application of Herbicides
- Impact HYD-5: Substantially Alter the Existing Drainage Pattern of a Treatment Site or Area

LAND USE AND PLANNING, POPULATION AND HOUSING

- Impact LU-1: Cause a Significant Environmental Impact Due to a Conflict with a Land Use Plan, Policy, or Regulation
- Impact LU-2: Induce Substantial Unplanned Population Growth

NOISE

- Impact NOI-1: Result in a Substantial Short-Term Increase in Exterior Ambient Noise Levels During Treatment Implementation
- Impact NOI-2: Result in a Substantial Short-Term Increase in Truck-Generated SENL's During Treatment Activities

PUBLIC SERVICES, UTILITIES, AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

- Impact UTIL-1: Result in Physical Impacts Associated with Provision of Sufficient Water Supplies, Including Related Infrastructure Needs

RECREATION

- Impact REC-1: Directly or Indirectly Disrupt Recreational Activities within Designated Recreation Areas

TRANSPORTATION

- Impact TRAN-1: Result in Temporary Traffic Operations Impacts by Conflicting with a Program, Plan, Ordinance, or Policy Addressing Roadway Facilities or Prolonged Road Closures
- Impact TRAN-2: Substantially Increase Hazards due to a Design Feature or Incompatible Uses
- Impact TRAN-3: Result in a Net Increase in VMT for the Proposed CalVTP

WILDFIRE

- Impact WIL-1: Substantially Exacerbate Fire Risk and Expose People to Uncontrolled Spread of a Wildfire
- Impact WIL-2: Expose People or Structures to Substantial Risks Related to Post-Fire Flooding or Landslides

CUMULATIVE

- Agriculture and Forestry Resources
- Biological Resources
- Geology, Soils, Paleontology, and Mineral Resources
- Energy Resources
- Hazardous Materials, Public Health, and Safety
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Population and Housing
- Noise
- Recreation
- Wildfire

SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

The PEIR identified a number of significant and potentially significant environmental effects (or impacts) that the CalVTP will contribute to or cause. The Board determined that some of these significant effects can be fully avoided through the application of feasible mitigation measures. Other effects, however, cannot be avoided by the adoption of feasible mitigation measures or alternatives and thus will be significant and unavoidable. For reasons set forth in Section 10.2 of the Board's Findings and Statement of Overriding Considerations, however, the Board determined that overriding economic, social, and other considerations outweigh the significant, unavoidable effects of the CalVTP.

The Board adopted the findings required by CEQA for all direct and indirect significant impacts. The findings provided a summary description of each impact, described the applicable mitigation measures identified in the PEIR and adopted by the Board, and stated the Board's findings on the significance of each impact after imposition of the adopted mitigation measures. A full explanation of these environmental findings and conclusions can be found in the Final PEIR; and the Board incorporated by reference into its findings the discussion in those documents supporting the Final PEIR's determinations. In making those findings, the Board ratified, adopted, and incorporated into the findings the analyses and explanations in the Draft PEIR and Final PEIR relating to environmental impacts and mitigation measures, except to the extent any such determinations and conclusions were specifically and expressly modified by the findings.

Not every individual treatment project will have all of the significant environmental impacts that the CalVTP was determined to contribute to or cause. Additionally, some of the environmental impacts predicted by the CalVTP PEIR to be significant and unavoidable or less than significant after mitigation may be determined in a PSA to be less severe for an individual treatment project than determined in the statewide PEIR. The impacts and mitigation measures identified in Sections 8.1 and 8.2 below reflect the conclusions of the PSA/Addendum by indicating which of the CalVTP's impacts that this treatment project will contribute to or cause. By indicating the project-specific effects of this treatment project as follows, the Project Proponent's decisionmaker or decision-making body is hereby making the required findings under CEQA regarding the application or feasibility of mitigation measures to reduce those impacts.

FINDINGS FOR IMPACTS MITIGATED TO LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT

The Project Proponent finds that changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the treatment project which avoid or substantially lessen the significant environmental effects indicated below, as identified in the Final PEIR and the PSA/Addendum. Implementation of the mitigation measures indicated below to be applicable to the treatment project, which have been required or incorporated into the project, will reduce these impacts to a less than significant level. The Project Proponent hereby directs that these mitigation measures be adopted.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL, HISTORICAL, AND TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

☒ **Impact CUL-2: Cause a Substantial Adverse Change in the Significance of Unique Archaeological Resources or Subsurface Historical Resources**

☒ Mitigation Measure CUL-2: Protect Inadvertent Discoveries of Unique Archaeological Resources or Subsurface Historical Resources

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

☒ **Impact BIO-1: Substantially Affect Special-Status Plant Species Either Directly or Through Habitat Modifications**

☐ Mitigation Measure BIO-1a: Avoid Loss of Special-Status Plants Listed under ESA or CESA

☒ Mitigation Measure BIO-1b: Avoid Loss of Special-Status Plants Not Listed Under ESA or CESA

☐ Mitigation Measure BIO-1c: Compensate for Unavoidable Loss of Special-Status Plants

☒ **Impact BIO-2: Substantially Affect Special-Status Wildlife Species Either Directly or Through Habitat Modifications (Tree-Nesting and Cavity-Nesting Wildlife)**

☒ Mitigation Measure BIO-2a: Avoid Mortality, Injury, or Disturbance and Maintain Habitat Function for Listed Wildlife Species and California Fully Protected Species (All Treatment Activities)

☒ Mitigation Measure BIO-2b: Avoid Mortality, Injury, or Disturbance and Maintain Habitat Function for Other Special-Status Wildlife Species (All Treatment Activities)

☐ Mitigation Measure BIO-2c: Compensate for Mortality, Injury, or Disturbance and Loss of Habitat Function for Special-Status Wildlife if Applicable (All Treatment Activities)

☐ Mitigation Measure BIO-3a: Design Treatments to Avoid Loss of Sensitive Natural Communities and Oak Woodlands

☐ Mitigation Measure BIO-3b: Compensate for Loss of Sensitive Natural Communities and Oak Woodlands

☐ Mitigation Measure BIO-3c: Compensate for Unavoidable Loss of Riparian Habitat

☐ **Impact BIO-2: Substantially Affect Special-Status Wildlife Species Either Directly or Through Habitat Modifications (Shrub-Nesting Wildlife)**

☐ Mitigation Measure BIO-2a: Avoid Mortality, Injury, or Disturbance and Maintain Habitat Function for Listed Wildlife Species and California Fully Protected Species (All Treatment Activities)

☐ Mitigation Measure BIO-2b: Avoid Mortality, Injury, or Disturbance and Maintain Habitat Function for Other Special-Status Wildlife Species (All Treatment Activities)

☐ Mitigation Measure BIO-2c: Compensate for Mortality, Injury, or Disturbance and Loss of Habitat Function for Special-Status Wildlife if Applicable (All Treatment Activities)

☐ Mitigation Measure BIO-2d: Implement Protective Measures for Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle (All Treatment Activities)

☐ Mitigation Measure BIO-3a: Design Treatments to Avoid Loss of Sensitive Natural Communities and Oak Woodlands

☐ Mitigation Measure BIO-3b: Compensate for Loss of Sensitive Natural Communities and Oak Woodlands

☐ Mitigation Measure BIO-3c: Compensate for Unavoidable Loss of Riparian Habitat

☒ **Impact BIO-2: Substantially Affect Special-Status Wildlife Species Either Directly or Through Habitat Modifications (Ground-Nesting Wildlife)**

☒ Mitigation Measure BIO-2a: Avoid Mortality, Injury, or Disturbance and Maintain Habitat Function for Listed Wildlife Species and California Fully Protected Species (All Treatment Activities)

☒ Mitigation Measure BIO-2b: Avoid Mortality, Injury, or Disturbance and Maintain Habitat Function for Other Special-Status Wildlife Species (All Treatment Activities)

☐ Mitigation Measure BIO-2c: Compensate for Mortality, Injury, or Disturbance and Loss of Habitat Function for Special-Status Wildlife if Applicable (All Treatment Activities)

☐ Mitigation Measure BIO-3a: Design Treatments to Avoid Loss of Sensitive Natural Communities and Oak Woodlands

☐ Mitigation Measure BIO-3b: Compensate for Loss of Sensitive Natural Communities and Oak Woodlands

☐ Mitigation Measure BIO-3c: Compensate for Unavoidable Loss of Riparian Habitat

☐ **Impact BIO-2: Substantially Affect Special-Status Wildlife Species Either Directly or Through Habitat Modifications (Burrowing and Denning Wildlife)**

- ☐ Mitigation Measure BIO-2a: Avoid Mortality, Injury, or Disturbance and Maintain Habitat Function for Listed Wildlife Species and California Fully Protected Species (All Treatment Activities)
- ☐ Mitigation Measure BIO-2b: Avoid Mortality, Injury, or Disturbance and Maintain Habitat Function for Other Special-Status Wildlife Species (All Treatment Activities)
- ☐ Mitigation Measure BIO-2c: Compensate for Mortality, Injury, or Disturbance and Loss of Habitat Function for Special-Status Wildlife if Applicable (All Treatment Activities)
- ☐ Mitigation Measure BIO-3a: Design Treatments to Avoid Loss of Sensitive Natural Communities and Oak Woodlands
- ☐ Mitigation Measure BIO-3b: Compensate for Loss of Sensitive Natural Communities and Oak Woodlands
- ☐ Mitigation Measure BIO-3c: Compensate for Unavoidable Loss of Riparian Habitat

☐ **Impact BIO-2: Substantially Affect Special-Status Wildlife Species Either Directly or Through Habitat Modifications (Insects and Other Terrestrial Invertebrates)**

- ☐ Mitigation Measure BIO-2a: Avoid Mortality, Injury, or Disturbance and Maintain Habitat Function for Listed Wildlife Species and California Fully Protected Species (All Treatment Activities)
- ☐ Mitigation Measure BIO-2b: Avoid Mortality, Injury, or Disturbance and Maintain Habitat Function for Other Special-Status Wildlife Species (All Treatment Activities)
- ☐ Mitigation Measure BIO-2c: Compensate for Mortality, Injury, or Disturbance and Loss of Habitat Function for Special-Status Wildlife if Applicable (All Treatment Activities)
- ☐ Mitigation Measure BIO-2d: Implement Protective Measures for Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle (All Treatment Activities)
- ☐ Mitigation Measure BIO-2e: Design Treatment to Retain Special-Status Butterfly Host Plants (All Treatment Activities)
- ☐ Mitigation Measure BIO-2f: Avoid Habitat for Special-Status Beetles, Flies, Grasshoppers, and Snails (All Treatment Activities)
- ☐ Mitigation Measure BIO-2g: Design Treatment to Avoid Mortality, Injury, or Disturbance and Maintain Habitat Function for Special-Status Bumble Bees (All Treatment Activities)
- ☐ Mitigation Measure BIO-3a: Design Treatments to Avoid Loss of Sensitive Natural Communities and Oak Woodlands
- ☐ Mitigation Measure BIO-3b: Compensate for Loss of Sensitive Natural Communities and Oak Woodlands
- ☐ Mitigation Measure BIO-3c: Compensate for Unavoidable Loss of Riparian Habitat

☒ **Impact BIO-2: Substantially Affect Special-Status Wildlife Species Either Directly or Through Habitat Modifications (Bats)**

- ☒ Mitigation Measure BIO-2a: Avoid Mortality, Injury, or Disturbance and Maintain Habitat Function for Listed Wildlife Species and California Fully Protected Species (All Treatment Activities)
- ☒ Mitigation Measure BIO-2b: Avoid Mortality, Injury, or Disturbance and Maintain Habitat Function for Other Special-Status Wildlife Species (All Treatment Activities)
- ☐ Mitigation Measure BIO-2c: Compensate for Mortality, Injury, or Disturbance and Loss of Habitat Function for Special-Status Wildlife if Applicable (All Treatment Activities)
- ☐ Mitigation Measure BIO-3a: Design Treatments to Avoid Loss of Sensitive Natural Communities and Oak Woodlands
- ☐ Mitigation Measure BIO-3b: Compensate for Loss of Sensitive Natural Communities and Oak Woodlands

- ☐ Mitigation Measure BIO-3c: Compensate for Unavoidable Loss of Riparian Habitat

☐ **Impact BIO-2: Substantially Affect Special-Status Wildlife Species Either Directly or Through Habitat Modifications (Ungulates)**

- ☐ Mitigation Measure BIO-2a: Avoid Mortality, Injury, or Disturbance and Maintain Habitat Function for Listed Wildlife Species and California Fully Protected Species (All Treatment Activities)
- ☐ Mitigation Measure BIO-2b: Avoid Mortality, Injury, or Disturbance and Maintain Habitat Function for Other Special-Status Wildlife Species (All Treatment Activities)
- ☐ Mitigation Measure BIO-2c: Compensate for Mortality, Injury, or Disturbance and Loss of Habitat Function for Special-Status Wildlife if Applicable (All Treatment Activities)
- ☐ Mitigation Measure BIO-2h: Avoid Potential Disease Transmission Between Domestic Livestock and Special-Status Ungulates (Prescribed Herbivory)
- ☐ Mitigation Measure BIO-3a: Design Treatments to Avoid Loss of Sensitive Natural Communities and Oak Woodlands
- ☐ Mitigation Measure BIO-3b: Compensate for Loss of Sensitive Natural Communities and Oak Woodlands
- ☐ Mitigation Measure BIO-3c: Compensate for Unavoidable Loss of Riparian Habitat

☐ **Impact BIO-2: Substantially Affect Special-Status Wildlife Species Either Directly or Through Habitat Modifications (Fish and Aquatic Invertebrates (in wetlands, vernal pools))**

- ☐ Mitigation Measure BIO-2a: Avoid Mortality, Injury, or Disturbance and Maintain Habitat Function for Listed Wildlife Species and California Fully Protected Species (All Treatment Activities)
- ☐ Mitigation Measure BIO-2b: Avoid Mortality, Injury, or Disturbance and Maintain Habitat Function for Other Special-Status Wildlife Species (All Treatment Activities)
- ☐ Mitigation Measure BIO-2c: Compensate for Mortality, Injury, or Disturbance and Loss of Habitat Function for Special-Status Wildlife if Applicable (All Treatment Activities)
- ☐ Mitigation Measure BIO-3a: Design Treatments to Avoid Loss of Sensitive Natural Communities and Oak Woodlands
- ☐ Mitigation Measure BIO-3b: Compensate for Loss of Sensitive Natural Communities and Oak Woodlands
- ☐ Mitigation Measure BIO-3c: Compensate for Unavoidable Loss of Riparian Habitat
- ☐ Mitigation Measure BIO-4: Avoid State and Federally Protected Wetlands

☐ **Impact BIO-2: Substantially Affect Special-Status Wildlife Species Either Directly or Through Habitat Modifications (Amphibians and Reptiles (in wetlands, vernal pools, associated riparian))**

- ☐ Mitigation Measure BIO-2a: Avoid Mortality, Injury, or Disturbance and Maintain Habitat Function for Listed Wildlife Species and California Fully Protected Species (All Treatment Activities)
- ☐ Mitigation Measure BIO-2b: Avoid Mortality, Injury, or Disturbance and Maintain Habitat Function for Other Special-Status Wildlife Species (All Treatment Activities)
- ☐ Mitigation Measure BIO-2c: Compensate for Mortality, Injury, or Disturbance and Loss of Habitat Function for Special-Status Wildlife if Applicable (All Treatment Activities)
- ☐ Mitigation Measure BIO-3a: Design Treatments to Avoid Loss of Sensitive Natural Communities and Oak Woodlands
- ☐ Mitigation Measure BIO-3b: Compensate for Loss of Sensitive Natural Communities and Oak Woodlands
- ☐ Mitigation Measure BIO-3c: Compensate for Unavoidable Loss of Riparian Habitat

☐ Mitigation Measure BIO-4: Avoid State and Federally Protected Wetlands

☒ **Impact BIO-3: Substantially Affect Riparian Habitat or Other Sensitive Natural Community Through Direct Loss or Degradation that Leads to Loss of Habitat Function**

☒ Mitigation Measure BIO-3a: Design Treatments to Avoid Loss of Sensitive Natural Communities and Oak Woodlands

☒ Mitigation Measure BIO-3b: Compensate for Loss of Sensitive Natural Communities and Oak Woodlands

☒ Mitigation Measure BIO-3c: Compensate for Unavoidable Loss of Riparian Habitat

☒ **Impact BIO-4: Substantially Affect State or Federally Protected Wetlands**

☒ Mitigation Measure BIO-4: Avoid State and Federally Protected Wetlands

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS, PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY

☒ **Impact HAZ-3: Expose the Public or Environment to Significant Hazards from Disturbance to Known Hazardous Material Sites**

☒ Mitigation Measure HAZ-3: Identify and Avoid Known Hazardous Waste Sites

FINDINGS FOR SIGNIFICANT AND UNAVOIDABLE IMPACTS

The CalVTP PEIR determined that some impacts of the program would be significant and unavoidable, even after implementation of all feasible mitigation. The Project Proponent finds that the treatment project would contribute to or cause the following significant and unavoidable impacts as indicated. Incorporating and implementing the following mitigation measures indicated to be applicable to the treatment project will reduce the severity of this impact, but not to a less-than-significant level. The Project Proponent hereby directs that these mitigation measures be adopted. The Project Proponent therefore finds that changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the treatment project that will substantially lessen, but not avoid, the significant environmental effect as identified in the PEIR and PSA/Addendum.

The Project Proponent finds that fully mitigating these impacts are not feasible; there are no feasible mitigation measures beyond the mitigation measures indicated below to reduce these impacts. These impacts will remain significant and unavoidable. The Project Proponent concludes, however, that the benefits of the CalVTP and the vegetation treatment project outweigh the significant unavoidable impacts of the Program and treatment project, as set forth in the Board's Statement of Overriding Considerations.

AESTHETICS AND VISUAL RESOURCES

☐ **Impact AES-3: Result in long-term substantial degradation of a scenic vista or visual character or quality of public views, or damage to scenic resources in a state scenic highway from the non-shaded fuel break treatment type**

☐ Mitigation Measure AES-3: Conduct Visual Reconnaissance for Non-Shaded Fuel Breaks and Relocate or Feather and Screen Publicly Visible Non-Shaded Fuel Breaks

AIR QUALITY

☒ **Impact AQ-1: Generate Emissions of Criteria Air Pollutants and Precursors During Treatment Activities that Would Exceed CAAQS Or NAAQS and Conflict with Regional Air Quality Plans**

☐ Mitigation Measure AQ-1: Implement On-Road Vehicle and Off-Road Equipment Exhaust Emission Reduction Techniques

☒ No feasible mitigation is available.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION TO SUPPORT CalVTP FINDING FOR THE GROUSE RIDGE VEGETATION TREATMENT PROJECT:

Implementation of Mitigation Measure AQ-1 was required or incorporated into the CalVTP by the Board to reduce the severity of this impact, but not to a less-than-significant level. Emission reduction techniques included Mitigation Measure AQ-1 would be infeasible for the UC Regents to implement and, for the same reasons explained in the PEIR, this impact would remain significant and unavoidable. Because the treatments would be implemented by a research forest group with limited funding, it is cost prohibitive to use equipment meeting the latest efficiency standards including meeting U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Tier 4 emission standards, using renewable diesel fuel, using electric- and gasoline-powered equipment, and using equipment with Best Available Control Technology. In addition, crew sizes would be small and are not expected to all be employed with the same company. Therefore, carpooling may not be feasible to implement for most of the workers or recommended during a pandemic.

The UC Regents have incorporated all feasible measures to prevent and minimize this potential impact pursuant to SPRs AD-4, AQ-1 through AQ-6. The UC Regents find that fully mitigating this impact is not feasible; there are no feasible mitigation measures to reduce this impact. The UC Regents have reviewed all mitigation measures and finds them infeasible. This impact will remain significant and unavoidable. The UC Regents conclude, however, that the benefits of the CalVTP outweigh the significant unavoidable impacts of the Program, as set forth in the Statement of Overriding Considerations, below. The UC Regents therefore find that changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the proposed project that will substantially lessen, but not avoid, the significant environmental effect as identified in the PEIR.

☒ **Impact AQ-4: Expose People to Toxic Air Contaminants Emitted by Prescribed Burns and Related Health Risk**

☒ No feasible mitigation is available.

☒ **Impact AQ-6: Expose People to Objectionable Odors from Smoke During Prescribed Burning**

☒ No feasible mitigation is available.

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

☐ **Impact BIO-2: Substantially Affect Special-Status Wildlife Species Either Directly or Through Habitat Modifications (Insects and Other Terrestrial Invertebrates - Bumble Bees)**

☐ Mitigation Measure BIO-2g: Design Treatment to Avoid Mortality, Injury, or Disturbance and Maintain Habitat Function for Special-Status Bumble Bees (All Treatment Activities)

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

☒ **Impact GHG-2: Generate GHG Emissions through Treatment Activities**

☒ Mitigation Measure GHG-2: Implement GHG Emission Reduction Techniques During Prescribed Burns

PUBLIC SERVICES, UTILITIES, AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

☐ **Impact UTIL-2: Generate Solid Waste in Excess of State Standards or Exceed Local Infrastructure Capacity**

☐ No feasible mitigation is available.

TRANSPORTATION

☐ **Impact TRAN-3: Result in a Net Increase in VMT for the Proposed CalVTP**

☐ No feasible mitigation is available.

CUMULATIVE

Aesthetics

☐ Cumulative Aesthetics Impact related to Degradation of a Scenic Vista or Visual Character or Quality of Public Views, or Damage to Scenic Resources in a State Scenic Highway

☐ Mitigation Measure AES-3: Conduct Visual Reconnaissance for Non-Shaded Fuel Breaks and Relocate or Feather and Screen Publicly Visible Non-Shaded Fuel Breaks

Air Quality

☒ Cumulative Air Quality Impact related to On-Road Vehicle and Off-Road Equipment Exhaust Emissions

☐ Mitigation Measure AQ-1: Implement On-Road Vehicle and Off-Road Equipment Exhaust Emission Reduction Techniques

☒ No feasible mitigation is available.

Archaeological, Historical, and Tribal Cultural Resources

☐ Cumulative Archaeological, Historical, and Tribal Cultural Resources Impact related to Inadvertent Discoveries of Unique Archaeological Resources

☐ Mitigation Measure CUL-2: Protect Inadvertent Discoveries of Unique Archaeological Resources or Subsurface Historical Resources

Biological Resources

☐ Cumulative Biological Resources Impact related to Bumble Bees

☐ Mitigation Measure BIO-2g: Design Treatment to Avoid Mortality, Injury, or Disturbance and Maintain Habitat Function for Special-Status Bumble Bees (All Treatment Activities)

Public Services, Utilities and Service Systems

☐ Cumulative Public Services, Utilities, and Service Systems Impact related to Disposal of Biomass

☐ No feasible mitigation is available.

Transportation

☐ Cumulative Transportation Impact related to Vehicle Miles Travelled

☐ No feasible mitigation is available.

STATEMENT OF OVERRIDING CONSIDERATIONS[1]

As set forth in the Board's adopted Findings, the Board determined that the CalVTP will result in significant adverse environmental effects that cannot be avoided even with the adoption of all feasible mitigation measures, and there are no feasible project alternatives that would mitigate or substantially lessen the impacts. Despite these effects, however, the Board, in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15093, chose to approve the CalVTP because, in its view, the benefits to life, property, and other resources, and the other benefits of the CalVTP, will render the significant effects acceptable.

In the Board's judgment, the CalVTP and its benefits outweigh its unavoidable significant effects. The Board's Findings were based on substantial evidence in the record. The Board's Statement of Overriding Considerations identified the specific reasons why, in the Board's judgment, the benefits of the CalVTP as approved outweigh its unavoidable significant effects.

Exercising its independent judgment and review, the Project Proponent concurs that the benefits of the CalVTP and the proposed treatment project outweigh the significant environmental effects and hereby incorporates by reference and adopts the Board's Statement of Overriding Considerations for the CalVTP, as appliable to the proposed treatment project.

Any one of the reasons listed in the Statement of Overriding Considerations is sufficient to justify approval of the treatment project. Thus, even if a court were to conclude that not every reason is supported by substantial evidence, the Project Proponent would stand by its determination that each individual reason is sufficient. The substantial evidence supporting the various benefits can be found in the preceding findings, which are incorporated by reference into this section, and the documents found in the Record of Proceedings, which are described and defined in Section 5, above.

- The CalVTP and the Grouse Ridge Vegetation Treatment Project will reduce dire risks to life, property, and natural resources in California.
- The CalVTP and the Grouse Ridge Vegetation Treatment Project reflect the most current and commonly accepted science and conditions in California and allows for adaptation in response to potential evolution and changes in science and conditions.
- The CalVTP and the Grouse Ridge Vegetation Treatment Project reflect the Board's and CAL FIRE's goals. The CalVTP and the Grouse Ridge Vegetation Treatment Project will help the Board and CAL FIRE achieve their central goals for reducing and preventing the impacts of fire in the state, as outlined in the *2018 Strategic Fire Plan for California*. The CalVTP will help to establish a natural environment that is more resilient and built assets that are more resistant to the occurrence and effects of wildland fire.
- The CalVTP and the Grouse Ridge Vegetation Treatment Project will help implement Executive Orders, including:
  - EO B-42-17: Governor Brown's order issued to bolster the state's response to unprecedented tree die-off through further expediting removal of millions of dead and dying trees across the state;
  - EO B-52-18: Governor Brown's order to improve forest management and restoration, provide regulatory relief, and reduce barriers for prescribed fire; and
  - EO N-05-19: Governor Newsom's order directing CAL FIRE to recommend immediate-, medium-, and long-term actions to help prevent destructive wildfires.
- The Board is required by law to comply with SB 1260, signed into law by Governor Brown in February 2018, which improves California forest management practices to reduce the risk of wildfire in light of the changing climate and includes provisions for the CalVTP PEIR to serve as the programmatic CEQA coverage for prescribed burns

[1] If the PSA indicates that the project proponent's treatment project will not contribute to or cause any of the significant and unavoidable impacts determined in the PEIR, the proponent need not adopt a statement of overriding considerations.

within the SRA. The CalVTP and the Grouse Ridge Vegetation Treatment Project will bring the Board into compliance with these requirements.

- The CalVTP and the Grouse Ridge Vegetation Treatment Project will help to meet California's GHG emission goals consistent with the California Forest Carbon Plan, California's 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan, Fire on the Mountain: Rethinking Forest Management in the Sierra Nevada, and California 2030 Natural and Working Lands Climate Change Implementation Plan.