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CULTURAL RESOURCES

7.1 INTRODUCTION

The Cultural Resources chapter of the EIR addresses historic and prehistoric resources in the vicinity of the proposed project area, including areas where off-site improvements associated with the project would occur. Cultural resources can be categorized into prehistoric or historic resources. Prehistoric resources are those sites and artifacts associated with indigenous, non-Euroamerican populations, generally prior to contact with people of European descent. Historic resources include structures, features, artifacts, and sites that date from Euroamerican settlement of the region. In addition, the potential for paleontological resources and/or Tribal Cultural Resources to occur on-site or within off-site improvement areas is addressed in this chapter. The chapter summarizes the existing setting with respect to cultural and paleontological resources, identifies thresholds of significance and Mill Creek project impacts to such resources, and sets forth mitigation measures that would be necessary to reduce impacts to a less-than-significant level. The discussions and mitigation measures presented in each technical section apply to both the Placer Greens property and the Haight, Ogg, and Pruett properties, as well as any off-site improvement areas, unless otherwise stated.

Information presented in this chapter is drawn from the Placer County General Plan,<sup>1</sup> the Placer County General Plan EIR,<sup>2</sup> the Dry Creek-West Placer Community Plan (DCWPCP),<sup>3</sup> a Paleontological Records Search prepared by Kenneth L. Finger (see Appendix E),<sup>4</sup> and three reports prepared for the proposed project by the Natural Investigations Company (Natural Investigations) (see Appendix F): the *Cultural Resources Inventory and Effects Assessment for the Meritage Homes Placer Greens Project* (Placer Greens Property Report),<sup>5</sup> the *Cultural Resources Inventory and Effects Assessment for the Meritage Homes PFE Assemblage Project* (Haight, Ogg, Pruett Properties Report),<sup>6</sup> and the *Cultural and Paleontological Resources Inventory for the Mill Creek Off-Site Improvements Project*.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Placer County. *Countywide General Plan Policy Document*. August 1994 (updated May 2013).

<sup>2</sup> Placer County. *Countywide General Plan EIR*. July 1994.

<sup>3</sup> Placer County. *Dry Creek-West Placer Community Plan*. Amended May 12, 2009.

<sup>4</sup> Kenneth L. Finger. *Paleontological Records Search for the Placer Greens Project (PLN15-00053)*. October 6, 2015.

<sup>5</sup> Natural Investigations Company. *Cultural Resources Inventory and Effects Assessment for the Meritage Homes Placer Greens Project, Placer County, California*. March 27, 2015.

<sup>6</sup> Natural Investigations Company. *Cultural Resources Inventory and Effects Assessment for the Meritage Homes PFE Assemblage Project, Placer County, California*. March 27, 2015.

<sup>7</sup> Natural Investigations Company. *Cultural and Paleontological Resources Inventory for the Mill Creek Off-Site Improvements Project, Placer County, California*. December 26, 2017.

## 7.2 EXISTING ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

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Placer County contains a rich cultural resource heritage that includes archeological, historical, and paleontological sites and resources. Given the rich heritage of the area, many archeological, historical, and paleontological sites and resources remain undiscovered. A historic overview of the project area and a description of the project area related to cultural resources is provided below.

### **Historic Overview**

The following discussion of the prehistory, ethnography, and history of the proposed project area is based on the Placer Greens Property Report and the Haight, Ogg, and Pruett Properties Report.

#### Prehistory

Little evidence currently exists of the Paleo-Indian and Lower Archaic periods in the Central Valley. According to Natural Investigations, large segments of the Late Pleistocene landscape throughout the central California lowlands have been buried or removed by periodic episodes of deposition or erosion. Periods of climate change and associated alluvial deposition occurred at the end of the Pleistocene and at the beginning of the early Middle Holocene.

In the Central Valley, the Lower Archaic Period is mainly represented by isolated finds, as the early landscape was buried by natural alluvial fan and floodplain deposition. Cultural material dating to this period has been found at only one site in the Central Valley; the site is located in present-day Kern County. Stratified cultural deposits at the site have yielded a stemmed projectile point, chipped stone crescents, and the remains of fish, birds, and shellfish. Although abundant milling slabs and handstones have been recovered from Lower Archaic Period foothill sites in eastern Contra Costa County and Calaveras County no milling tools or plant remains have been found at the valley floor site.

The cultural framework within the greater project region subsequent to the Paleo-Indian and Lower Archaic periods is further divided into three regionally based “patterns.” Specific to the Central Valley prehistory and the current project region, the regionally based patterns are the Windmill, Berkeley, and Augustine. The patterns mark changes in distinct artifact types, subsistence orientation, and settlement patterns, which began circa 5,550 calibrated years (cal) B.C. and lasted until historic contact in the early 1800s. The patterns were initially identified at three archaeological sites: the Windmill site (CA-SAC-107) near the Cosumnes River in Sacramento County; the West Berkeley site (CA-ALA-307) on the east side of the Bay in Alameda County; and the Augustine site (CA-SAC-127) in the Sacramento – San Joaquin Delta. In general, the patterns conform to three temporal divisions: Middle Archaic Period/Windmill Pattern, Upper Archaic Period/Berkeley Pattern, Late Prehistoric Period/Augustine Pattern.

#### *Middle Archaic Period/Windmill Pattern*

The variety of artifacts recovered from Windmill Pattern sites include shell beads, ground and polished charmstones, and bone tools, as well as impressions of twined basketry. Baked clay items include pipes, discoids, and cooking “stones” as well as the net sinkers. Burials in cemetery areas,

which were separate from habitation areas, were accompanied by a variety of grave goods. The presence of an established trade network is indicated by the recovery of *Olivella* shell beads, obsidian tools, and quartz crystals. Obsidian sources during the Middle Archaic included quarries in the North Coast Ranges, eastern Sierra, and Cascades.

#### *Upper Archaic Period/Berkeley Pattern*

The artifact assemblage in Berkeley Pattern sites demonstrates that populations in the area continued to exploit a variety of natural resources. In addition to seeds and acorns, hunting persisted as an important aspect of food procurement. Large, mounded villages that developed around 2,700 years ago in the Delta region included accumulations of habitation debris and features, such as hearths, house floors, rock-lined ovens, and burials. The remains of a variety of aquatic resources in the large shell midden/mounds that developed near salt or fresh water indicate exploitation of shellfish was relatively intensive. Berkeley Pattern artifact assemblages are also characterized by *Olivella* shell beads, *Haliotis* ornaments, and a variety of bone tool types. Mortuary practices continued to be dominated by interment, although a few cremations have been discovered at sites dating to the Upper Archaic Period. Trade networks brought obsidian toolstone to the Central Valley from the North Coast Ranges and the east side of the Sierra Nevada Range.

#### *Late Prehistoric Period/Augustine Pattern*

The Late Prehistoric Period was shaped by a number of cultural innovations, such as the bow and arrow and more elaborate and diverse fishing technology, as well as an elaborate social and ceremonial organization. Dart and atlatl technology was effectively replaced by the introduction of the bow and arrow. Additionally, the cultural patterns typical of the Augustine Pattern as viewed from the archaeological record are reflected in the cultural traditions known from historic period Native American groups.

The faunal and botanical remains recovered at Late Prehistoric Period archaeological sites indicate the occupants relied on a diverse assortment of mammals, fish, and plant parts, including acorns and pine nuts. Hopper mortars, shaped mortars and pestles, and bone awls used to produce coiled baskets are among the variety of artifacts recovered from Augustine Pattern sites. The toolkit during this period also included bone fish hooks, harpoons, and gorge hooks for fishing, as well as the bow and arrow for hunting. Projectile points have been found at sites dating to the early part of the period, while Desert-side notched points appear later in the period.

In her Master's thesis, which was completed in 1966, Patti Palumbo (now Johnson) focused on the archaeology of the Dry Creek drainage. Artifacts were analyzed from 32 prehistoric archaeological sites between Rio Linda on the west and Roseville on the east. Palumbo concluded four of the sites were permanent village sites with well-developed middens. Palumbo classified the remainder as temporary occupation sites. Diagnostic artifacts found at the Dry Creek sites (e.g., shell beads, projectile points) indicate occupation occurred mainly during the Late Prehistoric Period. One of the village sites (CA-PLA-41) is mapped adjacent to the main Dry Creek channel, approximately one half-mile from the proposed project site.

## Ethnography

According to Natural Investigations, the proposed project site is located in lands historically occupied by the Nisenan (also known as the Southern Maidu). Prior to Euro-American contact, Nisenan territory included the southern extent of the Sacramento Valley, east of the Sacramento River between the North Fork Yuba Rivers and Cosumnes Rivers on the north and south, respectively, and extended east into the foothills of the Sierra Nevada. Neighboring groups included the Plains Miwok on the south, Southern Patwin to the west across the Sacramento River beyond the Yolo Basin, and Konkow and Maidu to the north.

Ethnographic Nisenan established central villages and smaller satellite villages along the main watercourses in their territories. Valley Nisenan villages were generally located on low, natural rises along streams and rivers or on gentle, south-facing slopes, and Hill Nisenan villages were located on ridges and large flats along major streams. Semipermanent or winter villages, as well as seasonally occupied campsites, were used at various times during the seasonal round of subsistence activities associated with hunting, fishing, and gathering plant resources. Historically, a Nisenan village known as *Pitsokut* or *Pich-u-gut* was located in the Roseville area, and may have been at the location of a prehistoric site recorded along Dry Creek.

Similar to other California Native American groups, the Nisenan employed a variety of tools, implements, and enclosures for hunting and collecting natural resources. The bow and arrow, snares, traps, nets, and enclosures or blinds were used for hunting land mammals and birds. For fishing, they made canoes from tule, balsa, or logs, and used harpoons, hooks, nets, and basketry traps. To collect plant resources, the two groups used sharpened digging sticks, long poles for dislodging acorns and pinecones, and a variety of woven tools (seed beaters, burden baskets, and carrying nets).

## Historical Context

The earliest settlers in the general project vicinity arrived in the late 1840s, as miners poured into the region in search of placer deposits. By the mid-1850s, the area was sparsely settled and dotted with small-scale ranches. By the mid-1860s, the construction and development of the railroad industry played a significant role in the region's development. The tracks of the Central Pacific Railroad (later Southern Pacific Railroad [SPRR]) reached Roseville and Rocklin in 1864. Roseville prospered as a principal rail head that provided the frontier towns with goods and services. When the SPRR moved the company's major locomotive terminal from Rocklin to Roseville in 1908, Roseville expanded to be one of the largest railroad centers in the country.

The presence of the railroad also contributed to the growth of Placer County's agricultural industry, mainly fruits and nuts, as the rail line provided access to a large market east of the Sierra Nevada. Incorporated in 1906, the Pacific Fruit Express Company (PFE) was a joint SPRR and Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) enterprise. The company operated a number of ice plants and docks, as well as car and repair shops throughout the west, and shipped produce in ice refrigerated railcars. The first units of the Pacific Fruit Express Ice Plant were erected in 1909, and by 1920, it was known as the world's largest artificial ice plant. The name of present-day PFE Road is derived from the company, which is now a UPRR subsidiary.

The first Dry Creek School was established in 1876 at the southeast corner of today's intersection of PFE Road with Cook Riolo Road, approximately one-half-mile west of the proposed project. The one-room schoolhouse opened 20 years after the U.S. government granted 1,920 acres to the state in 1856 for school purposes, including all of Section 16 of Township 10 North, Range 6 East, under the California Enabling Act of 1853.

To the south of the proposed project, the town of Antelope, on the SPRR route between Sacramento and Roseville in north-central Sacramento County, was initially settled in the 1860s by many of the transcontinental railroad workers. The area west of the tracks remained rural, with scattered residences between the railroad and PFE Road, until significant growth occurred during the 1980s. The Antelope Community Plan and the East Antelope Specific Plan were adopted in 1985 and 1995, respectively, and together include capacity for over 13,000 residential units between Dry Creek on the west and the railroad on the east. The northern border of the community is the Sacramento-Placer county line.

Immediately north of the Sacramento-Placer county line is the Dry Creek-West Placer Community Plan Area, which includes the proposed project site. The approximately 9,200-acre plan area is bounded by Baseline Road on the north, Sutter County to the west, Sacramento County to the south, and the City of Roseville to the east (Placer County Planning Department 1990). Since the Community Plan was adopted in 1990, a separate Placer Vineyards Specific Plan was approved in 2007 for the 5,230 acres west of Dry Creek. The Specific Plan area thus excludes the proposed project. As indicated in the two plans, the primary land use in the area has historically been agricultural, with rice lands, vineyards, orchards, grazing land, and areas devoted to field crops, and some areas lying fallow for decades. While some neighboring land uses in the area include agricultural grazing, farming, and large rural-residential lots, the Dry Creek-West Placer Community Plan Area is distinctly different from the more urbanized communities of Roseville and Antelope.

## **Project Site History and Current Description**

The historical background and existing settings of the Placer Greens, Haight, Ogg, and Pruett properties, as well as off-site improvement areas associated with the proposed project, are discussed in detail below.

### Haight Property

Aerial photographs show that agricultural use was established on the Haight property between 1947 and 1957.<sup>8</sup> Crop rows are visible on the 1957 aerial but may have been established earlier considering crop rows are visible on the 1947 aerial, which is the earliest available, on adjacent properties alongside Cook Riolo Road and east of Antelope Road.

The approximately 19-acre Haight property includes a commercial nursery and wholesale grower (Haight Nursery). According to the Haight, Ogg, and Pruett Report, the nursery complex includes

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<sup>8</sup> Natural Investigations Company. *Cultural Resources Inventory and Effects Assessment for the Meritage Homes PFE Assemblage Project, Placer County, California*. March 27, 2015.

a small pond that is managed for irrigation purposes, four growing houses made of wood with a vinyl or plastic sheathing, one modern, two-story metal office building, and numerous one and two story wooden outbuildings with metal roofs. The property includes two paved parking lots and an area used for excess pots, stakes, and miscellaneous equipment. The majority of Haight Nursery property contains graded and graveled rows of trees, shrubs, and bushes in plastic pots with a drip irrigation system winding throughout the rows. The nursery complex also contains a modern, one story, single-family residence made of wood siding with wood framed windows and a composite roof. The home has an associated detached two-car garage that is also made of wood siding and a composite roof. The residence and the man-made pond are first shown on the 1992 Citrus Heights USGS 7.5-minute quadrangle and were constructed between 1980 and 1992. Two other buildings shown in the nursery area on the 1992 map are no longer present on the property.

### Ogg Property

Aerial photographs show an orchard was established on the Ogg property by 1947. Historic maps first depict the orchard on the Ogg property on the 1951 Citrus Heights USGS 7.5-minute quadrangle. Although the unnamed precedents to today's PFE and Antelope roads are shown on the 1911 Antelope (1:31,650) USGS map, buildings or structures are not shown within the Ogg property until the 1967 Citrus Heights quadrangle.

Currently, the Ogg property consists primarily of an approximately 21-acre fallow almond orchard. The orchard area is regularly disked to reduce fire hazard risks; however, the orchard has not been recently tended to or harvested, and was likely abandoned in the 1980s.

The southeastern portion of the Ogg property includes a single-family residence and associated outbuildings, as well as a mobile home with an adjoining carport. The single-family residence is a modern, ranch-style home with stucco exterior, composite roof, metal framed windows, and decorative brick work along the front. The home has undergone extensive renovations, including the addition of a partial second story, new stucco, and an attached two-car garage. The two outbuildings associated with the residence are a wooden sided pump house with a newly shingled composite roof, and a detached, wooden sided two-car garage with shop that has a metal roof. The two-car garage has recently-updated doors and windows, as well as a new garage door. The mobile home is permanently fixed in place, and has metal siding and roof with a masonry underskirt, metal stairs, and an adjoining wooden sided carport and small shop, all of which are in relatively poor condition.

### Pruett Properties

The Pruett property includes two distinct areas: a 25-acre area located to the west of the Haight property, and a smaller six-acre area to the east.<sup>9</sup> Aerial photographs show that agricultural use was established on the Pruett properties between 1947 and 1957.<sup>10</sup> Cultivated fields are also shown

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<sup>9</sup> The Ogg, Haight, and Pruett Property Report mistakenly identifies the six-acre area as being included in the Haight property; however, this error does not substantially alter the conclusions of the report.

<sup>10</sup> Natural Investigations Company. *Cultural Resources Inventory and Effects Assessment for the Meritage Homes PFE Assemblage Project, Placer County, California*. March 27, 2015.

on either side of Dry Creek northeast of and outside the Pruett property in Section 9 on the 1856 Government Land Office (GLO) Plat for Township 10 North, Range 6 East. Although the unnamed precedents to today's PFE and Antelope roads are shown on the 1911 Antelope (1:31,650) USGS map, buildings or structures are not shown within the Haight, Ogg, or Pruett properties until the 1967 Citrus Heights quadrangle. None of the original structures remain extant with the exception of one metal outbuilding on the Pruett property.

Currently, the 25-acre Pruett property consists primarily of fallow fields, now open grassland, with one building situated on the far western edge of the area. The center of the 25-acre area contains an unpaved overgrown private aircraft landing strip that is currently overgrown with grasses. In addition, the area includes approximately one acre of land associated with the Haight Nursery. Available aerial photographs show the open grassland was formerly used for agriculture. Crop rows are visible on 1957 aerial photography of the site, but may have been established earlier. Cultivated rows, for example, are visible on the 1947 aerial, which is the earliest available, on the adjacent property alongside Cook Riolo Road. The historic aerials indicate the fields were left fallow sometime between 1966 and 1993.

The single building on the 25-acre Pruett property is a one and one-half story outbuilding with metal siding and a metal roof. The building sits on a concrete foundation. The building was used to store cattle feed until the 1960s, after which the barn was used for the storage of cars and airplane parts.<sup>11</sup>

The six-acre area consists of open grassland, and was formerly used for agriculture. The area does not contain buildings or other permanent structures. Crop rows are visible on the historic 1957 aerial but may have been established earlier. In addition, the historic aerials indicate the fields were left fallow sometime between 1966 and 1993. A capped well situated in middle of the open grassland may have been connected to a windmill used to pump water for the small irrigation pond located on the Haight property.

### Placer Greens Property

Within the Placer Greens property, the earliest available aerial photographs show the land was plowed for row crops by 1947. However, later historic aerials indicate the fields were left fallow after 1964. The 1947 aerial also shows crop rows on nearby properties and a large orchard on the land west of Antelope Road. In addition, cultivated fields are depicted on either side of Dry Creek northeast of and outside the property in Section 9 on the 1856 Government Land Office (GLO) Plat for Township 10 North, Range 6 East. The Placer Greens property has not historically contained buildings or other permanent structures.

Open grassland dominates the majority of the Placer Greens property with two unnamed northward-flowing Dry Creek tributaries along the eastern edge of the 45-acre property. Except for three areas that have been graded and paved or graveled as parking areas, the land remains undeveloped and absent of buildings or other structures. Approximately one acre combined, two

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<sup>11</sup> Wallace Kuhl and Associates. *Phase I Environmental Site Assessment, 25-Acre Pruett Property, 2851 & 2901 PFE Road, Roseville, California, WKA No. 10215.01* [page i]. August 25, 2014.

of the parking areas are along the southern edge of the property, while the third is located along the east.

According to the Placer Greens Report, the Placer Greens property has been disced in the past, though not recently. During a survey of the site, several discrete modern trash piles were found scattered throughout the open area, including an industrial cooling unit, a fiberglass tub and plastic tubing, and a car. A relatively dense amount of paper and plastic litter was also found along the southern, western, and northern boundaries of the property. A moderate amount of debris (mattress, plastic sheeting, clothing, litter, etc.) associated with a homeless camp was present near a small group of mature oaks in the center of the property.

### Off-Site Improvement Areas

The off-site improvement areas consist of off-site sewer alignment Alternatives 2 and 4, discussed in Chapter 3, Project Description. Generally, Alternative 2 would direct the proposed force main north from PFE Road into a private driveway, which is located approximately 780 feet east of the eastern side of Hilltop Circle. A 2,500-foot easement would be established from the intersection of the private driveway and PFE Road, heading north, towards the Dry Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant (Dry Creek WWTP). The proposed force main would be routed from PFE Road, within the easement, to a direct point of connection at the Dry Creek WWTP. The pipe alignment would require a bore and jack crossing under Dry Creek.

The existing setting for the Alternative 2 alignment could generally be characterized as heavily disturbed areas, punctuated with vegetated areas, the most prominent of which is the riparian corridor associated with Dry Creek. Aside from the Dry Creek riparian corridor, and small vegetated, grassy areas, the alignment consists of residential and commercial structures, tractor trailer storage, gravel parking and graded areas.

The Alternative 4 alignment consists of sewer pipe installation in PFE Road/Atkinson Street and an area adjacent to the western side of the Atkinson Road bridge over Dry Creek. After crossing the bridge via suspension, the proposed force main would connect to an existing City of Roseville 33-inch transmission main located just west of the bridge, on the north side of Dry Creek. The 3.2-acre parcel surveyed for the Alternative 4 alignment (APN 473-070-015) represents an area larger than the proposed alignment itself, which would provide a conservative analysis of the off-site improvement area. The off-site parcel contains the remains of a modern, wooden-covered overhang shelter with associated wooden fence remains, a partially-buried concrete pipeline, and a partially-elevated PVC petroleum pipeline, but has not otherwise been developed. Dry Creek runs east-west through the parcel with associated riparian vegetation.

It is also important to note that from the proposed on-site sewer lift station, in the north portion of the East Village, both sewer Alternatives 2 and 4 would require installation of a new pipe up to the northern side of PFE Road, where it would then be extended east along the north side of PFE

Road and underneath a tributary<sup>12</sup> via a bore and jack crossing, before extending further east toward Hilltop Circle, as described above.

### **Known Resources**

One prehistoric site (P-31-000193, CA-PLA-67) has been identified within the Placer Greens property. Recorded in 1961 by J. B. Mott, the site consists of a surface scatter of slab milling stones, handstones, bowl mortars, pestles, cooking stones, one grooved hammerstone or weight, and one drilled “balance stone” on the west side of a branch of Dry Creek. Projectile points, features, and/or burials were not observed or recorded. The area was resurveyed in 1965 and only one mano and one pestle were found at what is described as a temporary occupation site. The additional cultural items that had been previously scattered about the area and described in the 1961 site record had been collected by the property owners. At the time the site was originally recorded in March of 1961, water was not present in the Dry Creek tributary. In addition to artifact collection, previous disturbance to CA-PLA-67 included agricultural plowing.

The original 1961 site record indicates the McBride family owned the property since at least 1871, and that artifacts were plowed up over the “entire ranch,” but most were found in the area designated as a site on the sketch map. A notation on the sketch map indicates the McBride Ranch was located approximately three miles southwest of Roseville, near the town of Antelope. The site record states the land was owned in 1961 by A. T. McBride, and shows McBride’s residence located to the south of the site off Antelope Road. At the time of the 1965 survey, the area had not been cultivated for many years. As part of the Placer Greens Report, the recorded location of the prehistoric site was carefully examined; however, surface manifestations of the site were not located.

### **Paleontological Resources**

Kenneth L. Finger, Ph.D., prepared a Paleontological Records Search on October 6, 2015 for the project site, and on December 26, 2017 for the off-site improvements area, in order to determine the project’s potential to impact significant paleontological resources in the vicinity of the project site.<sup>13</sup> The Paleontological Assessment included investigation of the surficial geology of the project site, as well as a review of the University of California Museum of Paleontology (UCMP) database. The results of the record search indicate that unique geological or paleontological features have not been identified in the immediate project vicinity. Additional findings associated with the Paleontological Record Search are discussed in Impact 7-3 below.

### **Native American Consultation**

Natural Investigations contacted the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) on February 17, 2015, requesting a search of their Sacred Lands File for traditional cultural resources within or

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<sup>12</sup> This is the tributary that flows along the eastern side of the project site. The tributary flows underneath PFE Road and ultimately into Dry Creek. The bore and jack crossing would occur just north of PFE Road, where the tributary daylights from under the roadway.

<sup>13</sup> Kenneth L. Finger. *Paleontological Records Search for the Placer Greens Project (PLN15-00053)*. October 6, 2015.

near the proposed project site. The reply from the NAHC, dated March 10, 2015, states that the search failed to indicate the presence of Native American sacred lands or traditional cultural properties in the immediate vicinity of the project site. In addition, a Sacred Lands File search for the off-site improvement areas was conducted, and on December 4, 2017, the NAHC replied that the search failed to indicate the presence of Native American sacred lands in the immediate vicinity.

Per the NAHC's suggestion, Natural Investigations contacted each of the 13 Native American tribes or individuals indicated by the NAHC to potentially have knowledge of cultural resources in the project area. A log of contact efforts is provided in Appendix A of both the Placer Greens Property Report and the Haight, Ogg, and Pruett Properties Report (see Appendix F of the EIR).

### **Field Survey/Site Assessment**

Field surveys of the proposed project site were conducted by Natural Investigations on February 24 and 25, 2015, and on December 14, 2017 for the off-site improvement areas. Except for a small 0.88-acre area along the northern boundary of the Placer Greens property, the entire site was carefully examined for the presence of cultural resources. The 0.88-acre area (545-foot long by 70-foot wide) along the northern site boundary on the south side of PFE Road was not accessible for survey due to the density of the undergrowth and brambles along the Dry Creek tributary.<sup>14</sup> Natural Investigations did not identify archaeological resources within the areas accessible for survey. Detailed survey methodology is discussed below.

## **7.3 REGULATORY CONTEXT**

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Federal, State, and local governments have developed laws and regulations designed to protect significant cultural resources that may be affected by actions that they undertake or regulate. The National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) are the basic federal and State laws governing preservation of historic and archaeological resources of national, regional, State, and local significance.

### **Federal Regulations**

The following are the federal environmental laws and policies relevant to cultural resources.

#### Section 106 for the National Historical Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966

Federal regulations for cultural resources are governed primarily by Section 106 of the NHPA of 1966. Section 106 of NHPA requires Federal agencies to take into account the effects of their undertakings on historic properties and affords the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation a reasonable opportunity to comment on such undertakings. The Council's implementing

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<sup>14</sup> It should be noted that this area is coincident with the potential ultimate widening limits for PFE Road as evaluated in this EIR. As discussed elsewhere in this EIR, the proposed project is not required to construct the ultimate widening of PFE Road; rather, this EIR includes analysis of potential future improvements should they be constructed in the future.

regulations, “Protection of Historic Properties,” are found in 36 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 800. The goal of the Section 106 review process is to offer a measure of protection to sites, which are determined eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). The criteria for determining NRHP eligibility are found in 36 CFR Part 60. Amendments to the Act (1986 and 1992) and subsequent revisions to the implementing regulations have, among other things, strengthened the provisions for Native American consultation and participation in the Section 106 review process. While federal agencies must follow federal regulations, most projects by private developers and landowners do not require this level of compliance. Federal regulations only come into play in the private sector if a project requires a federal permit or if it uses federal funding.

### National Register of Historic Places

NRHP is the nation’s master inventory of known historic resources. The NRHP includes listings of resources, including: buildings, structures, sites, objects, and districts that possess historic, architectural, engineering, archaeological, or cultural significance at the national, State, or local level. Resources over 50 years of age can be listed on the NRHP. However, properties under 50 years of age that are of exceptional significance or are contributors to a district can also be included on the NRHP. Four criteria are used to determine if a potential resource may be considered significant and eligible for listing on the NRHP. The criteria include resources that:

- A. Are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of history; or
- B. Are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
- C. Embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- D. Have yielded or may likely yield information important in prehistory or history.

A resource can be individually eligible for listing on the NRHP under any of the above four criteria, or it can be listed as contributing to a group of resources that are listed on the NRHP.

A resource can be considered significant in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, or culture. Once a resource has been identified as significant and potentially eligible for the NRHP, the resource’s historic integrity must be evaluated. Integrity is a function of seven factors: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The factors closely relate to the resource’s significance and must be intact for NRHP eligibility.

### **State Regulations**

The following are the State environmental laws and policies relevant to cultural resources.

## California Environmental Quality Act

State historic preservation regulations affecting the project include the statutes and guidelines contained in CEQA (Public Resources Code [PRC] Sections 21083.2 and 21084.1 and Sections 15064.5 and 15126.4 [b] of the CEQA Guidelines). CEQA requires lead agencies to consider the potential effects of a project on historic resources and unique archaeological resources. An “historic resource” includes, but is not limited to, any object, building, structure, site, area, place, record or manuscript that is historically or archaeologically significant (PRC Section 5020.1). Under Section 15064.5 of the CEQA Guidelines, a resource is considered “historically significant” if it meets one or more of the following California Register of Historic Resources (CRHR) criteria:

1. The resource is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California history; or
2. The resource is associated with the lives of important persons from our past; or
3. The resource embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region or method of construction, or represents the work of an important creative individual or possesses high artistic values; or
4. The resource has yielded, or may be likely to yield, important information in prehistory or history.

CEQA requires preparation of an EIR if a proposed project would cause a “substantial adverse change” in the significance of a historical resource. A “substantial adverse change” would occur if a proposed project would result in physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of the resource or its immediate surroundings such that the significance of a historical resource would be materially impaired (CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5[b][1]).

In addition to historically significant resources, which can include archeological resources that meet the criteria listed above, CEQA also requires consideration of “unique archaeological resources.” If a site meets the definition of a unique archaeological resource, it must be treated in accordance with the provisions of PRC Section 21083.2. Under PRC Section 20183.2(g), an archaeological resource is considered “unique” if it:

1. Contains information needed to answer important scientific research questions and there is a demonstrable public interest in that information;
2. Has a special and particular quality such as being the oldest of its type or the best available example of its type; or
3. Is directly associated with a scientifically recognized important prehistoric or historic event or person (PRC 21083.2[g]).

CEQA also includes specific guidance regarding the accidental discovery of human remains. Specifically, CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(e) requires that if human remains are uncovered, excavation activities must be stopped and the county coroner be contacted. If the county coroner determines that the remains are Native American, the coroner must contact the NAHC within 24 hours. The NAHC identifies the most likely descendent, and that individual or individuals can make recommendations for treatment of the human remains under the procedures set forth in Section 15064.5 of the CEQA Guidelines.

### California Register of Historic Places

The State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) maintains the CRHR. Properties that are listed on the NRHP are automatically listed on the CRHR, along with State Landmarks and Points of Interest. The CRHR can also include properties designated under local ordinances or identified through local historical resource surveys.

### Tribal Consultation Guidelines (Senate Bill [SB] 18)

SB 18, authored by Senator John Burton and signed into law by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger in September 2004, requires local (city and county) governments to consult with California Native American tribes, when amending or adopting a general plan or specific plan, or designating land as open space, in order to aid in the protection of traditional tribal cultural places (“cultural places”). The intent of SB 18 is to provide California Native American tribes an opportunity to participate in local land use decisions at an early planning stage, for the purpose of protecting, or mitigating impacts to, cultural places. The consultation and notice requirements apply to adoption and amendment of both general plans (defined in Government Code §65300 et seq.) and specific plans (defined in Government Code §65450 et seq.). The proposed project includes a General Plan/Community Plan Amendment, and, thus, is subject to SB 18 consultation requirements.

### Assembly Bill 52

Assembly Bill (AB) 52 adds Tribal Cultural Resources to the categories of cultural resources in CEQA, which had formerly been limited to historic, archaeological, and paleontological resources. “Tribal Cultural Resources” are defined as either:

- (1) Sites, features, places, cultural landscapes, sacred places, and objects with cultural value to a California Native American tribe that are either of the following:
  - (A) Included or determined to be eligible for inclusion in the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR).
  - (B) Included in a local register of historical resources as defined in subdivision (k) of Section 5020.1.
- (2) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Section 5024.1 for the purposes of this paragraph, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.

Under AB 52, a project that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a Tribal Cultural Resource is defined as a project that may have a significant effect on the environment. Where a project may have a significant impact on a Tribal Cultural Resource, the lead agency’s environmental document must discuss the impact and whether feasible alternatives or mitigation measures could avoid or substantially lessen the impact. AB 52 (PRC 21080.3.1) requires lead agencies to provide notice to tribes that are traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of a proposed project if they have requested notice of projects proposed within

that area. If the tribe(s) requests consultation within 30 days upon receipt of the notice, the lead agency must consult with the tribe(s). Consultation may include discussing the type of environmental review necessary, the significance of Tribal Cultural Resources, the significance of the project's impacts on the Tribal Cultural Resources, and alternatives and mitigation measures recommended by the tribe(s).

## **Local Regulations**

Relevant goals and policies from the Placer County General Plan and the DCWPCP are discussed below.

### Placer County General Plan

The following policies from the Placer County General Plan related to cultural resources are applicable to the proposed project.

- Policy 5.D.3      The County shall solicit the views of the Native American Heritage Commission, State Office of Historic Preservation, North Central Information Center, and/or the local Native American community in cases where development may result in disturbance to sites containing evidence of Native American activity and/or to sites of cultural importance.
- Policy 5.D.4      The County shall coordinate with the cities and municipal advisory councils in the County to promote the preservation and maintenance of Placer County's paleontological and archaeological resources.
- Policy 5.D.6      The County shall require that discretionary development projects identify and protect from damage, destruction, and abuse, important historical, archaeological, paleontological, and cultural sites and their contributing environment. Such assessments shall be incorporated into a countywide cultural resource data base, to be maintained by the Department of Museums.
- Policy 5.D.7      The County shall require that discretionary development projects are designed to avoid potential impacts to significant paleontological or cultural resources whenever possible. Unavoidable impacts, whenever possible, shall be reduced to a less than significant level and/or shall be mitigated by extracting maximum recoverable data. Determinations of impacts, significance, and mitigation shall be made by qualified archaeological (in consultation with recognized local Native American groups), historical, or paleontological consultants, depending on the type of resource in question.
- Policy 5.D.9      The County shall use the State Historic Building Code to encourage the preservation of historic structures.
- Policy 5.D.11     The County shall support the registration of cultural resources in appropriate landmark designations (i.e., National Register of Historic Places, California

Historical Landmarks, Points of Historical Interest, or Local Landmark). The County shall assist private citizens seeking these designations for their property.

Policy 5.D.12 The County shall consider acquisition programs (i.e. Placer Legacy Open Space and Agricultural Conservation Program) as a means of preserving significant cultural resources that are not suitable for private development. Organizations that could provide assistance in this area include, but are not limited to, the Archaeological Conservancy, the Native American community, and local land trusts.

### DCWPCP

The following goals and policies from the Environmental Resources Management Element of the DCWPCP related to cultural resources are applicable to the proposed project.

Goal 1 Recognize that the Dry Creek West Placer Community Plan Area is a unique community, which should incorporate development standards that enhance the area's separate cultural, sociological and physical identity.

Goal 2 Preserve areas of outstanding historical, cultural, or archaeological significance.

Policy 1 Identify and protect from destruction and abuse all representative and unique historical, cultural and archaeological sites.

Policy 2 Require site specific studies for archaeological or historical sites in all instances where land development has the potential to have a detrimental impact on these sites.

## **7.4 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES**

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This section describes the standards of significance and methodology utilized to analyze and determine the proposed project's potential impacts related to cultural resources. In addition, a discussion of the project's impacts, as well as mitigation measures where necessary, is also presented. The discussions and mitigation measures presented below apply to the Placer Greens property and the Haight, Ogg, and Pruett properties, as well as any off-site improvement areas, unless otherwise stated.

### **Standards of Significance**

Consistent with Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, the County's General Plan and Initial Study Checklist, and professional judgment, a significant impact would occur if the proposed project would result in the following:

- Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in Section 15064.5;

- Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5;
- Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature;
- Have the potential to cause a physical change, which could affect unique ethnic cultural values;
- Restrict existing religious or sacred uses within the potential impact area;
- Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside formal cemeteries; and/or
- Cause a substantial change in the significance of a Tribal Cultural Resource as defined in Public Resources Code, Section 21074.

## **Method of Analysis**

Preparation of the Haight, Ogg, and Pruett Properties Report, the Placer Greens Property Report, and the Off-Site Improvements Report included performance of archival research, contact with the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC), and a field survey. In addition, Kenneth L. Finger, consulting geologist, conducted a records search for the proposed project. Local tribes were contacted pursuant to AB 52 and SB 18 requirements.

### Archival Research Procedures

Both the Haight, Ogg, and Pruett Properties Report and the Placer Greens Property Report prepared by Natural Investigations included a cultural resources literature search at the North Central Information Center (NCIC) of the California Historical Resources Information System at California State University, Sacramento, on February 20, 2015. The records search was conducted to determine if prehistoric or historic cultural resources were previously recorded within the proposed project site vicinity, the extent to which the site had been previously surveyed, and the number and type of cultural resources within a 0.25-mile radius of the site. The archival searches of the archaeological and historical records, national and state databases, and historic maps included the following:

- National Register of Historic Places: listed properties;
- California Register of Historical Resources;
- Historic Property Data File (HPDF) and Archaeological Determinations of Eligibility; (ADOE) for Placer County (2012);
- California Inventory of Historical Resources (1976 and updates);
- California Historical Landmarks (1996 and updates);
- California Points of Historical Interest (1992 and updates);
- 1856 Government Land Office (GLO) Plat for Township 10 North, Range 6 East;
- 1911 Antelope (1:31,650) USGS quadrangle; and
- 1951 and 1967 Citrus Heights USGS 7.5-minute quadrangles.

In addition, a records search at the NCIC was conducted for the off-site improvement areas on December 4, 2017. The records search at the NCIC indicated that no cultural resources have been previously recorded within the off-site improvement area.

## NAHC

As noted previously, Natural Investigations contacted the NAHC on February 17, 2015, requesting a search of their Sacred Lands File for traditional cultural resources within or near the proposed project site. In addition, a Sacred Lands File search for the off-site improvement areas was conducted, and on December 4, 2017, the NAHC replied that the search failed to indicate the presence of Native American sacred lands in the immediate vicinity.

Per the NAHC's suggestion, Natural Investigations contacted each of the 13 Native American tribes or individuals indicated by the NAHC to potentially have knowledge of cultural resources in the project area. A log of contact efforts is provided in Appendix A of both the Placer Greens Property Report and the Haight, Ogg, and Pruett Properties Report (see Appendix F to the EIR).

As part of AB 52 requirements, the County sent project notification letters to the Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California, the United Auburn Indian Community (UAIC) of the Auburn Rancheria, T'Si-Akim Maidu, and the Shingle Springs Band of Miwok Indians on December 13, 2016. In addition, SB 18 notification letters were sent to the aforementioned tribes on April 14, 2017. The 90-day response period for SB 18 ended on July 12, 2017.

## Field Survey Methods

Field surveys of the proposed project site were conducted by Natural Investigations on February 24 and 25, 2015, and on December 14, 2017 for the off-site improvement areas. Except for a small 0.88-acre area along the northern boundary of the Placer Greens property, the entire site was carefully examined for the presence of cultural resources. The 0.88-acre area (545-foot long by 70-foot wide) along the northern site boundary on the south side of PFE Road was not accessible for survey due to the density of the undergrowth and brambles along the Dry Creek tributary.

The off-site improvement areas survey, included assessment of the following parcels:

- Sewer Alternative 2: APNs 473-080-006 (4.8 acres); 473-090-007 (14.3 acres); 473-090-003 (4.9 acres)
- Sewer Alternative 4: APN 473-070-015 (3.2 acres)

As stated above, these survey areas are larger than the proposed alignments themselves, but for conservative evaluation purposes, it was determined that a larger area should be assessed.

All visible ground surface within the project site was examined for cultural material (e.g., flaked stone tools, tool-making debris, stone milling tools, or fire-affected rock), soil discoloration that might indicate the presence of a cultural midden, soil depressions and features indicative of the former presence of structures or buildings (e.g., postholes, foundations), or historic-era debris (e.g., metal, glass, ceramics). Ground disturbances (e.g., unpaved paths, cutbanks, animal burrows, etc.) were visually inspected. A series of surface scrapes to improve ground visibility were accomplished with a handheld trowel within and near the mapped location of the prehistoric archaeological site (P-31-000193, CA-PLA-67) previously recorded within the Placer Greens property.

## Paleontological Assessment

Kenneth L. Finger, Ph.D., prepared a Paleontological Records Search on October 6, 2015 for the project site, and on December 26, 2017 for the off-site improvements area, in order to determine the project's potential to impact significant paleontological resources in the vicinity of the project site.<sup>15</sup> The Paleontological Assessment included investigation of the surficial geology of the project site, as well as a review of the University of California Museum of Paleontology (UCMP) database.

## **Project-Specific Impacts and Mitigation Measures**

The following discussion of impacts is based on implementation of the proposed project in comparison with the standards of significance identified above.

### **7-1 Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in CEQA Guidelines, Section 15064.5. Based on the analysis below, the impact is less than significant.**

Section 15064.5 of the CEQA Guidelines provides instructions for a lead agency to consider the effects of projects on historical resources and cultural resources. A historical resource is a resource listed in, or determined to be eligible for listing in, the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) (Public Resources Code [PRC] Section 21084.1), a resource included in a local register of historical resources (PRC Section 15064.5[a][2]), or any object, building, structure, site, area, place, record, or manuscript which a lead agency determines to be historically significant (PRC Section 15064.5[a][3]). Per National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) eligibility criteria, a resource must be at least 50 years old in order to be considered historic, except in exceptional circumstances.

According to Natural Investigations, the outbuilding on the 25-acre Pruett property is the only existing on-site structure that is at least 50 years old. The outbuilding is a common and ordinary metal outbuilding lacking distinct characteristics in method, construction, materials, design or artistic value, does not appear to be associated with important events or persons, and is unlikely to yield any important information about our history. The outbuilding cannot be linked or associated with specific historical events or individuals that have made significant contributions to local, regional, state or national history. Neither the aforementioned outbuilding, nor any of the other structures located on the project site, qualify as historic resources per the NRHP and/or CRHR criteria.

The existing residential and commercial buildings located on off-site parcels APNs 473-080-006 and 473-090-003 are of modern construction, less than 45 years old, and do not qualify for listing in the CRHR or NRHP. Thus, the buildings do not qualify as historical

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<sup>15</sup> Kenneth L. Finger. *Paleontological Records Search for the Placer Greens Project (PLN15-00053)*. October 6, 2015.

resources.<sup>16</sup> Furthermore, the proposed off-site improvements would avoid development on or near structures, and would, thus, not result in the alteration or disturbance of any, off-site historical resources.

As such, the proposed project, including all off-site improvements, would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in CEQA Guidelines, Section 15064.5, and a *less-than-significant* impact would occur.

Mitigation Measure(s)

*None required.*

**7-2 Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a unique archeological resource pursuant to CEQA Guidelines, Section 15064.5. Based on the analysis below and with implementation of mitigation, the impact is *less than significant*.**

The following section describes the effect of the proposed project on unique archaeological resources potentially occurring within the project site and off-site improvement areas.

Haight, Ogg, and Pruett Properties

Based on the results of the literature search, local ethnographic settlement and subsistence patterns, and the prehistory and history of the area, the Haight, Ogg, and Pruett properties were determined by Natural Investigations to be moderately sensitive for cultural resources. Although cultural resources have not been previously recorded within the three properties, prehistoric archaeological sites have been documented less than one mile away along the main Dry Creek channel and the channel's tributaries.

Nonetheless, the project site has been extensively disturbed by at least 50 years of agricultural land use with row crops and orchards, by grading, by construction of modern buildings, structures, driveways and paved parking areas, by the establishment and operation of the commercial Haight Nursery, and by creation of a man-made pond. Based on the prior disturbance, the potential for discovery of buried archaeological materials, features, or deposits on the Haight, Ogg, and Pruett properties is considered low.

Placer Greens Property

As described above, one prehistoric site (CA-PLA-67) has been identified within the Placer Greens property. The milling implements previously recorded at the prehistoric site are evidence of processing acorns or seeds for consumption. The site has been heavily disturbed by collection of historic artifacts by property owners, as well as agricultural plowing activities in the site vicinity, and surface manifestations of the site were not observed during the survey of the property conducted by Natural Investigations. However, the main Dry Creek channel and an associated prehistoric village site are less than one half-

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<sup>16</sup> Natural Investigations Company. *Cultural and Paleontological Resources Inventory for the Mill Creek Off-Site Improvements Project, Placer County, California* [pg. 22]. January 2, 2018.

mile from the property, and additional prehistoric archaeological sites have been recorded along Dry Creek in the greater project vicinity in Placer County.

During the prehistoric, protohistoric, and historic periods, Native Americans established temporary resource gathering or processing camps or permanent settlements near fresh water sources. In addition, watered locations provided habitat for large and small game, waterfowl, and fish. The historic configurations of the Dry Creek tributaries within the project site have been retained. Furthermore, the Nisenan, who historically occupied the region, relied on acorns as a staple food, and the oak woodland on the Placer Greens property is undoubtedly similar to historic woodlands along Dry Creek.

Although previously documented cultural material was limited to surface scatters, intact, buried cultural features or deposits may be present within additional areas within the Placer Greens Property that have not been previously heavily disturbed by agricultural land use or graded parking areas. Prehistoric and ethnohistoric materials might include flaked stone tools, tool-making debris, stone milling tools, fire-affected rock, basketry, culturally modified animal bone, fishing implements, or soil darkened by cultural activities (midden). Considering the results of the literature search, local ethnographic settlement and subsistence patterns, and the prehistory and history of the area, the Placer Greens property was determined by Natural Investigations to be highly sensitive for buried prehistoric or ethnohistoric cultural resources. However, upon development of the proposed project, the most sensitive areas of the Placer Greens property would be retained as open space, thus minimizing potential for development of the Placer Greens property to impact archaeological resources.

The exception to this is the potential ultimate widening of PFE Road, which would not be required as part of the proposed project, but is being evaluated in this EIR at the request of the County. The potential ultimate widening would occur on the southern half of PFE Road, and would thus be expected to temporarily disturb the tributary along the east side of the Placer Greens property and its surrounding habitats, which are sensitive areas with respect to having greater potential to contain archaeological resources.

#### Off-Site Improvement Areas

Archaeological resources were not identified or recorded during the survey of off-site improvement areas conducted by Natural Investigations, and cultural resources have not been previously recorded in the areas proposed for the alignment alternatives under consideration for the proposed off-site improvements. The Dry Creek drainage is considered highly sensitive for the presence of archaeological sites. A number of archaeological sites have been previously mapped along the Dry Creek drainage, including a village site (CA-PLA-41) less than one mile west of the proposed project site. However, based on the results of the records review, field survey, and assessment of impacts conducted by Natural Investigations, as well as the age of the underlying alluvial deposits, the potential for the discovery of buried archaeological materials within the proposed off-site improvement areas is low. Nonetheless, because off-site sewer alignment Alternative 2 would require a bore and jack crossing under Dry Creek, such work could have a higher

potential to encounter buried archaeological resources. The tributary along the eastern portion of the project site, that flows under PFE Road, and would require a sewer pipe bore and jack crossing for both Alternatives 2 and 4, would also be considered sensitive for archaeological resources.

The potential for buried sites versus the probability of locating a buried site depends on a number of site-specific variables. The parcels within the proposed off-site disturbance areas have been disturbed by former agricultural practices, grading and construction of roadways, residences, commercial businesses or storage areas, and historic flooding of Dry Creek. In addition, the presence of buried archaeological deposits in the alluvial sediments underlying the four off-site parcels is very low, as the rock units (Turlock Lake and Modesto [lower member] formations) are older than archeological evidence for the presence of humans in the region. Older buried archaeological deposits are rare in the Sacramento Valley, and known deposits in the immediate vicinity of the off-site improvement areas do not exist. Thus, the probability that intact prehistoric, ethnohistoric, or historic-era archaeological sites are present within the majority of the proposed off-site improvement areas is considered low.

### Conclusion

Based on the above, archaeological resources are not anticipated to occur on the Ogg, Haight, or Pruett properties. However, the Placer Greens property was determined by Natural Investigations to be highly sensitive for buried prehistoric or ethnohistoric cultural resources, and the potential exists for previously undiscovered archaeological resources to occur on any of the four properties included in the project site. While the potential to encounter buried archaeological materials during off-site improvements is low, portions of the proposed off-site improvement areas associated with the Dry Creek drainage area, specifically related to the bore and jack crossing under Dry Creek proposed for off-site sewer alignment Alternative 2, and the bore and jack crossing under the tributary to Dry Creek for both sewer alternatives, could be considered more sensitive for the presence of buried archaeological resources. Therefore, construction activities associated with buildout of the proposed project, including a portion of the off-site improvement areas, could adversely affect archaeological resources, and a *significant* impact could occur

### Mitigation Measure(s)

Implementation of the following mitigation measures would reduce the above impact to a *less-than-significant* level.

- 7-2(a) *If potential archaeological resources, cultural resources, articulated, or disarticulated human remains are discovered during ground-disturbing activities associated with the proposed project, all work within 100 feet of the find shall cease and the applicant shall retain an archaeologist meeting the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards in prehistoric or historical archaeology, as appropriate, to evaluate the finds. Native American Representatives from culturally affiliated Native American Tribes shall also be notified. If the resource is determined to be*

*eligible for inclusion in the California Register Historical Resources and project impacts cannot be avoided, data recovery shall be undertaken. Data recovery efforts could range from rapid photographic documentation to extensive excavation depending upon the physical nature of the resource. The degree of effort shall be determined at the discretion of a qualified archaeologist and shall be sufficient to recover data considered important to the area's history and/or prehistory. The language of this mitigation measure shall be included on any future grading plans, utility plans, and improvement plans approved by the Placer County Engineering and Surveying Division for the proposed project.*

*Placer Greens Property, Off-Site Sewer Alignment Alternatives, and Potential Ultimate Widening of PFE Road*

- 7-2(b) *Prior to initiation of ground-disturbing activities, qualified archaeologists shall conduct a short awareness training session for all construction workers and supervisory personnel. The course would explain the importance of, and legal basis for, the protection of significant archaeological resources. Each worker would also learn the proper procedures to follow in the event cultural resources or human remains/burials are uncovered during construction activities, including work curtailment or redirection and to immediately contact their supervisor and the archaeological monitor. The worker education session shall include visuals of artifacts (prehistoric and historic) that might be found in the project vicinity, and shall take place on the construction site immediately prior to the start of construction.*

*Placer Greens Property and Potential Ultimate Widening of PFE Road*

- 7-2(c) *During any ground-disturbing activities within 100 feet of the recorded boundaries of the prehistoric site located on the Placer Greens property (CA-PLA-67), and within the approximately 0.88-acre bramble-covered area in the northeastern corner of the property along the Dry Creek tributary, a qualified archaeologist shall be present to act as a monitor. The monitor shall meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archaeology. Local Native American tribes or groups that have responded to the request for information regarding sacred lands or other heritage sites that might be impacted by the proposed project shall be apprised by the applicant of the construction schedule and be afforded the opportunity to provide a tribal monitor at their discretion for construction or ground-disturbing activity in native soils or sediments within 100 feet (30 meters) of the recorded boundaries of prehistoric site P-31-000193 (CA-PLA-67).*

*If potential archaeological resources, articulated, or disarticulated human remains are discovered by Monitors from interested Native American*

*Tribes, qualified cultural resources specialists, or other project personnel during construction activities, work shall cease in the immediate vicinity of the find (based on the apparent distribution of cultural resources), whether or not a Native American Monitor from an interested Native American Tribe is present. A qualified cultural resources specialist and Native American Representatives and Monitors from culturally affiliated Native American Tribes will assess the significance of the find and make recommendations for further evaluation and treatment as necessary. Such recommendations shall be documented in the project record. For any recommendations made by interested Native American Tribes which are not implemented, a justification for why the recommendation was not followed shall be provided in the project record.*

*If adverse impacts to Tribal Cultural Resources, unique archeology, or other cultural resources occurs, then consultation with the appropriate tribe regarding mitigation contained in the Public Resources Code sections 21084.3(a) and (b) and CEQA Guidelines section 15370 shall occur, in order to coordinate for compensation for the impact by replacing or providing substitute resources or environments.*

**7-3 Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature. Based on the analysis below and with implementation of mitigation, the impact is less than significant.**

According to the Paleontological Records Search, geologic maps show that the general area of the proposed project site consists solely of Pleistocene alluvial sediments. The sediments, from youngest to oldest, are the Modesto Formation (Qm), the Riverbank Formation (Qr), undifferentiated Modesto-Riverbank formations (Qmr), and the Turlock Lake Formation (Qtl). The Turlock Lake Formation covers the entire project site.

Fossil occurrences within Pleistocene alluvium is generally unpredictable. However, the Turlock Lake Formation has yielded highly significant fossils. While such finds were made outside of Placer County and adjacent counties, the finds indicate that the Turlock Lake Formation units can have a high paleontological sensitivity.

The results of the record search indicate that unique geological or paleontological features have not been identified in the immediate project vicinity; however, while unlikely, the possibility exists that previously unknown resources could be discovered on the project site as a result of ground-disturbing activities associated with the proposed project, including activities associated with required off-site improvements. As such, construction activities associated with buildout of the proposed project, including off-site improvements, could uncover undocumented unique paleontological resources or unique geological features. Therefore, a *significant* impact related to direct or indirect destruction of such resources could occur.

Mitigation Measure(s)

Implementation of the following mitigation measure would reduce the above impact to a *less-than-significant* level.

7-3            *During construction activities, if any non-human vertebrate bones or teeth are found, all work shall be halted in the immediate vicinity of the discovery, and the applicant shall notify the Placer County Community Development Resources Agency and retain a qualified paleontologist to inspect the discovery. If deemed significant with respect to authenticity, completeness, preservation, and identification, the resource(s) shall then be salvaged and deposited in an accredited and permanent scientific institution (e.g., University of California Museum of Paleontology [UCMP] or Sierra College), where the discovery would be properly curated and preserved for the benefit of current and future generations. The language of this mitigation measure shall be included on any future grading plans, utility plans, and improvement plans approved by the Placer County Engineering and Surveying Division for the proposed project, where excavation work would be required.*

**7-4    Restrict existing religious or sacred uses within the potential impact area or have the potential to cause a physical change, which could affect unique ethnic cultural values. Based on the analysis below, the impact is *less than significant*.**

As noted previously, Natural Investigations contacted the NAHC on February 17, 2015, requesting a search of their Sacred Lands File for traditional cultural resources within or near the Placer Greens, Haight, Ogg, and Pruett properties contained within the proposed project site. A second Sacred Lands File search was completed for the proposed off-site improvement areas on December 4, 2017. The searches failed to indicate the presence of Native American sacred lands or traditional cultural properties within the immediate area of any of the properties or within the off-site improvement areas. It should be noted that the absence of specific site information in the Sacred Lands File does not necessarily indicate the absence of cultural resources.

Nonetheless, given the results of the Sacred Lands File search and the lack of information regarding other religious or unique ethnically valuable uses potentially occurring within the proposed project site or off-site improvement areas, it is assumed that the neither the site nor the off-site areas are associated with any known existing religious, sacred, or ethnically valuable uses. Therefore, a *less-than-significant* impact would occur.

Mitigation Measure(s)

*None required.*

**7-5 Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside formal cemeteries. Based on the analysis below and with implementation of mitigation, the impact is *less than significant*.**

Procedures of conduct following the discovery of human remains on non-federal lands in California have been mandated by Health and Safety Code §7050.5, PRC §5097.98 and the California Code of Regulations (CCR) §15064.5(e) (CEQA). As noted previously, the Placer Greens property was determined by Natural Investigations to be highly sensitive for buried prehistoric or ethnohistoric cultural resources, and, thus, previously undiscovered human remains are most likely to be located on the property relative to the remainder of the project site. However, upon development of the proposed project, the most sensitive areas of the Placer Greens property would be retained as open space, thus minimizing potential for development of the Placer Greens property to impact human remains.

Although human remains or evidence thereof was not identified during the site surveys conducted by Natural Investigations, including the survey of the proposed off-site improvement areas, the potential for unknown human remains to be discovered during construction cannot be eliminated given the known prehistoric occupation of the vicinity by Native American tribes. As a result, the proposed project could have a *significant* impact to human remains.

Mitigation Measure(s)

Implementation of the following mitigation measure would reduce the above impact to a *less-than-significant* level.

- 7-5 *If human remains are encountered on the proposed project site or off-site improvement areas during construction activities, all work within 100 feet of the find must cease, and any necessary steps to ensure the integrity of the immediate area must be taken. The Placer County Coroner shall be immediately notified. If the Coroner determines the remains are of Native American origin, the Coroner shall notify the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) within 24 hours. The NAHC shall determine and notify a Most Likely Descendent (MLD). Further actions shall be determined, in part, by the desires of the MLD. The MLD shall be afforded 48 hours to make recommendations regarding the disposition of the remains following notification from the NAHC of the discovery. If the MLD does not make recommendations within 48 hours, the owner shall, with appropriate dignity, reinter the remains in an area of the property secure from further disturbance. Alternatively, if the owner does not accept the MLD's recommendations, the owner or the descendent may request mediation by the NAHC.*

**7-6 Cause a substantial change in the significance of a Tribal Cultural Resource as defined in Public Resources Code, Section 21074. Based on the analysis below and with implementation of mitigation, the impact is *less than significant*.**

As part of AB 52 requirements, the County sent project notification letters with offers to consult to the Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California, the United Auburn Indian Community (UAIC) of the Auburn Rancheria, T'Si-Akim Maidu, and the Shingle Springs Band of Miwok Indians on December 13, 2016. In addition, SB 18 notification letters were sent to the aforementioned tribes on April 14, 2017. The 90-day response period for SB 18 ended on July 12, 2017. Requests to consult under SB 18 were not received. A request to consult on the proposed project under AB 52 was received from the UAIC of the Auburn Rancheria and consultation was subsequently closed on July 25, 2017 following agreement by the County to incorporate an Inadvertent Discoveries mitigation measure in the EIR (see Mitigation Measure 7-2[a] above). The Shingle Springs Band of Miwok Indians responded that their tribe is unaware of any known Tribal Cultural Resources on the project site. At the request of the Shingle Springs Band of Miwok Indians, the County provided the project's cultural records searches and surveys. Furthermore, as a result of Natural Investigations initial efforts to reach out to local tribes, a request for consultation was received from the Colfax-Todd Valley Consolidated Tribe on March 16, 2015.

As noted previously, records searches of the NAHC Sacred Lands File failed to indicate the presence of Native American sacred lands or traditional cultural properties within the project site vicinity or the proposed off-site improvement areas. Nonetheless, per Impact 7-2 above, the Placer Greens property contains a prehistoric site (CA-PLA-67). Considering the results of the literature search, local ethnographic settlement and subsistence patterns, and the prehistory and history of the area, the Placer Greens property was determined by Natural Investigations to be highly sensitive for buried prehistoric or ethnohistoric cultural resources, which could include Tribal Cultural Resources. In addition, portions of the proposed off-site improvement areas associated with the Dry Creek drainage area, specifically related to the bore and jack crossing under Dry Creek proposed for off-site sewer alignment Alternative 2, could be considered sensitive for the presence of buried archaeological resources. While the site and the off-site improvement areas have generally been subject to heavy disturbance, previously undiscovered Tribal Cultural Resources could potentially occur within areas where construction is proposed as part of the proposed project.

Based on the above, Tribal Cultural Resources associated with local tribes could potentially occur in the vicinity of the project site and the proposed off-site improvement areas. Thus, ground-disturbing activities associated with the proposed project could cause a substantial change in the significance of a Tribal Cultural Resource as defined in Public Resources Code, Section 21074, and a *significant* impact could occur.

Mitigation Measure(s)

Implementation of the following mitigation measure would reduce the above impact to a *less-than-significant* level.

7-6            *Implement Mitigation Measures 7-2(a) through 7-2(d).*