

CHAPTER 6.0

Additional Statutory Considerations

6.1 Introduction

CEQA requires analysis of the growth inducing impacts, cumulative impacts, and long-term effects of proposed projects. The following sections address these issues as they relate to implementation of the proposed project.

6.2 Growth Inducing Effects of the Proposed Project

The CEQA *Guidelines* Section 15126.2(d) require that an EIR evaluate the growth-inducing impacts of a proposed action. A growth-inducing impact is defined by the CEQA Guidelines as:

[T]he ways in which the proposed project could foster economic or population growth, or the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment. Included in this are projects which would remove obstacles to population growth ... It must not be assumed that growth in any area is necessarily beneficial, detrimental, or of little significance to the environment.

New employees from commercial and industrial development and new population from residential development represent direct forms of growth. These direct forms of growth have a secondary effect of expanding the size of local markets and inducing additional economic activity in the area. Examples of development that would indirectly facilitate growth are the installation of new roadways and the construction or expansion of water delivery or treatment facilities.

A project could indirectly induce growth by removing barriers to growth, by creating a condition that attracts additional population or new economic activity, or by providing a catalyst for future unrelated growth in the area. While a project may have a potential to induce growth, it does not automatically result in growth. Growth can happen only through capital investment in new economic opportunities by the public or private sectors.

Typically, the growth-inducing potential of a project is considered significant if it fosters growth or a concentration of population in excess of the existing setting or baseline. Growth may be induced through the provision of infrastructure or service capacity that would accommodate new development.

In order to comply with state general plan law, the proposed project must provide sufficient opportunities for new residential growth. Based on the definition of growth inducement, a general plan is inherently growth-inducing because it must accommodate at least projected housing

demand. Accordingly, the County's proposed 2035 General Plan is premised on a certain amount of growth taking place as more fully described in Chapter 3.0 "Project Description" of this DEIR. The focus of the County's 2035 General Plan is to provide a framework in which the growth can be managed in order to best suit the needs of the County. However, it is the implementation of land use policies that will incrementally increase demands for public services, utilities, and infrastructure.

6.3 Cumulative Impacts

This section discusses the cumulative impacts of the proposed project. CEQA Guidelines define a cumulative impact as one in which two or more individual effects, when considered together, are considerable or that compound or increase other environmental impacts. The individual effects may be changes resulting from a single project or a number of separate projects. The cumulative impact from several projects is the change in the environment which results from the incremental impact of the project when added to other closely related past, present, and reasonably foreseeable probable future projects.

Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor but collectively significant projects taking place over a period of time (CEQA Guidelines Section 15355). CEQA Guidelines Section 15130 describes the requirements for the discussion of cumulative impacts in an EIR. It states that an EIR will discuss cumulative impacts of a project when the project's incremental effect is cumulatively considerable. The discussion will reflect the severity of the impacts and their likelihood of occurrence, but the discussion need not provide as much detail as is provided for the impacts attributable to the project alone. In addition, the CEQA Guidelines allow for a project's contribution to be rendered less than cumulatively considerable with implementation of appropriate mitigation.

The geographic scope defines the area within which a proposed project and related projects may contribute to a specific cumulative impact. The geographic scope of the cumulative impact analysis varies depending upon the specific environmental issue being analyzed. The geographic scope for each environmental issue analyzed in this EIR is identified below.

In addition, CEQA Guidelines Section 15130(b) allows for the use of two alternative methods to determine the scope of projects for the cumulative impact analysis:

- **List Method** – A list of past, present, and probable future projects producing related or cumulative impacts, including, if necessary, those projects outside the control of the agency.
- **Regional Growth Projections Method** – A summary of projects contained in an adopted general plan or related planning document or in a prior environmental document which has been adopted or certified, which described or evaluated regional or area wide conditions contributing to the cumulative impact.

The proposed project establishes policy to guide future development within the Planning Area, and implementation is long-term in nature. The Regional Growth Projections Method is

considered an appropriate methodology for evaluating the cumulative impacts of the proposed project because it provides overall growth projections for the region over the long-term.

6.3.1 Growth Projections

Given the broad geographic scope considered for cumulative impacts associated with implementation of the proposed project, this analysis relies upon the population projections gathered from a variety of sources, in addition to the projections contained in relevant plans. These population projections and sources are summarized below in **Table 6-1**. The table also identifies the long range planning efforts (recent general plan updates) for surrounding jurisdictions, including Sierra County, Butte County, Tehama County, and Lassen County. As appropriate, the key cumulative environmental impacts from the respective environmental documents of these long range planning efforts are also summarized in the table.

**TABLE 6-1
REGIONAL POPULATION PROJECTIONS AND PLANNING EFFORTS**

Jurisdiction/Region (1)	Existing Population	Population Projections for 2035		
Sierra County	3,152	3,140		
Butte County	221,273	290,186		
Tehama County	63,177	78,823		
Lassen County	34,167	39,069		

Jurisdiction/Region	General Plan Planning Timeframe	Existing Population	General Plan Build out Population	Significant Environmental Impacts
Sierra County (2)	1996-2012	3,318	4,110	Agriculture; Aesthetics; and Biological Resources
Butte County (3)	2010-2030	83,900	117,700	Agriculture; Hydrology and Water Quality; Land Use; Noise; Transportation and Circulation.
Tehama County (4)	2008-2028	40,936	63,385	Aesthetics; Agriculture; Air Quality; Biological Resources; Hazardous Materials; Hydrology and Water Quality; Population and Housing; Traffic and Circulation; Utilities and Services Systems.
Lassen County (5)	2000-2020			Agriculture; Aesthetics; and Biological Resources

Source: (1)Demographic Research Unit, California Department of Finance, May 2012; (2)Sierra County General Plan, 2012 (3)Butte County General Plan 2030 EIR 2010; (4) Tehama County General Plan EIR, 2008 (5)Lassen County General Plan, 2000

6.3.2 Geographic Scope

The geographic area that could be affected by the proposed project varies depending on the type of environmental resource being considered. The general geographic area associated with different environmental effects of the proposed project, and the location of adopted plans or related projects, define the boundaries of the area considered in the cumulative impact analysis.

Table 6-2 presents the general geographic areas associated with the different resources addressed in this DEIR analysis.

**TABLE 6-2
GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE OF CUMULATIVE IMPACTS**

Cumulative Impact Topic	Geographic Scope
Land Use and Aesthetics	Plumas County
Transportation/Traffic	Plumas and Lassen Counties
Air Quality	Mountain Counties Air Basin
Climate Changes	California (for GHG Emissions)
Noise	Plumas County
Hydrology and Water Quality	Feather River Watershed
Geology/Soils/Mineral Resources	Plumas County
Hazards and Hazardous Materials	Plumas County
Public Services, Utilities, and Recreation	Plumas County
Agricultural Resources	Plumas County and Sierra Valley
Biological Resources	Feather River Watershed
Cultural Resources	Plumas County

6.3.3 Cumulative Impact Analysis by Issue Area

Land Use and Aesthetics

As described in Section 4.1 Land Use and Aesthetics, implementation of the proposed project to the 2035 planning horizon would result in an increase in growth, land uses changes, and the construction of infrastructure/transportation improvements that would result in potential effects to land use consistency and important visual resources. The proposed project has been developed with the primary goal of insuring that future growth will occur in a concise, orderly pattern consistent with the economic, social, and environmental needs of the specific communities that can accommodate future planned population growth. This concept of orderly growth will help future land use planning decisions balance the development of needed infrastructure within existing and proposed community areas so that community continuity is maintained within these areas. The proposed project has been developed with the primary goal of insuring that future growth will occur in an orderly manner, which will help to prevent urban sprawl and ensure community-wide compatibility. However, new development resulting from implementation of the proposed project over the 2035 planning horizon would result in the permanent conversion of some undeveloped land to urban uses resulting in visual changes and additional nighttime lighting.

Policies and implementation programs included as part of the proposed project that would minimize this impact are summarized below by general plan element. For example, the Land Use, Economics, and Circulation Elements provide guidance on the future development of community areas and roadways to ensure the orderly placement of compatible land uses near existing similar land uses (see policies LU-1.1.1, LU-1.2.2, E-5.1.4) while promoting a variety of smart growth land use concepts (see policies CIR-4.2.1 and PHS-6.8.2 “Walkable Communities” from the Public Health and Safety Element). Other policies from the Circulation Element promote the

development of cohesive land uses by encouraging a balanced transportation system that also facilitates the use of alternative modes of transportation (see policies CIR-4.2.2 and CIR-4.4.2) that do not physically divide neighborhoods. The Land Use Element also includes a specific set of policies to encourage compatible development with the neighboring City of Portola (see policy LU-1.3.1 “Working with the City of Portola” and LU-1.3.2 “County and City of Portola’s General Plan Consistency”).

Future development can also physically divide existing neighborhoods through the development of new land uses in a manner that contributes to the abandonment or neglect of older neighborhoods (including central or downtown areas). The Land Use, Economics, and Conservation/Open Space Elements contain a variety of policies that encourage the preservation of existing historic areas and older neighborhoods (see Policies LU-1.1.2, LU-1.3.3, E-5.6.11, COS-7.5.1, COS-7.5.10, and COS-7.6.4). Policy LU-1.3.3 specifically addresses this issue with future development within the City of Portola’s Sphere of Influence. Additionally, Policy AG/FOR 8.2.8 encourages the County to maintain, rehabilitate, and restore historic era ranches and farms.

A variety of other policies from the Land Use, Economics, Noise, and Conservation/Open Space Elements promote community cohesiveness by encouraging the placement of compatible land uses (see Policies LU-1.2.2, E-5.1.4, N- 3.1.3, COS-7.1.2, COS-7.1.3, and COS-7.2.14) and the development of environmentally sensitive land uses.

The proposed project provides a variety of policies designed to maintain and enhancement the visual quality of the County and its surroundings. For example, by adopting the Land Use and Open Space and Conservation Elements, the County is taking proactive steps to improve its visual character. For example, the Land Use Element focuses on policies designed to address land use compatibility concerns (see Policy LU-1.2.2). The Open Space and Conservation Element includes a number of policies have the common goal of improving the visual quality of the County by maintaining or enhancing existing scenic resource conditions (including scenic conditions along roadways) developing guidelines to improve future development projects, and address the visual impacts of signs and billboards(see Policies COS-7.6.1 through COS-7.6.5). Policy COS-7.5.1 requires the County to encourage the continued historic preservation and revitalization of housing and business sectors within the County. Policy AG/FOR-8.2.8 encourages the maintenance, rehabilitation, and restoration of historic era ranches and farms. Additional policies encourage community development standards that promote infill development that is both consistent and compatibility with existing development (see policies LU-1.1.2 “Infill Development”, COS-7.5.10 “Community Character”, and COS-7.6.4 “Community Design”).

Other sections of the Open Space and Conservation Element include a variety of policies designed to preserve the existing rural character of the County through the preservation of open space and agricultural land uses. For example, COS-7.1.3 requires the County to collaborate with a variety of resource agencies to monitor County resources over time provide input to advance the County’s interest in land management issues. Policy COS-7.1.4 encourages continued use of public and private conservation easements programs that protect important natural resource and

open space areas. Policy COS-7.2.4 promotes the protection of County stream corridors and Policy W-9.4.1 will require new development projects to mitigate potential impacts to surface water, recreation, agricultural, and wildlife habitat areas. Policy COS-7.2.14 calls for the integration of natural landscapes (i.e., rivers, streams, riparian areas) into new development as a way to enhance the aesthetic and natural character of individual locations within the County. The Conservation and Open Space Element also includes Policy COS-7.6.6 “Lighting and Night Sky Protection” which requires the County to ensure that new develop design and configure new light sources to reduce light pollution, glare, and nuisance light spillage.

A significant cumulative impact to land use in the year 2035 would result if the combination of impacts of the proposed project and the impacts from the growth projections in adopted plans (identified in Table 6-1) within Plumas County were significant when combined together, even if not independently significant. As a comprehensive planning document, the General Plan establishes land use concepts, and sets forth goals and policies to guide future development and preserve natural and agricultural areas from urban encroachment. Consequently, development of the proposed project has been completed to be internally consistent between the various General Plan Elements. Consequently, the goals and policies of the proposed project are internally consistent. Therefore, no internal conflicts would occur. Additionally, the proposed project has been developed to ensure consistency and compatibility with other local and regional planning documents. Therefore, with implementation of the proposed project and policies from other regional general plans, this impact would be *less than cumulatively considerable*.

A significant cumulative impact to aesthetics and visual resources would result if the combination of impacts of the proposed project and the impact projections from adopted plans and population projections (identified in Table 6-1) were significant when combined together, even if not independently significant. New development by itself would potentially result in adverse impacts to the visual character and quality of the County. While the proposed new growth is considered relatively small and would be focused within the various Planning Areas identified under the proposed project, future development would result in the conversion of undeveloped land to urban uses, with some Planning Areas within the Almanor and Mohawk Valley Geographic Areas experiencing a greater degree of development (and greater changes in their visual appearance) versus development proposed within the Indian Valley Geographic Area. While these developed uses would primarily be located within areas that already support urban development (Planning Areas), the introduction of additional urban development within these areas would irreversibly alter the localized visual character of these portions of the unincorporated county. Because aesthetic and visual resource impacts throughout Plumas County would be significant, and because the proposed project’s incremental aesthetic and visual resource impacts are significant, the proposed project’s incremental visual impacts are also *cumulatively considerable*.

Traffic and Circulation

Cumulative traffic impacts are addressed in Section 4.2 of the DEIR.

Air Quality

The proposed project is generally consistent with the objectives of the NSAQMD and includes policies specifically developed to ensure continued coordination with the NSAQMD (see Policy 7.9.1 “Cooperation with Other Agencies”) and other agencies to achieve better air quality conditions. However, vehicle traffic associated with growth under the proposed project would generate emissions of ROG and PM10 that would exceed the daily thresholds established by the NSAQMD. Specific policies direct the reduction of air emissions associated with transportation by encouraging transit use (see policies CIR-4.2.2 and CIR-4.3.1 through 4.3.3), bicycle/pedestrian access (see policies CIR-4.4.1 through 4.4.3), and ridesharing activities (see Policy CIR-4.3.4). Additional policies call for a variety of strategies designed to improve air quality through land use planning and economic activities (see policies LU-1.1.1 through LU-1.1.3, LU-1.1.5, and ECON 5.9.2 through ECON 5.9.7) that help to reduce vehicle miles travelled. Implementation of these various policies and the development of future transportation projects would ultimately help to reduce vehicle idling and have a corresponding reduction in mobile-source air quality emissions. However, this will not avoid contributions of ozone precursors along roads that will suffer increased congestion as a result of the proposed project, nor would it reduce vehicle miles travelled. Further mitigation is infeasible, as described in Section 4.2 “Traffic and Circulation” and Section 4.3 “Air Quality” of this DEIR. Thus, the proposed project’s incremental contribution to these air quality impacts would be *cumulatively considerable*.

There is also the reasonable possibility that, at the project level, there may be future individual developments whose construction emissions will exceed the NSAQMD’s standards. Such cases are rare in that large projects are practically always subject to discretionary permits that require CEQA review. As part of the CEQA process, future mitigation measures would be developed in cooperation with the NSAQMD to bring construction emissions below standards. This is unlikely to contribute to the cumulative effect on air quality.

Energy and Climate Change

Climate change is a global phenomenon driven by myriad individual actions, large and small, in every country. As described in Section 4.4 of the DEIR “Energy and Climate Change” no individual project within Plumas County is large enough in itself to trigger global climate change. However, most individual projects contribute to the greenhouse gas emissions that fuel climate change. Climate change is a cumulative impact. Accordingly, the climate change analysis in Section 4.4 is an analysis of the project’s contribution to this cumulative impact. The reader is directed to that section.

The cumulative context considered for energy consumption is Plumas County. Energy consumption impacts are described in Section 4.4, “Energy and Climate Change”. Impact 4.4-3 identifies the proposed project’s potential impacts to energy consumption as less than significant impacts. As described for direct impacts, implementation of general plan policies would reduce energy consumption by requiring new development to incorporate measures to reduce construction and operational energy, as well as encouraging new employers to provide incentives

for their employees to carpool, telecommute, or use transit. Other policies encourage compact and infill development, as well as additional employment and retail opportunities, to promote walking or biking to destinations consistent with the existing land use patterns of the various Planning Areas within Plumas County. Additional policies require the installation of energy efficient lighting (consistent with current County activities) and appliances, as well as renewable energy systems (i.e., solar, etc.) and to encourage the use of alternative modes of transportation to reduce vehicular travel. Therefore, implementation of these land use and energy consumption measures would not result in or contribute to a cumulatively considerable impact. This impact would be *less than cumulatively considerable*.

Hydrology, Water Quality, and Drainage

Construction Period Water Quality

The cumulative context considered for water quality is the Upper Feather River watershed. With respect to water quality and the potential to exceed water quality standards during construction, as described for direct impacts, implementation of the proposed project would require acquisition of coverage under the SWRCB's Construction General NPDES permit. Requirements and conditions for the Construction General NPDES permit are implemented so as to prevent degradation of downstream beneficial use. Therefore, although some small degree of residual degradation of downstream water quality could occur as a result of project construction, NPDES permit conditions would limit potential for such discharges to result in or contribute to a cumulatively considerable impact. This impact would be *less than cumulatively considerable*.

Habitation Period Water Quality

With respect to habitation period water quality, potential discharges of water quality pollutants from anticipated industrial facilities, including stormwater discharges, would be regulated by applicable NPDES permits. As described for the Construction General NPDES permit above, adherence to the conditions of these permits would be anticipated to minimize potential for contributions of the proposed project to cumulative water quality impacts. With respect to discharges of stormwater from other uses within the project area during habitation, including residential uses, commercial uses, and other non-industrial uses, potential for discharge of water quality pollutants from these areas would be minimized via adherence to the mitigating policies contained in the General Plan including Policy W-9.2.5 which relates specifically to monitoring construction activities through NPDES enforcement, requiring the use of BMPs. Policy W-9.2.1 requires the County to support and assist in the development and implementation of TMDLs for the impaired water bodies and pollutants of concern identified by the RWQCB. Policy W-9.2.4 requires the County to design, construction, and maintain County facilities that minimize sediment and other water quality pollutants. Additionally, Policy W-9.2.4 requires the County to cooperate with wildlife management and fire protection agencies and implement a variety of post-fire erosion, sedimentation, and other water quality measures. Policies W-9.7.4 and W-9.7.5 require that all new development (including drainage systems) comply with applicable regulations regarding non-point source pollutant discharge requirements.

With respect to cumulative scenario projects within the Upper Feather River watershed, it is presumed for the purposes of this analysis that cumulative scenario projects would be required, under CEQA, to adhere to or implement similar stormwater quality control measures, in order to minimize potential water quality degradation. Therefore, in consideration of all anticipated cumulative scenario projects, a cumulative impact to water quality is not anticipated, and the proposed project would result in a *less than cumulatively considerable* impact.

Groundwater Level

With respect to groundwater depletion, as described for direct impacts, additional development associated with implementation of the proposed project would increase demand on groundwater supplies in some areas and the associated increased well pumping would result in the continued decline of groundwater levels within portions of the County even with implementation of the policies and mitigation specified with respect to groundwater preservation. In addition to pumping, implementation of the proposed project could also affect groundwater levels indirectly, by reducing the net volume of stormwater that is able to recharge the underlying aquifer. Other regional projects that would rely on groundwater could also contribute to additional drawdown within the vicinity of the Planning Areas or region. While pumping would not result in the exceedance of any adjudicated or other institutionalized groundwater management threshold, groundwater levels would still drawdown. Therefore, when viewed in consideration of all cumulative scenario projects relevant to the proposed project, implementation of the proposed project would result in a *cumulatively considerable* impact to groundwater levels. No additional mitigation is available.

Runoff

Implementation of the proposed project would result in development that could affect existing surface drainage patterns or the re-alignment of smaller drainages or waterways within the County. With respect to potential changes in runoff patterns, which could lead to increased erosion or changes in flows, implementation of the proposed project would include adherence to numerous General Plan policies designed to minimize potential impacts associated with changes in stormwater flows and associated erosion issues. These include policies COS-7.3.2, COS-7.3.3, COS-7.3.4, W-9.2.1 through W-9.2.6, W-9.7.1 through W-9.7.6, as well as PHS-6.4.5 through PHS-6.4.8. Implementation of these policies would ensure that potential effects on runoff patterns would be minimized at the direct impact level. With respect to cumulative impacts, additional development and other projects considered within the Feather River watershed (scope of this cumulative analysis) could potentially result in additional changes in runoff patterns, which could lead to changes in flows or erosion patterns. However, it is anticipated that other cumulative projects would be required to implement similar stormwater drainage and erosion management measures or mitigation, in order to comply with CEQA. Therefore, potential increases in stormwater flows or erosion would be minimized for cumulative projects. When considered in concert with other cumulative scenario projects, this impact would be *less than cumulatively considerable*.

Flooding

With respect to flooding, implementation of the proposed project would include adherence to General Plan policies PHS 6.4.1 through PHS-6.4.7. These policies support the protection of housing and residents from risks associated with flooding. For example, Policy PHS-6.4.1 requires the County to continue participation in the National Flood Insurance Program. Additionally policies require the County to maintain eligibility for flood insurance; developments are required to provide a minimum of 100-year flood protection, and development would be regulated in accordance with local, state, and federal requirements with respect to flooding in order to minimize potential flood damage. As described for direct impacts, adherence to these policies would ensure that potential for flooding associated with proposed development would be avoided or minimized. The cumulative analysis for flooding considers the Upper Feather River watershed. It is anticipated that mitigation or avoidance measures for development within a floodplain elsewhere in the watershed would also be required under CEQA, in order to avoid potential floodplain impacts. When viewed in concert with other anticipated cumulative scenario projects, implementation of the proposed project would not increase water levels upstream or downstream, would not otherwise affect or alter flooding outside of the project area, and would not cause or contribute to the installation of facilities within an existing floodplain outside of the project area. Therefore, with adherence to the aforementioned General Plan policies, it is anticipated that this impact would be *less than cumulatively considerable*.

Dam Failure

Dam inundation impacts associated with the placement of housing within these areas are focused on individual locations within Plumas County and are not considered cumulative.

Geology, Soils, Seismicity, and Mineral Resources

As described in Section 4.7 “Geology, Soils, Seismicity, and Mineral Resources”, the increase in regional growth, land uses changes, and the construction of infrastructure/transportation improvements under the proposed project would result in the increased erosion, expose people or structures to geological hazards, and the loss of mineral resources. Potential project-level impacts associated with geology, soils, seismicity and mineral resources would be reduced to a less than significant level due to local, regional, State and federal regulations and the policies presented in Section 4.7.

As previously described, numerous General Plan policies have been designed to ensure a safe environment for the City’s residents, visitors, and businesses and conserve important mineral resources. For example, W-9.2.3, W-9.2.4, W-9.2.5, W-9.2.6, COS-7.2.4, COS-7.3.2 and COS-7.3.4 relate specifically to monitoring design and construction activities through NPDES enforcement, requiring the use of Best Management Practices (BMPs), and other mitigation measures designed to control erosion and protect surface water and groundwater from the adverse effects of construction activities. Other policies from the Public Health and Safety Element include continued compliance with all applicable development requirements (i.e., California Building Code, etc.), the restriction of development in hazardous areas (see policies PHS-6.2.4, PHS-6.2.5 and COS-7.4.7), and limit construction-related activities and development in areas

with slopes in excess of 30 percent or prone to avalanche, landslide or mudflow hazards, which could result in several public safety issues and increased hillside erosion. Additionally, Policies PHS 6.1.1 and PHS 6.1.3 limit development densities to reduce public safety issues and promote awareness and education among residents regarding possible natural hazards, including soil conditions, landslides, earthquakes, flooding, wildfire hazards and emergency procedures. Policies within the Conservation and Open Space and Agriculture and Forestry elements (COS-7.3.5 and AG/FOR-8.6.4) encourage agricultural property owners to use practices and participate in programs that reduce soil erosion and increase soil productivity. Policies COS-7.4.1, COS-7.4.2 and COS-7.4.4 recognize the important contribution of mineral resources to both the local and regional economy and provide for the future conservation of identified and/or potential mineral deposits within the County.

A significant cumulative impact from geology, soils, seismicity and mineral resources would result if the combination of impacts from the proposed project and impacts from other projects in the region are significant when combined together, even if not independently significant. As growth occurs throughout the region, additional people would be exposed to risks associated with geology, soils, and seismic hazards. Additional people may also result in an increased use of mineral resources. However, local, regional, State and federal regulations would apply to development countywide and any mineral extraction activities, thereby reducing the potential for cumulative impacts associated with geologic and soil hazards, as well as to mineral resources to a less than significant level. The proposed project's incremental contribution to these impacts would be *less than cumulatively considerable*.

Hazardous Materials and Public Safety

As described in Section 4.8 "Hazardous Materials and Public Safety", the increase in local population and employment under the proposed project would result in the increased use of hazardous household, commercial and industrial materials. In addition, implementation of the proposed project would result in new development near aviation facilities and in areas potentially at risk of wildfires. Potential project-level impacts associated with hazardous materials and public safety would be reduced to a less than significant level due to local, regional, State and federal regulations, such as those that control the production, use, and transportation of hazardous materials and waste.

As previously described, Public Health and Safety Element provides a number of policies and implementation measures that have been developed to address hazardous materials concerns including the safe storage, use, transportation, and disposal of hazardous materials and continued coordination with the California Highway Patrol to establish procedures for the movement of hazardous waste (see Policies PHS-6.5.1, PHS-6.5.3 and PHS-6.5.9), continued compliance with all applicable local, State, and federal safety standards (see Policy PHS-6.5.8), and the requirement and review of project applications on known or suspected contaminated sites (see Policy PHS-6.5.2) through the preparation of individual hazardous materials site investigations and the requirement that new developments to protect soils, air quality, surface water and groundwater from hazardous material contamination associated with site development and construction activities (see Policy PHS-6.5.4). Other policies require the continued education of

County residents about household hazardous waste and its proper disposal (see Policy PHS-6.5.7) and the promotion of a variety of public safety programs (see Policy PHS-6.1.4) for local residents (including hazardous materials disposal). Policy PHS-6.5.9 requires the County to work with individual project applicants to actively clean-up or remediate properties found to be contaminated by mine waste or other hazardous materials.

Additional policies from both the Land Use and Health and Safety Elements (see Policies LU-1.2.2 and PHS-6.5.5) prevent the placement of incompatible land uses near properties that produce or store hazardous materials. Also, Policy 6.2.6 requires the County to coordinate with the Northern Sierra Air Quality Management District to continue to locate and map locations determined to include soils with naturally occurring asbestos and to mitigate potential hazards to future development.

A significant cumulative impact from hazardous materials and public safety would result if the combination of impacts from the proposed project and the impacts from other projects in the region were significant when combined together, even if not independently significant. As growth occurs throughout the region, additional people would be exposed to risks associated with hazardous materials and aviation hazards. However, local, regional, State and federal regulations would apply to development within the Planning Area, which combined with General Plan policies, reduce the potential for cumulative impacts associated with hazardous materials and public safety to a less than significant level. The proposed project's incremental contribution to these impacts would be *less than cumulatively considerable*.

Wildfire

Large portions of Plumas County are highly susceptible to wildfire. The risk of wildfires is acute in areas of high fuel loading; somewhat less so in moderate fuel loaded areas. As described in Section 4.8 "Hazardous Materials and Public Safety", the proposed project contains detailed requirements for and limitations on future development to avoid contributing to fire risk, limiting damage through provision of defensible space and funding fire suppression services. While these policies would greatly reduce the potential contribution of the proposed project to the risk of wildfires, the proposed project cannot eliminate the risk of catastrophic wildfires originating on public lands sweeping across rural areas despite the best efforts of fire fighters and fire protection activities to slow or halt their approach. Therefore, when viewed in consideration of all cumulative scenario projects relevant to the proposed project, implementation of the proposed project would result in a *cumulatively considerable* impact to wildfire risk. No additional mitigation is available.

Public Services, Recreation and Utilities

Public Services and Recreation

As described in Section 4.9 "Public Services, Recreation and Utilities," future growth associated with the proposed project would result in increased demand on public services, including those to fire protection, law enforcement, recreation facilities, libraries, and other County services within and Planning Areas and the greater County area. However, adequate public services (i.e., police,

fire, schools, library, etc.) will be planned for and funded through County and other service provider fees and funding programs. With implementation of proposed project policies and implementation programs (including the additional required mitigating policies), as well as collection of the County and other service provider required fees and funding programs, this impact of the proposed project on the range of public services (including parks and recreation facilities and programs) is considered less than significant.

A significant cumulative impact to public services and safety would result if the proposed project would contribute to a regional/cumulative intensification in the combined impacts of the proposed project. Thus, a cumulatively considerable impact could occur even if impacts would not otherwise be independently significant. As described in Section 4.9 of the DEIR, the analysis of direct impacts to public services takes into consideration the potential growth associated with the proposed project that would be provided public services within the County. Therein, no significant impact was identified in regards to the provision of fire protection, law enforcement services, libraries, parks and recreation facilities, and other County services, with incorporation of required additional policies LU-1.5.4 “Maintain Existing Levels of Services”, LU-1.5.5 “Fair Share Funding for Public Services and Facilities”, LU-1.5.6 “Coordination with Service Providers”, LU-1.5.7 “Municipal Service Reviews (MSRs)”, LU-1.5.8 “Library Services, Facilities, and Programs”, and LU-1.5.9 “Diverse Health Care Facilities”. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project would not result in a cumulatively considerable impact to fire protection, law enforcement services, libraries, parks and recreation facilities, and other County services. This impact would be *less than cumulatively considerable*.

The geographic context for the analysis of cumulative impacts on schools is the Plumas Unified School District (PUSD) and the Sierra- Plumas Joint Unified School District (SPJUSD), which serve the entire County. All new development within the State is subject to Proposition 1A/Senate Bill 50, which established a statutory amount of allowable development fees to mitigate for new schools facilities. Thus, new growth within the PUSD and the SPJUSD would pay applicable developer fees to fund school facilities. In addition, existing and planned school facilities in the County can accommodate development under the proposed project. It is anticipated that existing and planned schools would be able to accommodate cumulative development. As such, impacts associated with school facilities would be *less than cumulatively considerable*.

Water Supply and Delivery

Because water supply for the proposed project is primarily limited to groundwater, the cumulative context evaluated for water supply matches the cumulative context for groundwater levels – namely, the various groundwater basins that comprise the Feather River Watershed (see Section 4.6 of the DEIR). Future regional growth in these areas would result in a general increase in demand for urban water supply throughout the greater Feather River Watershed.

Generally, as population increases, additional areas of farmland or open space areas are converted to urban uses. Therefore, consumption of water resources by new urban areas is, at least in part, offset by a reduction in agricultural water demand. Within this framework, the ability of local

service providers in the region to continue providing sufficient water supply will vary based on urbanization rates, population density, and water source/supply availability.

As described in Section 4.9 “Public Services, Recreation Resources, and Utilities” of this DEIR, several of the water purveyors in the County are currently experiencing water supply infrastructure deficiencies (as shown in Table 4.9-2). However, the proposed project includes a comprehensive Water Resources Element that addresses these deficiencies by providing policy guidance for a range of water supply issues including water conservation, adequate water supply infrastructure, and groundwater management. These policies include Policy W-9.5.1 “Adequate Water Supply Facilities and Services” requires the County to continue its support of water purveyors infrastructure plans to develop new reliable sources of supply while promoting water conservation and water recycling measures. Policy W-9.5.4 “Water Supply for New Development” require the County to conduct water supply studies (suitable for the size and scale of the proposed development) consistent with Water Code Section 10910 (Senate Bill 610) and Government Code Section 66473.7 (Senate Bill 221). Policy W-9.5.7 “Community Water Systems” requires that any new community water system serving planned development and operated by a public or private entity to demonstrate adequate financial, managerial, and operational resources. Policy W-9.5.9 “Funding for Water Supply Improvements” requires the County to support water/wastewater purveyors use of equitable methods to finance public facility design, construction, operation, and maintenance. The Water Resources Element also includes a variety of water conservation policies (see policies W-9.8.1 through W-9.8.7) that seek to minimize water consumption associated with planned growth. Policy W-9.8.2 requires the County to support new development and practices that use recycled water wherever practical. Policy W-9.8.3 requires the County to support compact forms of development that minimize the conversion of additional open space areas and support continued groundwater recharge activities.

Under future cumulative scenario conditions, it is possible that additional drawdown of groundwater could occur, as described for direct impacts. However, as described in Section 4.9 of the DEIR, no significant impact was identified in regards to water supply infrastructure, with incorporation of required additional policies LU-1.5.4 “Maintain Existing Levels of Services”, LU-1.5.5 “Fair Share Funding for Public Services and Facilities”, LU-1.5.6 “Coordination with Service Providers”, and LU-1.5.7 “Municipal Service Reviews (MSRs)”. Consequently, in considering that cumulative scenario urban growth would displace existing agricultural groundwater use in most areas and that the proposed project would implement policies to support water supply sustainability, conservation, and infrastructure funding, as noted above, implementation of the proposed project would not result in a cumulatively considerable impact to water supply infrastructure. This impact would be *less than cumulatively considerable*.

Wastewater Service

As described in Section 4.9 of the DEIR, future regional growth subsequent to the proposed project would result in increased demand for wastewater services throughout the Planning Areas and the entire County. Additionally, as shown in Table 4.9-2, several of the wastewater purveyors in the County are currently experiencing infrastructure deficiencies.

Proposed goals and policies in the Water Resources Element would reduce wastewater/sanitary sewer impacts by addressing the County and affected purveyor's (i.e., CSD, CSA, PUD, etc.) ability to meet increased capacity requirements resulting from projected growth. For example, policies (W-9.6.1 and W-9.6.2) require the County to ensure, through the development review process, that wastewater facilities and services (including the use of alternative wastewater treatment systems) will be adequate and operational to serve new development and meet capacity. Policy W-9.2.2 encourages the use of water management strategies, biological remediation and the best available technology to address water quality problems. Policy W-9.2.7 requires the County to approach all wastewater applications (for both individual on-site, including septic systems, and community systems) in a manner consistent with Federal, state, and local regulations to ensure the protection of public health and the environment.

Under future cumulative scenario conditions, it is possible that additional wastewater/sanitary sewer capacity would be required, as described for direct impacts. However, as described in Section 4.9 of the DEIR, no significant impact was identified in regards to wastewater infrastructure, with incorporation of required additional policies LU-1.5.4 "Maintain Existing Levels of Services", LU-1.5.5 "Fair Share Funding for Public Services and Facilities", LU-1.5.6 "Coordination with Service Providers", and LU-1.5.7 "Municipal Service Reviews (MSRs)". Consequently, implementation of the proposed project would not result in a cumulatively considerable impact to wastewater/sanitary sewer infrastructure. This impact would be *less than cumulatively considerable*.

Storm Drainage

Implementation of the cumulative scenario considered under this analysis would result in a general increase in demand for stormwater conveyance and containment facilities within affected areas of the County. In general, as developed surface area increases, so too does the need for stormwater facilities to serve developed areas.

With respect to the proposed project and the County specifically, as described for direct impacts, implementation of the proposed project would include policies that would reduce and minimize potential increases in demand for storm drainage facilities. For example, policies included in the Water Resources and Public Health and Safety elements would require implementation of adequate stormwater control facilities; ongoing storm drainage planning and management; requirements for demonstration of no net increase in stormwater flows associated with new development; prioritization of new storm drainage infrastructure where deficient service exists; detention basin siting specifications; stormwater detention and drainage system design criteria, stormwater quality management, and other measures (see policies W-9.7.1 through W-9.7.6 and W-9.2.1 through W-9.2.6). Policies included in the Open Space and Conservation Element (see policies COS-7.3.2 through COS-7.3.4) provide for the minimization of stormwater flows and water quality pollutants, including incorporation of Low Impact Development measures for stormwater and erosion management; and preservation of natural open space areas that provide drainage and flood control benefits.

With respect to other regional/cumulative effects outside of the County, implementation of the proposed project would not result in direct or indirect effects on stormwater drainage facilities for other municipalities. For example, stormwater infrastructure used in support of the proposed project is not shared with other municipalities (outside the County), and increases in stormwater facility demand within the various Planning Areas and the County would not result in any export of stormwater to another municipality, or otherwise result in any increase in stormwater handling capacity within the service area of another municipality. Additionally, as described in Section 4.9 of the DEIR, no significant impact was identified in regards to stormwater drainage infrastructure, with incorporation of required additional policies LU-1.5.4 “Maintain Existing Levels of Services”, LU-1.5.5 “Fair Share Funding for Public Services and Facilities”, LU-1.5.6 “Coordination with Service Providers”, and LU-1.5.7 “Municipal Service Reviews (MSRs)”. Consequently, implementation of the proposed project would not contribute to a cumulatively considerable impact associated with stormwater/drainage facilities; therefore, when considered in light of potential cumulative scenario impacts, this impact would be *less than cumulatively considerable*.

Solid Waste

As described in Section 4.9 of the DEIR, population growth within the County and surrounding area would contribute to the need for adequate solid waste disposal facilities. It is assumed that existing waste disposal companies would continue to maximize the use of existing disposal options and plan for future waste disposal opportunities once existing disposal options reach their capacity. The proposed project includes a number of policies that encourage new or expanded solid waste disposal services (including recycling services) to be provided concurrently with future growth. For example, Policy PHS-6.5.8 requires the safe handling of hazardous materials and solid waste, including a focus on waste minimization, waste reduction and recycling management strategies. Policy COS-7.10.5 “Sustainable Business Practices” encourages all businesses to adopt purchasing practices that promote the use of reusable materials and increased recycling.

Additionally, as described in Section 4.9 of the DEIR, no significant impact was identified in regards to solid waste, with incorporation of required additional policies LU-1.5.4 “Maintain Existing Levels of Services”, LU-1.5.5 “Fair Share Funding for Public Services and Facilities”, LU-1.5.6 “Coordination with Service Providers”, and LU-1.5.7 “Municipal Service Reviews (MSRs)”. Consequently, implementation of the proposed project would not contribute to a cumulatively considerable impact associated with the provision of solid waste service or facilities; therefore, when considered in light of potential cumulative scenario impacts, this impact would be *less than cumulatively considerable*.

Agricultural Resources

As described in Section 4.10 “Agricultural Resources”, the increase in regional growth, land uses changes, and the construction of infrastructure/transportation improvements under the proposed project would result in the conversion of important agricultural resources. Potential project-level impacts associated with the conversion of Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, or Forest Land may occur.

The preservation of agricultural/forest land resources is a key goal of the proposed project, with the dedication of a specific element to these resources. Specifically, several policies (see Policies AG/FOR-8.1.2 through AG/FOR-8.1.4, AG/FOR-8.2.1 through AG/FOR-8.2.8, AG/FOR 8.6.1 through AG/FOR 8.6.8 and AG/FOR 8.8.1 through AG/FOR 8.8.6) call for the continued recognition of agriculture and timber lands as a productive use of resource lands, for the continuation of a diversified economy, for the maintenance of the County's rural character, for the protection of scenic, natural, and recreational resources, and as a defining characteristic of the County's quality of life, and the continued use of preservation programs (i.e., the California Land Conservation Act/Williamson Act) to protect existing agricultural lands. Policies from the Land Use element also serve to protect these resources by focusing new growth within established Planning Areas (on non-designated farm/forest lands). Policy LU-1.1.1 "Future Development" requires future development to be located within or adjacent to these Planning Areas, including those areas identified as Towns, Communities, Rural Areas, or Master Planned Communities on the County's General Plan Land Use Maps. Similarly, policies LU-1.1.2, LU-1.1.3, and LU-1.1.5 also support these land use development patterns and Economic Development Element Policy ECON-5.9.5 "Discouragement of Non-Compatible Land Uses" also requires the County to protect the long-term economic viability of agricultural operations by discouraging the encroachment of non-compatible uses near agricultural uses.

A variety of policies from the Agriculture and Forestry Element have also been developed to protect forest and timberland resources with the County. For example, Policies AG/FOR-8.7.1 through AG/FOR-8.7.3 support continued education and awareness of forestry issues. Policies AG/FOR-8.8.1 through AG/FOR-8.8.6 support the maintenance of a healthy and productive forest by limiting the encroachment of incompatible uses and encourage the development of new markets and services based on forest resources (i.e., bio-mass energy). Other policies (see AG/FOR-8.11.1 and AG/FOR-8.11.2) recognize the important role that forest lands have in addressing carbon sequestration activities. Policy AG/FOR-8.12.1 provides specific guidance on development requirements within lands designed as Timber Resource Lands. This guidance includes having the approving authority make all of the following findings prior to approving any development on these lands:

- The proposed use will not significantly detract from the use of the property for, or inhibit, growing and harvesting timber on that parcel or to adjoining parcels for long-term timber resource production value or conflict with timber resource production in that general area,
- The proposed use will not intensify existing conflicts or add new conflicts between adjoining proposed uses and timber production and harvesting activities,
- The proposed use will not create an island effect wherein timber production lands located between the project site and other non- timber production lands are negatively affected,
- The proposed use will not hinder timber production and harvesting access to water and public roads or otherwise conflict with the continuation or development of timber production harvesting, and

- The proposed use will not significantly reduce or destroy the buffering effect of existing large parcel sizes adjoining timber production lands.

Implementation of the proposed project along with increases in regional growth, land use changes, and transportation network improvements would result in additional opportunities for adverse impacts to agricultural resources. Plumas County contains a range of soils designated as Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, or Forest Land, and land that is currently in active timber production. As growth occurs throughout the County, important timberland will be converted to other uses. The combination of the direct and cumulative agricultural resource-related impacts from the proposed project and development within the County as described above could result in significant cumulative agricultural impacts. Because cumulative agricultural resource impacts throughout Plumas County would be significant, and because the proposed project's incremental agricultural resource impacts are significant, the proposed project's incremental agricultural resource impacts are also *cumulatively considerable*.

Biological Resources

As described, implementation of the proposed project would result in future growth including land use changes and construction of projects that would impact existing biological resources throughout the Planning Area. Although the General Plan area contains both urban and agricultural uses, which includes a substantial anthropogenic disturbance regime (e.g. agricultural operation, utility infrastructure, residential homes, and so forth), these areas are occupied by scattered portions of undeveloped habitat. Conifer (including Mixed Conifer) habitat types comprise the majority (72%) of land coverage in the County and are habitats commonly found at higher elevations. The County and the larger Feather River Watershed area contain a variety of aquatic habitats including small alpine streams, natural ponds, lakes, reservoirs, and rivers that provide habitat to a variety of regionally significant fish species. Not only do these habitats provide food and shelter for common and special-status species, they may serve as wildlife movement corridors providing connections to outlying and regional habitat.

General Plan Policies from the , the Open Space and Conservation Element include Policy COS-7.1.4 which encourages the use of private and public conservation easement programs to protect open space areas. Policies COS-7.1.3 "Collaborative Open Space Land Use Management" and COS-7.2.18 "Inter-Agency Coordination" promote continued coordination with a variety of State, Federal, and trustee agencies (with a focus on resource management responsibilities) to jointly address open space and habitat issues. Policy COS-7.2.2 "Species and Habitat Avoidance" requires new development to avoid or minimize adverse impacts to threatened, rare, or endangered species and critical/sensitive habitat. In the event that avoidance is not feasible, the policy requires a "no-net-loss" of the habitats that support these species. Additionally, the Open Space and Conservation Element include a number of policies designed to protect the visual quality of the County. The preservation of scenic resources, viewsheds, and scenic corridors (see policies COS-7.6.1 through COS-7.6.5) provide a secondary benefit by preserving important habitat areas that provide space for a variety of special status species. In addition, the General Plan policies (proposed project) address these impacts through a variety of measures. For example, Policy COS-7.2.7 "Wetland and Riparian Habitat Buffers" requires the identification of

these areas as part of the development review process for individual projects and requires buffering to avoid impacts to these resources. Additionally, Policy COS-7.2.6 “No-Net-Loss of Wetland Habitats” requires new development projects to achieve a “no-net-loss” of wetland habitats. Other policies include COS-7.2.4 “Stream Corridor Development” which limits development within stream corridors. Other policies include COS-7.2.15 which encourages the use of native plant species in landscaping plans and projects and Policy COS-7.2.17 which supports private land owners or organizations that acquire land for habitat protection or for the maintenance of sensitive habitats.

The Water Resources Element also includes a number of policies designed to address local and regional water quality concerns. These include Policy W-9.2.5 which relates specifically to monitoring construction activities through NPDES enforcement, requiring the use of BMPs. Policy W-9.2.1 requires the County to support and assist in the development and implementation of TMDLs for the impaired water bodies and pollutants of concern identified by the RWQCB. Policy W-9.2.4 requires the County to design, construction, and maintain County facilities that minimize sediment and other water quality pollutants. Additionally, Policy W-9.2.4 requires the County to cooperate with wildlife management and fire protection agencies and implement a variety of post-fire erosion, sedimentation, and other water quality measures. Policies W-9.7.4 and W-9.7.5 require that all new development (including drainage systems) comply with applicable regulations regarding non-point source pollutant discharge requirements.

Areas considered within the cumulative environment for biological resources include the immediately surrounding counties (Butte, Tehama, Shasta, Lassen and Sierra), which contain urban development, agricultural lands, and open space. Urban development for the most part is concentrated in and around developed cities. Over the past several years, urban development has encroached upon areas previously used for agriculture or occupied by habitat types that include grasslands, riparian woodlands, woodlands, and a variety of wetlands including vernal pools, seasonal wetlands, freshwater marshes, ponds, streams, and rivers. As noted above, Conifer (including Mixed Conifer) habitat types comprise the majority (72%) of land coverage in the County and are habitats commonly found at higher elevations. The County and the larger Feather River Watershed area contain a variety of aquatic habitats including small alpine streams, natural ponds, lakes, reservoirs, and rivers that provide habitat to a variety of regionally significant fish species.

Buildout of the proposed project could directly affect these species through loss of suitable habitat. These species would also be indirectly affected through potential adverse effects to surface water quality, introduction of exotic species and increase in human presence and activities within the region. To address this cumulative loss, most of the current and planned projects in the region include varying levels of compensatory mitigation for impacts to these habitats. Mitigation typically includes a mix of on-site preservation and on- and off-site creation and/or restoration. Nevertheless, the effects of the full buildout of the proposed project, when considered with the impacts from the population growth projections within region, represents a potentially significant and adverse cumulative loss of annual timberlands and a variety of wetlands including vernal pools, seasonal wetlands, freshwater marshes, ponds, streams, and rivers. In addition, cumulative

development would result in the conversion of open habitat landscapes to smaller patches of habitat surrounded by urban development, which would make riverine and seasonal wetland habitat more vulnerable to the effect of habitat fragmentation and other indirect impacts (predator introduction, degradation of water quality, hydrologic alterations, and reduction of habitat functions of on-site wetlands and downstream wetlands). Therefore the proposed project would result in a cumulatively considerable contribution towards the loss of the aforementioned habitats in the region if full buildout occurred without mitigation. Thus, the proposed project's incremental contribution to these impacts would be *cumulatively considerable*.

Cultural Resources

As described in Section 4.12 Cultural Resources, the increase in regional growth, land uses changes, and the construction of infrastructure/transportation improvements under the proposed project would result in potential effects to historic, archaeological and paleontological resources. Potential project-level impacts associated with the degradation of historic resources may occur during the construction of future improvements; however, with implementation of identified mitigation measures (Measures COS-7.5.1, COS-7.5.2, COS-7.5.3, COS-7.5.5, COS-7.5.6, COS-7.5.7 and COS-7.5.8) potential project-level effects to archaeological or paleontological resources are considered less than significant.

As previously described, General Plan policies from the Conservation and Open Space Element includes Policies COS-7.5.1, COS-7.5.3, COS-7.5.4, COS-7.5.10 and ECON-5.6.11 which promote the preservation, protection and revitalization of historic buildings and areas to preserve the County's unique historic heritage. Policy COS-7.5.5 would require the preparation of assessment of historical resources for all projects involving ground disturbance shall have evaluations to determine cultural and historical significance. Additionally, the Land Use and Conservation/Open Space Elements contain a variety of policies that encourage the preservation of existing historic areas and older neighborhoods (see Policies LU-1.1.2, LU-1.3.3, E-5.6.11, COS-7.5.1, COS-7.5.10, and COS-7.6.4). Policy AG/FOR 8.2.8 encourages the County to maintain, rehabilitate, and restore historic era ranches and farms.

The Land Use, Economics, and Circulation Elements also provide guidance that will serve to protect historic areas and neighborhoods by ensuring the orderly placement of compatible land uses near existing similar land uses (see Policy LU-1.1.1) while promoting a variety of smart growth land use concepts (see policies CIR-4.2.1 and PHS-6.8.2 "Walkable Communities" from the Public Health and Safety Element). The Land Use Element also includes a specific set of policies to encourage compatible development with the neighboring City of Portola (see policy LU-1.3.1 "Working with the City of Portola" and LU-1.3.2 "County and City of Portola's General Plan Consistency").

With regard to archaeological and paleontological resources, General Plan Policies COS-7.5.1, COS-7.5.2, COS-7.5.3 and COS-7.5.5 are in place to protect archaeological and paleontological resources by requiring surveys, research and testing prior to excavation in projects with discretionary action. Additionally, Policies COS-7.5.6, COS-7.5.7 and COS-7.5.8 require the County to encourage the cooperation and education of property owners, the public and the Native

American community. Previously recorded archaeological sites and resources will be maintain confidentiality regarding sensitive cultural resource and archaeological information in order to preserve and protect these resources from vandalism and the unauthorized removal of artifacts or other inappropriate uses (Policy COS-7.5.9).

Significant historical resources are non-renewable and cannot be replaced, and disturbance or alteration of a resource causes an irreversible loss of significant information. Future development allowed under the proposed project could affect historical sites through the introduction of visual, audible, or atmospheric effects that are out of character with the historical resource or alter the setting of the resources when the setting contributes to the resources' significance. Cumulative development could also result in the remodeling, alteration, addition, or demolition of a historic resource or a change in use that is not compatible with the authenticity of the resource and that would substantially alter its significance. As such, because the proposed project's incremental cultural resource impacts are significant; the proposed project's incremental impacts to historical resources are *cumulatively considerable*.

Future development allowed under the proposed project could require subsurface ground disturbance that may result in damage to or destruction of buried archaeological and paleontological resources. However, the California Health and Safety Code has specific provisions for the protection of human burial remains, and Public Resources Code protects Native American burials. Implementation of State regulations, Plumas County General Plan policies and Mitigation Measures would result in a *less than cumulatively considerable* impact to archaeological and paleontological resources.

6.4 Significant Unavoidable Adverse Impacts

Public Resources Code section 21100(b) (2) and CEQA Guidelines section 15126.2(b) require that any significant and unavoidable effect on the environment must be identified. In addition, CEQA Guidelines 15093(a) allows the decision-making agency to determine if the benefits of a project outweigh the unavoidable adverse environmental impacts of implementing the project. The County can approve a project with unavoidable adverse impacts if it prepares and adopts a "Statement of Overriding Considerations" setting forth the specific reasons for making such a judgment. A list of unavoidable adverse impacts identified in this DEIR is provided below. For each of the unavoidable adverse impacts, the County must prepare and adopt a Statement of Overriding Considerations if the County approves the proposed project.

6.4.1 Unavoidable Adverse Impacts

This section lists the impacts (by environmental resource topic) which are considered significant after all mitigation is applied. These impacts include the following:

Land Use and Aesthetics

- Impact 4.1.5: The proposed project would substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of Plumas County.

- Impact 4.1.6: The proposed project would create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the County.
- Contribute to a cumulative significant and unavoidable visual character/light and glare impact.

Traffic and Circulation

- Impact 4.2-1: The proposed project could result in a substantial increase in vehicular traffic. This would result in a significant impact to SR 36 west of Chester. (Existing Plus Proposed Project)
- Impact 4.2-4: The proposed project could result in a substantial increase in vehicular traffic. This would result in a significant impact to SR 36 west of Chester and to SR 36 east of Chester. (Cumulative Plus Proposed Project)

Air Quality

- Impact 4.3-2: The proposed project could result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of criteria air pollutants that result in a violation of an air quality standard.
- Impact 4.3-3: The proposed project could result in conflicts with applicable Air Quality Management Plans and Standards.
- Contribute to a cumulative significant and unavoidable air quality impact.

Noise

- Impact 4.5.1: The proposed project would result in exposure of noise sensitive land uses (persons) to traffic noise in excess of County noise standards, or substantial increases in traffic noise.
- Contribute to a cumulative significant and unavoidable noise (mobile sources) impact.

Hydrology, Water Quality, and Drainage

- Impact 4.6.4: The proposed project would deplete groundwater supplies or interfere with groundwater recharge.
- Impact 4.6.8: The proposed project could result in the development of areas that are located within an existing dam failure inundation zone.
- Contribute to a cumulative significant and unavoidable groundwater impact.

Hazardous Materials and Public Safety

- Impact 4.8-3: The proposed project would establish new land uses increasing their exposure to wildland fires.
- Contribute to a cumulative significant and unavoidable wildland fire impact.

Agricultural and Timber Resources

- Impact 4.10-1: The proposed project would result in the conversion of Important Farmland or Forest Land to non-agricultural use.
- Impact 4.10-3: The proposed project could involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, would result in the conversion of farmland to nonagricultural use.
- Contribute to a cumulative significant and unavoidable agricultural and timber resources impact.

Biological Resources

- Contribute to a cumulative significant and unavoidable biological resources impact.

Cultural Resources

- Contribute to a cumulative significant and unavoidable historic resource impact.

6.5 Significant Irreversible Environmental Changes

Section 15126.2 of the State CEQA Guidelines requires an EIR to include a discussion of significant irreversible environmental changes that would result from implementation of a project. Implementation of the proposed project would result in the commitment of nonrenewable natural resources used in construction (such as gravel, petroleum products, and others) and slowly renewable resources (such as wood products for individual project construction). Development and operation of specific projects with the various Planning Areas and other portions of the unincorporated County also would result in a commitment of energy resources in the form of fossil fuels, including fuel oil, natural gas and gasoline for automobiles, and utility services.

