

# Introduction

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The purpose of this introduction is to describe the organization and approach for this joint federal/state document (environmental assessment/environmental impact report [EA/EIR]) on the U.S. Highway 50/Missouri Flat Road interchange project. This joint document has been prepared to comply with the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) of 1970, as amended (Public Resources Code, Section 21000, et seq.) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), as amended. With the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) acting as federal lead agency and El Dorado County (County) acting as state lead agency, this joint document has been prepared based on the State CEQA Guidelines (14 California Code of Regulations, Section 14000 et seq.); Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) NEPA regulations (40 CFR 1500-1508); and the U.S. Department of Transportation's Environmental Impact and Related Procedures (23 CFR Part 771). Considerable effort has been expended to present to the readers a clear description of the environmental analysis conducted for this complex project within the framework of applicable regulations.

## Organization

This joint document is organized to follow the FHWA environmental document template, as follows:

- The following lists appear at the end of this Introduction: technical studies prepared for this project, figures appearing in this joint document, tables appearing in this joint document, and abbreviated terms appearing in this joint document and their definitions;
- The Summary chapter presents an overview of the proposed project under CEQA and the proposed action under NEPA. This chapter also presents the CEQA and NEPA alternatives, potential environmental impacts of the proposed project/action and of the alternatives (including CEQA and NEPA summary tables), CEQA-required pre- and post-mitigation significance conclusions (contained in the summary tables), known areas of controversy associated with the project, and the environmentally preferred alternative under CEQA and NEPA. This chapter also presents a summary of coordination and consultation with other agencies and the public involvement process.
- Chapter 1, "Project Objectives/Purpose and Need and Description of the Proposed Project/Action", presents a description of the project location; project

background; project objectives under CEQA and purpose and need under NEPA; characteristics of the proposed project under CEQA and proposed action under NEPA, including right-of-way acquisition and costs; and required permits and approvals.

- Chapter 2, “Project Alternatives”, presents a description of the CEQA and NEPA alternatives development process, including those alternatives that were considered but rejected, and the CEQA and NEPA alternatives to the proposed project/action that are evaluated in this joint document.
- Chapter 3, “Affected Environment, Environmental Consequences, and Mitigation Measures”, covers the following 12 environmental issues:
  - 3.1 Land use, planning, and growth
  - 3.2 Community impacts and environmental justice
  - 3.3 Relocation
  - 3.4 Traffic and transportation/pedestrian and bicycle facilities
  - 3.5 Air quality
  - 3.6 Noise
  - 3.7 Hydrology, water quality, and floodplains
  - 3.8 Wildlife and botanical resources, threatened and endangered species, and wetlands and waters of the U.S.
  - 3.9 Historic and archeological resources
  - 3.10 Earth resources and hazardous materials
  - 3.11 Visual, and
  - 3.12 Utilities/emergency services.

This chapter constitutes the NEPA evaluation for this project. For each issue, this chapter presents the affected environment (The “Affected Environment” sections also serve as the “Setting” section under CEQA), NEPA environmental consequences associated with the proposed action and the No-Action Alternative, and mitigation measures to avoid or reduce environmental consequences associated with the proposed action and No-Action Alternative.

- Chapter 4, “Cumulative Impacts”, presents cumulative impacts associated with the proposed project under CEQA and proposed action under NEPA.
- Chapter 5, “California Environmental Quality Act Evaluation”, presents the environmental impacts associated with the proposed project (also referred to as the preferred alternative in this chapter) and alternatives for the 12 environmental issues evaluated in Chapter 3, the significance thresholds used to judge environmental impacts under CEQA, and the pre-mitigation and post-mitigation CEQA significance conclusions associated with each environmental impact. This chapter constitutes the CEQA evaluation for this project. The environmental

- setting for these environmental issues and a description of the methods used to assess impacts are contained in Chapter 3.
- Chapter 6 “Summary of Public Involvement Process/Tribal Coordination”, summarizes the public involvement process and tribal coordination undertaken for this project.
  - Chapter 7, “List of Preparers”, lists the technical specialists who prepared this joint document.
  - Chapter 8, “References”, cites all sources and personal communications made in preparing this joint document.
  - This joint document also contains the following appendices (separately bound):
    - A. Title VI Policy Statement
    - B. Coordination and Consultation
    - C. Correspondence
    - D. Notice of Preparation (NOP), CEQA Checklist, and NOP comments
    - E. Public Involvement Process
    - F. Summary of Relocation Benefits
    - G. Draft Mitigation Monitoring Program
    - H. Writ of Mandate
    - I. Relationship of Program-Level Mitigation Measures Adopted as Part of the Missouri Flat Area Master Circulation and Funding Plan (MC&FP) Environmental Impact Report and the Project-Level Mitigation Measures Recommended in this Report for the U.S. 50/Missouri Flat Road Interchange Project
    - J. Relationship of the Program-Level Mitigation Measures Contained in the 2025 Metropolitan Transportation Plan the Project-Level Mitigation Measures Recommended in this Report for the U.S. 50/Missouri Flat Road Interchange Project

### **Approach for Joint NEPA/CEQA Document**

FHWA is preparing an EA for the proposed NEPA action and intends to adopt a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) since it has determined that the whole of the proposed action would not result in a significant effect on the quality of the human environment. El Dorado County has determined that the appropriate level of CEQA environmental documentation is an EIR since the CEQA proposed project may have a significant effect on the environment. Because NEPA has a higher threshold for preparing environmental impact statements (EISs) than does CEQA for

preparing EIRs (as demonstrated by the fact that many more EIRs are prepared in California each year than EISs nationwide), EA/EIRs are more typically prepared for FHWA projects.

The County and FHWA will act upon different, but related projects. The CEQA proposed project has 2 phases. Phase 1 is an interim 4-lane tight diamond interchange, and the preferred Phase 2 (or the Ultimate Phase) configuration is a single point diamond interchange (SPDI). The County will act only on Phase 1 as part of this project since it, alone, is included in the approved 2025 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and 2003/05 Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP), as well as the Missouri Flat Area MC&FP, critical mass approval associated with the MC&FP, and MC&FP Community Facilities District financing plan.

The NEPA proposed action is a 4-lane tight diamond interchange; this configuration is the same as the Phase 1 project for CEQA. FHWA will act only on the 4-lane tight diamond interchange since it is included in the approved 2025 MTP and 2003/05 MTIP.

It is important to recognize that differences exist in the way impacts are addressed in CEQA versus NEPA documents. While CEQA requires that environmental documents judge the significance of individual environmental impacts, NEPA uses the term “significance” to determine the type of environmental document to be prepared. Under NEPA, an EIS should be prepared when a proposed federal action has the potential to significantly affect the quality of the human environment. Once the federal agency has determined the type of environmental documentation required, only the magnitude of the impact is evaluated in the environmental document and no significance conclusions for individual impacts are identified. Federal and state lead agencies can also use different thresholds for determining the need for mitigation.

The NEPA and CEQA evaluations for this joint document are contained in separate chapters (Chapter 3 and 5, respectively). For the purpose of the impact discussions in this document, significance conclusions are provided in the context of CEQA only. These significance conclusions are presented in Chapter 5.

## List of Technical Studies (Bound Separately)

The following identifies the technical studies prepared for this project. These documents are available for review by contacting:

Kris Payne, Supervising Civil Engineer  
El Dorado County Department of Transportation  
2850 Fair Lane Court  
Placerville, CA 95667  
530-621-5926

Fehr & Peers Associates, Inc. 2002. *Final Traffic Report for the U. S. 50/Missouri Flat Road Interchange Project Report*. March. Prepared for Quincy, Engineering, Inc., Sacramento, CA. Roseville, CA.

Jones & Stokes. 2002a. *Draft Biological Assessment for the U.S. Highway 50/ Missouri Flat Road Interchange Project*. July. Prepared for Quincy Engineering, Inc., Sacramento, CA. Sacramento, CA.

Jones & Stokes. 2002b. *Final Air Quality Technical Report for the U.S. Highway 50/ Missouri Flat Road Interchange Project*. October. Prepared for Quincy Engineering, Inc., Sacramento, CA. Sacramento, CA.

Jones & Stokes. 2002c. *Final Community Impact Assessment for the U.S. Highway 50/ Missouri Flat Road Interchange Project*. October. Prepared for Quincy Engineering, Inc., Sacramento, CA. Sacramento, CA.

Jones & Stokes. 2002d. *Final Earth Resources Technical Report for the U.S. Highway 50/ Missouri Flat Road Interchange Project*. October. Prepared for Quincy Engineering, Inc., Sacramento, CA. Sacramento, CA.

Jones & Stokes. 2002e. *Final Hydrology and Water Quality Technical Report for the U.S. Highway 50/ Missouri Flat Road Interchange Project*. October. Prepared for Quincy Engineering, Inc., Sacramento, CA. Sacramento, CA.

Jones & Stokes. 2002f. *Final Natural Environment Study Report for the U.S. Highway 50/ Missouri Flat Road Interchange Project*. July. Prepared for Quincy Engineering, Inc., Sacramento, CA. Sacramento, CA.

Jones & Stokes. 2002g. *Final Noise Study Report for the U.S. Highway 50/ Missouri Flat Road Interchange Project*. October. Prepared for Quincy Engineering, Sacramento, CA. Sacramento, CA.

Jones & Stokes. 2002h. *Final Relocation Impact Statement for the U.S. Highway 50/ Missouri Flat Road Interchange Project*. October. Prepared for Quincy Engineering, Sacramento, CA. Sacramento, CA. (Contained in the Final Community Impact Assessment report as Appendix A)

Jones & Stokes. 2002i. *Final Visual Resources Technical Report for the U.S. Highway 50/ Missouri Flat Road Interchange Project*. October. Prepared for Quincy Engineering, Inc., Sacramento, CA. Sacramento, CA.

Jones & Stokes. 2002j. *Historic Property Survey Report for the U.S. Highway 50/ Missouri Flat Road Interchange Project*. January. Prepared for Quincy Engineering, Inc., Sacramento, CA. Sacramento, CA.

Jones & Stokes. 2002k. *Revised Delineation of Waters of the United States for the U.S. Highway 50/ Missouri Flat Road Interchange Project*. October. Prepared for Quincy Engineering, Inc., Sacramento, CA. Sacramento, CA.

Jones & Stokes. 2002l. *Results of a Site Assessment and Protocol-Level Surveys for the California Red-Legged Frog, U.S. Highway 50/ Missouri Flat Road Interchange Project, El Dorado County, California*. May. Prepared for Quincy Engineering, Inc., Sacramento, CA. Sacramento, CA. (Contained in the Draft Biological Assessment as Appendix B)

Jones & Stokes. 2003. *Final Biological Assessment U.S. Highway 50/Missouri Flat Road Interchange Project*. August. Prepared for Quincy Engineering, Sacramento, CA. Sacramento, CA.

Norman S. Braithwaite Inc. 2002. *Design Hydraulic Study. U.S. 50 over Weber Creek Bridge No. 35-005L*. Missouri Flat Road Interchange Project. February. Prepared for Quincy Engineering, Inc., Sacramento, CA. Redding, CA.

Quincy Engineering, Inc. 2002. *Drainage Report, Missouri Flat Interchange*. August. Prepared for El Dorado County Department of Transportation, Placerville, CA. Sacramento, CA.

Quincy Engineering, Inc. 2001. *Final Seismic Assessment Report, El Dorado County Weber Creek Bridge at U.S. 50 (03-ED-50-15.4) Br. No. 25-0005R/L*. April. Prepared for El Dorado County Department of Public Works, Placerville, CA. Sacramento, CA.

Quincy Engineering, Inc. 2003. *Draft Project Report*. Prepared for Caltrans District 3, Sacramento, CA. Sacramento, CA.

Taber Consultants. 2001a. *Geologic/geotechnical review; Missouri Flat Road Interchange at U.S. 50, Weber Creek Bridge at U.S. 50, 03-ED-50-23.1/25.4, El Dorado County, California*. August. Prepared for Quincy Engineering, Inc., Sacramento, CA. West Sacramento, CA.

Taber Consultants. 2001b. *Initial Site Assessment; U.S. Route 50/Missouri Flat Road Interchange Project, El Dorado County, California*. October. Prepared for Quincy Engineering, Inc., Sacramento, CA. West Sacramento, CA.

Taber Consultants. 2003. *Supplemental Site Assessment, Russell Property-APN 327-130-20, Missouri Flat Road Interchange Project, El Dorado County, California*. September. Prepared for Jones & Stokes, Sacramento, CA. West Sacramento, CA.

## List of Figures

	<b>Follows Page</b>
1.1-1	Project Vicinity ..... 1-2
1.6-1	Missouri Flat Interchange Preferred Alternative: 4-Lane Tight Diamond Interchange, Phase 1 ..... 1-14
1.6-2	Missouri Flat Road Interchange Preferred Alternative: Single Point Diamond Interchange, Ultimate Phase ..... 1-14
1.6-3	Perks Court Cul-de-sac Option ..... 1-14
1.6-4	Perks Court Realignment Option: Phase 1 ..... 1-14
1.6-5	Perks Court Realignment Option: Ultimate Phase (SPDI Only) ..... 1-14
2.2-1	No-Project Alternative ..... 2-6
2.2-2	6-Lane Tight Diamond Alternative, Ultimate Phase ..... 2-6
3.1-1	Existing Land Uses in the Project Area and Vicinity ..... 3-4
3.1-2	Existing Land Uses in the Missouri Flat MC&FP Area and Vicinity ..... 3-4
3.1-3	General Plan Land Use Designations in the Missouri Flat MC&FP Area ..... 3-10
3.1-4	Assessor Parcel Numbers with Permanent and Temporary Right-of-Way Impacts ..... 3-10
3.2-1	Census Tracts 309.02 and 315.02 ..... 3-20
3.4-1	Peak Hour Traffic Volumes and Geometrics Missouri Flat Road Intersections – Existing Conditions ..... 3-40
3.4-2	No Project Geometrics, Traffic Control, and Peak Hour Volumes – 2005 Conditions ..... 3-46
3.4-3	Phase 1 Diamond Interchange Geometrics, Traffic Control, and Peak Hour Volumes – 2005 Conditions ..... 3-46
3.4-4	Phase 1 Diamond Interchange Geometrics, Traffic Control, and Peak Hour Volumes – 2015 Conditions ..... 3-48
3.5-1	Receptors ..... 3-68
3.6-1	Noise Monitoring and Modeling Positions and Commercial Land Uses in the Project Area ..... 3-78
3.7-1	Location of Weber, Mound Springs, and Indian Creeks in the Project Area ..... 3-90
3.8-1	Location of Biological Communities and Special-Status Species ..... 3-106
3.11-1	Location of Landscape Unit Vantage Points in Project Area ..... 3-178
3.11-2	View of Weber Creek Bridges and Eastbound U.S. 50 Looking North towards Forni Road/Placerville Drive Interchange ..... 3-180
3.11-3	View of Weber Creek Bridges and Missouri Flat Road Overcrossing Looking Southwest ..... 3-180
3.11-4a	View of Missouri Flat Road/Prospector’s Plaza Drive Intersection and Distant Views of Missouri Flat Road Overcrossing Looking Southeast ..... 3-180
3.11-4b	View of Southbound Missouri Flat Road and Access to Perks Court ..... 3-180
3.11-5	View of Northbound Missouri Flat Road and Missouri Flat Road/Mother Lode Drive Intersection ..... 3-180
3.11-6a	View of Park-and-Ride Lot in Southwest Quadrant of Interchange ..... 3-180
3.11-6b	View of Propane Gas Station and Perks Court Property in Southeast Quadrant of the Interchange ..... 3-180
3.11-6c	View of Residential Uses along Perks Court in Southeast Quadrant of the Interchange ..... 3-180
3.11-6d	View of Vegetative Buffer near Best Western Placerville Inn ..... 3-180
3.11-7a	View of Prospector’s Plaza in Northwest Quadrant of Interchange ..... 3-180
3.11-7b	View of Vacant Lot (site of approved El Dorado Village Shopping Center) and Jack-in-the-Box in Northeast Quadrant of the Interchange ..... 3-180
5.4-1	No Project Geometrics, Traffic Control, and Peak Hour Volumes – 2025 Conditions ..... 5-28



5.4-2	Phase 1 Diamond Interchange Geometrics, Traffic Control, and Peak Hour Volumes – 2025 Conditions .....	5-28
5.4-3	SPUI Interchange Geometrics, Traffic Control, and Peak Hour Volumes – 2025 Conditions.....	5-28
5.4-4	Six-Lane Diamond Interchange Geometrics, Traffic Control, and Peak Hour Volumes—2025 Conditions .....	5-28

## List of Tables

	<b>Page</b>
S.4-1	CEQA Impacts and Mitigation Measures Associated with the SPDI (Preferred Alternative)..... follows S-8
S.4-2	Comparison of CEQA Impacts Associated with the Preferred Alternative and Alternatives to the Proposed Project..... follows S-8
S.4-3	NEPA Impacts and Mitigation Measures Associated with the 4-Lane Tight Diamond Interchange..... follows S-8
S.4-4	Comparison of NEPA Impacts Associated with the 4-Lane Tight Diamond Interchange and the No-Action Alternative..... follows S-8
3.1-1	Acquisitions and Easements under the 4-Lane Tight Diamond Interchange..... follows 3-10
3.1-2	Acquisitions and Easements under Perks Court Options, 4-Lane Tight Diamond Interchange..... follows 3-10
3.2-1	Selected Population and Age Characteristics: 2000 Census..... 3-20
3.2-2	Racial Distribution of Area Populations: 2000 Census..... 3-21
3.2-3	Selected Housing Characteristics: 2000 Census..... 3-21
3.4-1	Ramp Junction Level of Service Criteria..... 3-37
3.4-2	Weaving Area Level of Service Criteria..... 3-38
3.4-3	Signalized Intersection LOS Criteria..... 3-38
3.4-4	Ramp Junction LOS Summary—Existing Conditions..... 3-40
3.4-5	Intersection LOS Summary—Existing Conditions..... 3-41
3.4-6	U.S. 50/Missouri Flat Road Interchange Accident History July 1997 Through June 2000..... 3-42
3.4-7	Ramp Junction and Weaving Section LOS/Operations Summary—2005 Conditions..... 3-45
3.4-8	Caltrans Weaving Operations Evaluation 4-Lane Tight Diamond Interchange—2005 Conditions..... 3-46
3.4-9	Intersection LOS/Operations Summary—2005 Conditions..... 3-47
3.4-10	Ramp Junction and Weaving Area LOS/Operations Summary 4-Lane Tight Diamond Interchange—2015 Conditions..... 3-48
3.4-11	Caltrans Weaving Operations Evaluation 4-Lane Tight Diamond Interchange—2015 Conditions..... 3-49
3.4-12	Intersection LOS/Operations Summary 4-Lane Tight Diamond Interchange— 2015 Conditions..... 3-49
3.4-13	U.S. 50 Eastbound Average Speed—2005 Conditions..... 3-52
3.4-14	Intersection Operations Summary—2005 Conditions..... 3-52
3.5-1	Ambient Air Quality Standards Applicable in California and the Attainment Status of El Dorado County..... follows 3-60
3.5-2	Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Data from Placerville Monitoring Station..... 3-61
3.5-3	Construction Emission Estimates (lbs/day)..... 3-68
3.5-4	Construction Equipment Fuel Use Screening Levels..... 3-69
3.5-5	Best Available Fugitive Dust Control Measures..... follows 3-70
3.5-6	Best Available Fugitive Dust Control Measures for High Wind Conditions..... follows 3-70
3.5-7	Carbon Monoxide Modeling Concentrations (PPM) Results for the Proposed Action and No-Action Alternative..... follows 3-70
3.6-1	Activity Categories and Noise Abatement Criteria..... 3-74
3.6-2	Summary of Field-Measured Data..... follows 3-78
3.6-3	Summary of Long-Term Noise Monitoring Conducted near the 7th-Day Adventist Church..... 3-80
3.6-4	Measured and Modeled Noise Levels..... 3-81
3.6-5	Summary of Traffic Noise Modeling Results in Terms of FHWA/Caltrans Standards..... follows 3-82

3.6-6	Office of Noise Control Construction Noise Limits .....	3-84
3.6-7	Construction Equipment Noise .....	3-84
3.8-1	Special-Status Plants Identified during the Pre-Field Investigation as Having the Potential to Occur in the U.S. 50/Missouri Flat Road Interchange Project Area .....	follows 3-106
3.8-2	Special-Status Wildlife Species with Potential to Occur in the U.S. Highway 50/Missouri Flat Road Interchange Project Area, El Dorado County .....	follows 3-106
3.8-3	Noxious Weeds Located on the U.S. 50/Missouri Flat Road Interchange Project Site.....	3-122
5.1-1	Acquisitions and Easements under Preferred Alternative .....	follows 5-6
5.1-2	Acquisitions and Easements under Perks Court Options .....	follows 5-16
5.1-3	Acquisitions and Easements under the 6-Lane Tight Diamond Alternative .....	follows 5-16
5.4-1	Ramp Junction and Weaving Section LOS/Operations Summary—2025 Conditions.....	5-28
5.4-2	Caltrans Weaving Section Evaluation—2025 Conditions .....	follows 5-28
5.4-3	Intersection LOS Summary—2025 Conditions .....	follows 5-28
5.5-1	Carbon Monoxide Modeling Concentrations (PPM) Results.....	follows 5-46
5.6-1	Summary of Traffic Noise Modeling Results in Terms of El Dorado County Standards .....	follows 5-52

## List of Abbreviated Terms

ACHP	Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
ADL	aerial deposited lead
APCD	air pollution control district
APE	area of potential effect
APNs	Assessor's Parcel Numbers
AQMD	air quality management district
ARB	California Air Resources Board
BMPs	Best Management Practices
CAAA	Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990
Caldor	California Door Company
CalEPPC	California Exotic Pest Plant Council
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
cfs	cubic feet per second
CIP	El Dorado County 20-Year Capital Improvement Program
cms	cubic meters per second
CNDDDB	California Natural Diversity Data Base
CNPS	California Native Plant Society
CO	carbon monoxide
Corps	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
County	El Dorado County
CRHR	California Register of Historical Resources
CRLF	California red-legged frog
CTs	census tracts
CWA	Clean Water Act
dB	decibels
dBA	hourly A-weighted sound levels
dbh	diameter at breast height
DFG	California Department of Fish and Game
DSM	Diamond Springs Main system
DTSC	California Department of Toxic Substances Control
EA	environmental assessment
EDCAPCD	El Dorado County Air Pollution Control District
EDCTA	El Dorado County Transit Authority
EDCTC	El Dorado County Transportation Commission
EID	El Dorado Irrigation District
EIR	environmental impact report
EO	Executive Order
EPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
ESA	environmentally sensitive area
ESA	Endangered Species Act
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
Fire District	Diamond Springs-El Dorado Fire Protection District
FONSI	Finding of No Significant Impact
FWHA	Federal Highway Administration
FY	fiscal year

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General Plan	El Dorado County General Plan
GLO	General Land Office
HCM	Highway Capacity Manual
HCS	Highway Capacity Software
HDMP	hazard dust mitigation plan
Ldn	day-night average sound level
Leq	equivalent sound levels
L <sub>max</sub>	maximum noise level
LOS	level of service
MBTA	Migratory Bird Treaty Act
MC&FP	Master Circulation and Funding Plan
MC&FP EIR	Missouri Flat Area MC&FP and Sundance Plaza and El Dorado Villages Shopping Center Projects EIR
MCAB	Mountain Counties Air Basin
MTIP	Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program
MTP	Metropolitan Transportation Plan
μ/m <sup>3</sup>	micrograms per cubic meter
NAAQS	national ambient air quality standards
NAC	noise abatement criteria
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NES	Natural Environment Study
NESHAP	National Emissions Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants
NFIP	National Flood Insurance Program
NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act
NISMP	National Invasive Species Management Plan
NO <sub>2</sub>	nitrogen dioxide
NOP	notice of preparation
NO <sub>x</sub>	nitrogen oxide
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
NTUs	Nephelometric Turbidity Units
NWP	nationwide permits
O <sub>3</sub>	ozone
Pb	lead
pc/mi/ln	passenger cars/mile/lane
pcphpl	passenger cars per hour per lane
PG&E	Pacific Gas & Electric Company
PHF	peak-hour factor
PM <sub>10</sub>	particulate matter less than or equal to 10 microns in diameter
ppd	pounds per day
ppm	parts per million
Protocol	Construction Noise and Traffic Noise Analysis Protocol for New Highway Construction and Reconstruction Projects
PS&E	Plans, Specifications, & Estimates
ROG	reactive organic gases
RTP	regional transportation plan
RWQCB	Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board

SACOG	Sacramento Area Council of Governments
sf	square feet
SFAR	South Fork of the American River
sheriff's department	El Dorado County Sheriff-Coroner's Department
SIP	State Implementation Plan
SO <sub>2</sub>	sulfur dioxide
SPDI	single point diamond interchange
SPTC	Sacramento Placerville Transportation Corridor
SWANCC	Solid Waste Agency of Northern Cook County
SWMP	Stormwater Management Plan
SWPPP	Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan
TASAS	Traffic Accident Surveillance and Analysis System
TAZs	Split Traffic Analysis Zones
TIP	transportation improvement program
TMP	traffic management plan
U.S. 50	U.S. Highway 50
VELB	Valley elderberry longhorn beetle
VHD	vehicle hours of delay
vph	vehicles per hour
WDRs	waste discharge requirements