SIERRA COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

IN THE MATTER OF ADOPTION OF SIERRA COUNTY 2015 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN

RESOLUTION 2015-14

WHEREAS, California Government Code Section 65080(c) requires Regional Transportation Planning Agencies to adopt and submit an updated Regional Transportation Plan to the California Transportation Commission and the California Department of Transportation every four years; and,

WHEREAS, the Sierra County Transportation Commission is the Regional Transportation Planning Agency for the Sierra County Region; and,

WHEREAS, the Sierra County Transportation Commission, through the conduct of a continuing, comprehensive, and coordinated transportation planning process, including holding public hearings, and in conformance with all applicable State and Federal requirements, has prepared the 2015 Regional Transportation Plan for Sierra County; and,

WHEREAS, the Sierra County Transportation Commission prepared an Initial Study and Negative Declaration for the 2015 Regional Transportation Plan in conformance with the California Environmental Quality Act.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

1. That the 2015 Regional Transportation Plan provides for a balance between needed transportation developments, and State and County development needs consistent with existing conditions and future needs.

2. That the 2015 Regional Transportation Plan incorporates measures to provide for the transportation system necessary to accommodate future traffic demand.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Sierra County Transportation Commission does hereby adopt the Negative Declaration for the Sierra County 2015 Regional Transportation Plan attached as Exhibit 1, and by this reference incorporated in this resolution; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Sierra County Transportation Commission does hereby adopt the Sierra County 2015 Regional Transportation Plan, which by this reference is incorporated into this resolution.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Sierra County Transportation Commission on the **23rd day of June, 2015** by the following vote:

AYES:	Schlefstein; Huebner; Whitley; Moore; Teague; Marin; Roen
NOES:	None
ABSTAINED:	None
ABSENT:	None

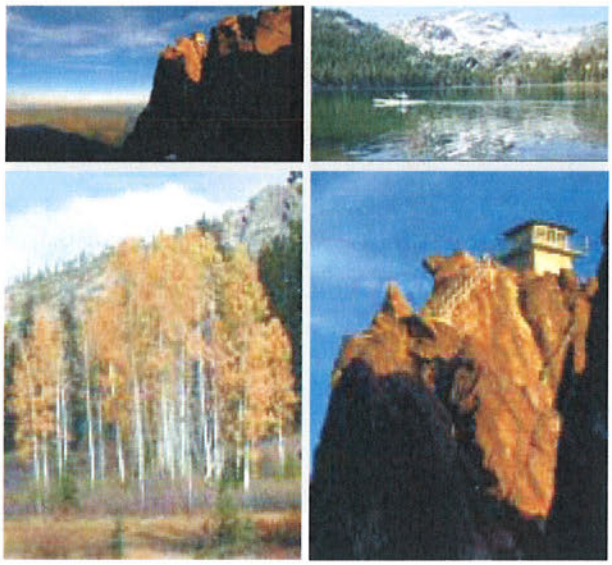
Paul Roen, Chairperson
SIERRA COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

ATTEST:

MIRIAM B. DINES, EXECUTIVE SECRETARY TO THE COMMISSION

SIERRA COUNTY
2015 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Initial Study and Negative Declaration



Prepared for the

Sierra County Transportation Commission

Prepared by

LSC TRANSPORTATION CONSULTANTS, INC.

LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc.

Exhibit 1, Resolution 2015-14

INITIAL STUDY AND NEGATIVE DECLARATION

FOR THE SIERRA COUNTY 2015 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Prepared for

Sierra County Transportation Commission
P.O. Box 98
Downieville, California 95936
530 • 289-3210

Prepared by

LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc.
2690 Lake Forest Road, Suite C
P.O. Box 5875
Tahoe City, California 96145
530 • 583-4053

June 19, 2015

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Introduction

Project Title:	Sierra County 2015 Regional Transportation Plan
Lead Agency Name and Address:	Sierra County Transportation Commission 101 Courthouse Square, PO Box 98 Downieville, CA, 95936
Contact Persons and Phone Numbers:	Bryan Davey (530) 289-3201 Genevieve Evans (530)583-4053
Project Location:	Sierra County

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Sierra County Transportation Commission (SCTC) has recently prepared an updated draft *Sierra County 2015 Regional Transportation Plan* (RTP) (which is defined as the "Project" for purposes of this study). SCTC board members and staff members from the County of Sierra worked together with a consulting firm to guide the development of the Project. A public hearing will be held during a Transportation Commission meeting on February 11, 2015 to solicit public input. The Public Draft RTP can be viewed and downloaded from the Sierra County website: www.sierracounty.ws

In compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, the Lead Agency is required to prepare an Initial Study for the Project. The SCTC is defined as the Lead Agency under the provisions of CEQA. The primary objective in the preparation of an Initial Study is to disclose significant environmental effects and to identify measures to avoid or reduce significant environmental effects.

This Initial Study addresses potential impacts at a general level, leaving more project-specific impacts to be evaluated at the time that each individual project reaches the preliminary design phase. Based upon the findings of this Initial Study, and pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15070, the SCTC plans to prepare a Negative Declaration. If, through the public review process, mitigation measures are found necessary, the SCTC will prepare a Mitigated Negative Declaration that includes a mitigation monitoring program in accordance with CEQA Guidelines.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The SCTC, as the Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA), is required by California law to adopt and submit an updated Regional Transportation Plan to the California Transportation Commission (CTC) and to the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) every five years. The purpose of the RTP is to provide a vision of transportation facilities and services for the region, supported by transportation goals, for ten and twenty year horizons. The RTP documents the policy direction, actions and funding strategies designed to maintain and improve the regional transportation system. The RTP is a programmatic document containing general policies, guidelines, and lists of projects. For future projects identified in the RTP,

specific design details have not been developed. Each transportation project will be assessed on an individual basis under various criteria.

The RTP begins with a background discussion of Sierra County, including projected population growth and economic conditions, as well as a description of existing transportation services and facilities. A needs assessment follows, describing existing and future transportation needs in the county. The needs assessment analyzes various aspects of transportation including streets and highways, goods movement, public transportation, bicycle and pedestrian traffic, and railroad and aviation facilities. For each aspect, goals, objectives, performance measures, policies and implementation programs are identified. Finally, an action element is presented that lists proposed projects, as well as proposed potential funding for future projects.

To implement the project, the SCTC must adopt the updated RTP by resolution. Once the RTP is adopted, implementation of projects identified in the RTP would depend on many factors, including the availability of funding, changes in priority of needs, and emergencies. Also, implementation would require the cooperation of other agencies, such as Caltrans, whose activities are beyond the control of the SCTC.

The RTP presents a series of goals focusing on mobility, safety, quality of life, environmental impacts, and financial effectiveness. In the document, capital transportation improvement projects are identified which meet regional transportation needs and are consistent with regional goals and adopted planning documents. Projects identified in the RTP consist of the following:

- Short-term, mid-term, and long-term roadway/bridge projects including roadway maintenance and bridge rehabilitation/reconstruction on state highways, county roads and city streets.
- Caltrans projects consisting of truck turnouts, guardrail replacement and embankment repair
- Forest Highway road rehabilitation/reconstruction projects and safety projects such as speed feedback signs and wayfinding signs
- Transportation planning feasibility studies for rehabilitation on local roadways
- Bicycle/pedestrian facility improvement projects, including construction of sidewalks, bike paths, and pedestrian ways to increase safety for non-motorized transportation users.
- Transit capital improvement projects
- Aviation capital improvement projects at the Sierraville-Dearwater Airport

Of importance to this environmental document, the RTP does not call for any projects that would significantly increase capacity of the transportation network. Additionally the RTP describes environmental mitigation measures which are typically applied to transportation projects and outlines strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. In total, the financially constrained roadway and bridge projects identified in the RTP are forecast to cost approximately $13.5

million over the 20-year planning period. Funding is expected to be generated through a wide range of existing state, federal, and local sources.

PROJECT LOCATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Location

Sierra County is located in the heart of the northern section of the Sierra Nevada in California. Elevation ranges from 1,800 feet in the western foothills to over 8,000 feet in the eastern portion of the county. As shown in Figure 1, the county extends from the Nevada/California border west to Yuba County and is bordered by Plumas and Lassen Counties to the north and Nevada County to the south. The county is located roughly 100 miles northeast of Sacramento, California and 50 miles west of Reno, Nevada. While Loyalton is the only incorporated city in the county, other community centers consist of Sierra Brooks, Long Valley, and a portion of Verdi, and larger communities of Sierraville, Calpine, Sattley, Alleghany, Bassetts, Sierra City, Downieville, Goodyears Bar, Pike, Forest City.

Transportation/Circulation

The roadway system in Sierra County totals approximately 760 maintained miles. In addition to private roadways, the public road system consists of 97 miles in the state highway system, 384 miles in the county roadway system, 7 miles of city streets in Loyalton, and 272 miles maintained by the US Forest Service. Two major highways traverse the county: State Route (SR) 49, running generally east-west and SR 89 running generally north-south. In addition, a 1.6-mile section of Interstate 80 passes through the southeastern tip of the county and a 3.1-mile segment of US 395 crosses the county's northeastern corner. State highways play an important role in Sierra County's transportation system serving as main streets for most of the communities in the county. The most recent estimate prepared for 2013 indicates a total of 292,000 daily vehicle vehicle-miles were traveled on all roadways in Sierra County (Caltrans Public Road Data). This represents roughly a decrease of 3,000 daily vehicle miles from 2008 estimates.

Sierra County state highways and local roadways generally do not experience traffic congestion. The primary limiting factor for traffic flow is narrow and winding roadways through mountainous terrain.

Population

US Census figures indicate the estimated total population of Sierra County to be 3,240 persons in the year 2010, of which 769 resided in Loyalton. From 2000 to 2010 the population in Sierra County, as estimated by the US Census, decreased by 9 percent, with the decrease occurring in both the unincorporated portions of the county as well as the City of Loyalton. Over the past few years, from 2010 to 2013, Sierra County's population has decreased by roughly 113 people. The California Department of Finance projects that the Sierra County population will continue to decrease by 209 people or 6.7 percent by 2035.

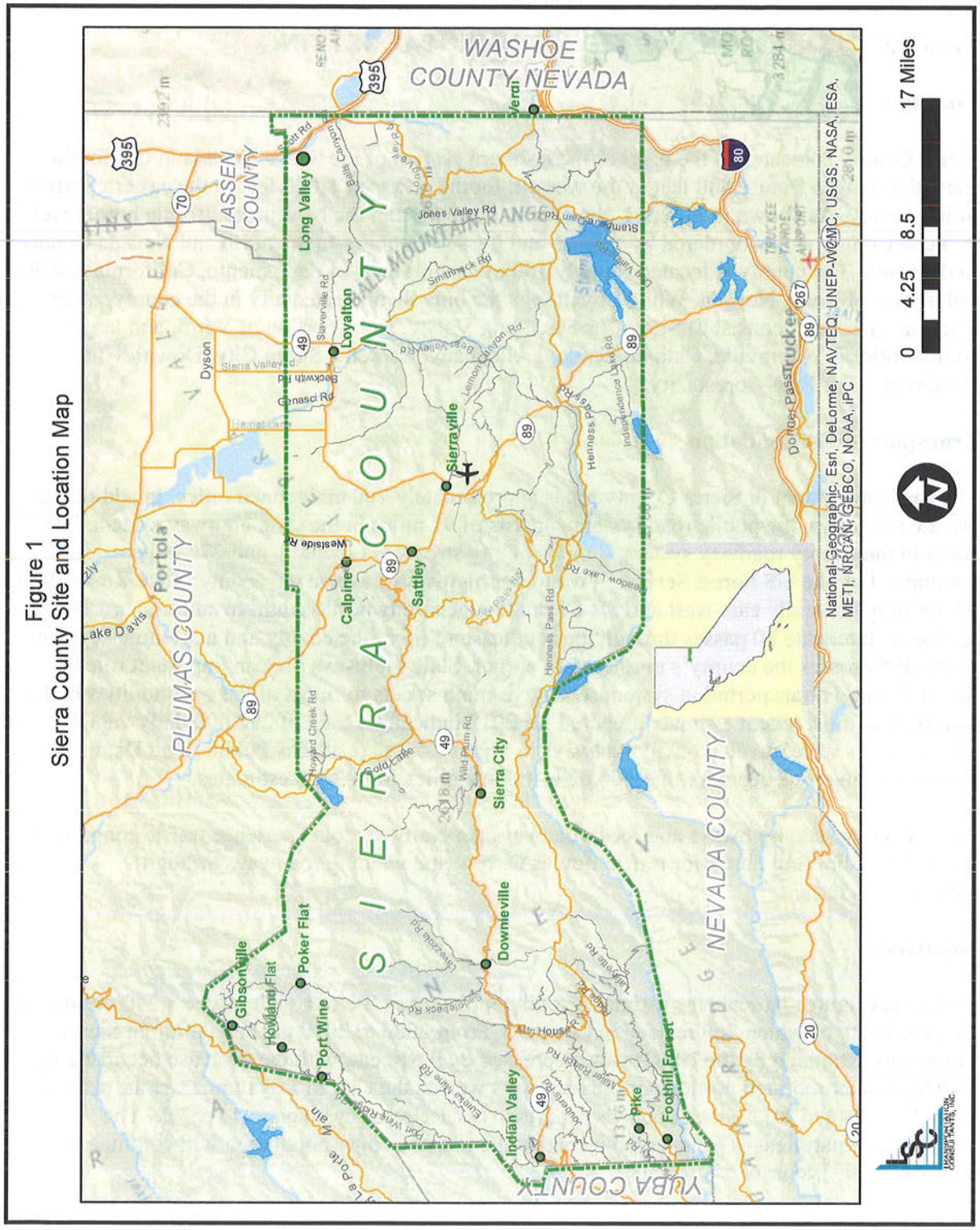

Figure 1
Sierra County Site and Location Map

Given the decline in population, traffic volumes and vehicle miles travelled on Sierra County regional roadways, important transportation improvement projects identified in the RTP reflect safety improvements and on-going upkeep of the regional transportation system.

OTHER AGENCY APPROVALS

Per Government Code Section 65080 the RTP must be adopted by SCTC at a public hearing. After adoption, copies of the document must be submitted to Caltrans and the CTC.

1.5 ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED

None of the environmental factors mentioned below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

	Aesthetics		Agriculture Resources		Air Quality
	Biological Resources		Cultural Resources		Geology/Soils
	Hazards & Hazardous Materials		Hydrology/Water Quality		Land Use/Planning
	Mineral Resources		Noise		Population/Housing
	Public Services		Recreation		Transportation/Traffic
	Utilities/Service Systems		Mandatory Findings of Significance		Greenhouse Gas Emissions

DETERMINATION

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

X I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

□ I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will **not** be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project (mitigation measures) have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

□ I find the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.

□ I find that the proposed project MAY have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.

□ I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Tim Beals, Executive Director
Sierra County Transportation Commission

CHECKLIST AND ANALYSIS

The following Environmental Checklist and discussion of potential environmental effects were completed in accordance with Sections 15060 to 15065 of the CEQA Guidelines and the revised Initial Study checklist, to determine whether the Project may have a significant environmental effect. The degree of impact for each discussion topic is noted based upon the following definitions:

- **Potentially Significant Impact**: An impact which could be significant and for which no mitigation has been incorporated. Such an impact would require the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report.
- **Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation**: An impact which requires mitigation to reduce the impact to a less than significant level. For such impacts, proposed mitigation measures are identified within this Initial Study.
- **Less Than Significant Impact**: An impact which is considered less than significant under the standards of CEQA.
- **No Impact**: An issue for which the Project would have no impact.

EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

I. Aesthetics, would the project:	**Potentially Significant**	**Less than Significant with Mitigation**	**Less than Significant**	**No Impact**
a) Have an adverse effect on a scenic vista?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Create a new source of light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion: No significant expansion of transportation facilities is proposed in the RTP, considered on a region-wide basis.

II. AGRICULTURE RESOURCES In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model prepared by the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment Project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. Would the project:	**Potentially Significant**	**Less than Significant with Mitigation**	**Less than Significant**	**No Impact**
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance, as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program in the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)) or timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526)?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion: The RTP includes policies that support goods movement which would support agriculture. Additionally, the RTP does not include any capacity increasing projects – meaning that no new roadways will be constructed. RTP projects include re-paving and roadway/bridge rehabilitation projects.

III. AIR QUALITY Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:	**Potentially Significant**	**Less than Significant with Mitigation**	**Less than Significant**	**No Impact**
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute to an existing or projected air quality violation?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions that exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion: Sierra County is part of the Mountain Counties Air Basin, with air quality managed by the Northern Sierra Air Quality Management District (NSAQMD). Generally, Sierra County has good air quality because of its low population density, limited industry, extensive undeveloped public lands, and rare traffic congestion. However, the county is currently in non-attainment of state PM10 standards, but not federal PM10 standards. Primary sources of PM10 pollution include wood stoves, open and prescribed burning, wind-blown dust generated from unpaved roads, and agriculture. Thus, PM10 air pollution problems in the region are not from transportation sources.

IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES Would the project:	**Potentially Significant**	**Less than Significant with Mitigation**	**Less than Significant**	**No Impact**
a) Have an adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☐	☒	☐

b) Have an adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, and regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Have an adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Interfere with the movement of any resident or migratory fish or wildlife species, or with established resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of wildlife nursery sites?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Conservation Community Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion: The RTP contains policies to minimize environmental impacts of transportation investments. Additionally, the RTP contains wildlife undercrossing projects which will have a positive impact on biological resources. As the RTP is a programmatic document and the proposed projects will be reviewed on a project-by-project basis, no direct physical effects will result from the adoption of this RTP. Most RTP projects are pavement rehabilitation and therefore will not have a significant impact on wildlife or habitat. The RTP does include several bridge rehabilitation projects and one new bridge which will replace an existing water crossing. The new bridge will revitalize wetland habitat by directing all crossings to one location. Various environmental agencies were consulted as part of the RTP process. Sierra County will continue to consult with environmental agencies are part of individual project review.

V. CULTURAL RESOURCES Would the project:	**Potentially Significant**	**Less than Significant with Mitigation**	**Less than Significant**	**No Impact**
a) Cause an adverse change in the significance of a historical resource, as defined in Section 15064.5?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Cause an adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource, pursuant to Section 15064.5?	☐	☐	☐	☒

c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion: Those Tribal Governments that have sacred lands within Sierra County were contacted via mail with a notification letter and email that defined the RTP, requested their input in the RTP process, and requested they make contact for a one-on-one meeting. To date, none of the tribes have responded. Copies of this Initial Study and the Draft RTP document have been sent to tribal representatives.

The RTP is a programmatic document. Specific environmental impacts of proposed projects discussed in the RTP will be addressed on an individual basis at the time of project review. Therefore, there is no potential for significant impact.

VI. GEOLOGY AND SOILS Would the project:	**Potentially Significant**	**Less than Significant with Mitigation**	**Less than Significant**	**No Impact**
a) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:	☐	☐	☐	☒
i. Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Publication 42.	☐	☐	☐	☒
ii. Strong seismic ground shaking?	☐	☐	☐	☒
iii. Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	☐	☐	☐	☒
iv. Landslides?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Result in soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating risks to life or property?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion: The RTP identifies projects for reconstruction of and improvements to existing roadways and bridges, specific impacts on geology and soils associated with these projects will be addressed on an individual basis at the time of project review. Some of the bridge

rehabilitation projects include seismic retrofit. The RTP is a programmatic document and the proposed projects will be reviewed on a project-by-project basis, therefore there is no potential for significant impact.

VI. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS Would the project:	**Potentially Significant**	**Less than Significant with Mitigation**	**Less than Significant**	**No Impact**
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Conflict with any applicable plan, policy or regulation of an agency adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion: The RTP includes goals, policies, and strategies aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions in Sierra County. RTP projects such as roadway and bridge repairs are necessary to maintain a safe regional transportation system and to prevent deterioration of roadways and bridges which may require costlier repairs in the future. These projects will not result in greater traffic volumes along state highways, county roads or city streets. To the degree that keeping an existing travel route open avoids travel via longer alternative routes that would accompany a closure, maintaining existing roadways and bridges can help to avoid increases in Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT). The RTP also includes long-term bicycle and pedestrian improvement projects which will create more bicycle and pedestrian friendly communities and potentially further reduce VMT. The RTP also includes public transit elements. By expanding alternative forms of transportation, Sierra County is in-line with statewide climate change goals. The RTP is a programmatic document and the proposed projects will be reviewed on a project-by-project basis, therefore there is no potential for significant impact.

VII. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS Would the project:	**Potentially Significant**	**Less than Significant with Mitigation**	**Less than Significant**	**No Impact**
a) Create a hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Create a hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Have hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Be located on a site that is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section	☐	☐	☐	☒

65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?				
e) Be located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, and consequently result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f) Be located within the vicinity of a private airstrip, and consequently result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?	☐	☐	☐	☒
g) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒
h) Expose people or structures to the risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion: RTP projects will not increase hazards and hazardous materials. RTP projects include the installation of guardrails and traffic control signs which will increase the safety of Sierra County roadways. The RTP is a programmatic document. Specific environmental impacts of proposed projects discussed in the RTP will be addressed on an individual basis at the time of project review. Therefore, there is no potential for significant impact.

VIII. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY Would the project:	**Potentially Significant**	**Less than Significant with Mitigation**	**Less than Significant**	**No Impact**
a) Violate any applicable water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Deplete groundwater supplies or interfere with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level that would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner that would result in erosion or siltation on- or off-site?	☐	☐	☒	☐

d) Alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner that would result in flooding on- or off-site?	☐	☐	☒	☐
e) Create or contribute runoff water that would exceed the capacity of existing or planned storm water drainage systems or provide additional sources of polluted runoff?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f) Place housing within a 100-year floodplain, as mapped on a Federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?	☐	☐	☐	☒
g) Place within a 100-year floodplain structures that would impede or redirect flood flows?	☐	☐	☐	☒
h) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving: 1) flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam, or 2) inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?	☐	☐	☐	☒
i) Otherwise degrade water quality?	☐	☐	☐	☒
j) Change the amount of surface water in a water body?	☐	☐	☐	☒
k) Change currents or the course or direction of water movements?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion: All bridge repair projects will undergo individual environmental review and follow Best Management Practices for stream protection, erosion, and sedimentation control. The new bridge project will replace an existing water crossing and revitalize the surrounding meadow. Prior to project implementation Sierra County will consult with the Lahonton and Central Valley Regional Water Board as appropriate and follow the State Water Quality Control guidelines for *Potential Water Quality Impacts and Required Analysis*. The RTP is a programmatic document and the proposed projects will be reviewed on a project-by-project basis, therefore no direct physical effects will result from the adoption of this RTP.

IX. LAND USE AND PLANNING Would the project:	**Potentially Significant**	**Less than Significant with Mitigation**	**Less than Significant**	**No Impact**
a) Physically divide an established community?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	☐	☐	☐	☒

c) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural communities' conservation plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion: Based on preliminary review of the projects proposed by the RTP, there does not appear to be any potential for impacts that might physically divide a community, conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation or conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan. Additionally, the RTP is consistent with the *Sierra County General Plan* (2012) and the *City of Loyalton General Plan* (2009). Further, the RTP is a programmatic document. Specific environmental impacts of proposed projects discussed in the RTP will be addressed on an individual basis at the time of project review. Therefore there is no potential for significant impact.

X. MINERAL RESOURCES Would the project:	**Potentially Significant**	**Less than Significant with Mitigation**	**Less than Significant**	**No Impact**
a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion: The RTP includes policies that support goods movement, which would support mineral resource production and does not include projects which will result in the loss of availability of a known mineral. The RTP is a programmatic document. Specific environmental impacts of proposed projects discussed in the RTP will be addressed on an individual basis at the time of project review. Therefore, there is no potential for significant impact.

XI. NOISE Would the project:	**Potentially Significant**	**Less than Significant with Mitigation**	**Less than Significant**	**No Impact**
a) Generate or expose persons to noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Generate or expose persons to excessive ground-borne vibration or ground-borne noise levels?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Result in a permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) A temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	☐	☐	☐	☒

e) Be located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, and consequently expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f) Be within the vicinity of a private airstrip, and consequently expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion: The most probable source of noise impacts would come from construction activities associated with proposed projects in this RTP. However, as the RTP is a programmatic document, specific environmental impacts of proposed projects discussed in the RTP will be addressed on an individual basis at the time of project review. Therefore, there is no potential for significant impact.

XII. POPULATION AND HOUSING Would the project:	**Potentially Significant**	**Less than Significant with Mitigation**	**Less than Significant**	**No Impact**
a) Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion: Population and housing projections are included in the RTP through 2035 and show that population is anticipated to decrease over the long term. A preliminary review of the RTP indicates there will be no impact on population and housing in Sierra County primarily because the projects contained in the RTP would not increase roadway capacity. Furthermore, as the RTP is a programmatic document, specific environmental impacts of proposed projects discussed in the RTP will be addressed on an individual basis at the time of project review. Therefore, there is no potential for significant impact.

XIII. PUBLIC SERVICES Would the project result in 1) adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, or 2) the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:	Potentially Significant	Less than Significant with Mitigation	Less than Significant	No Impact
a) Fire protection?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Police protection?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Schools?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Parks?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e) Roads?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f) Other public facilities?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion: As the RTP projects focus primarily on the improvement to existing roadway facilities, the potential for significant impact on public services is low. Any impact would be beneficial, in that improvements to existing facilities would aid in access to public services. In addition, the update of the RTP is a programmatic document. Specific environmental impacts of proposed projects discussed in the RTP will be addressed on an individual basis at the time of project review. Therefore there is no potential for significant impact.

XIV. RECREATION	Potentially Significant	Less than Significant with Mitigation	Less than Significant	No Impact
a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion: Adoption and implementation of the RTP will not create the need for new or expanded park and recreation facilities. The project will improve recreation opportunities by upgrading trailhead facilities for hiker and biker use. The impacts of construction of those trails will be addressed on an individual basis at the time of project review. As the RTP is a programmatic document, and as the proposed projects will be reviewed on a project-by-project basis, there is no potential for significant impact.

XV. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC Would the project:	**Potentially Significant**	**Less than Significant with Mitigation**	**Less than Significant**	**No Impact**
a) Exceed the capacity of the existing circulation system, based on an applicable measure of effectiveness (as designated in a general plan policy, ordinance, etc.), taking into account all relevant components of the circulation system, including but limited to intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths and mass transit?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Conflict with an applicable congestion management program, including, but not limited to level of service standards and travel demand measures, or other standards established by the County congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Substantially increase hazards to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e) Result in inadequate emergency access?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f) Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation (e.g., bus turnouts, bicycle racks)?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion: As defined in the RTP, the roadway system generally operates at LOS B or better. Only a section of SR 49 from the Yuba County line to Sattley operates at a lower LOS; although this is due to sharp curves and limited passing opportunities. Sierra County's low population and projected future growth rates indicate traffic congestion is not a major concern of the region. Additionally, projects identified in the RTP are determined to improve the overall transportation system and related impacts. Furthermore, as the RTP is a programmatic document, and as the proposed projects will be reviewed on a project-by-project basis, there is no potential for significant impact.

XVI. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS Would the project:	**Potentially Significant**	**Less than Significant with Mitigation**	**Less than Significant**	**No Impact**
a) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Require or result in the construction of new facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider that serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?	☐	☐	☐	☒
g) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion: As the RTP projects focus primarily on the improvement to existing roadway facilities, the potential for significant impacts on utilities and service system is low. The update of the RTP is a programmatic document. Specific environmental impacts of proposed projects discussed in the RTP will be addressed on an individual basis at the time of project review. Therefore, there is no potential for significant impact.

XVII. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE	Potentially Significant	Less than Significant with Mitigation	Less than Significant	No Impact
a) Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? "Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are significant when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Does the project have environmental effects that will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion: Preparation and adoption of the RTP represents long-term transportation planning for the Sierra County Region, and by definition does not involve individual projects that would have individual impacts. Policies are included in the RTP to minimize environmental impacts of transportation investments. Specific environmental impacts of proposed projects discussed in the RTP will be addressed on an individual basis at the time of project review. Therefore, there is less than significant potential impact.

PREPARERS

Report Authors: LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc.
Gordon R. Shaw, PE, AICP
Genevieve Evans, Planner, AICP