



COUNTY OF LAKE

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
 Planning Division
 Courthouse - 255 N. Forbes Street Lakeport, California 95453
 Telephone: (707) 263-2221 FAX: (707) 263-2225

Draft: August 14, 2025
 Revised: November 10, 2025

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST FORM INITIAL STUDY (SCH No. 2025080737)

1. Project Title: Cobb Community Park Project
2. Permit Numbers: General Plan Conformity and Initial Study PL-25-96
3. Lead Agency Name and Address: County of Lake
 Community Development Department
 Planning Division
 Courthouse - 255 N. Forbes Street
 Lakeport, CA 95453
4. Contact Person: Michelle Irace, Senior Planner
 (707) 263-2221
michelle.irace@lakecountyca.gov
5. Project Location(s): 16540 State Hwy 175
 Southeast corner of Highway 175 and Golf Road,
 Cobb, CA
 Assessor Parcel Number (APN): 013-056-04
6. Project Name & Address: Cobb Community Park Project
 16540 State Highway 175
 Cobb, California 95426
7. General Plan Designation: Rural Lands (RL), Rural Residential (RR), Suburban
 Residential Reserve (SRe), Community Commercial
 (Cc)
8. Zoning: Split; "RL-B5", Rural Lands-Special Lot Size, 5 acres;
 "RR-B5-FF-WW", Rural Residential-Special Lot Size, 5
 acres, Floodway Fringe, Waterway; "SR-B4-WW",
 Suburban Reserve-Special Lot Size, 4 acres,
 Waterway; "C2-DR", Community Commercial-Design
 Review
9. Supervisor District: District Five (5)
10. Flood Zone: "X" (Area of Minimal Flood Hazard)
11. Slope: Primarily flat in the southwestern portion of the site,
 west of Kelsey Creek. There are steeper slopes to the

	east and north, east of Kelsey Creek.
12. Fire Hazard Severity Zone:	Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ)
13. Earthquake Fault Zone:	None
14. Dam Failure Inundation Area:	Not located within designated Dam Failure Inundation Area
15. Parcel Size:	13.13 acres ¹
16. Description of project:	See next page.

¹ The assessor parcel map acreage (12.88 acres) is smaller than the topographically surveyed Project area of 13.13 acres. As such, for the purposes of this Initial Study and supporting technical reports, the Project site is conservatively referenced as the larger 13.13 acres surveyed parcel size.

Project Background

To address the increasing need for parks, trails, and open space within Cobb and beyond, the County has identified the Cobb Community Park Project (Project) site for potential development of a park that would serve the local community (see Figure 1 Vicinity Map, and Figure 2 Project Site).

Lake County General Plan

The 2008 Lake County General Plan addresses Open Space, Conservation, and Recreation within the County with the intent to protect and enhance the natural and cultural resources that make the County unique. The General Plan sets the goal “Goal OSC-6: To provide a parks, recreation, and open space system that serves the recreational needs of County residents and visitors, including a regional non-motorized recreational trail system.” Within this goal are some key policies which drove the need for the Project, specifically:

Policy OSC 6.3 Location and Size Criteria for Parks, which among other items, includes locating parks to ensure equitable distribution of facilities within the County. The Cobb Mountain area currently contains no County parks, making the construction of a park in Cobb key to pursuing this general plan policy.

Also relevant is Policy OSC 6.2 Park Amenities, which requires a broad range of active and passive recreational needs, specifically including trees for shade, active sports fields and facilities, multi-use areas and trails, and sitting areas, all of which are planned for the Project.

County of Lake Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

The County of Lake Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan (Master Plan) (Spring 2024), specifically recommends a new park in the Cobb Mountain Planning Area. The preferred park elements listed in the Master Plan, which are also reflected in this Project, include:

- Play area suitable for the surrounding context
- At least one (1) medium-sized picnic shelter
- A gathering area
- A looped walking path
- A dog run
- A restroom
- Site design to maintain tree canopy

Cobb Mountain Area Plan

The Cobb Mountain Area Plan (May 1989) recognizes the need to maintain the natural amenities which define the Cobb Area and develop new park and recreation opportunities. Specific Cobb Mountain Area Plan recommendations include:

- Maintain natural amenities, including expansive views, open space, and wildlife environments so that economic development, in combination with environmental quality, is enhanced.

- Develop more public park and recreation opportunities in Cobb Mountain Area.
- Develop youth-oriented recreation facilities.
- Develop at least one (1) neighborhood or wayside park and eventually a 5 to 20-acre community park.
- Develop an integrated bicycle/pedestrian trail system to provide access to recreation facilities.

Project Objectives

The Project objectives, listed pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15124(b), are as follows:

1. Provide a park site for recreational use by the Cobb area community.
2. Provide park amenities including a picnic shelter, playground, gathering area, and trails. Provide secondary amenities as required to support the recreational amenities such as a parking lot and restroom.
3. Protect environmental resources, including cultural and biological resources.

Project Characteristics

Project Overview

The Project site (see Figure 3a Overall Site Plan) is planned for development by County as a community park. The Project would include a primary recreation area in the southwestern portion of the Project site (see Figure 3b Primary Recreation Area Plan).

This primary recreation area includes:

- Main parking lot with bicycle parking (accessible from Golf Road),
- A park sign,
- A group picnic area,
- A restroom with drinking fountain,
- Utilities (including a potable water connection to the Cobb Water Agency),
- A grass play field,
- A playground,
- An outdoor gathering area,
- Pathways connecting these amenities together, and,
- the South trailhead (connecting to a trail system spanning the Project site).

The rest of the Project site includes:

- Stabilized accessible trails,
- Natural surface trails,
- Enclosed dog run,
- Retaining wall along natural surface trail paralleling Golf Road,
- the North trailhead,
- A secondary parking lot including bicycle parking (accessible from Golf Road),
- Pedestrian bridge over Kelsey Creek,
- Pedestrian access points to Kelsey Creek,
- Kelsey Creek restoration,
- Maintenance and emergency vehicle access with gates,

- Signs, and,
- Park furnishings.

Description of Project Components

Play Area

Play areas would be established northeast of the group picnic area. It would provide play opportunities for children between the ages of 2 and 12, with equipment and fall surfacing.

Picnic Area

The group picnic area is a paved space northeast of the parking lot and southwest of the playground. It would include up to two (2) shade shelters with picnic tables and barbeques.

Restroom

The restroom building (anticipated to be up to 180 square feet and constructed on a concrete foundation) would include up to two (2) single-user stalls, a maintenance room/closet, and a drinking fountain.

Project Site Utilities

Water

The water for the restroom, drinking fountain, and Project-site irrigation would be provided through a new connection to Cobb Water Agency along Golf Road (a will-serve letter for the Project was received on October 27, 2025). The maximum total water demand is estimated at 50.8 gallons per minute (GPM), assuming all restroom fixtures, including two (2) toilets and two (2) sinks, are operating simultaneously. The connection would meet the requirements of the State Water Resource Control Board Division of Drinking Water. The irrigation system will require a maximum of 45 GPM. In practice, actual average water use would be substantially lower due to intermittent usage of both the irrigation system and restroom fixtures. Irrigation would occur primarily during off-hours or non-peak times and would not coincide with restroom use.

The connection exact location along Golf Road would be at the discretion of the Cobb Water Agency. As such, it is anticipated that the connection would adequately meet the Project site's water needs.

Wastewater

The existing septic system, located northeast of the existing building, is adequate for proposed needs and will be reused if the leach field is still functional (the restroom would drain into the existing septic system). The septic tank has been assessed and requires only minor repairs. The leach field is approximately 90 linear feet.

In November 2023, Kelseyville Septic conducted an inspection and determined that the septic tank was operational and did not require pumping. Functional testing was completed by running water through the system, which performed as expected. In Fall 2024, the County's Director of Environmental Health conducted a visual inspection and indicated that the system would be sufficient for the Project's anticipated level of use. Minor improvements and/or repairs would be implemented, including the recommended installation of a new bio-filter and sanitary tees.

Stormwater

The Project is outside of the municipal stormwater sewer system. Stormwater runoff would be managed through landscaping, adherence to erosion control best management practices (BMPs), and the Project would comply with Chapter 30, Grading Ordinance, of the Municipal Code (refer to Figure 3a, 3b, and 4).

Electricity

Existing power (provided by Pacific Gas & Electric [PG&E]) to the Project site would be retained and the electrical panel would be replaced with a new panel. The only lighting proposed for the Project is motion sensor and/or timer-managed security lighting associated with the restroom, within the picnic shelters, and in the parking lot. Lockable electrical outlets for special events will be located at the outdoor gathering area.

Solid Waste

Trash collection within the restroom and throughout the Project site would be performed by County park maintenance staff. Solid waste generated by the Project would consist primarily of typical park-related refuse (e.g., food wrappers, paper waste, restroom waste, and small maintenance debris) and is expected to be minimal due to the recreational nature of the Project.

Based on the park's size and anticipated daily use, the volume of solid waste generated would be low and would not require additional hauling capacity or new collection routes. All solid waste would be hauled directly by County staff to the Eastlake Sanitary Landfill, which is the designated disposal facility for County public facilities.

Trails and Bridge

The proposed trail system consists of an approximately 0.2-mile stabilized accessible trail in the southwest area of Kelsey Creek, natural surface trails paralleling portions of Golf Road, and a pedestrian bridge crossing Kelsey Creek. The bridge would connect the accessible trail to an approximately one (1) mile natural surface trail on the northeast side of the creek. The bridge and associated construction would remain entirely outside and above the ordinary high-water mark (OHWM) of Kelsey Creek. The trail system would be routed to preserve trees, to the extent possible,

and would include park rule signs, wayfinding signs, and interpretive signs. The trail system would also provide pedestrian overlooks of Kelsey Creek. These overlooks would be located outside of the top of bank, although they may be sited nearby to provide views of the creek. The trail system would terminate at the northern corner of the property along Golf Road, where the north trailhead and a secondary parking lot would be located. A 4-foot-high retaining wall is anticipated along the natural surface trail paralleling Golf Road for less than 0.1 mile. All applicable permits, such as a Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement, from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife would be obtained for work near the creek.

Maintenance and Emergency Access

In addition to emergency and maintenance vehicle access in the parking lot, the Project includes a reinforced maintenance and emergency vehicle access trail between Golf Road and the pedestrian bridge, and a reinforced maintenance and emergency vehicle turn out off of Highway 175. The maintenance and emergency vehicle access only routes would be blocked by locking gates (anticipating that the Project site would have three [3] vehicular pipe gates) preventing access by the public.

Kelsey Creek

This Project includes removal of invasive species along Kelsey Creek and restoration of native plants. Any work within the creek or riparian zone would comply with applicable regulatory requirements. Creek restoration would include removal of invasive plants and planting of native plants within riparian area. Irrigation, if any, would be on-surface and temporary. No modifications will be made to the creek channel or flow.

Parking

Two (2) paved parking lots are included within the Project site. The main parking lot would be located on the southwest corner of the site, in the area that previously contained the building and associated parking. The main parking lot would provide 27 stalls. The secondary lot would be located at the north trailhead and would provide no more than four (4) stalls. These parking lots would meet minimum requirements for accessible stalls, electric vehicle charging, and bicycle parking per California Building Code (CBC) requirements.

Signage

The Project would include a park monument sign (at the western entrance) to identify the park, park rules signs at entrances and trailheads, wayfinding signs along the trails, and interpretive signs at key points along the trails.

Dog Run

An enclosed dog run will be provided with an entrance from the stabilized accessible trail. The enclosure will be a metal fence which is visually permeable. The entrance will include a double

gated entry, benches, and an accessible entry pad. Beyond that the area will remain in the existing natural surface state with all trees preserved.

Landscaping

New landscaping would be provided around the primary recreation area and would consist of native and drought-tolerant species. The proposed replacement trees for the Project site are shade trees for the parking lot, native shade trees for the other use areas, accent trees, shrubs and groundcovers, native grasses, and an active use grassy field.

Park Operations

The Project would be maintained as a dawn to dusk park. County park staff would provide regular daily trash collection, as required, ongoing maintenance, and cleaning. During times of regular use, no more than 30 users are anticipated to be present. The County has a park use permit for events with over 20 people or which reserve the community gathering area or picnic shelter/s. This permit ensures adequate operational support for higher uses. During event use, up to 47 users are expected to be present at the Project site.

Project Construction

The Project would be constructed in four (4) phases (see Figure 4 Phasing Site Plan) with a total of approximately 1,393 cubic yards of grading and up to 20,950 square feet of new impervious surfaces. Grading would be balanced on-site with no import or export of soil required. It is also assumed that a grading permit and Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) will be required. The Project site has approximately 2,200 square feet of existing impervious surface, all of which would be demolished. The Project would result in a net increase of up to 18,750 square feet of impervious surface.

Phase 1 would occur in the western portion of the site (primary recreation area) and includes the main parking lot, restroom, picnic and gathering areas, dog run, and concrete paths and curbs, and reinforcement of the existing turnout. Phase 2 would include construction of the pedestrian bridge over Kelsey Creek and the retaining wall along the trail segment paralleling Golf Road in the northeastern portion of the site. It would also include natural surface trails north/east of Kelsey Creek, the northern trailhead furnishings, and signage installation. Phase 3 includes the pedestrian creek overlooks and removal of invasive species and restoration of native species along Kelsey Creek. Phase 4 would provide a secondary parking lot and adjacent concrete walk at the north corner of the site along Golf Road.

Phase 1:

- Grading: Approximately 1,015 cubic yards
- Impervious Surface: Up to 19,050 square feet

Phase 2:

- Grading: Approximately 333 cubic yards
- Impervious Surface: Up to 600 square feet

Phase 3 (Creek Restoration and River Access):

- Grading: None
- Impervious Surface: None

Phase 4 (Far Future Phase):

- Grading: Approximately 45 cubic yards
- Impervious Surface: Up to 1,300 square feet

Phase Totals:

- Grading: Approximately 1,393 cubic yards
- Impervious Surface: Up to 20,950 square feet

Project construction shall be implemented in logical phases depending on the available funding. Construction activities are planned to begin in 2026. Phase 1 is estimated to take 6-8 months; Phase 2 is estimated to take 3-6 months; Phase 3 is estimated to take 1-3 months; and Phase 4 is estimated to take 1-2 months. The phases are not anticipated to progress continuously; each phase will commence when funding is secured. Construction activities may take place six days a week (Monday through Saturday), from 7:00am-7:00pm.

Use of the following construction equipment is anticipated:

- Excavator
- Backhoe
- Posthole digger
- Auger
- Hand tools
- Trucks and trailers
- Forklift
- Woodchipper
- Asphalt roller
- Crane (for delivery of restroom structure and potential play equipment)

All construction equipment would be delivered to the Project site on tractor trailer. Equipment would be operated by licensed and insured equipment operators, or County staff using County equipment. Workers would use general hand tools comprised but not limited to pneumatic (air) tools, electrically powered hand tools, and non-powered hand tools. In general, construction would include the following stages (described sequentially):

Site Preparation

- Construction and tree protection fencing installation
- Install erosion control measures
- Site clearing and demolition (including demolition of the existing commercial building and outbuildings)
- Earthwork and fine grading

Utilities

- Assessment and reconstruction (if necessary) of leach field
- Installation of water lines
- Relocation of power panel and installation of conduit and wires

- Installation of irrigation mainline and sleeves

Flatwork and Structures

- Installation of footings
- Subgrade, base, and paving installation
- Restroom and shade shelter installation
- Play equipment installation
- Stabilized trail construction

Planting and Irrigation

- Soil preparation and amendment
- Irrigation installation
- Planting installation including grass
- This stage also includes habitat restoration planting where applicable

Finishing and Site Furnishings

- Install site furnishings including benches, tables, and signs
- Site finish work

Access and Staging

During construction, access to the Project site would continue to be provided via the existing driveway on Golf Road (the existing driveway would be replaced by a new driveway during construction). Future access would be via the new driveway at the intersection of Highway 175 and Golf Road to the main parking lot, and from Golf Road to the smaller secondary parking lot. Construction staging would occur on the Project site, as it is currently vacant. Staging would occur where it would not impede surrounding uses or cause a significant impact to natural resources.

Tree Removal and Replanting

The County will preserve as many trees as possible. However, development of the primary recreation area would result in the removal of approximately 30 trees (including California black oak, Valley oak, Douglass fir, Ponderosa pine and Pacific madrone; see Arborist Report in Attachment 1a). The number and location of exact trees to be removed would be confirmed with engineered grading plans during the Grading Permit process. As noted on the site plan, trees with 25 DBH would be preserved. Tree limbing and removal of dead wood may occur along the road or fire safety and defensible space. While the Project proposes the removal of trees within the primary recreation area to develop the parking lot and park facilities, oak trees would be replaced at a ratio of 3:1 with a 75% survival rate criteria over 5 years, consistent with the recommendations of the CDFW. Other native trees will be replanted at a ratio of 2:1. The County proposes planting replacement trees on-site if possible, or offsite at Trailside Park in Middletown.

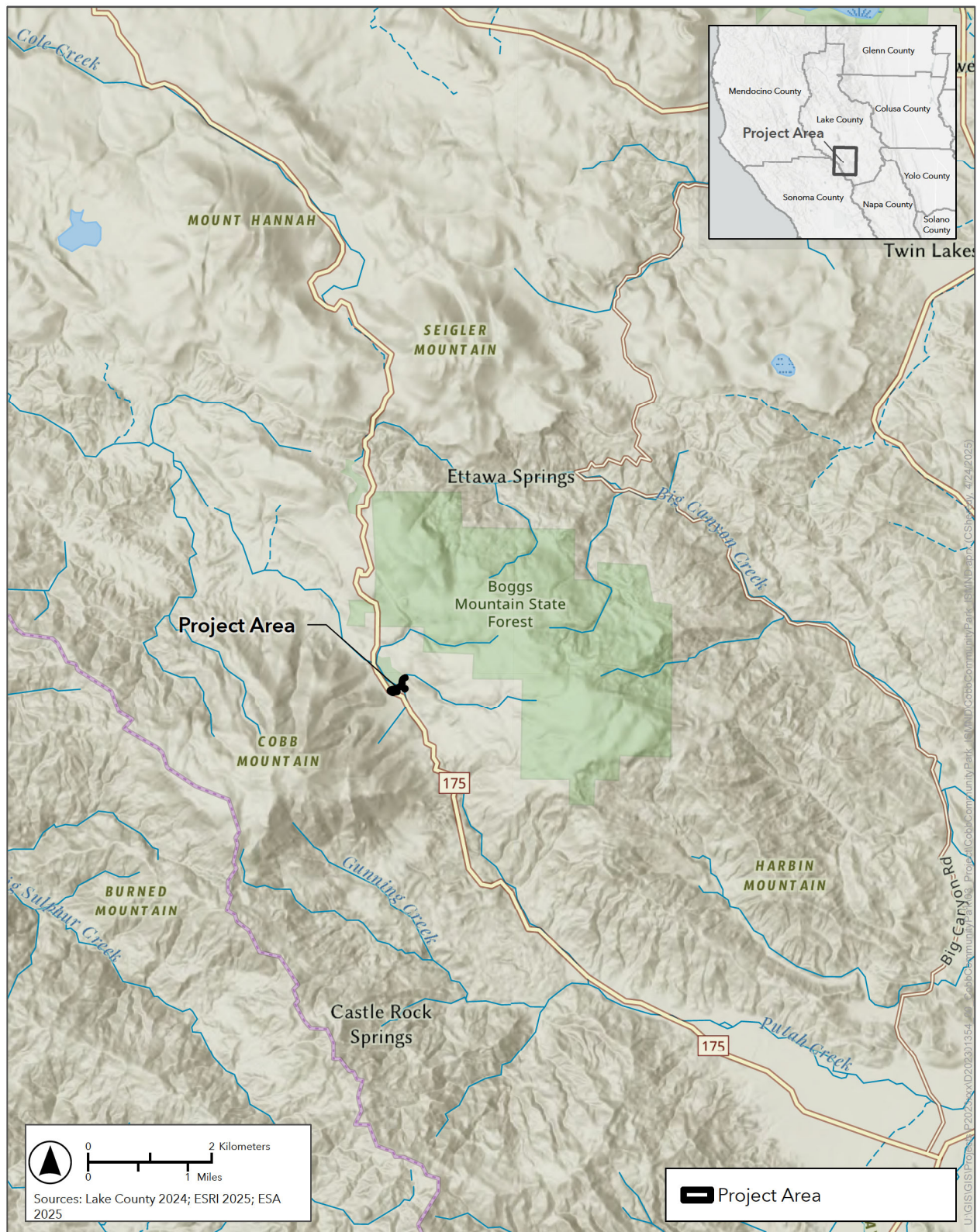
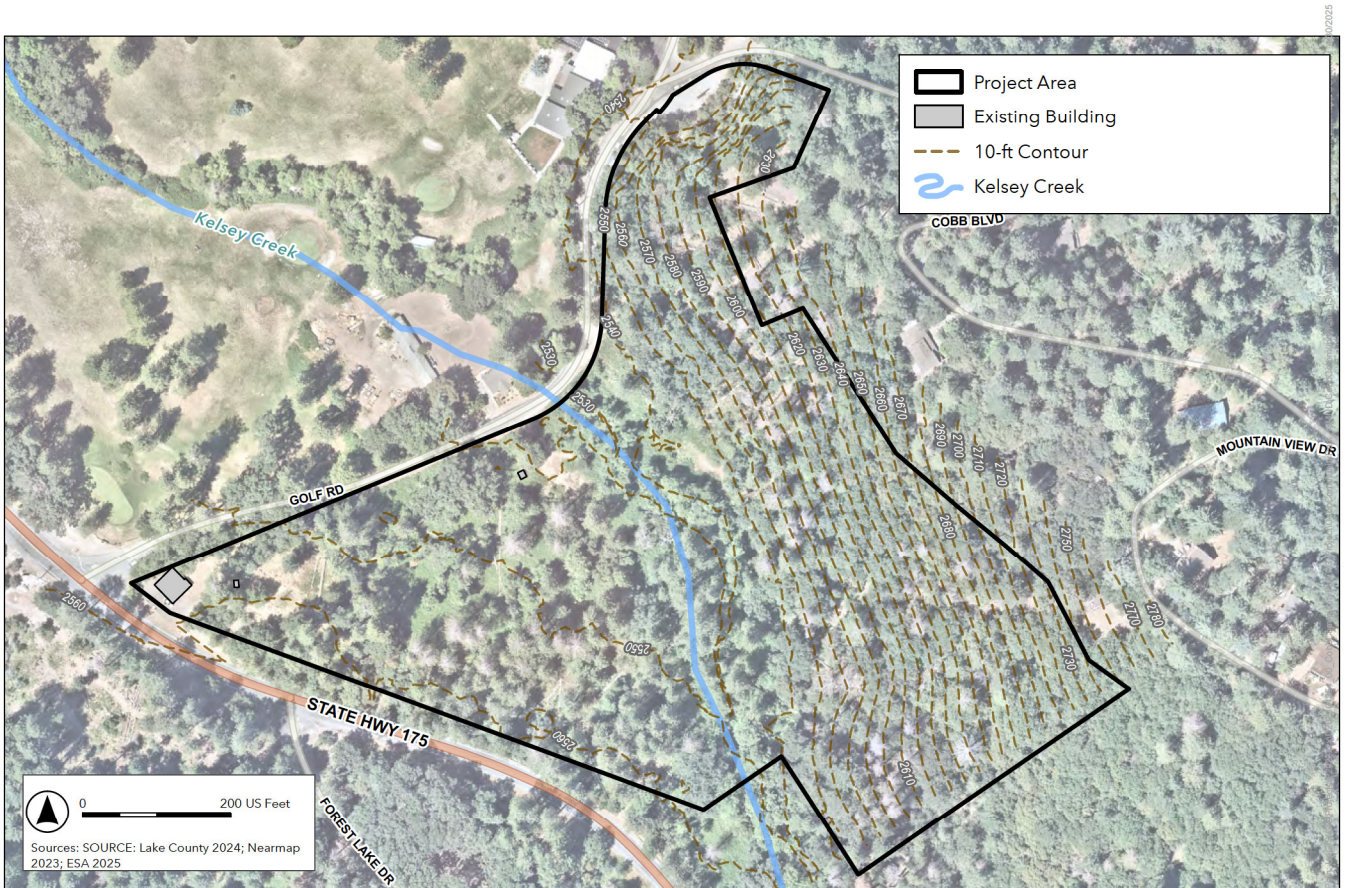
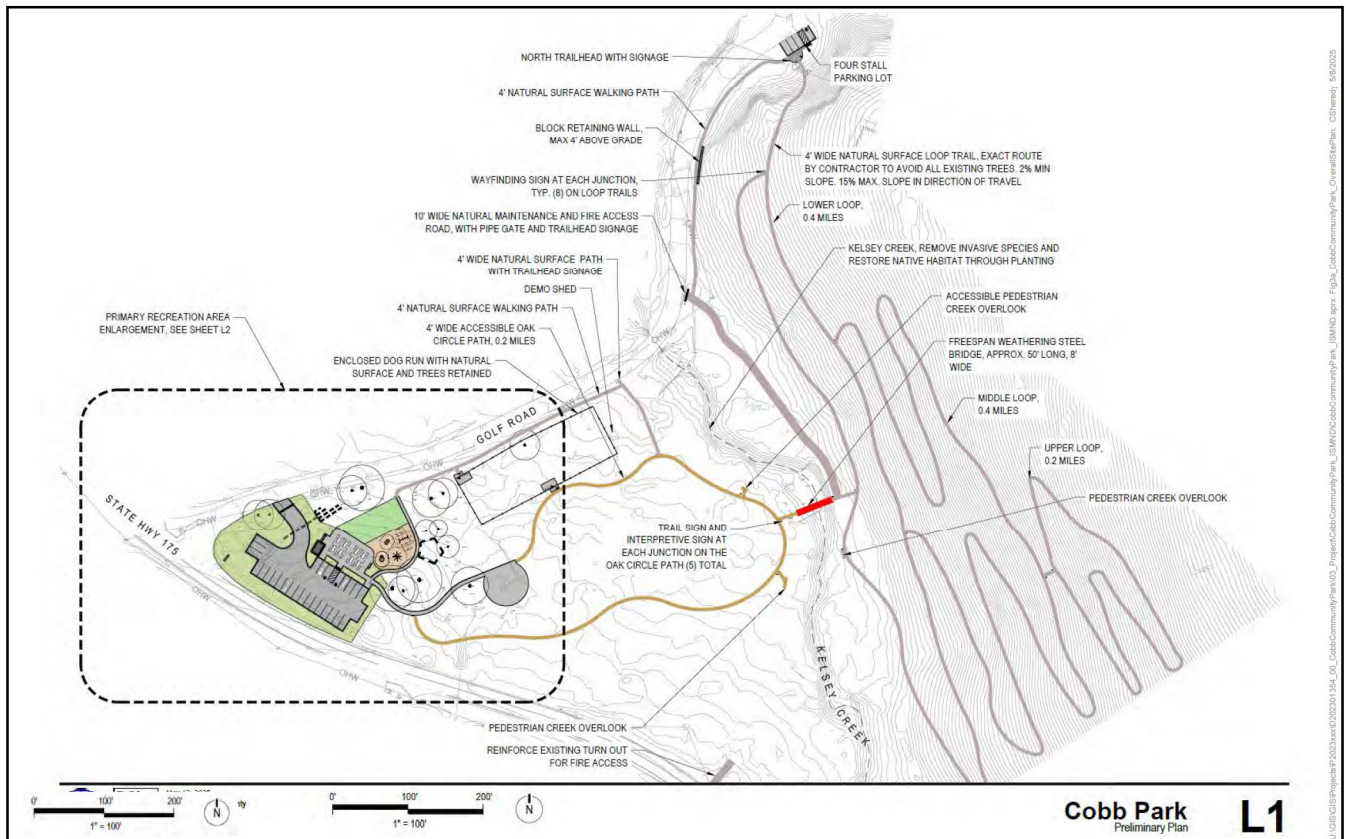


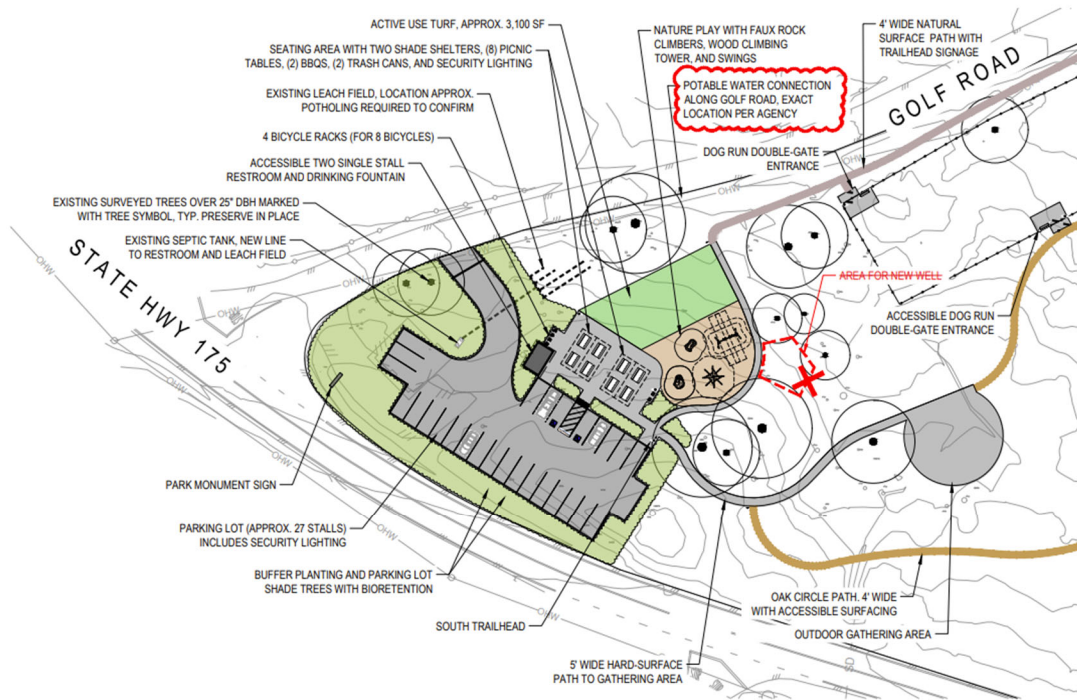
Figure 1
Vicinity Map
Cobb Community Park
Lake County, CA





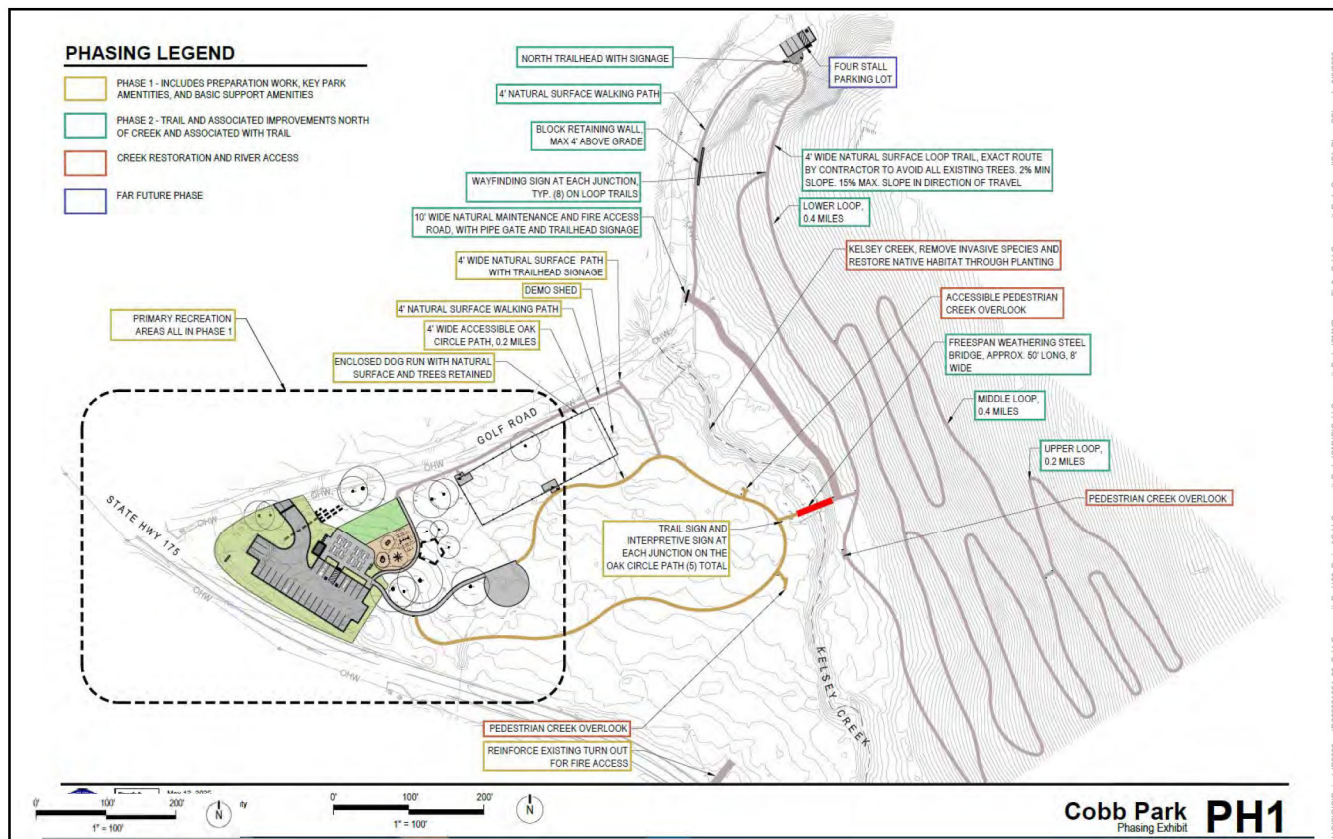
Sources: County of Lake; Roach & Campbell 2025; ESA 2025

Figure 3a
Overall Site Plan
Cobb Community Park
Lake County, CA



REVISION NOTED IN RED

Cobb Community Park
Lake County, CA



Sources: County of Lake; Roach & Campbell 2025; ESA 2025

Figure 4
Phasing Site Plan
Cobb Community Park
Lake County, CA



17. Environmental Setting and Existing Conditions:

The proposed Project would be constructed and located in Cobb, a census-designated place in an unincorporated portion of Lake County (see Figure 1). The Project site is directly accessible via Highway 175 at the intersection with Golf Road, and approximately 8.1 miles from Middletown, California. As of 2020, the community of Cobb had a population of 1,295 (U.S. Census 2022).

The 13.13-acre Project site (APN: 013-056-40)² is located at 16540 Highway 175, Cobb, California. The Project site (see Figure 2) is primarily flat in the southwestern portion of the site, west of Kelsey Creek. There are steeper slopes to the east and north, east of Kelsey Creek. The topography of the Project site ranges in elevation, from approximately 2,545 to 2,610 feet above mean sea level (amsl). There is one (1) commercial building located at the site, and two (2) outbuildings. The commercial building in the southwestern portion of the site is one-story and vacant with an L-shaped footprint. The commercial building was constructed circa 1955 as a real estate office and does not possess significance under any National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) or California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) criteria. The two (2) outbuildings are wood-frame sheds east of the commercial building, and do not possess significance under any NRHP or CRHR criteria.

The Project site is bounded by a golf course and restaurant immediately across Golf Road to the north, a hotel across Highway 175 to the west, single-family residential houses to the northeast and east, and undeveloped land to the south. Within a mile heading north along Highway 175 is the Cobb Post Office, the South Lake Fire District Cobb Station (Station 62), the Cobb Area Water District office, and the Cobb Mountain Elementary School, along with some commercial and residential properties. Within a mile heading south along Highway 175 is the Our Lady of the Pines Catholic Church outdoor mass site, and commercial and residential properties.

² As previously described, the APN map acreage (12.88 acres) is smaller than the topographically surveyed Project area of 13.13 acres. As such, for the purposes of this Initial Study and supporting technical reports, the Project site acreage is conservatively referenced as the larger 13.13 acres surveyed parcel size.

18. Surrounding Land Uses and Setting:

The Project site is located in a rural, forested area characterized by a mix of undeveloped parcels, low-density residential properties, and public lands. The surrounding area is predominantly zoned for rural and recreational use, with limited commercial development (see Figure 5 Surrounding Land Use Map).

- North: Parcels to the north, across Golf Road, are zoned Rural Residential (RR), Resort Commercial (CR), and Single Family Residential (R1), and include the Belmont Pines Golf Course and single-family residences.
- South: Parcels to the south are zoned Rural Residential (RR), Rural Lands (RL), and Planned Development Commercial (PDC), and include riparian woodland areas and single-family residences.
- East: Parcels to the east are zoned Single Family Residential (R1), and include Cobb Boulevard, riparian woodland areas, and low-density residential development.
- West: Parcels to the west, across Highway 175, are zoned Community Commercial (C2) and remain largely undeveloped, with the exception of a small hotel at the corner of Highway 175 and Golf Road, and PDC, including oak woodlands.

The Project site itself is previously disturbed, with non-native annual grassland and oak woodland in the cleared portions on the west. Along Kelsey Creek is riparian woodland, and more oak woodland is located to the east. The surrounding landscape provides a buffer between the site and any sensitive receptors or developed land uses.

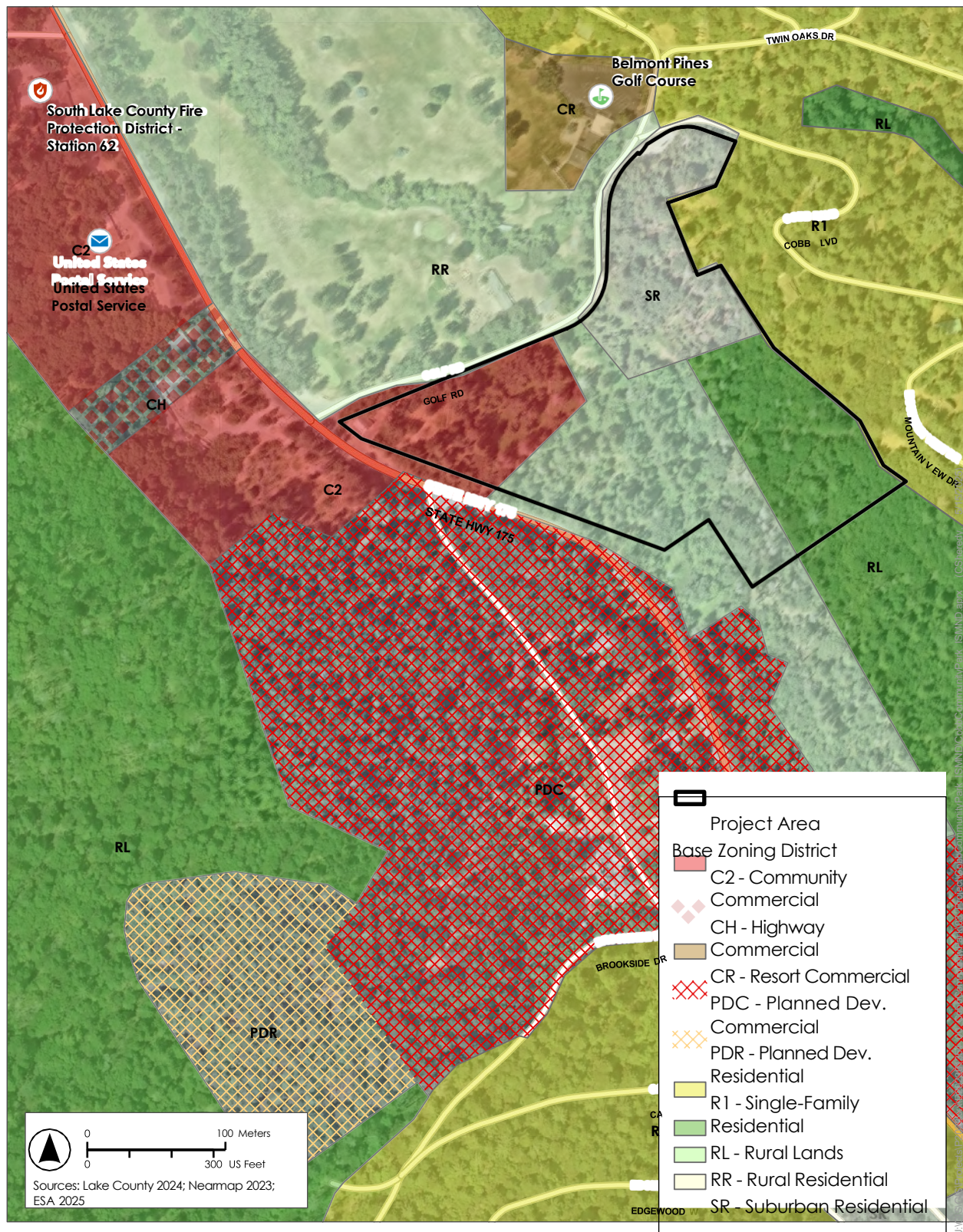


Figure 5
 Surrounding Land Use Map
 Cobb Community Park
 Lake County, CA

19. Other public agencies whose approval is required (e.g., Permits, financing approval, or participation agreement).

The County is the CEQA lead agency for this Project and has sole authority to consider and approve the Project, approve the IS/MND, and adopt the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP), if necessary. Table 1 lists agencies that may be required to issue permits or approve certain aspects of the Project.

Table 1. Responsible Agencies and Anticipated Permits and Approvals

Agency	Anticipated Permit/Approval
County of Lake (County) - Community Development Department - Department of Environmental Health - Department of Public Works - Department of Public Services - Air Quality Management District	- Project review and approval. - Approval of conceptual plans and compliance with the Lake County General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, and Lake County Municipal Code. - Grading permits, building permits, certificates of occupancy, and other development related approvals (including notifications and applications).
Department of Transportation (Caltrans), District 1	Review of Project and plans as it relates to Highway 175.
Police and Fire Services - South Lake County Fire Protection District - California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CALFIRE) - Lake County Sheriff Department	- Review of Project and plans (with consideration for impacts to firefighting and emergency services). - Review of Project and plans (with consideration for impacts to law enforcement and emergency services).
Other Utility/Community Service Providers (i.e., PG&E)	Review of the Project as it relates to facilities and on-going services.
Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) California Water Resources Control Board	- National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) General Permit for stormwater discharges associated with construction. - Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 401 Water Quality Certification and Notice of Intent for construction activities. - Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) for on-site storm water management and pollution prevention.
California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)	If needed, Section 1602 Streambed Alteration Agreement (SAA) review and comment on specific sensitive species and habitats.
United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)	If needed, Approval of Section 404 Permit under the Federal Clean Water Act for Project impacts to jurisdictional waters of the United States.

20. Have California Native American tribes traditionally and culturally affiliated with the Project area requested consultation pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21080.3.1? If so, is there a plan for consultation that includes, for example, the determination of significance of impacts to tribal cultural resources, procedures regarding confidentiality, etc.?

Prior to sending out Assembly Bill 52 (AB 52) notification letters, the County informally corresponded with tribal representatives from Big Valley Band of Pomo Indians and Middletown Rancheria of Pomo Indians as early as October 2023. This included Project site meetings, the sharing of draft plans, and multiple follow-up attempts to solicit design feedback.

A site visit with the Middletown Rancheria Tribal Historic Preservation Officer (THPO) occurred in November 2023 (and the Big Valley THPO was scheduled to attend).

Pursuant to AB 52, notification letters were sent to local tribes on May 15, 2025, by the County of Lake. In response to the May 15, 2025 AB 52 notification letters, Robert Geary, Cultural Resources Director/THPO of the Habematolel Pomo of Upper Lake sent a letter (May 27, 2025) that concluded that the Project was not within the aboriginal territories of the Habematolel Pomo of Upper Lake, and thus they declined to comment. In this letter, it deferred correspondence to the Middletown Rancheria of Pomo Indians. No formal requests for consultation were received within the 30 day response timeframe. Additional outreach to Middletown Rancheria and Big Valley (via phone and email, in July 2025) tribes was completed by the County, but has not resulted in any further response, comment, or request for formal consultation.

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED:

The environmental factors checked 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.

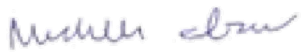
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|---|---|--|
| ☐ Aesthetics | ☐ Greenhouse Gas Emissions | ☐ Public Services |
| ☐ Agriculture & Forestry Resources | ☐ Hazards & Hazardous Materials | ☐ Recreation |
| ☐ Air Quality | ☒ Hydrology / Water Quality | ☐ Transportation |
| ☒ Biological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

DETERMINATION: (To be completed by the lead Agency)

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

- ☐ 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 have been made by or agreed to by the Project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- ☐ I find that 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.

Initial Study Prepared By: Michelle Irace, County of Lake Senior Planner, with assistance from Environmental Science Associates

 Date: November 10, 2025
SIGNATURE

SECTION 1

EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS:

- 1) A brief explanation is required for all answers except "No Impact" answers that are adequately supported by the information sources a lead agency cites in the parentheses following each question. A "No Impact" answer is adequately supported if the referenced information sources show that the impact simply does not apply to Projects like the one involved (e.g., the Project falls outside a fault rupture zone). A "No Impact" answer should be explained where it is based on Project-specific factors as well as general standards (e.g., the Project will not expose sensitive receptors to pollutants, based on a Project-specific screening analysis).
- 2) All answers must take account of the whole action involved, including off-site as well as on-site, cumulative as well as Project-level, indirect as well as direct, and construction as well as operational impacts.
- 3) Once the lead agency has determined that a particular physical impact may occur, and then the checklist answers must indicate whether the impact is potentially significant, less than significant with mitigation, or less than significant. "Potentially Significant Impact" is appropriate if there is substantial evidence that an effect may be significant. If there are one or more "Potentially Significant Impact" entries when the determination is made, an EIR is required.
- 4) "Negative Declaration: Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated" applies where the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from "Potentially Significant Impact" to a "Less Than Significant Impact." The lead agency must describe the mitigation measures, and briefly explain how they reduce the effect to a less than significant level (mitigation measures from Section XVII, "Earlier Analyses," may be cross-referenced).
- 5) Earlier analyses may be used where, pursuant to the tiering, program EIR, or other CEQA process, an effect has been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or negative declaration. Section 15063(c) (3) (D). In this case, a brief discussion should identify the following:
 - a) Earlier Analysis Used. Identify and state where they are available for review.
 - b) Impacts Adequately Addressed. Identify which effects from the above checklist were within the scope of and adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and state whether such effects were addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis.
 - c) Mitigation Measures. For effects that are "Less than Significant with Mitigation Measures Incorporated," describe the mitigation measures, which were incorporated or refined from the earlier document and the extent to which they address site-specific conditions for the Project.
- 6) Lead agencies are encouraged to incorporate into the checklist references to information sources for potential impacts (e.g., general plans, zoning ordinances). Reference to a previously prepared or outside document should, where appropriate, include a reference to the page or pages where the statement is substantiated.
- 7) Supporting Information Sources: A source list should be attached, and other sources used or individuals contacted should be cited in the discussion.
- 8) This is only a suggested form, and lead agencies are free to use different formats; however, lead agencies should normally address the questions from this checklist that are relevant to a Project's environmental effects in whatever format is selected.

- 9) The explanation of each issue should identify:
- The significance criteria or threshold, if any, used to evaluate each question; and
 - The mitigation measure identified, if any, to reduce the impact to less than significance

I. AESTHETICS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Measures	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Except as provided in Public Resource Code Section 21099, would the Project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point). If the Project is in an urbanized area would the Project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d) Would the Project create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion:

- The General Plan Land Use designations assigned to the Project site are Rural Lands (RL), Rural Residential (RR), Suburban Residential Reserve (SRe), and Community Commercial (Cc). The Zoning District designations assigned to the Project site are Rural Lands-Special Lot Size, 5 acres (RL-B5); Rural Residential-Special Lot Size, 5 acres, Floodway Fringe, Waterway (RR-B5-FF-WW); Suburban Reserve-Special Lot Size, 4 acres, Waterway (SR-B4-WW); and Community Commercial-Design Review (C2-DR).

Scenic areas are regulated in the Lake County Municipal Code Zoning Ordinance Article 34, "SC" Scenic Combining District. While portions of Highway 175 are recognized locally for scenic value, this portion of the highway is not located within the SC district. Additionally, HWY 175 is not designated as a state scenic highway under the California Scenic Highway Program (Caltrans, 2023).

Section 3.8 of the Cobb Area Plan identifies the following as scenic resources: viewsheds of Boggs and Cobb Mountains, Mount Hannah, and Seigler Mountain; meadow and wetland viewsheds in lower Cobb Valley areas; and the Mayacmas Mountains, including portions of the northern Geysers geothermal resource area. Additionally, the Area Plan identifies Red Hills Road, Salmina Road, Loch Lomond Road, Bottle Rock Road, Big Canyon Road, as locally scenic for providing views of the noted mountains and viewsheds.

The Project site is primarily flat southwest of Kelsey Creek, with steeper slopes to the east and north. The primary recreation area is planned in this relatively flat area which is previously disturbed and includes non-native annual grassland habitat. Development in the western portion of the site would avoid the more dense areas of oak and riparian woodland to the

east, would not have ridgeline views (due to intervening vegetation), and would be limited in height and scale, with no structures exceeding one story or the maximum building height limits established in the Rural Lands, Rural Residential, Suburban Reserve, and Community Commercial zoning districts (35 feet for primary structures and 20 feet for accessory structures) (County of Lake, 2023).

The surrounding area includes single-family residences, a hotel, a golf course, and associated restaurant facilities, all of which are consistent with the rural recreational and residential character of the area. Due to the Project site's location, elevation, and surrounding vegetation, views into the site from Highway 175 and Golf Road are partially obscured. Views of the noted mountains and scenic resources are not available from the roadway, as the existing trees and topography block such views. The Project would include recreational facilities such as a picnic shelter, restroom, trails, and parking, largely concentrated in the already disturbed southwestern area. No portion of the Project would be located on a prominent ridgeline, nor would it obstruct long-range views of the Cobb Mountain area or other designated scenic vistas.

While the Project would be implemented in phases, with potential gaps between construction activities depending on available funding, none of the individual phases would introduce substantial structures that obstruct scenic views (see Figure 4). Given the location of the Project improvements in a flat, previously disturbed, and lower-elevation portion of the site, and due to the absence of any officially recognized scenic vistas on or near the site, the Project would not result in substantial adverse effects on any scenic vista.

Less than Significant Impact.

- b) The Project site does not contain any rock outcroppings or buildings listed on the National or California Registers of Historic Places. Although the site contains oak woodland and riparian habitat along Kelsey Creek, the Project has been designed to preserve the natural canopy and minimize tree removal to the extent possible. Any necessary tree removal for park development, access, fire safety, or site features would comply with applicable protection, mitigation standards, Lake County's Resolution No. 95-211 (Oak Woodland Management Policy), and Chapter 30, Grading Ordinance of the Municipal Code. No modifications would occur to the Kelsey Creek channel or flow; creek restoration efforts would focus solely on invasive plant removal and native revegetation within the riparian zone. See Biological Resources Section for more information.

The nearest state-eligible scenic highway is Highway 29, located more than 10 miles from the site. As previously discussed, Highway 175 is not part of the State Scenic Highway Program (Caltrans, 2023).

Less than Significant Impact.

- c) The Project would include recreational facilities such as a picnic shelter, restroom, trails, and parking, largely concentrated in the already disturbed southwestern area. These features would be developed using materials that reflect natural colors and textures and would be supported by landscaping with native and drought-tolerant species, consistent with the Lake County Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan (County of Lake, 2024).

Public views from Highway 175 and Golf Road would be partially obscured by existing vegetation and topography. From most vantagepoints, the improvements would appear modest in scale and compatible with the surrounding rural landscape. Visual impacts would also be minimized by the use of prefabricated structures, visually permeable fencing (e.g., at

the dog run), and the preservation of the existing tree canopy where feasible.

Construction would occur in phases. While intermediate phases may leave portions of the Project unfinished or undergoing active work, this temporary condition would not result in substantial degradation of visual character. Each phase has been designed to function cohesively on its own, and the full buildout would maintain consistency with the natural, recreational character of the site and surrounding area.

Less than Significant Impact.

- d) The Project would include minimal outdoor lighting, limited to security and safety needs, such as motion-activated or timer-controlled lights on the restroom building, under picnic shelters, and in the main parking lot. All fixtures would be downward-facing, shielded, and compliant with dark-sky principles and County lighting standards.

The Project would operate from dawn to dusk only, and no athletic field or event lighting is proposed. These limitations, combined with the site's rural location and topographic screening, would prevent substantial light or glare impacts during construction or operations. Lighting provisions would be subject to standard Conditions of Approval during Project permitting.

Less than Significant Impact

II. AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Measures	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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No Impact

Would the Project:

- | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of 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)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| e) 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:

- a) According to the California Department of Conservation's Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP), the Project site is designated as "Urban and Built Up Land" and "Other Land" (DOC, 2020). These classifications do not meet the criteria for Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide or Local Importance. Additionally, the site is not currently or historically used for agricultural production. Development of the Project would therefore not result in the conversion of important agricultural lands to non-agricultural use.

No Impact.

- b) The Project site is not under a Williamson Act contract, and neither the site nor the surrounding parcels are zoned specifically for active agricultural production. As previously described, the site is zoned "RL-B5" (Rural Lands-Special Lot Size, 5 acres), "RR-B5-FF-WW" (Rural Residential-Special Lot Size, 5 acres, Floodway Fringe, Waterway), SR-B4-WW (Suburban Reserve-Special Lot Size, 4 acres, Waterway), and C2-DR (Community Commercial-Design Review), which allows for agricultural uses but does not require agricultural preservation or exclusive agricultural use (County of Lake, 2008). The Project would not conflict with any applicable agricultural zoning or land conservation contracts.

No Impact.

- c) The Project site is not zoned as forest land, timberland, or timber production zoning (TPZ) under Government Code Section 51104(g) or Public Resources Code Sections 12220(g) and 4526. While the site contains oak and riparian woodland habitat, it is not designated or managed as a forest resource and is not included in the County's TPZ overlays. The Project has been designed to preserve tree canopy where feasible, consistent with County policy and the Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan (County of Lake, 2024). The proposed recreational use is consistent with the RL-B5, RR-B5-FF-WW, SR-B4-WW, and CC-DR land use designations.

No Impact.

- d) Although the Project site includes native trees, oak, and riparian woodland, the property is not classified as forest land by state definitions or inventories, and no timber harvesting activities have occurred onsite. The Project would preserve canopy coverage where feasible and would not involve the conversion of designated forest land.

No Impact.

- e) The Project does not include infrastructure extensions, policy changes, or intensification of land use that would induce the conversion of surrounding agricultural or forest resources. The surrounding area consists primarily of low-density residential uses and rural infrastructure. The Project would not alter environmental conditions in a manner that would encourage agricultural or forest land conversion.

No Impact.

III. AIR QUALITY

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Measures	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the Project:				
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) 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?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion:

- a) The Project site is located within the Lake County Air Basin, regulated by the Lake County Air Quality Management District (LCAQMD). The air basin is in attainment for all federal and state ambient air quality standards, and as such, the LCAQMD does not maintain a formal Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP). Instead, emissions and compliance are governed by LCAQMD Rules and Regulations (LCAQMD, 2023).

Project construction (refer to page 8 of this document) would occur in four (4) logical phases depending on the available funding. Construction activities would include the following stages: site preparation (including earthwork and demolition), utilities, flatwork and structures, planting and irrigation, and finishing and site furnishings. Grading would total approximately 1,393 cubic yards across all phases. Typical construction equipment may include, but is not limited to, excavators, backhoes, posthole diggers, augers, trucks/trailers, forklifts, rollers, and cranes consistent with the low-intensity nature of park development.

Operational emissions would be generated primarily by mobile sources (passenger vehicles) accessing and using the site and area sources (use of barbeques and from landscape maintenance). Stationary sources are not proposed as part of the Project (an exception is the use of generators, which would be limited to emergencies only). At peak use, trip generation would remain consistent with a low-intensity recreational facility and all sources in combination are not anticipated to exceed LCAQMD or CEQA thresholds of significance for reactive organic gases (ROG), nitrogen oxides (NOx), or particulate matter (PM10/PM2.5).

Based on the soils at the Project site (127 Collayomi-Aiken-Whispering complex, 5 to 30 percent slopes and 129 Collayomi-Whispering complex, 30 to 50 percent slope) and mapping from the California Department of Conservation, California Geological Survey, the primary recreation area is not anticipated to be underlain by serpentine or ultramafic rock, which could contain naturally occurring asbestos (NOA) (NRCS 2025 and DOC 2000). This is further confirmed by a review of the Lake County Parcel Viewer GIS map, which indicated that the Project site was located outside of the serpentine soil layer areas (Lake County Parcel Viewer 2025).

Compliance with LCAQMD requirements for demolition and new construction, dust control rules, and other best practices; such as minimizing disturbed surfaces, covering stockpiles, limiting vehicle idling, and applying water to exposed soil; would ensure the Project does not conflict with any air quality policies or contribute to regional nonattainment. As such, the Project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable LCAQMD Rules and Regulations.

Less than Significant Impact.

- b) The Lake County Air Basin is designated as being in "attainment" for all criteria pollutants under both state and federal standards (CARB, 2023). Air pollutant emissions would be limited to short-term construction activities and operational emissions generated primarily by mobile sources (vehicle trips generated by Project users).

Construction would occur over phases depending on the available funding.

At peak use, trip generation is anticipated to remain consistent with a low-intensity recreational facility and would not exceed LCAQMD or CEQA thresholds of significance for any criteria pollutant. As such, the Project would not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase in any criteria pollutant for which the Project region is in non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard.

Less than Significant Impact.

- c) Sensitive receptors include residences, schools, and facilities occupied by children, the elderly, or individuals with existing health conditions. Nearby sensitive receptors include single-family residences adjacent to the northeast boundary and a hotel located west of the Project site and across Highway 175.

Project construction would occur in phases, be limited in scale and duration, and would involve standard construction equipment.

Given the limited number of sensitive receptors in the vicinity and the small footprint of construction the potential for exposure to emissions such as diesel exhaust and fugitive dust would be minimal. Compliance with LCAQMD Rule 430 for fugitive dust control, and standard dust suppression measures such as watering exposed surfaces, covering stockpiles, and limiting idling, would further reduce potential exposure.

Topographic variation and existing tree canopy would provide natural screening between work areas and sensitive receptors. No operational period exposures (other than those associated with typical landscaping and custodial tasks) to substantial pollutant concentrations are anticipated. As such, the Project would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations.

Less than Significant Impact.

- d) Construction-related dust and equipment exhaust may result in temporary and localized odors near active work areas. However, given the duration of exposure and the use of BMPs (e.g., diesel equipment maintenance, dust suppression), odor-related impacts would not persist or affect a substantial number of people.

Once operational, the Project would not involve any activities known to produce objectionable odors, such as agricultural waste processing or industrial facilities. As previously mentioned, Maintenance activities would be limited to typical landscaping and custodial tasks. These activities would result in odors similar to those normally associated with rural and community parks. As such, the Project would not result in other emissions that would adversely affect a substantial number of people.

Less than Significant Impact.

IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Measures	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the Project:				
a) Have a substantial 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 a substantial 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 a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal wetlands, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native 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 Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion:

- a) A Biological Technical Report (BTR) was prepared by Environmental Science Associates (ESA, 2025, to assess the potential for the Project to impact biological resources, and is included as Attachment 1a. The Project site was surveyed during the botanical flowering season. Habitat on-site consists primarily of oak woodland, with riparian woodland adjacent to Kelsey Creek, and disturbed and non-native annual grasslands (including ruderal and landscaped species) to the west.

The BTR evaluated potential impacts to special-status species, sensitive habitats, and native communities based on California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB) queries, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service records and field observations (CDFW, 2025, USFWS 2025a). While no listed species were observed, suitable habitat exists for a limited number of sensitive plant and wildlife species, warranting preconstruction survey requirements as detailed below.

Plants

No special-status plants were identified during the spring 2024 survey; however, the BTR notes that several woodland and grassland species known to occur in the region have potential to occur. These include Jepson's leptosiphon (*Leptosiphon jepsonii*), Baker's navarretia (*Navarretia leucocephala* ssp. *bakeri*), bent-flowered fiddleneck (*Amsinckia lunaris*), narrow-anthered brodiaea (*Brodiaea leptandra*), congested-headed hayfield tarplant

(*Hemizonia congesta* ssp. *congesta*), Konocti manzanita (*Arctostaphylos manzanita* ssp. *elegans*), and Cobb Mountain lupine (*Lupinus sericatus*).

The primary recreation area will be located in disturbed areas west of Kelsey Creek. Project work is not expected to result in detrimental impacts on any special-status plant species. However, Mitigation Measure BIO-1, would ensure avoidance of potential rare plant populations, by requiring a blooming-season survey prior to Project start.

Amphibians and Reptiles

The Project site development area lacks suitable habitat to support northwestern pond turtle (*Actinemys marmorata*), foothill yellow-legged frog (*Rana boylei*), or other special-status amphibians. Although Kelsey Creek crosses the site, the proposed construction and vegetation clearing for the Project area would, to the extent possible, be located above the ordinary high water mark and avoid the riparian woodland area. No impacts to amphibians and reptiles are expected, and no further surveys are warranted.

Birds

The Project site contains habitat for nesting birds in the form of shrubs and scattered trees. Both migratory songbirds and raptors may utilize the site for nesting in season (between February 1 and August 31). To avoid inadvertent take, a preconstruction nesting bird survey would be required if vegetation removal occurs during the nesting season (see Mitigation Measure BIO-2).

Insects

No special-status pollinators, including the western bumble bee (*Bombus occidentalis*), were observed during the survey. As the Project site is dominated by disturbed grasses and forbs, it does not support high-quality foraging habitat. No additional survey or mitigation for special-status pollinators is warranted.

Fish

No perennial aquatic habitat exists within the Project development footprint to support special-status fish species. Although Kelsey Creek crosses the property, it is not anticipated that construction and/or operation of the Project would result in disturbance to the aquatic habitat. Kelsey Creek is known to support the Clear Lake hitch (*Lavinia exilicauda chi*), but are unlikely to spawn as far upstream as the study area (approximately 10 miles north of Clear Lake). No direct or indirect effects to special-status fish or their habitat are anticipated, and no further surveys or mitigation measures are warranted.

Mammals

Habitat for pallid bat (*Antrozous pallidus*) and other special-status bat species is present. Trees on-site may offer roosting habitat for special-status bats and other bat species protected by California Fish and Game Code. The BTR recommends surveying for roosting bats in trees over 12 inches at diameter breast height (DBH) prior to removal or limbing, particularly if work occurs during the bat maternity season (April–August). Mitigation Measure BIO-3 would ensure protection of roosting bats with potential to occur on-site.

Less than Significant Impact with Implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-1, BIO-2, and BIO-3.

Mitigation Measures:

BIO-1: Focused Botanical Survey. A focused botanical survey shall be conducted during the typical blooming season (April through June) for special-status plant

species with the potential to be impacted by Project activities. The survey shall be conducted by a qualified biologist in accordance with the field methodology portion of the *Protocols for Surveying and Evaluating Impacts to Special Status Native Plant Populations and Sensitive Natural Communities* (CDFW, 2018). The survey will occur during the appropriate blooming times (April to June) of the special-status plant species prior to the start of Project activities. If found, populations shall be flagged and avoided during construction, or may be relocated to the nearest local population, preserved on- or off-site or compensated in consultation with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW).

BIO-2: Nesting Bird Survey. If vegetation removal or grading occurs between February 1 and August 31, a qualified biologist shall conduct a nesting bird survey within 7 days prior to disturbance in all work areas and areas within 50 ft. If active nests are found, an exclusion buffer of 50 to 300 feet (depending on species) shall be maintained until young have fledged, as determined by the biologist.

BIO-3: Preconstruction Bat Survey. If tree removal or major pruning occurs between October 15 and March 1 or April 15 and September 1, a preconstruction bat survey shall be conducted by a qualified biologist. If active maternity or hibernation roosts are identified, work shall be postponed until the roost is vacated or a relocation plan is developed in coordination with CDFW. Between March 1 and April 15 and between September 1 and October 15 (i.e., outside of maternity and hibernation seasons), trees with potential bat habitat can be removed using a two-day process, where limbs are removed the first day, under supervision of a qualified biologist, and the remainder of the tree is removed the second day.

- b) Kelsey Creek runs through the Project site and riparian vegetation, a sensitive natural community, occurs along both sides. The remainder (and majority) of the site consists of oak woodland, and a smaller area of disturbed and non-native annual grasslands is to the west (ESA, 2025).

It is not anticipated that construction and/or operation of the Project would result in disturbance to the riparian woodland along Kelsey Creek. This includes Phase 3 improvements such as the pedestrian bridge and trail connections. The bridge would “free-span” Kelsey Creek and would not require in-channel work, and all construction activities associated with the trail connections (and lookouts) would occur outside of the creekbed and riparian setback. The Project may pursue invasive vegetation removal within the creek corridor in Phase 3. If riparian impacts are unavoidable, the Project would seek Lake and Streambed Alteration coverage from CDFW and comply with all provisions of the permit, including tree replacement (see Mitigation Measure BIO-4).

Less Than Significant Impact with Implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-4.

- c) The Project site does not contain state or federally protected wetlands as mapped by the National Wetlands Inventory (NWI)(CDFW, 2025; USFWS, 2025b). Kelsey Creek, a jurisdictional water of the U.S., crosses the parcel and ultimately drains to Clear Lake.

As previously described, it is not anticipated that construction and/or operation of the Project would result in disturbance to the riparian woodland along Kelsey Creek, much less Kelsey Creek itself. This includes Phase 3 improvements such as the pedestrian bridge and trail connections. The bridge would “free-span” Kelsey Creek and would not require in-channel work, and all construction activities associated with the trail connections (and lookouts) would occur outside of the creekbed and riparian setback.

As such, no jurisdictional wetlands or waters would be filled, graded, or otherwise modified. BMPs would be implemented to protect water quality and minimize indirect impacts during construction activities in upland grassland and disturbed woodland.

Thus, no direct or indirect impacts to wetlands or watercourses are expected.

Less Than Significant Impact.

- d) The Project site does not contain designated or mapped wildlife corridors, and the primary recreation area is concentrated in previously disturbed and open areas that are not known to serve as migratory pathways or wildlife nursery sites (ESA, 2025). Surrounding areas include roadways, and rural residential parcels which limit the connectivity and suitability of the site for terrestrial wildlife movement or nursery habitat. Kelsey Creek and its associated riparian corridor provide migratory habitat for aquatic species, but these areas would be completely avoided by the Project.

While a range of common and special-status species may occasionally pass through the property, implementation of the Project would not introduce barriers to movement or remove critical habitat. Limited vegetation clearing for fire safety and trail development would occur in portions of oak woodland, generally along the woodland edge, previously disturbed areas, and in grassland. These activities would not impede wildlife movement or access to natural resources. Moreover, fuel management and defensible space measures would comply with applicable state and local requirements, further minimizing disruption to ecological functions.

Based on the BTR and the Project's limited scope, implementation would not interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory species or impede the use of native nursery sites.

Less than Significant Impact.

- e) The Lake County Grading Ordinance (Ord. No. 2830, § 1, 7-17-2007, codified in Chapter 30 of the Lake County Municipal Code) regulates grading on public and private lands within the unincorporated areas of Lake County. It sets forth rules and regulations to control activities involving excavation, grading, and earthwork construction and establishes procedures for the issuance of permits. Grading Ordinance Section 30-14, *Clearing of Vegetation*, specifies that native vegetation shall be retained and protected where its removal is not necessary to implement the grading project or to meet fire safety regulations. Where vegetation must be removed, the method shall be one that minimizes the erosive effects of the removal. Further, when vegetation is to be removed, the location of mature trees, defined as trees greater than five (5) inches diameter at breast height (DBH), that are to be removed and retained, shall be clearly indicated. The Project would obtain a Grading Permit prior to clearing and earthwork activities, and all activities would be completed in accordance with the Lake County Grading Ordinance.

An arborist survey of the Project site identified 47 California black oaks (*Quercus kelloggii*), 11 valley oaks (*Quercus lobata*), and 3 canyon live oaks (*Quercus chrysolepis*) with diameter at breast height (dbh) of greater than 5 inches. Other trees observed included ponderosa pine (*Pinus ponderosa*), Douglas fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*), Pacific madrone (*Arbutus menziesii*), white alder (*Alnus rhombifolia*), bigleaf maple (*Acer macrophyllum*), California bay laurel (*Umbellularia californica*), and Oregon ash (*Fraxinus latifolia*) (ESA 2025b). Numerous additional trees, primarily alder and valley oak, were located outside

the development area near Kelsey Creek.

While most trees surveyed were located along the roadside and would not be disturbed by the Project, tree limbing and removal of dead wood may occur for fire safety and defensible space. Additionally, the Project would remove approximately 30 trees to develop the primary recreation area. The County of Lake General Plan Policy OSC-1.13 supports the conservation and management of oak woodland communities and their habitats and encourages collaboration with public agencies to preserve these resources (County of Lake, 2008). The County has coordinated with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) regarding tree removal. While initially, CDFW commented that a 5:1 oak tree replacement mitigation is preferred, after meeting with them, they stated that a 3:1 ratio is acceptable with a 75% survival rate over 5 years (included as Mitigation Measure BIO-4). The Project has been designed to minimize disturbance to woodland habitat and would comply with the oak protection ordinances and fire safety standards under Public Resources Code §4291. If trees must be removed in future phases, the Project would reduce the loss of native trees, including oaks, to a less-than-significant level by implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-4. With implementation of this measure, the Project would not conflict with any County or municipal policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, including tree preservation or oak woodland protection policies.

Less than Significant Impact with Implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-4.

Mitigation Measure:

BIO-4: Tree Replacement. The Project will engage a certified arborist to survey trees prior to design of each Project phase. If removal of native trees, including oaks, is required for Project development, the trees shall be replanted on-site, or on other County property (e.g., Trailside Park in Middletown), at a ratio of 3:1 planted to removed tree for oaks, and 2:1 for all other native species, or as required by any permits obtained for the Project.

Planted trees shall be caged and irrigated for a period of five years, and shall meet success criteria of 75 percent survival after five years. If this criterion is not met, replacement trees shall be planted and subsequently monitored for five years. In addition, compensatory restoration enhancement to support ecosystem function at the Project site may be pursued in coordination with CDFW.

- f) The Project site is not located within any adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or similar conservation area.

No Impact.

V. CULTURAL RESOURCES

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Measures	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the Project:				
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to §15064.5?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?	☐	☒	☐	☐

- c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?

☐☒☐☐

Discussion:

ESA completed a records search and conducted background research at the Northwest Information Center (NWIC) of the California Historical Resources Information System on August 29, 2024 (File No. 24-0234). The purpose of the records search was to (1) determine whether known cultural resources have been recorded in the vicinity of the Project site; (2) assess the likelihood for unrecorded cultural resources to be present based on historical references and the distribution of nearby resources; and (3) develop a context for the identification and preliminary evaluation of cultural resources. The records search consisted of an examination of the following documents:

- NWIC digitized base maps (United States Geological Survey [USGS] Whispering Pines 7.5-minute topographic map) to identify recorded archaeological sites and studies within a 0.5-mile radius of the Project site.
- NWIC digitized base maps (USGS Whispering Pines 7.5-minute topographic map) to identify recorded historic-era resources of the built environment (building, structures, and objects) within and adjacent to the Project site.
- Resource Inventories: California Inventory of Historical Resources (California Register), California Historical Landmarks, Built Environment Resources Directory (BERD) (through March 2024).

The results of the records search indicate that three (3) cultural resources have been previously documented within the 0.5-mile search radius, but none have been documented within the Project site. None of these resources would be impacted by the Project.

A pedestrian survey of the Project site was completed on September 20, 2024. The survey entailed walking the Project site in narrow transects where feasible, and observation from vantage points where infeasible, to provide an overall assessment of site conditions. During the survey, ground visibility ranged from 0%, due to thick vegetation on 20 to 40-degree wooded slopes, to 75% in the northern and western areas where the Project site interfaces with Golf Road and State Highway 175. The visible soil consisted of brown gravelly loam and duff. No cultural materials or other indicators of past human use or occupation were identified during the survey (ESA, 2025).

Three (3) architectural resources were identified during the survey of the Project site at 16540 State Highway 175. A vacant, commercial building is located at the southeast corner of the intersection of State Highway 175 and Golf Road, and it was constructed ca. 1955–57 as a sales office for a contemporary residential subdivision located to the east and northeast of the Project site. A small shed/outbuilding that is less than 45 years old is located approximately 50 feet east of the commercial building. Another dilapidated shed/outbuilding that likely functioned as a generator building appears to be over 45 years old; it is located approximately 465 feet northeast of the commercial building. The three (3) architectural resources were jointly recorded and evaluated in the California Department of Parks and Recreation Series 523 (DPR 523) forms. A summary of the evaluation is presented below.

Criterion 1 (Event)

Research did not identify any significant associations between important events and 16540 State Highway 175. The commercial building was constructed in the mid-1950s and it originally functioned as the sales office for the Cobb View Heights residential subdivision, which was the first such development in Cobb. After the initial homesites sold out and later subdivisions were offered for sale

to the public, the commercial building appears to have become a general real estate office, as noted in later print advertisements ca. 1960 and in the late 1970s. Research does not indicate that any of the architectural resources within the Project site were the location of a specific historical event or that they played a central role in the development of Cobb. For these reasons, 16540 State Highway 175 does not appear to possess significance under Criterion 1.

Criterion 2 (Person)

Research did not identify any significant associations between important persons and 16540 State Highway 175. For several decades prior to its development in the mid-1950s, the Project site was part of the 4,300-acre holdings of the Calso Water Company. The property was inherited or otherwise acquired by Don Emerson who, with partners George and Frank Hoberg, established the Cobb Valley Subdivision Co. and eventually created more than a dozen residential subdivisions in Cobb. The commercial building functioned initially as a sales office for the development company and later as the office of multiple real estate companies.

Although the commercial building was constructed during the productive life of Don Emerson, the prominent Cobb resident responsible for developing a significant amount of the area's residences and commercial buildings, it does not illustrate his achievements or contributions better than other extant buildings in the area. These include the Forest Lake Resort's clubhouse (located a short distance to the southeast on Forest Lake Drive), Emerson's private residence in Cobb (exact location unknown), the golf course immediately north of the Project site, and several important Lake County buildings. For this reason, 16540 State Highway 175 does not appear to possess significance under Criterion 2.

Criterion 3 (Design/Construction)

Research did not identify original construction records or historical photographs of 16540 State Highway 175. The original appearance of the commercial building is unknown; however, an analysis of available archival materials and assessor data suggests that it was built in multiple phases: the flat-roofed portion of the building was likely constructed before the shed-roofed portion. According to the San Francisco Planning Department, which published the fundamental and widely referenced San Francisco Modern Architecture and Landscape Design 1935–1970 Historic Context Statement, for a commercial building designed in the Midcentury Modern style to be individually eligible under Criterion 3, it must retain many of its character-defining features.

While the commercial building may be one of few Midcentury Modern-style commercial buildings in Cobb, it is a modest and altered example that embodies few of the distinctive characteristics listed in the San Francisco Modern Architecture and Landscape Design 1935–1970 Historic Context Statement, namely projecting eaves, flat and shed roof forms, vertical wood siding, cubic form, and integrated planters. Because the commercial building does not embody enough character-defining features to be considered a "true representative of a particular type, period, or method of construction," it does not possess high artistic values. The original and subsequent design professionals or craftsmen are unknown, and the building does not appear to represent the work of a master. The outbuildings are modest sheds that do not embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction; do not represent the work of a master; and do not possess high artistic values. For these reasons, 16540 State Highway 175 does not appear to possess significance under Criterion 3.

Criterion 4 (Information Potential)

While most often applied to archaeological sites and districts, Criterion 4 can also apply to buildings, structures, and objects that contain important information. For these types of properties to be eligible under Criterion 4, they themselves must be, or must have been, the principal source of the important information, and the information must be considered important. 16540 State Highway 175 is

minimally developed, and the architectural resources are constructed of common materials using common construction methods. For these reasons, it is unlikely that 16540 State Highway 175 would yield information important to history. Therefore, it does not appear to possess significance under Criterion 4.

The architectural resources were not found to possess significance under any California Register criteria, and no further assessment of integrity is provided. Therefore, 16540 State Highway 175 appears to be not eligible for listing in the California Register and is not considered to be a historical resource for the purposes of CEQA. Lastly, the building is not listed on the County's local inventory of historic structures.

- a) CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5 requires the lead agency to consider the effects of a project on historical resources. A historical resource is defined as any building, structure, site, or object listed in or determined to be eligible for listing in the California Register or determined by a lead agency to be significant in the architectural, engineering, scientific, economic, agricultural, educational, social, political, or cultural annals of California. The following discussion focuses on architectural resources. Archaeological resources, including those that are potentially historical resources according to CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5, are addressed below under issue b).

As a result of the records search and background research, there are no architectural resources within the Project site that qualify as historical resources, as defined in CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5. As such, there are no historic architectural resources present within the Project site, and there would be no impact on historic architectural resources.

No Impact.

- b) Archaeological resources can be considered historical resources, according to CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5, as well as unique archaeological resources, as defined in PRC Section 21083.2(g). A significant impact could occur if the Project would cause a substantial adverse change to an archaeological resource through physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of the resource.

No evidence of pre-contact or historic-era archaeological resources was identified in the Project site through background research and there is a low sensitivity for previously unknown archaeological resources. Based on the results of the records search, survey results, and the degree of Project ground disturbance that would be concentrated in the vicinity of modern roadways, the potential to impact archaeological resources is low.

Implementation of Mitigation Measure CUL-1, and compliance with existing PRC regulations, will ensure potential impacts related to the accidental discovery of archaeological resources would be less than significant.

Less than Significant Impact with Implementation of Mitigation Measure CUL-1.

Mitigation Measure:

CUL-1: Accidental Discovery of Archaeological Resources. In the unlikely event that subsurface resources are identified during ground disturbing activities, County of Lake would comply with PRC §21083.2(i), which requires the lead agency to make provisions for archaeological resources accidentally discovered during construction. County of Lake would be required to make an immediate evaluation by a qualified archaeologist, and if the find is determined to be a unique archaeological resource or

a historical resource, then it must be avoided. If avoidance is not feasible, the resource must be recovered and treated accordingly. Construction would be allowed in other areas while the recovery takes place.

- c) The records search and background research determined that no human remains are known to exist within the Project site. Therefore, the Project is not anticipated to impact human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries.

Implementation of Mitigation Measure CUL-2, and compliance with Government Code Section 27460 et seq., will ensue potential impacts related to the unanticipated discovery of human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries would be less than significant.

Less than Significant Impact with Implementation of Mitigation Measure CUL-2.

Mitigation Measure:

CUL-2. Accidental Discovery of Human Remains. In the unlikely event that ground disturbing activities identify undiscovered human remains, County of Lake will comply with Government Code Section 27460 et seq., which requires ground disturbing activities to halt until the County Coroner can determine whether the remains are subject to the provisions of Section 27491 of the Government Code or any other related provisions of law concerning investigation of the circumstances, manner, and cause of death; and the required recommendations concerning the treatment and disposition of the human remains have been made. Pursuant to California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5, the coroner shall make a determination within 48 hours of notification of the discovery of the human remains. If the coroner determines that the remains are not subject to their authority and recognizes or has reason to believe that they are those of a Native American, the coroner shall contact the Native American Heritage Commission within 24 hours. With compliance with existing regulations, the potential impact related to the accidental discovery of human remains would be less than significant.

VI. ENERGY

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Measures	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the Project:				
a) Result in potentially significant environmental impacts due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resource, during construction or operation?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion:

- a) The Project would not result in wasteful or inefficient energy use during construction or operation. Construction-related energy use would consist primarily of diesel fuel for equipment such as excavators, backhoes, forklifts, and trucks, etc., as identified in the Project Description. Construction would occur in phases depending on funding availability. This phased schedule would limit peak energy consumption.

Equipment operation would be limited in scope and duration for each phase, and subject to

California Air Resources Board (CARB) regulations for fuel efficiency and emissions compliance (CARB, 2023). These requirements would reduce unnecessary idling, encourage proper maintenance, and promote the use of cleaner engines, minimizing avoidable energy waste. Operational energy consumption would be minimal and typical of a rural community park. Electricity use may include motion-activated restroom lights, picnic shelter and parking lot lighting, electric vehicle charging, restroom equipment, an irrigation controller, associated equipment for water supply and irrigation, and occasional power use during community events, via lockable outlets at the gathering area.

All proposed facilities would be designed to meet California Building Code energy standards, including Title 24 and CALGreen provisions (CEC, 2022), requiring efficient lighting, thermal insulation, and low-energy plumbing and mechanical systems. Given these design features, phased implementation, and the Project's small scale, the use of energy would not be wasteful, inefficient, or excessive.

Less Than Significant Impact.

- b) The Project would not conflict with any adopted state or local energy efficiency policies. It does not include energy-intensive land uses, and operational energy demands would be minor, as described above. All lighting and buildings would be required to meet the energy efficiency standards established by Title 24 and CALGreen (CEC, 2022), aligning with California's goals to reduce energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions.

The Project is consistent with the County's rural development patterns and does not require major grid expansions, infrastructure upgrades, or new utility corridors. Although County of Lake does not have a standalone renewable energy plan, the Project would not impede state-level sustainability targets. As a recreational park designed for low-operational intensity, the Project would not interfere with long-range energy efficiency or renewable energy implementation efforts.

Less Than Significant Impact.

VII. GEOLOGY AND SOILS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Measures	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the Project:				
a) Directly or indirectly cause potentially 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 Special Publication 42.	☐	☐	☒	☐
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?				
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?				
iv) Landslides?				
b) Result in substantial 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-site or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |

Discussion:

a)

- 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 Special. Publication 42.

The Project site is not located within an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone, and no known active or potentially active faults traverse the property. The nearest mapped fault trace, associated with the Konocti Bay Fault Zone, is located approximately 4.4 miles northeast of the Project site. Based on current seismic mapping, the risk of surface fault rupture at the site is considered low (CGS 2022).

Less Than Significant Impact.

- ii) Strong seismic ground shaking

The Project is located within a seismically active region of Northern California. As with most development in Lake County, the site could experience moderate to strong ground shaking during a major seismic event on nearby regional faults. However, all proposed structures would be designed and constructed in compliance with the California Building Code (CBC), which includes structural requirements for seismic safety and lateral forces, reducing the potential for structural failure or injury.

Less Than Significant Impact.

- iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction

Liquefaction potential is typically highest in areas with loose, unconsolidated sandy soils and shallow groundwater. Based on regional geologic mapping and the absence of mapped liquefaction zones in the vicinity, the potential for liquefaction at the Project site is considered low. The site's soil composition (refer to VIIc), primarily well-drained, loamy soils, does not indicate a high liquefaction risk. The geotechnical study performed for the Project site generally confirms that, with the exception of the bridge across Kelsey Creek, there is a low liquefaction risk for the Project Site. At Kelsey Creek, the geotechnical engineer identified a high liquefaction risk for the bridge abutments. As aligned with geotechnical recommendations, design for the bridge abutments will include foundations that gain support below the soil susceptible to liquefaction.

Less Than Significant Impact. iv) Landslides

The Project site contains a mix of flat, gently sloping, and steeper terrain, with proposed development (recreation plan area) limited to the southwestern portion of the site which is primarily flat. The Project site has not been identified as an area of high susceptibility for landslides and no landslides have been recorded in the vicinity by the Department of Conservation Landslide Inventory Deep-Seated Landslide Susceptibility map ((DOC 2023). The Project proposes minimal grading in higher-slope areas, and structures would not be located on or near known unstable slopes, and would be constructed according to geotechnical standards and CBC requirements. As such, the Project is not expected to expose people or structures to significant landslide hazards.

Less Than Significant Impact.

- b) Construction would involve approximately 1,393 cubic yards of total earthwork, balanced on-site. Ground-disturbing activities would include grading, excavation for trails and parking, and utility installation. A Grading Permit would be obtained for the Project, and all earthwork activities would be conducted in compliance with Chapter 30 of the Lake County Municipal Code. A Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) would be implemented during construction in compliance with the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) General Construction Permit. Erosion control measures, such as silt fences, straw wattles, and stabilization of disturbed soils, would be implemented as required.

Given the scale of ground disturbance and required compliance with BMPs, the Project would not likely result in substantial erosion or topsoil loss.

Less Than Significant Impact with Implementation of Mitigation Measures GEO-1 and GEO-2.

Mitigation Measures:

GEO-1: Erosion Control. Prior to ground disturbance the Project shall submit erosion control and sediment plans to the Water Resource Department and the Community Development Department for review and approval. Said erosion control and sediment plans shall protect the local watershed from runoff pollution through the implementation of Best Management Practices (BMPs) in accordance with the Grading Ordinance. Typical BMPs include the placement of straw, mulch, seeding, straw wattles, silt fencing, and the planting of native vegetation on all disturbed areas. No silt, sediment, or other materials exceeding natural background levels shall be allowed to flow from the Project area. The natural background level is the level of erosion that currently occurs from the area in a natural, undisturbed state. Vegetative cover and water bars shall be used as permanent erosion control after Project installation.

GEO-2: Soil Disturbance. Excavation, filling, vegetation clearing, or other disturbance of the soil shall not occur between October 15 and April 15 unless authorized by the Community Development Department Director. The actual dates of this defined grading period may be adjusted according to weather and soil conditions at the discretion of the Community Development Director.

- c) The soil types on the Project site are classified as 127 Collyomi-Aiken -Whispering

complex, 5 to 30 percent slopes and 129 Collayomi-Whispering complex, 30 to 50 percent slope per the USDA Web Soil Survey (NRCS 2025). These soils are loamy, well-drained, and not considered susceptible to instability, subsidence, or collapse. No soil types at the site are associated with known geologic hazards requiring engineered stabilization. Structures would be constructed according to geotechnical standards and CBC requirements, further reducing the risk of instability.

Less Than Significant Impact.

- d) Expansive soils contain high clay content that can shrink or swell significantly with changes in moisture, posing a risk to structural integrity. The soils onsite are loamy and have moderate clay content, with no evidence of expansive characteristics (NRCS 2025). The geotechnical study performed for the Project site did not identify the presence of expansive soils. Structures would be constructed according to geotechnical standards and CBC requirements.

Less Than Significant Impact.

- e) The existing septic system on the property was inspected in 2023 and found to be operational. Functional testing and a visual inspection confirmed that the system, including the leach field, is suitable to serve the restroom facilities proposed for the Project. Minor improvements/repairs are planned to maintain system components, and any future expansions would be subject to approval by the County of Lake Division of Environmental Health. There is no indication that the soils onsite are incapable of supporting septic infrastructure.

Less Than Significant Impact.

- f) No paleontological resources, fossil-bearing formations, or unique geologic features have been identified on the Project site. The area is underlain by non-marine sedimentary and metamorphic rocks, which are not typically associated with significant paleontological sensitivity. Although unlikely, any unexpected discovery during construction would be subject to standard procedures for stopping work and consulting a qualified paleontologist in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5.

Less than Significant Impact.

VIII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Measures	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the Project:				
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion:

- a) Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from the Project would be generated primarily during temporary construction activities and, to a lesser extent, from operational sources such as

vehicle trips, electricity use, water delivery and treatment, and solid waste disposal. The Project would not introduce any high-intensity land uses or stationary sources of emissions, and its recreational character limits long-term GHG impacts.

Construction activities would occur in phases depending on funding availability. Construction-related GHG emissions would result from fuel combustion in off-road equipment, material transport, and worker vehicle trips. These emissions would be short term. All construction activities would comply with applicable California Air Resources Board (CARB) diesel equipment regulations and the California Green Building Standards Code (CALGreen), which include mandatory measures to reduce energy consumption and associated emissions (CEC, 2022).

Once operational, the Project's primary source of GHG emissions would be vehicle trips by park users. The Project is designed for local community use and includes minimal parking (27 stalls in the main lot and 4 in the secondary lot), indicating limited daily traffic volumes. The Project is also subject to Title 24 energy efficiency standards for lighting, insulation, and plumbing, further minimizing operational emissions. No large buildings, mechanical systems, or energy-intensive uses are proposed. Therefore, the Project would not generate GHG emissions that would have a significant impact on the environment, either directly or cumulatively.

Less than Significant Impact.

- b) The Project was evaluated for consistency with the following GHG-related policies and plans:
- 2008 Lake County General Plan
 - Lake County Air Quality Management District (LCAQMD) Rules and Regulations
 - California Air Resources Board's 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan (AB 32 Implementation Plan)

The Lake County General Plan includes Policy HS-3.6, which encourages interagency coordination to assess potential impacts on regional air quality and reduce emissions.

The Lake County Air Basin is currently in attainment for all criteria pollutants, and the LCAQMD does not maintain a formal GHG emissions threshold or adopted Air Quality Management Plan. Nonetheless, the Project would comply with all applicable LCAQMD construction-related emissions control regulations.

At the state level, the 2017 AB 32 Scoping Plan outlines a statewide framework for reducing GHG emissions to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030. Many of the regulations identified in the Scoping Plan, including CARB's Off-Road Diesel Regulation, vehicle emissions standards, and energy efficiency requirements, apply to the Project and would be implemented through standard compliance with the California Building Code, Title 24, and vehicle/equipment regulations.

Because the Project would be small in scale and would comply with applicable regulatory standards, objectives, and implementation mechanisms of any adopted plan or policy to reduce GHG emissions, it would not interfere with achieving statewide or local GHG reduction goals.

Less than Significant Impact.

IX. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Measures	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the Project:				
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonable foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Emit 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 which 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) For a Project 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, would the Project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the Project area?	☐	☐	☒	☒

Discussion:

- a) The Project would involve the routine use of small quantities of hazardous materials during both construction and operations. Construction would occur in phases. During active phases, construction could involve the use of fuels, oils, lubricants, and other petroleum-based products.

Operational use of hazardous materials would include small quantities of cleaning supplies and landscaping products, such as fertilizers and herbicides, used for turf areas, native planting zones, and limited vegetation management along trails and in the dog run area. These materials would be applied in accordance with manufacturer guidelines and California Department of Pesticide Regulation (CDPR) requirements.

The Project would comply with Section 41.7 of the Lake County Zoning Ordinance, requiring proper handling, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials under local, state, and federal laws. Spill containment kits would be maintained on-site during both construction and operations.

Less Than Significant Impact.

- b) There is the potential for minor accidental releases of hazardous materials during both construction and operations. Construction staging would occur entirely on the Project site in previously disturbed areas, away from sensitive natural features. Equipment fueling and maintenance would occur in these designated areas with appropriate spill control measures such as drip pans, absorbents, and secondary containment.

During operations, fertilizers and herbicides may be applied on a limited basis for landscaping

and habitat restoration. All materials would be used according to regulatory standards and best practices to minimize risk to people and the environment. No bulk hazardous materials or long-term hazardous storage is proposed.

The Project site is not located within a mapped fault or flood zone and the recreation plan area does not contain ultramafic or serpentine soils associated with NOA, based on soil classifications provided by the NRCS Web Soil Survey and mapping from the California Geological Survey (NRCS 2023 and CGS, 2023). Spill kits would be available during all construction phases, and County staff would be trained in the proper handling and disposal of hazardous substances.

Less than Significant Impact.

- c) There are no existing or proposed schools located within 0.25 miles of the Project site. The nearest school, Cobb Mountain Elementary School, is located approximately 0.9 miles north along Highway 175.

No Impact.

- d) The California Environmental Protection Agency (CALEPA) has the responsibility for compiling information about sites that may contain hazardous materials, such as hazardous waste facilities, solid waste facilities where hazardous materials have been reported, leaking underground storage tanks and other sites where hazardous materials have been detected. Hazardous materials include all flammable, reactive, corrosive, or toxic substances that pose potential harm to the public or environment.

A review of the California Environmental Protection Agency's Cortese List databases, including the State Water Resources Control Board's GeoTracker and DTSC's EnviroStor, confirms that the Project site is not listed as a hazardous materials site pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 (SWRCB, 2025; DTSC, 2025).

No Impact.

- e) The Project site is not located within an airport land use plan area and is not within two miles of a public or private airport. The nearest public airport, Lampson Field, is approximately 21 miles northwest of the site.

No Impact.

- f) County of Lake does not currently have an adopted countywide evacuation plan; however, the County's Office of Emergency Services (OES) is responsible for local emergency management and is currently updating the 2008 General Plan, including the Safety Element, which will incorporate an evacuation assessment. The County also uses multiple emergency communication systems (including online and mobile tools), including Everbridge Nixle, LakeCo Alerts, and Reverse 911 systems, as well as posts on Genasys Protect, and official County social media, to notify the public of evacuation orders, warnings, shelter locations, and road closures during emergencies (County of Lake OES, 2024).

The 2023 Lake County Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) provides region-specific emergency preparedness and wildfire mitigation guidance. While the CWPP does not establish official evacuation routes, it supports the County's zone-based evacuation strategy through Genasys Protect. The Project site is located within Evacuation Zone UPP-E031, as identified in the County's Genasys Protect mapping system (Genasys Protect, 2024).

Emergency response to the site would be provided by the South Lake County Fire Protection District, which maintains a station in Cobb (Station 62).

The Project includes the following access and operational design features (see Figure 3a) that support emergency response:

- Construction of a 10-foot wide maintenance and fire access road northeast of Kelsey Creek, and reinforcement of a turnout area along Highway 175; both would be constructed to comply with PRC §4290;
- Parking capacity for 31 vehicles (including all phases);
- Golf Road would remain passable for emergency access;
- Prohibition of campfires.

These Project features would be implemented incrementally, consistent with phased construction. Primary access routes, including construction of the main parking lot (27 spaces) and reinforced turnout area, would be constructed in Phase 1. Additional access elements, such as the fire access road would be completed in Phase 2. Finally, construction of the secondary parking lot (4 spaces) would be completed in Phase 4.

These design features, along with compliance with California Public Resources Code §4290 and related County of Lake fire access regulations, would ensure that emergency access is preserved and that the Project would not interfere with emergency vehicle circulation or conflict with local emergency notification systems. Access plans will be further reviewed during the County's development permit process.

Less than Significant Impact.

- g) The Project site is located within a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ) for lands under local responsibility, as designated by CAL FIRE (2023). The area is characterized by oak woodland vegetation and proximity to Kelsey Creek, which contribute to increased wildfire susceptibility. As discussed in subsection (f), the Project has been designed with multiple features to minimize fire risk and support emergency response. Operation of the Project site as a community park (with regular park maintenance of the primary recreation area and overall park monitoring by County staff), represents an improvement compared to existing conditions, with respect to fire risk.

To further reduce fire hazard risks, the Project:

- Would be reviewed by CAL FIRE, the County of Lake Building Division, and the South Lake County Fire Protection District as part of the County's development permit and building review process;
- Includes defensible space zones around all structures, consistent with Public Resources Code §4291;
- Would prohibit campfires and comply with CAL FIRE seasonal burn restrictions;
- Includes vegetation management and invasive plant removal along Kelsey Creek and around structures to reduce flammable fuel loads, consistent with the creek restoration and site landscaping plans.

Project construction would occur in phases, and defensible space and fire access improvements would be implemented as part of Phase 1, ensuring emergency access and risk reduction are in place early in the site's development (see Figure 4). The Project does

not allow overnight camping, high-density development, or long-term occupancy. With these measures in place and compliance with applicable state and local fire safety requirements, wildfire exposure would be reduced to a less-than-significant level without the need for additional mitigation.

Less than Significant Impact.

X. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

	Potentially Significant Impact	Significant with Mitigation Measures	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the Project:				
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?	☐	☒	☐	☐
b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion:

- a) Construction and operation of the Project would not violate water quality standards or discharge requirements, nor would it substantially degrade groundwater or surface water quality. Kelsey Creek runs along the eastern portion of the property, but the proposed developed portions of the park, including parking areas, structures, and gathering spaces, would be set back from the creek and located primarily within previously disturbed areas on the western half of the site.

Total ground disturbance would be approximately 1,393 cubic yards, with grading distributed across phases of development. Potential impacts to water quality standards and waste discharge requirements, as a result of ground disturbance would be reduced to a less-than-significant level by implementation of Mitigation Measures GEO-1 and GEO-2.

Construction activities would include trail and restroom installation, parking lot paving, and utility trenching. To protect water quality, the Project would incorporate erosion and sediment control BMPs such as fiber rolls, stabilized construction entrances, and sediment barriers. The Project would comply with Chapter 30 of the County of Lake Code (Grading Ordinance) and applicable Clean Water Act requirements, including the preparation of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) in accordance with the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) General Permit (EPA, 2024).

Given the Project's scale, phased implementation, and adherence to BMPs, impacts to water quality would be less than significant.

Less Than Significant Impact with Implementation of Mitigation Measures GEO-1 and GEO-2 (see Section VII. Geology and Soils).

- b) The Project would rely on groundwater sourced from a new onsite connection provided by Cobb Water Agency, to meet operational water demands for the restroom, drinking fountain, and Project-site irrigation. The maximum

total water demand is estimated at 50.8 GPM, assuming all restroom fixtures, including two (2) toilets and two (2) sinks, are operating simultaneously. The connection would meet the requirements of the State Water Resource Control Board Division of Drinking Water. The irrigation system will require a maximum of 45 GPM. In practice, actual average water use would be substantially lower due to intermittent usage of both the irrigation system and restroom fixtures. Irrigation would occur primarily during off-hours or non-peak times and would not coincide with restroom use.

The location of the connection along Golf Road will be at the discretion of the Cobb Water Agency. Although flow rate data (GPM) is not yet confirmed pending test drilling, the driller preliminarily estimated that the site could produce at least 40 GPM, which would be significantly more than the 1.5 GPM typically needed to support a household. This amount would be sufficient to meet the Project's daily water needs, particularly given its limited water demand. It is anticipated the connection would adequately meet the Project site's needs.

The Project would not conflict with the Lake County Groundwater Management Plan, and associated utility infrastructure would be reviewed at the Building Permit stage in coordination with the fire protection district (County of Lake, 2006). It is assumed that the Project would not substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere with long-term sustainability of the local groundwater basin.

Less Than Significant Impact.

- c) The Project would result in approximately 1,393 cubic yards of earthwork, balanced onsite, associated with phased construction of the restroom, parking areas, trail system, and utility improvements. At full buildout, the Project would introduce approximately 20,950 square feet of impervious surface area, including paved parking, concrete walkways, and structures. Minor compaction would also occur in gravel trail and parking areas. However, the majority of the 13.13-acre site would remain in a pervious, natural condition.

No modifications to Kelsey Creek or its hydrologic channel are proposed, and the Project would not include stream diversions, culverts, or other structures that alter drainage flow. Although the creek runs through the Project site, no grading would occur within the creek bed. During construction, standard BMPs would be implemented, as appropriate, to prevent sediment or runoff from entering the creek.

The Project would not contribute runoff volumes that exceed system capacity or create significant new sources of polluted runoff. In accordance with Chapter 30 of the County of Lake Code (Grading Ordinance) and relevant 319 Grant stormwater BMP guidance, the Project would implement both temporary construction BMPs (e.g., fiber rolls, stabilized entrances) and long-term runoff dispersion into surrounding pervious areas.

Less than Significant Impact.

- d) The Project site is located in FEMA-designated Flood Zone X, indicating minimal risk of flooding (FEMA, 2024). The majority of active recreational features would be located outside of the Kelsey Creek floodplain. Certain recreational features, such as the pedestrian bridge and overlook areas, would be located adjacent to or above the creek corridor. It is not anticipated these features would involve fill or modification of the creekbed or floodway, and potential impacts related to seasonal inundation are considered moderate to low. Due to the Project's existing topography and location (more than 30 miles

east of the Pacific Ocean and 8 miles south of Clear Lake) it is not subject to tsunami or seiche events.

Furthermore, because the Project does not involve hazardous material storage or pollutant-generating uses, there would be no risk of pollutant release during potential inundation scenarios.

Less Than Significant Impact.

- e) The Project site is located within the Clear Lake watershed, part of the Cache Creek Hydrologic Unit, which drains into the Sacramento River system. Accordingly, the applicable water quality regulatory framework is the Water Quality Control Plan for the Central Valley Region (Basin Plan), administered by the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB, 2019). The Basin Plan establishes beneficial uses, water quality objectives, and implementation strategies for protecting both surface and groundwater resources in the region. Similarly, the 2006 Lake County Groundwater Management Plan provides guidance for long-term groundwater monitoring, recharge protection, and sustainable water use.

As described, the Project would rely on groundwater from a new connection. The Project's water use would be limited to the restroom, drinking fountain, and Project-site irrigation, with demand occurring as-needed, and increasing incrementally as the Project's phases are completed.

The Project does not include pollutant-generating land uses, hazardous material storage, or major grading within the Kelsey Creek corridor. With implementation of standard construction and operational BMPs, including erosion and sediment control, per Chapter 30 of the County of Lake Code, the Project would remain consistent with the Basin Plan's water quality goals and the Lake County Groundwater Management Plan's sustainability objectives.

Less Than Significant Impact.

X. LAND USE AND PLANNING

	Potentially Significant Impact	Significant with Mitigation Measures	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the Project:				
a) Physically divide an established community?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion:

- a) The Project site consists of a single 13.13-acre parcel (APN: 013-056-40) located in unincorporated Cobb, within the Cobb Mountain Planning Area. The site is currently developed with a vacant commercial building and associated outbuildings and is surrounded by a mix of rural residential uses, a hotel, a golf course, and undeveloped woodland. The Project would not introduce any new roads, barriers, or linear infrastructure that could divide

the surrounding community. The Project would develop trails, but they would not bisect an existing community. Instead, the Project would enhance local access to recreation through a centrally located public park.

No Impact.

- b) The Project's General Plan designation includes Rural Lands (RL), Rural Residential (RR), Suburban Residential Reserve (SRe), and Community Commercial (Cc). The Project's zoning is "RL-B5", Rural Lands-Special Lot Size, 5 acres; "RR-B5-FF-WW", Rural Residential-Special Lot Size, 5 acres, Floodway Fringe, Waterway; "SR-B4-WW", Suburban Reserve-Special Lot Size, 4 acres, Waterway; "C2-DR", Community Commercial-Design Review (County of Lake, 2024). The Primary Recreation Area improvements would be located entirely within the C2-DR-zoned portion of the property.

In accordance with Chapter 21, Section 2.4 (b)(4), of the Lake County Municipal Code, development undertaken by the County of Lake is exempt from the Lake County Zoning Ordinance. Although the Zoning Ordinance is not applicable to County development, the County Project is consistent with the current land use and zoning designations applied to the site. Specifically, Article 27, Uses Generally Allowed, identifies outdoor recreation as an allowed use within the noted zoning designations with approval of a use permit; the Project would comply with all regulations contained within the FF and WW combining districts related to protection of water resources and life safety; and the proposed amenities, including trails, restrooms, parking areas, signage, and gathering spaces, would comply with zoning performance standards related to height (35 feet maximum for primary structures), setbacks (30-foot front, 25-foot rear, and 15-foot side), lot coverage, and grading requirements.

The Project also supports the goals and policies of the 2008 Lake County General Plan, particularly Policy OSC-6.3 promoting equitable access to recreational facilities (County of Lake, 2008). Policy OSC-6.3 directly addresses priorities identified in the 2024 Lake County Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan, which designates the Cobb Mountain area as a target for new park development. Amenities such as a play area, picnic shelter, trail networks, dog run, gathering area, and tree canopy protection align with these goals (County of Lake, 2024).

Project construction would occur in phases, however, all phases and associated uses would remain consistent with applicable zoning and development standards. The Project would not create any significant land use conflicts or inconsistencies with applicable plans, policies, or regulations.

Less than Significant Impact.

XII. MINERAL RESOURCES

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Measures	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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Would the Project:

- | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource 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:

- a) The California Geological Survey's *Mineral Land Classification* maps do not identify any regionally significant or statewide valuable mineral resources on or adjacent to the Project site (CGS, 2023). Additionally, the Lake County Aggregate Resource Management Plan does not list the Cobb area or the Project parcel (APN: 013-056-40) as a source of important aggregate resources (County of Lake 1992). Therefore, the Project would not result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource of regional or statewide value.

No Impact.

- b) The Project site is not identified as a mineral resource recovery area in any adopted land use plans, including the Lake County General Plan, Cobb Mountain Area Plan, or the Aggregate Resource Management Plan. As such, the Project would not result in the loss of access to locally important mineral resources.

No Impact.

XIII. NOISE

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Measures	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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Would the Project:

- | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) Result in the generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the Project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies? | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☐ |
| b) Result in the generation of excessive ground-borne vibration or ground-borne noise levels? | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☐ |
| c) Be located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or 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 expose people residing or working in the Project area to excessive noise levels? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |

Discussion:

- a) The Project would involve the construction and operation of a community park that includes amenities such as a parking lot, restroom facility, open lawn, play areas, and trails. As a neighborhood-serving facility, the Project would generate typical recreational noise associated with vehicle access, visitors conversing, children playing, and periodic maintenance.

Noise from day-to-day park activity is expected to remain within commonly accepted thresholds. According to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), typical conversational speech occurs at approximately 60 dB(A), a quiet urban area averages around 40 dB(A), and a lawn mower generates about 90 dB(A) (FAA, 2023). These values help place park noise into perspective, as the types of sounds generated by park users are most comparable to normal speaking levels and are therefore not considered substantial sources of community noise.

Acceptable noise levels under Lake County Zoning Ordinance Article 41 allow up to 60 dB(A) during daytime hours for commercial and public uses (County of Lake, 2024). Because the Project site is surrounded primarily by open space and woodland, and is not located directly adjacent to residential uses, operational noise is not anticipated to affect sensitive receptors.

Construction would temporarily generate elevated noise levels from grading and site preparation. However, construction noise is expected to be minimal due to the small scale of improvements, the use of light- to medium-duty equipment, and the absence of pile driving or large-scale structural work. All construction activities would be limited to daytime hours, and Mitigation Measure NOI-1 would restrict construction times and require proper equipment maintenance to minimize disruption to nearby properties.

Less than Significant Impact with Implementation of Mitigation Measure NOI-1.

Mitigation Measure:

NOI-1: Construction Hours. All construction activities, including construction equipment warm-up, shall be limited to the hours of 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., Monday through Saturday. Construction shall be prohibited on Sundays and federal holidays. All equipment shall be properly maintained and fitted with factory-recommended mufflers to minimize noise generation.

- b) The Project would not generate substantial ground-borne vibration during regular operation. No heavy industrial activity, rail lines, or truck-intensive land uses are located near the site. Routine park uses such as walking trails, small gatherings, or occasional maintenance would not involve equipment or activities that generate noticeable vibration.

Project-related ground-borne vibration would be limited to short-term construction activities such as grading, driveway improvements, and restroom installation. These activities would involve light- to medium-duty equipment (e.g., compactors, small dozers, and skid steers) and would not include pile driving, blasting, or other high-impact methods. Vibration levels from this type of equipment generally diminish rapidly with distance and are not expected to exceed thresholds for annoyance or structural damage (FTA, 2018). The nearest off-site residences are located approximately 150 to 200 feet from the proposed construction areas and would not be exposed to substantial levels of ground-borne vibration.

Operational activities would not produce noticeable vibration, and amplified sound (e.g., for announcements or small events) would be limited in scale and volume, particularly with implementation Mitigation Measure NOI-1. As such, vibration-related impacts would be less than significant.

Less Than Significant Impact with Implementation of Mitigation Measure NOI-1.

- c) The Cobb Community Park site is not located within the vicinity of a public or private airport and is not within any airport land use plan area or airport influence area, as defined in the Lake County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan. The closest airport to the site is Lampson Field in Lakeport, located approximately 17 miles northwest of the Project site. No other active airports, private airstrips, or aviation facilities are located nearby.³

Because the Project is not located in an airport land use plan area and would not be exposed to aircraft-related noise, there would be no impact related to airport or airstrip noise exposure.

No Impact.

XIV. POPULATION AND HOUSING	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Measures	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the Project:				
a) Induce substantial unplanned 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 people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion:

- a) The Project is a public-serving recreational facility that does not propose the development of any residential uses or businesses that would directly induce population growth. The Project also does not involve the extension of urban infrastructure, such as new public water or sewer systems, that would support new housing or large-scale development.

While the Project may draw visitors and improve quality of life for existing residents, its recreation amenities (e.g., trails, picnic areas, playground, dog run) are intended to serve the local population and are not expected to induce unplanned growth. Project construction would occur in phases over several years, further limiting the potential for infrastructure-driven growth inducement. All utility infrastructure would be limited to serving park operations and would not be oversized for future development.

Less than Significant Impact.

³ Paul Hoberg Airport is an abandoned airport that closed in the 1980s. This is approximately 4.6 miles to the northeast of the Project site.

- b) The Project site contains no existing residential uses and does not require the removal of any housing units or inhabited structures. No residents would be displaced as a result of Project implementation, and no replacement housing would be required.

No Impact.

XV. PUBLIC SERVICES

Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Measures	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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Would the Project:

- a) Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, 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:

☐	☐	☒	☐
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- 1) Fire Protection?
- 2) Police Protection?
- 3) Schools?
- 4) Parks?
- 5) Other Public Facilities?

Discussion:

- 1) Fire protection services for the Project site would be provided by the South Lake County Fire Protection District, which serves the Cobb area (South Lake County Fire Protection District, 2024). As noted in Sections IX and XX (Hazards and Wildfire), the site is located within a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone, as designated by CAL FIRE (CAL FIRE, 2023). The County's Office of Emergency Services (OES) coordinates emergency planning and response across the unincorporated area, including fire safety preparedness and public alert systems such as Nixle, LakeCo Alerts, Reverse 911 systems, Genasys Protect, and official County social media (County of Lake OES, 2024).

The Project has incorporated several design elements to support fire response, including:

- A reinforced emergency vehicle access trail and turnout;
- Compliance with Public Resources Code §§4290 and 4291, as required during the County permitting process;
- Internal roadway improvements to support emergency response access;
- Defensible space around structures and prohibition of campfires.

Although the Project would increase demand for fire services due to its location and expected public use, it would not generate sufficient need to require new or expanded fire protection facilities. The Project would be constructed in compliance with all applicable local and state fire codes.

Less than Significant Impact.

- 2) The Project site falls under the jurisdiction of the Lake County Sheriff's Office, which provides law enforcement services to unincorporated areas such as Cobb (Lake County

Sheriff's Office, 2024). Law enforcement response in rural areas may be delayed due to distance and staffing limitations. However, Project operations (including special events and regular park use) are expected to result in low levels of service demand. Incidents requiring police response are anticipated to be infrequent and minor in nature, and the Project would not require new or expanded police facilities.

Less than Significant Impact.

- 3) While the Project is intended to provide recreational facilities to local residents, including youth, the Project does not propose residential development or uses that would generate a new school-age population. As such, the Project would not result in an increased impact on the Middletown Unified School District or other educational facilities.

Less than Significant Impact.

- 4) The proposed Project is a new public park designed to expand the recreational capacity of the Cobb area, which currently lacks any existing County parks. The Project would directly relieve demand on other parks and school grounds by providing new, accessible amenities including trails, picnic facilities, a dog run, playground, and open space. The Project would not result in increased use of existing park facilities, nor would it displace or impact other public recreation areas.

Less than Significant Impact.

- 5) The Project would not increase demand for libraries, healthcare facilities, or other public infrastructure beyond a level that could be accommodated by existing resources. Public trash collection would be handled by County park maintenance staff, and the site would not require any new municipal service extensions.

Less than Significant Impact.

XVI. RECREATION

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Measures	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the Project:				
a) 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 which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion:

- a) The Project would not increase use of existing park facilities, as it is intended to serve current and future recreational demand in the Cobb area. The Cobb community currently lacks any County-operated park facilities. As identified in the 2024 Lake County Parks, Recreation,

and Trails Master Plan, the Cobb Mountain area is a priority location for new park development due to an identified service gap (County of Lake, 2024).

The Project would directly address that gap by providing a new 13.13-acre public park including a playground, group picnic area, gathering space, dog run, trails, and Kelsey Creek access. The availability of these new amenities would reduce pressure on other regional parks and help meet local recreational needs.

No Impact.

- b) The Project includes the construction of new public recreational facilities. These include a picnic area, playground, grass play field, outdoor gathering areas, dog run paths, trailheads, accessible permeable trails, and natural surface trails, a pedestrian bridge, and associated amenities (e.g., restrooms, parking, signage, emergency access, retaining wall, and utilities). All physical impacts associated with construction and operation of these facilities are evaluated throughout this Initial Study, including potential effects related to biological resources, hydrology, noise, and wildfire safety. Because recreational improvements would be phased over time as funding becomes available, construction-related physical effects would also occur incrementally, further reducing potential site disturbance. No additional off-site recreational development would be required.

Because the proposed recreational components have been designed in consideration of site constraints and environmental conditions, the Project would not result in substantial adverse physical effects related to the construction or expansion of recreational facilities.

Less Than Significant Impact.

XVII. TRANSPORTATION

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Measures	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the Project:				
a) Conflict with a program plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) For a land use Project, would the Project conflict with or be inconsistent with CEQA guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)(1)?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) For a transportation Project, would the Project conflict with or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)(2)?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Substantially increase hazards due to geometric design features (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	☐	☐	☒	☐
e) Result in inadequate emergency access?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion:

- a) The Project is located at the southeast corner of the intersection of Highway 175 and Golf Road, in the rural community of Cobb in unincorporated Lake County. Highway 175 is a two-lane, state-maintained highway under the jurisdiction of Caltrans District 1 (Caltrans, 2025). Golf Road is a narrow, low-volume County-maintained roadway that serves adjacent

residential uses and a nearby golf course.

Primary access to the site would be provided by a new driveway off of Golf Road near the Golf Road/Highway 175 intersection, leading to the main parking lot, while a secondary access point along Golf Road would serve the northern trailhead and secondary parking area. Both access points would be constructed in accordance with applicable County and fire safety standards, including compliance with Public Resources Code §4290 and County of Lake roadway design guidelines, and Caltrans encroachment and driveway requirements, as necessary (CAL FIRE, 2024).

The Project would include a total of 31 parking spaces (27 in the main lot and 4 in the north lot) and limits the number of vehicles on-site at any one time to 40 during special events. This limits vehicle trips to approximately 80 trips during event days, with an additional estimated 14 trips from shuttles and staff, for a peak event-day estimate of 94 total trips. Special events would occur no more than once per week, with regular daily use generating substantially fewer trips. The Project would not involve the construction or alteration of any public roadway and would not change circulation patterns or road design beyond the driveway connection.

Transportation Plans and Policies

The Project is consistent with the circulation and mobility goals of the 2008 Lake County General Plan and supports recreation access as outlined in the Lake County Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan (County of Lake, 2024). Although the Project is not specifically called out in regional transportation planning documents, it does not conflict with the Lake Area Planning Council's Lake County Active Transportation Plan (Lake APC, 2016), Regional Transportation Improvement Program (Lake APC, 2024), or other plans such as the Lake Transit Authority Bus Passenger Facilities Plan (LTA, 2019) or Regional Bikeway Plan (Lake APC, 2011).

The Project would include improved pedestrian access to park facilities and trails, supports local mobility, and provides safe internal circulation. The Project would not propose road modifications or high-traffic uses that would interfere with the County's existing or future transportation system.

Transit Analysis

There is currently no public transit service directly to the Project site. The closest Lake Transit Authority route is Route 2, which operates Monday-Friday along Highway 175 between Kit's Corner and Middletown, and the closest stop is at Cobb/Hardeste's Market, less than a mile north of the Project site. As such, no new transit infrastructure is proposed or required. The Project would not interfere with or conflict with any existing or proposed transit plans.

Bicycle Lane and Pedestrian Path Analysis

There are no designated bicycle lanes or pedestrian paths on Highway 175 or Golf Road. While the Project does not propose offsite improvements to regional bike or pedestrian infrastructure, it enhances local non-motorized circulation through the construction of internal accessible trails, natural surface trails, and a pedestrian bridge over Kelsey Creek. The Project is consistent with applicable bicycle and pedestrian-related policies in the General Plan and Active Transportation Plan (Lake APC, 2016).

Less than Significant Impact.

- b) For land use projects, CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3(b)(1) requires an assessment of vehicle miles traveled (VMT) rather than level of service (LOS). Because the County of Lake has not adopted specific VMT thresholds, this analysis relies on guidance from the California Office of Planning and Research (OPR).

According to OPR's 2018 Technical Advisory, projects that generate fewer than 110 daily vehicle trips are presumed to have a less-than-significant transportation impact. The Project would generate approximately 94 trips on its busiest days, only during seasonal special events occurring once per week, or less, between April and October. Regular daily use would result in substantially fewer trips. As described in subsection (a), vehicle access would be limited to 40 cars on-site at any one time, with additional shuttle and staff trips included in the peak estimate (OPR, 2018).

Because the Project meets the small project screening criteria, it is eligible for CEQA streamlining and is presumed to result in a less-than-significant VMT impact under Section 15064.3(b)(1).

Less Than Significant Impact.

- c) The Project is not a transportation project. Therefore, CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3(b)(2) does not apply.

No Impact.

- d) The Project does not propose any changes to road alignment or other features, does not result in the introduction of any obstacles, nor does it involve incompatible uses that could increase traffic hazards. The Project be applicable with all emergency access and fire safety requirements. See discussion in subsections (a), (b), and (e).

Less than Significant Impact.

- e-f) As discussed in the Project Description, access to the Project site would be provided via two (2) new driveways. One would be a new driveway off of Golf Road at the intersection of Highway 175 and Golf Road to the main parking lot, and the other would be from Golf Road to the smaller secondary parking lot. Construction staging and future maintenance access would also occur from these access points, consistent with County standards. Highway 175 is maintained by Caltrans, and Golf Road is a local County-maintained road (Caltrans, 2025). According to the California Fire Code and PRC §4290, emergency vehicle access must be maintained along these routes (CAL FIRE, 2024).

The Project does not include changes to the public roadway network and would not reconfigure through traffic on Golf Road or Highway 175. However, consistent with fire safety requirements, the Project would incorporate a reinforced maintenance and emergency access northeast of Kelsey Creek and a reinforced emergency turnout off Highway 175, locking vehicle gates to limit access to authorized personnel only.

The Project would provide 31 onsite parking spaces and would not reconfigure through traffic on Golf Road or Highway 175. If desired by the County, directional signage may be posted during emergencies to support one-way exit flow, consistent with PRC §4290 emergency response protocols. Additionally, the Project site is located in evacuation zone COB-E187, as identified by the County's Genasys Protect (formerly Zonehaven) platform. Notifications during emergencies would be transmitted via Everbridge Nixle, LakeCo Alerts, and/or Reverse 911 systems, as well as posted on Genasys Protect and official County

social media (County of Lake OES, 2024).

Although the Project would slightly increase the number of vehicles traveling to and from the Project site for park activities, it would not substantially alter road capacity or geometry. Emergency access standards would be met through site design review, and provisions to ensure access on surrounding roadways would remain unobstructed.

Less Than Significant Impact.

XVIII. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Measures	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the Project Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:				
a) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k)?	☐	☒	☐	☐
b) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe?	☐	☒	☐	☐

Discussion:

Tribal cultural resources are: (1) sites, features, places, cultural landscapes, sacred places, and objects with cultural value to a California Native American tribe that are listed, or determined to be eligible for listing, in the California Register, or local register of historical resources, as defined in PRC § 5020.1(k); or (2) a resource determined by the CEQA lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in PRC §5024.1(c). For a cultural landscape to be considered a tribal cultural resource, it must be geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape (PRC §21074[b]). A historical resource, as defined in PRC §21084.1, unique archaeological resource, as defined in PRC §21083.2(g), or non-unique archaeological resource, as defined in PRC §21083.2(h), may also be a tribal cultural resource.

Prior to sending out Assembly Bill 52 (AB 52) notification letters, the County informally corresponded with tribal representatives from Big Valley Band of Pomo Indians and Middletown Rancheria of Pomo Indians as early as October 2023. This included Project site meetings, the sharing of draft plans, and multiple follow-up attempts to solicit design feedback.

A site visit with the Middletown Rancheria THPO occurred in November 2023 (and the Big Valley THPO was scheduled to attend).

Pursuant to AB 52, notification letters were sent to local tribes on May 15, 2025, by the County of Lake. In response to the May 15, 2025 AB 52 notification letters, Robert Geary,

Cultural Resources Director/THPO of the Habematolel Pomo of Upper Lake sent a letter (May 27, 2025) that concluded that the Project was not within the aboriginal territories of the Habematolel Pomo of Upper Lake, and thus they declined to comment. In this letter, it deferred correspondence to the Middletown Rancheria of Pomo Indians. No formal requests for consultation were received within the 30 day response timeframe. Additional outreach to Middletown Rancheria and Big Valley (via phone and email, in July 2025) tribes was completed by the County, but has not resulted in any further response, comment, or request for formal consultation.

- a-b) Through background research at the Northwest Information Center of the California Historical Resources Information System, no known archaeological resources that could be considered tribal cultural resources, are listed or determined eligible for listing in the California Register, or included in a local register of historical resources as defined in PRC §5020.1(k), pursuant to PRC §21074(a)(1), would be impacted by the Project. County of Lake did not identify any tribal cultural resources listed or eligible for listing in the California Register, nor did they determine any resources to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in Subdivision (c) of PRC §5024.1.

In the event that unanticipated subsurface resources (including tribal cultural resources) are identified during ground disturbing activities, County of Lake would comply with Mitigation Measure CUL-1 (see *Section V. Cultural Resources*) and PRC §21083.2(i), which requires the lead agency to make provisions for archaeological resources accidentally discovered during construction. As described in CUL-1, County of Lake would be required to make an immediate evaluation by a qualified archaeologist, and if the find is determined to be a unique archaeological resource or a historical resource, then it must be avoided. If avoidance is not feasible, the resource must be recovered and treated accordingly. Construction would be allowed in other areas while the activity takes place.

As such, with implementation of CUL-1, potential impacts related to the accidental discovery of archaeological resources, (including tribal cultural resources) would be less than significant.

Similarly, in the event that ground disturbing activities identify undiscovered human remains, County of Lake will comply with Mitigation Measure CUL-2 (see *Section V. Cultural Resources*) and Government Code Section 27460 et seq., which requires ground disturbing activities to halt until the County Coroner can determine whether the remains are subject to the provisions of Section 27491 of the Government Code or any other related provisions of law concerning investigation of the circumstances, manner, and cause of death; and the required recommendations concerning the treatment and disposition of the human remains have been made. As described in CUL-2, pursuant to California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5, the coroner shall make a determination within 48 hours of notification of the discovery of the human remains. If the coroner determines that the remains are not subject to their authority and recognizes or has reason to believe that they are those of a Native American, the coroner shall contact the Native American Heritage Commission within 24 hours.

As such, with implementation of CUL-2, potential impacts related to the accidental discovery of human remains (including Native American human remains) would be less than significant.

Less than Significant Impact with Implementation of Mitigation Measures CUL-1 and CUL-2.

XIX. UTILITIES

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Measures	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the Project:				
a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the Project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider, which 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?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d) Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?	☐	☐	☒	☐
e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion:

- a) The Project site is located in an unincorporated area of the County of Lake and is not connected to centralized municipal utilities for water or wastewater. Instead, it would be supported by onsite infrastructure, including a new connection, an existing septic system, and existing underground electrical service from Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E). The Project does not propose major utility extensions or off-site trenching. However, minor onsite modifications, such as relocation of the existing PG&E electrical meter and connection to Golf Road (at the discretion of Cobb Water Agency), may occur.

Telecommunications would be provided via existing local service providers and cellular coverage. The Project does not require fiber optic or broadband infrastructure and does not propose modifications to regional telecommunications facilities.

Stormwater would be managed onsite through a combination of pervious surfaces, landscaping, and standard BMPs, including erosion control during and after construction. The Project site is located outside a municipal separate storm sewer system (MS4), and no new stormwater lines or storm drain tie-ins are proposed (RWQCB, 2024).

Less than Significant Impact.

- b) Water supply for the Project would be provided by a new connection along Golf Road. The maximum total water demand is estimated at 50.8 gallons per minute (GPM), assuming all restroom fixtures, including two (2) toilets and two (2) sinks, are operating simultaneously. The connection would meet the requirements of the State Water Resource Control Board Division of Drinking Water. The irrigation system will require a maximum of 45 GPM. In practice, actual average water use would be substantially lower due to intermittent usage of the irrigation system, restroom fixtures, and drinking fountain. Irrigation would occur

during off-hours or non-peak times and would not coincide with restroom use.

It is anticipated that the new connection would adequately meet the Project site's needs.

Less than Significant Impact.

- c) Wastewater would be treated through an existing septic tank and leach field system installed under Lake County Division of Environmental Health oversight. In November 2023, the system was inspected by Kelseyville Septic, which confirmed it to be operational with only minor repairs recommended, including installation of a new biofilter and sanitary tees. These repairs would be completed prior to park operation. In Fall 2024, a follow-up site visit by the County's Director of Environmental Services confirmed that the system has sufficient capacity to support proposed restroom use and light event traffic. Vehicle restrictions would be implemented to prevent compaction of the leach field.

If additional leach line capacity is required, improvements would be limited to previously disturbed portions of the site and would not involve trenching in undisturbed or wooded areas. All upgrades would be reviewed and permitted by the Division of Environmental Health.

Less than Significant Impact.

- d) Solid waste generated by the Project would consist of typical park-related refuse, including food packaging, restroom waste, and maintenance debris. Solid waste would be collected by County park staff and hauled to the Eastlake Sanitary Landfill in Clearlake, the County's designated public disposal facility (CalRecycle, 2024). Construction-related waste would also be minimal and would be properly sorted and disposed of in accordance with CalGreen construction recycling requirements.

Based on the Project's recreational use, limited event frequency, and onsite waste management program, the Project would not exceed the capacity of local solid waste facilities or impede solid waste reduction goals.

Less than Significant Impact.

- e) The Project would comply with all applicable waste management statutes, including the California Integrated Waste Management Act (Public Resources Code §§ 40000–49620), local recycling ordinances, and applicable State Building Code provisions. No deviations or waivers are requested.

Less than Significant Impact.

X. WILDFIRE

Potentially
Significant
Impact

Less Than
Significant with
Mitigation
Measures

Less Than
Significant
Impact

No Impact

If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the Project:

- | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan? | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☐ |
| b) Would the Project, due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose Project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire? | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☐ |
| c) Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment? | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☐ |
| d) Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes? | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☐ |

Discussion:

- a) The County does not currently have an adopted countywide evacuation plan. However, as part of the General Plan update, the County is developing a revised Safety Element that is expected to provide evacuation and hazard mitigation planning guidance (County of Lake, 2024). Emergency alerts are issued through Nixle, LakeCo Alerts, and Reverse 911 systems, as well as posted on Genasys Protect and official County social media (County of Lake OES, 2024). The County also has a recently adopted Emergency Operations Plan and local hazard mitigation plan (County of Lake, 2025 and 2023).

The Cobb Community Park site is located in a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ) in the unincorporated community of Cobb, County of Lake, California (CAL FIRE, 2023). According to the County's Genasys Protect evacuation platform, the site falls within Evacuation Zone COB-E187 (County of Lake OES, 2024). The platform (formerly known as Zonehaven) is used by the Lake County Sheriff's Office of Emergency Services (OES) to coordinate alerts and evacuation orders. The Project could incorporate design elements that would reduce wildfire-related evacuation risks and improve existing emergency access in the area. These include, but are not limited to:

- A primary vehicular access point to the Project site will be provided by a new driveway off of Golf Road near the Golf Road/Highway 175 intersection.

- A reinforced emergency and maintenance vehicle access trail will extend from the new Golf Road driveway near the Highway 175 intersection to the pedestrian bridge area. No direct access would be provided from Highway 175 .
- Onsite parking limits (up to 31 parking spots are proposed), and other elements/features such as directional signage and driveway design could improve existing emergency access in the area.
- Required compliance with PRC §§4290 and 4291 to ensure driveway width, vertical clearance, and defensible space standards are met.

The Project would not involve the construction or reconfiguration of any offsite roadways and would not obstruct existing emergency response routes. During construction and operation, all emergency access points would remain clear, with gates accessible to emergency personnel. When compared to existing conditions, the Project would not result in a substantial alteration to the design or capacity of any public road that would impair or interfere with the implementation of evacuation procedures. Emergency access would be maintained throughout phased construction, with each completed phase ensuring compliance with PRC §§4290 and 4291 prior to public use. Mitigation Measures WILD-1 through WILD-7 include requirements related to access, evacuation, construction and operation of the Project to mitigate wildfire impacts.

Less than Significant Impact with Implementation of Mitigation Measures WILD-1 through WILD-7.

Mitigation Measures:

WILD-1: Cessation of Construction on Red Flag Warning Days. Construction activities shall not occur on red flag warning days, as determined by CAL FIRE or the National Weather Service. Wind speed, temperature, and humidity shall be monitored to minimize ignition risk, and grading shall not occur during periods of high wind.

WILD-2: Emergency Exit Routes. Prior to public use, the County shall coordinate with the County's Department of Public Works to install "Emergency Exit Route" signage at both driveway entrances (Highway 175 and Golf Road) to direct outbound traffic in the event of an emergency. Public parking shall be limited to designated spaces within the park.

WILD-3: Emergency Turnout. Prior to the portion of the Project included in Phase 1 opening for public use, the emergency turnout off Highway 175 shall be constructed in accordance with PRC §4290. This improvement shall be reviewed and approved by the County Fire Marshal or other designated authority during final permitting. Similarly, prior to the portion of the Project included in Phase 2 opening for public use, the emergency/maintenance access route northeast of Kelsey Creek shall be constructed in accordance with Public Resources Code §4290. This improvement shall be reviewed and approved by the County Fire Marshal or other designated authority during final permitting. Emergency access turnouts shall be maintained clear of obstructions.

Fire safety and Project site readiness requirements shall include, but are not limited to:

- a. An interior driveway at least 20 feet wide, constructed with an all-weather surface designed to support a 75,000-pound emergency vehicle;

- b. A vertical clearance of at least 15 feet along all emergency access routes;
- c. Defensible space established around all structures per applicable fire code and PRC §4291 guidelines;
- d. Lockable emergency gates and address signage visible and legible from the roadway;
- g. Driveway shall be inspected by the County and the driveway entrance shall be marked with 6-inch-tall contrasting address numbers visible at night.

WILD-4: Defensible Space. Prior to public use of the park, defensible space shall be established and maintained around structures and gathering areas in compliance with PRC §4291. This may include strategic limbing of trees or vegetation thinning rather than tree removal, as determined by the Fire Marshal or designated agency.

WILD-5: Pre-Occupancy Inspection. A pre-occupancy inspection shall be conducted by County Building and Safety to verify the following:

- Minimum 20-foot-wide access roads with appropriate load-bearing surfaces;
- Adequate vertical clearance and emergency vehicle turnaround;
- Fire-resistant restroom and utility structure materials;
- Address signage and emergency contact postings.

WILD-6: Emergency Evacuation Information. The County shall install posted emergency evacuation information at park entrances and kiosks, consistent with local emergency protocols. The information shall include evacuation zone number, available exit routes, and procedures during red flag conditions.

WILD-7: Campfire Prohibition. Recreational campfires shall be prohibited. Barbeques must be contained, monitored, and located within cleared defensible space zones (i.e. picnic area).

- b) The Project site is located within a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ) and is heavily wooded in areas, with steeper slopes to the east (CAL FIRE, 2023). While much of the primary recreation area in the southwest portion of the site is relatively flat and would be cleared for construction, the presence of dense vegetation and slope in the surrounding areas increases the risk of wildfire spread.

To reduce risk during construction, activities would not occur on red flag warning days, in accordance with Mitigation Measure WILD-1, and the contractor would monitor temperature, humidity, and wind conditions. Construction would comply with applicable County Building Code and Fire Code requirements, and the site would be inspected prior to public use to ensure conformance with PRC §4290, including driveway width, vertical clearance, and defensible space (WILD-3). Each completed construction phase would be subject to inspection prior to public use to verify compliance with fire safety standards.

Vegetation thinning, tree limbing, and removal of flammable understory would be required in targeted areas surrounding park structures. These efforts are consistent with PRC §4291 defensible space requirements and are included in WILD-4.

The Project does not include or allow overnight uses. A maximum of 40 vehicles would be allowed on-site at any time, and fire restrictions would be posted and enforced (WILD-7).

These Project design features and mitigation measures would ensure that the Project would not substantially exacerbate wildfire risks or increase exposure of park visitors or nearby residents to hazardous pollutant concentrations from wildfire events.

Less than Significant Impact with Implementation of Mitigation Measures WILD-1 through WILD-6.

- c) Power is currently provided to the Project site by Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) and enters the site via existing underground electrical infrastructure. No new overhead lines are proposed. As such, the Project would not introduce aboveground electrical features that could pose additional wildfire ignition risk.

If additional water or septic improvements are required, these installations would be located in previously disturbed or cleared areas within the primary development footprint and would not involve tree removal or ground disturbance in undisturbed woodland areas.

Less than Significant Impact.

- d) The developed portion of the Project site, the southwest corner and main recreation area, is relatively flat and has not exhibited signs of instability. These areas would undergo limited grading and vegetation removal as described in the Project Description and Geology/Soils section. The steeper eastern portion of the site adjacent to Kelsey Creek would remain largely undisturbed aside from trail improvements, pedestrian access points, and the smaller secondary parking lot, which would be constructed in a relatively flat and previously disturbed area.

Vegetation clearing and grading activities would require a Grading Permit and be conducted in accordance with BMPs and erosion control standards to reduce the potential for post-fire drainage impacts or slope destabilization. As discussed above, impacts to wildfire from construction and operation of the Project may be mitigated to a less-than-significant level with adherence to existing fire and building codes, as well as implementation of Mitigation Measures WILD-1 through WILD-7.

Less than Significant Impact with Implementation of Mitigation Measures WILD-1 through WILD-7.

XXI. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Measures	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Does the Project have the potential to substantially 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 considerable 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 which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly? ☐ ☒ ☐ ☐

Discussion:

- a) The Project would involve the construction and operation of a community park, including trails, a restroom facility, parking, play features, and open lawn areas. The majority of development would occur in a previously disturbed, relatively flat portion of the Project site, minimizing impacts on natural resources. Sensitive environmental areas, such as the riparian corridor adjacent to Kelsey Creek would be protected to the extent possible.

As evaluated in this Initial Study, the Project has the potential to result in impacts to Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Geology and Soils, Hydrology and Water Quality, Noise, Tribal Cultural Resources, and Wildfire. However, implementation of BMPs, adherence with existing local and state regulations, and implementation of the mitigation measures identified in the referenced sections , would reduce potential environmental impacts to less-than-significant levels.

Less Than Significant Impact with Implementation of Mitigation Measures.

- b) The Project's contribution to cumulative impacts would be limited due to its small scale (to meet anticipated park and recreation demand identified in the 2008 Lake County General Plan and Spring 2024 County of Lake Parks, Recreation and Trails Master Plan) and low-daily visitation. Areas of cumulative concern, such as incremental effects of the Project in connection with other past, present, and reasonably future projects in the Cobb area were fully evaluated, and mitigation measures have been incorporated to address potential effects on Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Geology and Soils, Hydrology and Water Quality, Noise, Transportation, Tribal Cultural Resources, and Wildfire. No regional infrastructure expansions or major new vehicle trip generation is anticipated to occur.

Accordingly, the Project would not contribute to cumulatively considerable impacts when viewed in the context of past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future development in the area.

Less Than Significant Impact with Implementation of Mitigation Measures.

- c) The Project is not expected to result in significant adverse effects on human health or safety.

Potential risks related to Air Quality (dust), Geology and Soils, Noise, and Wildfire, were evaluated and addressed through mitigation measures. BMPs and other protective measures would further reduce potential impacts related to hydrology/water quality, and unanticipated discovery of prehistoric, historic, and tribal cultural resources. In support of human health and safety, construction-period activities would be limited to daytime hours 7am-7pm, Monday-Saturday), evacuation signage and emergency access routes would be required, and fire safety infrastructure is included in the Project and would be completed prior to final operation of the Project. Furthermore, the Project design (including emergency access) is subject to review by the South Lake County Fire Protection District, CALFIRE, and the Lake County Sheriff Department.

if constructed, the Project would serve the local community, providing a planned park and recreational facility in the Cobb Area, consistent with the Lake County General Plan and County of Lakes, Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan.

With implementation of previously described mitigation measures, BMPs, and other protective measures, the Project would not have significant adverse environmental effects on human health or safety.

Less Than Significant Impact with Implementation of Mitigation Measures.

21. Attachments

- 1a. Biological Resources Technical Report
- 1b. Arborist Report
2. Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP)

22. References

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