# Revision to the Safety Element of the Alpine County General Plan INITIAL STUDY AND ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

#### Introduction

This environmental checklist includes an evaluation of impacts based on the CEQA Guidelines Appendix G Environmental Checklist. Each checklist item is explained in the discussion following the checklist and, if necessary, mitigation measures are provided to reduce impacts to a less-than-significant level. In accordance with CEQA, Alpine County considered the whole of the action when evaluating impacts, including on- and off-site effects, direct and indirect effects, and effects from both construction and operation of any new development.

Each checklist criterion is marked to identify whether there is an environmental impact.

- *No impact* indicates that there is no impact on the resource.
- Less-than-significant impact means that while there is some impact, the impact is below the threshold of significance, or that existing regulations and legal standards will reduce these impacts to a less-than-significant level.
- Less than significant with mitigation incorporated indicates that a potentially significant or significant impact has been identified in the course of this analysis and mitigation measures have been provided in this IS to reduce the impact to a less-than-significant level.
- *Cumulative impacts* are discussed in Section 3.18, Mandatory Findings of Significance, of this IS. If a significant cumulative impact is identified, the project's contribution to the significant *cumulative impact* is considered.

## **Project Information**

1. Project Title:

Revision to the Safety Element of the Alpine County General Plan

2. Lead Agency Name and Address:

Alpine County Community Development Department 50 Diamond Valley Road Markleeville CA 96120

3. Contact Person and Phone Number:

Brian Peters, Community Development Director 530-694-1361

4. Project Location:

Alpine County, California

#### 5. Project Sponsor's Name and Address:

Alpine County Community Development Department 50 Diamond Valley Road Markleeville CA 96120

#### 6. General Plan Designation and Zoning:

The project encompasses the entirety of Alpine County and therefore includes all general plan designations and zoning districts in the County.

#### 7. Description of Project:

The project is a complete revision to the Safety Element of the Alpine County General Plan. The Safety Element establishes goals, policies and implementation measures intended to avoid or minimize human injury and protect property by reducing the exposure of the community to hazards.

The Alpine County Safety Element addresses the following hazards that are known to have potential for causing injury to people or damage to property in the County:

- A. Wildland Fire
- B. Geologic Hazards
- D. Flood
- E. Noise
- F. Hazardous Materials

#### 8. Surrounding Land Uses and Setting:

Alpine County is located in the central Sierra region of California, astride the Pacific crest. It is bordered by the State of Nevada to the east and the California counties of El Dorado, Amador, Calaveras, Tuolumne and Mono to the north, west and south.

Alpine County comprises 465,030 acres (738.6 square miles), which makes it California's eighth smallest of 58 counties. Almost 95 percent of the land is publicly owned and is open to the public for such uses as skiing, fishing, hiking, hunting, whitewater rafting, mountain biking, and other daytime recreational uses. Elevation ranges from 4,800 feet to over 11,400 feet. The Central Sierra Nevada is the dominant land feature, with Carson and Antelope Valleys bordering on the east.

#### 9. Other Public Agencies Whose Approval is Required:

Each city and county must provide a draft of its safety element or amendment of its safety element to the California Geological Survey of the Department of Conservation prior to adoption, for review to determine if all known seismic and other geologic hazards are addressed (Gov. Code § 65302.5)(a)). A city or county that contains a state fire responsibility area or a very high fire hazard severity zone must provide a draft of its safety element or amendment of its safety element to the State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection for review before adoption, and the Board may recommend changes regarding uses of land, policies, or strategies for reducing fire risk (Id. at § 65302.5)(b)).

These required reviews are in process and will be completed as required prior to the adoption of the revised Safety Element.

10. 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.?

No California Native American tribes have requested consultation pursuant to PRC 21080.3.1.

Additionally, in accordance with California Government Code Section 65352.3 (SB 18) California Native American tribes have been notified of the proposed Safety Element revision and been given the opportunity to initiate consultation with the County.

## **Environmental Factors Potentially Affected**

Impacts to each environmental resource topic listed below are given one of the following determinations:

**No Impact.** The project would not have the impact described. The project may have a beneficial effect, but there is no potential for the project to create or add increment to the impact described.

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The project would have the impact described, but the impact would not be significant. Mitigation is not required, although the project applicant may choose to modify the project to avoid the impacts.

**Less Than Significant with Mitigation.** The project would have the impact described, and the impact could be significant. One or more mitigation measures have been identified that will reduce the impact to a less than significant level.

**Significant and Unavoidable Impact.** The project would have the impact described, and the impact could be significant. The impact cannot be reduced to a less-than-significant level by incorporating mitigation measures. An environmental impact report must be prepared for this project.

Each question on the checklist was answered by evaluating the project as proposed, that is, without considering the effect of any added mitigation measures. The checklist includes a discussion of the impacts and mitigation measures that have been identified.

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by the Project, but impacts would be mitigated to a less-than-significant level as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

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

## **Environmental Determination**

On the basis of this initial evaluation:	
I find that the Project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.	$\boxtimes$
I find that although the 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 Project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.	
I find that the Project MAY have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant impact 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 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 project, nothing further is required.	
Bris Robo March 4, 2020	

## **Environmental Impact Checklist**

General Comment: The proposed revision to the Safety Element of the Alpine County General Plan consists of text amendments to policy documents. The adoption of this revision to the Safety Element will not result in the approval of specific development projects or actions that result in changes to the physical environment. All future projects that may be related to the revision of the Safety Element will require that a project-specific environmental review occur prior to specific project approval or project implementation. Accordingly, the Environmental Impact Checklists indicates No Impact for each category of resources addressed. Specific comments within each section are provided when necessary to further describe the basis for the No Impact determination.

#### **Aesthetics**

Environmental Impacts	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
1. AESTHETICS. Except as provided in Public Resources 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 or designated scenic roadway?				×
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) Create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?				×

#### The project

a) Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?

No physical change to the environment would occur.

- b) Would the project substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway or designated scenic roadway? No physical change to the environment would occur.
- c) Would the project 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?

No physical change to the environment would occur. The revised Safety Element does not contain any goals, policies or recommended actions that would conflict the applicable zoning, which includes the

County's Scenic Highway Corridor Development Standards that are part of the County Zoning Ordinance.

d) Would the project create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?

No physical change to the environment would occur and no new sources of light would result.

**Agriculture and Forestry** 

Environmental Impacts	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact	
2. AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES. In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. Would the project:					
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?		×

a) Would the project 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?

No land in these categories is present in Alpine County.

- b) Would the project conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?

  No physical change to the environment would occur. Nothing in the revision will conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or any areas under a Williamson Act contract.
- c) Would the project 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))?
  Nothing in the revision will conflict with existing zoning of forest land, timberland or timberland production areas that may exist within the County.
- d) Would the project result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

  No physical change to the environment would occur. Accordingly, the project will not result in the loss of forest land or the conversion of forest land to non-forest use.
- e) Would the project 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?

No physical change to the environment would occur. Consequently, there will not be any conversion of land use.

Air Quality

Environmental Impacts	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
3. AIR QUALITY. Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management district or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. 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?				×
c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?				×
d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors adversely affecting a substantial number of people?				×

Alpine County is located within the Great Basin valleys - Air Basin (GBVAB), so named because its geologic formation is that of a basin, with the surrounding mountains trapping the air and its pollutants in the valleys and basins. Alpine County is currently non-attainment for state PM10 standards, but not federal PM10 standards. Primary sources of PM10 pollution include wood stoves, open and prescribed burning, and wind-blown dust generated from unpaved roads and agriculture. Alpine County is unclassified for state ozone standards and federal 8-hour ozone standards.

The Great Basin Unified Air Pollution Control District (GBUAPCD) is the regional government agency that works to protect the people and the environment of Alpine, Mono and Inyo Counties from the harmful effects of air pollution. The GBUAPCD is responsible for the preparation of plans for the attainment and maintenance of Ambient Air Quality Standards (AAQS), adoption and enforcement of rules and regulations for sources of air pollution, and issuance of permits for stationary sources of air pollution.

- a) Would the project conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan? The proposed project would not conflict with or obstruct the implementation of the air quality plan, or violate any air quality standard.
- b) Would the project 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?
  Hazardous forest fuel reduction in the form of prescribed burning releases particulate matter (PM-10) for which the County is currently in non-attainment. The revised Safety Element Wildland Fire Fuel Modification section recommends that the County pursue fuels reduction projects that may include prescribed burning. The Safety Element revision does not identify any specific projects that may include prescribed burning. Any proposed project with prescribed burning will be subject to environmental review and will need to address air quality impacts and include project provisions or mitigation measures to address any adverse impacts that may result.

- c) Would the project expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?
  - The Safety Element revision does not identify any specific projects that would potentially expose sensitive receptors to pollutant concentrations.
- d) Would the project result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors adversely affecting a substantial number of people?

The Safety Element revision does not identify any specific projects that would potentially result in other emissions that could affect a substantial number of people.

**Biological Resources** 

Environmental Impacts	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
4. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES. 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, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or US Fish and Wildlife Service?				×
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, 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?				×
e) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?				×

a) Would the project 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?

No physical change to the environment would occur.

b) Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or US Fish and Wildlife Service?

No physical change to the environment would occur.

c) Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?

No physical change to the environment would occur.

d) Would the project 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?

No physical change to the environment would occur.

- e) Would the project conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?
  - Implementation Measure 20C-1 anticipates that the County will work with Calfire to assertively implement the defensible space requirements of Public Resources Code 4291. The Kirkwood Specific Plan area in Alpine County includes a tree removal ordinance that restricts the manner of tree removal that may occur and may conflict with PRC 4291. This ordinance has been in effect for over 30 years. The need for modification of this local ordinance to eliminate conflicts with PRC 4291 has been acknowledged and it is expected that a modification will be forthcoming. The requirements of PRC 4291 exist with or without the proposed revision to the Safety Element. As such, the proposed revision, by itself, does not conflict with any local policies or ordinance protecting biological resources, including the Kirkwood tree removal ordinance.
- f) Would the project conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan? No areas in Alpine County are subject to or included in any of the above listed plans.

#### **Cultural Resources**

Environmental Impacts	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
5. CULTURAL RESOURCES. 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 archaeological resource pursuant to § 15064.5?				×
c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?				×

a) Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to § 15064.5?

No physical change to the environment would occur.

b) Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to § 15064.5?

No physical change to the environment would occur.

c) Would the project disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries? No physical change to the environment would occur.

Energy

Environmental Impacts	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
6. ENERGY. Would the project:				
a) Result in a potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?				×
b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?				×

a) Would the project result in a potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?

No physical change to the environment will occur and no projects are authorized by the revision to the Safety Element.

b) Would the project conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?

Alpine County adopted an Energy Action Plan in 2016. This plan establishes Energy Efficiency Goals, Strategies and Actions in the five areas listed below. There is nothing in the proposed Safety Element revision that conflicts with the Energy Action Plan.

- 1. Existing Structures Energy efficiency in existing homes, offices, etc.
- 2. New Construction Energy performance in new and planned construction
- 3. Renewable Energy Expansion of local renewable energy generation and use
- 4. County Operations Energy efficiency in municipal operations
- 5. Water Energy Reduction in water waste and its embedded energy use

**Geology and Soils** 

Environmental Impacts	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
7. GEOLOGY AND SOILS. Would the project:				
a) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology 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- 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 waste water 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: The revised Safety Element contains goals, policies and implementation measures intended to reduce the risk from geologic hazards that are known to exist in Alpine County. These include avalanche, earthquake/seismic shaking and landslide/slope failure. The goals, policies and implementation measures will become actionable as they are applied to future development proposals and projects that may be proposed within the County. No physical change to the environment will occur and no projects are authorized by the revision to the Safety Element. Thus, the response to items a-f is no impact.

- a) Would the project directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:
  - i. Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.
  - ii. Strong seismic ground shaking?
  - iii. Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?
  - iv. Landslides?
- b) Would the project result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?
- c) Would the project be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?
- d) Would the project 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) Would the project have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?
- f) Would the project directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?

#### **Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

Environmental Impacts	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
8. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS. 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?				×

## a) Would the project generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?

No physical change to the environment will occur and no projects are authorized by the revision to the Safety Element. Any future project such as reduction of hazardous forest fuels by prescribed burning will be required to have project specific environmental review that will address the potential for generation of greenhouse gas emissions.

## b) Would the project conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?

No physical change to the environment will occur and no projects are authorized by the revision to the Safety Element. There are no goals, policies or implementation measures in the revised Safety Element that would conflict with any applicable plan, policy or regulation as listed.

#### **Hazards and Hazardous Materials**

Environmental Impacts	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
9. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS. 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 reasonably 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?				×
f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?				×
g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?				×

Discussion: The revised Safety Element contains a policy and implementation measures intended to reduce the risks association with hazardous materials and hazards. The policies and implementation measures will become actionable as they are applied to future development proposals and projects that may be proposed within the County. No physical change to the environment will occur and no projects are authorized by the revision to the Safety Element. Thus, the response to items a-g is no impact.

a) Would the project create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?

- b) Would the project create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?
- c) Would the project emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?
- d) Would the project 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?
- f) Would the project impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?
- g) Would the project expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?

**Hydrology and Water Quality** 

Environmental Impacts	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
10. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY. Would the project:				
<ul> <li>a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality?</li> </ul>				×
b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?				×
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:				
i) result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off- site;				×
ii) substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or offsite;				×
iii) create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or				×
iv) impede or redirect flood flows?				×
d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?				×
e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?				×

a) Would the project violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality?

No physical change to the environment will occur and no projects are authorized by the revision to the Safety Element.

b) Would the project substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?

- c) Would the project substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:
  - i. result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site;
  - ii. substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or offsite;
  - iii. create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or
  - iv. impede or redirect flood flows?

- d) Would the project in flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?
  - No physical change to the environment will occur and no projects are authorized by the revision to the Safety Element.
- e) Would the project conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?
  - No physical change to the environment will occur and no projects are authorized by the revision to the Safety Element.

**Land Use and Planning** 

Environmental Impacts	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
11. LAND USE AND PLANNING. 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?				×

a) Would the project physically divide an established community?

No physical change to the environment will occur and no projects are authorized by the revision to the Safety Element.

b) Would the project 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?

#### **Mineral Resources**

Environmental Impacts	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
12. MINERAL RESOURCES. 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?				×

a) Would the project 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?

No physical change to the environment will occur and no projects are authorized by the revision to the Safety Element.

b) Would the project 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?

#### Noise

Environmental Impacts	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
13. NOISE. Would the project result in:				
a) 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) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?				×
c) For a project 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, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?				×

Discussion: The revised Safety Element contains a policy and implementation measures intended to reduce the risks association generation of noise. The policies and implementation measures will become actionable as they are applied to future development proposals and projects that may be proposed within the County. No physical change to the environment will occur and no projects are authorized by the revision to the Safety Element. Thus, the response to items a-c is no impact.

- a) Would the project result in 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) Would the project result in generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?
- c) For a project 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, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?

**Population and Housing** 

Environmental Impacts	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
14. POPULATION AND HOUSING. 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?				×

a) Would the project 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)?

No physical change to the environment will occur and no projects are authorized by the revision to the Safety Element.

b) Would the project displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

#### **Public Services**

Environmental Impacts	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
15. PUBLIC SERVICES.				
a) Would the project 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:				
Fire protection?				×
Police protection?				×
Schools?				×
Parks?				×
Other public facilities?				×

a) Would the project 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:

Fire protection?

Police protection?

Schools?

Parks?

Other public facilities?

Discussion: The revised Safety Element contains goals, policy and implementation measures intended to support and improve fire protection capability and resources within the County. The goals, policies and implementation measures will become actionable as they are applied to future development proposals and projects that may be proposed within the County. No physical change to the environment will occur and no projects are authorized by the revision to the Safety Element. Thus, the response is no impact.

#### Recreation

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

- a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?
  No physical change to the environment will occur and no projects are authorized by the revision to the Safety Element. Nothing in the revised Safety Element will increase the use of parks and recreational facilities.
- facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?

  No physical change to the environment will occur and no projects are authorized by the revision to the Safety Element. Thus the project does not include recreational facilities or require either construction or expansion of recreational facilities.

b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational

**Transportation** 

Environmental Impacts	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
17. TRANSPORTATION. Would the project:				
a) Conflict with a program plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?				×
b) Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?				×
c) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?				×
d) Result in inadequate emergency access?				×

a) Would the project conflict with a program plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?

No physical change to the environment will occur and no projects are authorized by the revision to the Safety Element. There are no goals, policies or implementation measures in the revised Safety Element that would conflict with any applicable plan, ordinance or policy as listed.

- b) Would the project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)? No physical change to the environment will occur and no projects are authorized by the revision to the Safety Element. Thus there is no conflict or inconsistency with the referenced CEQA Guidelines section.
- c) Would the project substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?

No physical change to the environment will occur and no projects are authorized by the revision to the Safety Element.

d) Would the project result in inadequate emergency access?

The revised Safety Element includes implementation measures intended to expand requirements for secondary vehicular access in new development, such that the secondary vehicular access will be required to meet the same construction standard as the primary vehicular access. This implementation measure will result in emergency access to new development that exceeds standards contained in the California Fire Safe Regulations contained Title 14 of the Public Resources Code.

#### **Tribal Cultural Resources**

Environmental Impacts	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
18. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES.				
a) 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:				
i) 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), or				×
ii) 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. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.				×

- a) 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:
  - i. 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), or
  - ii. 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. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.

**Utilities and Service Systems** 

Environmental Impacts	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
19. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS. 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?				×

a) Would the project 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?

No physical change to the environment will occur and no projects are authorized by the revision to the Safety Element.

b) Would the project have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?

No physical change to the environment will occur and no projects are authorized by the revision to the Safety Element.

c) Would the project 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), e) 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? Would the project comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?

#### Wildfire

Environmental Impacts	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
20. WILDFIRE. 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) 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: The revised Safety Element contains an extensive section of wildfire hazard that includes goals, policy and implementation measures intended reduce the risk of wildland fires and their associated adverse impacts within the County. Five important policy areas are addressed:

- o Planning and Capacity Building
- o Land Use
- o Fuel Modification
- o Access
- o Water Supply

The goals, policies and implementation measures will become actionable as they are applied to future development proposals and projects that may be proposed within the County. No physical change to the environment will occur and no projects are authorized by the revision to the Safety Element. Thus, the response to items a-d is no impact.

## a) Would the project substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

The revised Safety Element includes an implementation measure supporting development of pre-plans for fire risk areas that address civilian evacuation and provide a means to effectively communicate those plans

- 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?
  - No physical change to the environment will occur and no projects are authorized by the revision to the Safety Element.
- c) Would the project 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?
  - No physical change to the environment will occur and no projects are authorized by the revision to the Safety Element.
- d) Would the project 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?
  - No physical change to the environment will occur and no projects are authorized by the revision to the Safety Element.

**Mandatory Findings of Significance** 

Environmental Impacts	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
21. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE.				
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?				×

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?

No physical change to the environment will occur and no projects are authorized by the revision to the Safety Element.

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)?

No physical change to the environment will occur and no projects are authorized by the revision to the Safety Element.

c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?

## **Report Preparers**

Brian Peters, Community Development Director for Alpine County

## References

Draft Revision to the Safety Element of the Alpine County General Plan (2-27-2020)