

INITIAL STUDY AND MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

Jones Bros. Solar Farm 1

15200 East Lone Tree Road, Escalon, California
Unincorporated San Joaquin County, California

Lead Agency: San Joaquin County Community Development Department
Applicant: Jones Bros. Solar Farm 1, LLC / Cal Solar (CSLB #980699)
Property Owner: Jones, Jordan W.
APN: 203-110-190-000
Project Type: Ground-Mounted Photovoltaic Solar Energy Facility (~4.04 MW DC)
Document Type: Initial Study / Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND)
Date: April 2026

*Prepared pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA),
Public Resources Code §21000 et seq., and the State CEQA Guidelines (14 CCR §15000 et seq.)*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary.....	ES-1
Chapter 1: Project Description	1-1
1.1 Project Overview	1-1
1.2 Project Location and Setting.....	1-2
1.3 Project Components and Design	1-2
1.4 Construction Activities	1-4
1.5 Operations and Maintenance	1-5
1.6 Decommissioning	1-5
1.7 Required Permits and Approvals	1-5
Chapter 2: Environmental Setting	2-1
Chapter 3: Environmental Checklist, Analysis and Mitigation Measures.....	3-1
3.1 Introduction / Determination	3-1
3.2 Aesthetics.....	3-2
3.3 Agriculture and Forestry Resources.....	3-4
3.4 Air Quality	3-6
3.5 Biological Resources.....	3-9
3.6 Cultural Resources	3-11
3.7 Energy	3-13
3.8 Geology and Soils.....	3-14
3.9 Greenhouse Gas Emissions.....	3-16
3.10 Hazards and Hazardous Materials.....	3-17
3.11 Hydrology and Water Quality.....	3-21
3.12 Land Use and Planning.....	3-23
3.13 Mineral Resources.....	3-24
3.14 Noise.....	3-24
3.15 Population and Housing.....	3-25
3.16 Public Services	3-26
3.17 Recreation.....	3-26
3.18 Transportation.....	3-27
3.19 Tribal Cultural Resources	3-28
3.20 Utilities and Service Systems	3-29
3.21 Wildfire.....	3-30
3.22 Mandatory Findings of Significance.....	3-31
Chapter 4: Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP).....	4-1
Chapter 5: Persons and Organizations Consulted	5-1
Chapter 6: References and Document Preparers	6-1
Lead Agency Determination.....	—
Appendix A: Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (AdvancedGeo, Inc., March 2026).....	—
Appendix B: Electrical Design Plans (Cal Solar, February 2026).....	—

List of Tables

- Table 1-1: Project Design Parameters
- Table 3.1-1: Environmental Factors Checklist Summary
- Table 4-1: Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Overview of the Proposed Project

Cal Solar, on behalf of Jones Bros. Solar Farm 1, LLC, proposes to construct and operate a utility-scale ground-mounted photovoltaic (PV) solar energy facility (the Project) on an approximately 14.47-acre portion of a 39.65-acre parcel located at 15200 East Lone Tree Road, in unincorporated San Joaquin County, California (APN: 203-110-190-000). The Project would consist of approximately 4,043.52 kilowatts (kW) direct current (DC) of solar generating capacity using First Solar 540-watt PV modules mounted on a fixed racking system.

The Project would interconnect to Pacific Gas & Electric's (PG&E) existing overhead distribution system via a 17-kilovolt (kV), three-phase point of interconnection located on Lone Tree Road. The facility would generate clean, renewable electricity for delivery to the electrical grid. No battery energy storage systems (BESS) are proposed as part of this Project.

The subject parcel is currently used for row crop agriculture and is zoned AG-40 (General Agriculture) under San Joaquin County's zoning ordinance. The parcel has been utilized for agricultural purposes since at least 1914. A conditional use permit (CUP) application (PA-2600014) was filed with San Joaquin County on or about January 13, 2026.

Location of the Proposed Project

The Project site is located on the south side of Lone Tree Road, approximately 0.25 miles west of Due Road, within an agricultural area of unincorporated San Joaquin County, California. The site is situated northwest of the City of Escalon at approximately latitude 37.823888°N, longitude 121.123333°W, within the Avena 7.5-Minute USGS Topographic Quadrangle. Overhead PG&E transmission lines run diagonally across the property from southwest to northeast, with transmission towers located near the southwest corner and center of the property (AGI Phase I ESA, Project No. 26-8364, March 13, 2026, pp. 5, 18).

Summary of Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures

This Initial Study has been prepared in accordance with CEQA, the State CEQA Guidelines, and San Joaquin County's local CEQA procedures. Based on the analysis presented in Chapter 3, the following conclusions are reached:

- **Aesthetics:** Less Than Significant Impact. The Project is a low-profile installation within an agricultural setting with no designated scenic vistas nearby.
- **Agriculture/Forestry:** Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. The Project site is active farmland (Prime/Statewide Important Farmland designation requires confirmation); the zoning is AG-40 and the site may be subject to a Williamson Act contract.
- **Air Quality:** Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. Short-term construction emissions in the San Joaquin Valley Air Basin (non-attainment area) require dust control BMPs.
- **Biological Resources:** Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. Standard pre-construction surveys and avoidance measures are required to address the potential for nesting birds and other special-status species.
- **Cultural Resources:** Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. Standard discovery protocols and tribal consultation are required.
- **Energy:** Less Than Significant Impact. The Project is a net energy producer with no significant energy consumption.
- **Geology/Soils:** Less Than Significant Impact. The Project is in a low-seismic, low-relief alluvial setting; pile-driving avoids major grading.
- **Greenhouse Gas Emissions:** Less Than Significant Impact. Net lifecycle GHG emissions are substantially negative.

- **Hazards/Hazardous Materials:** Less Than Significant Impact. The Phase I ESA identified no RECs; de minimis oil staining at the agricultural well is addressed through a soil removal BMP.
- **Hydrology/Water Quality:** Less Than Significant Impact. The site is not in a FEMA flood zone; depth to groundwater is approximately 91 feet; standard stormwater BMPs apply.
- **Land Use/Planning:** Less Than Significant Impact (pending CUP). The Project is consistent with general plan energy policies.
- **Mineral Resources, Noise, Population/Housing, Public Services, Recreation, Utilities:** No Impact or Less Than Significant Impact.
- **Transportation:** Less Than Significant Impact. Construction traffic will be temporary; 22-foot wide access gates are designed for fire access.
- **Tribal Cultural Resources:** Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. AB 52/SB 18 consultation required.
- **Wildfire:** Less Than Significant Impact. The Project includes 20–25 foot fire access roads on all sides; the site is not in a State Responsibility Area.

No Potentially Significant Impact remains after implementation of the mitigation measures described in Chapter 3 and the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) in Chapter 4.

Lead Agency Determination

On the basis of this Initial Study, the Lead Agency (San Joaquin County Community Development Department) finds 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.

CHAPTER 1: PROJECT DESCRIPTION

1.1 Project Overview

Cal Solar, a licensed electrical contractor (CSLB #980699, License Classifications B, C10, C46) located at 580 N. Wilma Avenue, Suite H, Ripon, California 95366, has submitted an application to develop the Jones Bros. Solar Farm 1 Project (Project) on behalf of the property owner, Jones Jordan W. The Project consists of a ground-mounted photovoltaic solar energy facility with a nameplate capacity of approximately 4,043.52 kW DC STC, to be developed on approximately 14.47 acres of a 39.65-acre agricultural parcel.

The Project's purpose is to generate clean, renewable electrical energy for delivery to the PG&E electrical grid pursuant to a power purchase or net energy metering arrangement. The Project is designed to support California's Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) goals and statewide greenhouse gas reduction targets under AB 32 and SB 100.

1.2 Project Location and Setting

Site Address	15200 East Lone Tree Road, Escalon, California 95320
Assessor's Parcel Number (APN)	203-110-190-000
County	San Joaquin County (unincorporated)
Township/Range/Section	USGS Avena Quadrangle; approx. Sec. 7, T 1 S, R 9 E, MDB&M
GPS Coordinates	37.823888°N, 121.123333°W (Cal Solar Design Plans, Sheet PV1.1, Feb. 2026)
Property Owner	Jones, Jordan W.
Zoning	AG-40 (General Agriculture) — San Joaquin County
General Plan Land Use	Agricultural
Total Parcel Size	39.65 acres total; ~14.47 acres proposed solar installation area
Elevation	Approximately 62 feet above mean sea level
Electric Utility	Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E)

The subject property is located on the south side of Lone Tree Road, approximately 0.25 miles west of Due Road, in an agricultural area of unincorporated San Joaquin County. The parcel is surrounded by agricultural uses: a farmstead and orchard to the north (across Lone Tree Road), agricultural uses (orchards) to the east and west, and an undeveloped lot potentially used for agriculture to the south (AGI Phase I ESA, p. 18).

An approximately 2.0-acre portion of the northwest corner of the parcel is developed with a single-family dwelling and an outbuilding; these structures are not included within the Project's solar installation area. Overhead PG&E transmission lines run diagonally across the property from southwest to northeast, with transmission towers located near the southwest corner and center of the property (AGI Phase I ESA, pp. 5–6).

1.3 Project Components and Design

The Project will consist of the following principal components, as detailed in the Cal Solar electrical design plans (Cal Solar, Sheet Nos. PV1.0, PV1.1, PV2.0, and associated sheets, last revised February 11, 2026; Design for Permitting update October 17, 2025):

1.3.1 Photovoltaic Modules

The Project will use First Solar 540-watt photovoltaic modules mounted on a fixed-tilt ground-mount racking system. The total module output aggregates to approximately 4,043.52 kW DC STC, as recorded in the CUP application (PA-2600014; AGI Phase I ESA, p. 15).

1.3.2 Racking System

Modules will be mounted on a fixed-tilt ground-mount racking system. Racking posts will be driven or embedded into the soil with no concrete foundation pads anticipated.

1.3.3 Inverters and Electrical Equipment

The Project will include the following electrical infrastructure (Cal Solar Plans, Sheets PV1.1, EL series):

- 12 remote DC combiner boxes (maximum circuit current 4.46 amps per circuit; 1,488.61 VDC maximum)
- 12 grid-tied string or central inverter units
- Two (2) 1,500 kVA step-up transformers
- One (1) 4,000-ampere solar switchgear panel
- One (1) utility pad-mount interrupter on a prefabricated concrete pad
- An Also Energy Data Acquisition System (DAS) for performance monitoring
- Revenue-grade metering with CT/PT on a new utility pole (Pole 1)
- A new PG&E switch on a new utility pole (Pole 2) and a new S&C switch disconnect

1.3.4 Interconnection Infrastructure

The Project will interconnect to the PG&E 17-kV, three-phase overhead distribution system at a point of interconnection on or adjacent to Lone Tree Road. The interconnection includes approximately 617 linear feet of new underground conduit from the Project's switchgear to the POI (Cal Solar Plans, Sheet PV1.0), plus internal conduit trench paths of approximately 1,112 feet and 583 feet within the property (Cal Solar Plans, Sheet PV1.1). A 15-foot setback is maintained from existing overhead utility power lines.

1.3.5 Fencing and Access

The Project's solar installation area will be enclosed by a security fence. Access will be provided via three (3) twenty-two-foot (22') wide access gates and three (3) three-foot (3') wide man gates (Cal Solar Plans, Sheets PV1.0, PV1.1, PV2.0). Fire access roads with a minimum width of 20 to 25 feet are provided on all four sides of the solar array area, as shown on the Fire Setback Details sheet (PV2.0).

1.3.6 Existing Agricultural Well

An existing agricultural well is located near the east-central portion of the property, observed during the Phase I ESA site reconnaissance on March 2, 2026. The well will be preserved in place and is not proposed for removal (AGI Phase I ESA, p. 18).

Table 1-1: Project Design Parameters

Project Name	Jones Bros. Solar Farm 1
Site Address	15200 E. Lone Tree Road, Escalon, CA 95320
APN	203-110-190-000

Total Parcel Area	39.65 acres
Solar Installation Area	~14.47 acres
Installed DC Capacity	~4,043.52 kW DC STC (~4.04 MW DC)
PV Module Type	First Solar 540-watt modules
Racking System	Fixed-tilt, ground-mount
Interconnection Voltage	17 kV, 3-phase (PG&E)
Underground Conduit Length	~617 feet (property line to POI); ~1,112 ft + ~583 ft internal
New Utility Poles	Two (2) new PG&E poles (metering and switch)
Fire Access Road Width	20–25 feet minimum (all four sides)
Access Gates	Three (3) × 22-foot vehicle gates; three (3) × 3-foot man gates
Battery Energy Storage	None proposed
Design Life	Approximately 25–30 years

1.4 Construction Activities

Construction of the Project is anticipated to require approximately four to six months to complete. Construction activities will include:

- Site preparation: clearing of existing row crops or fallow vegetation; minor grading; installation of erosion and sediment controls.
- Fencing installation: perimeter security fencing and fire access road grading.
- Pile driving or post installation for racking system foundations.
- Module racking assembly and solar panel installation.
- Electrical equipment installation: DC combiners, inverters, transformers, switchgear, DAS, and conduit.
- Underground conduit trenching: approximately 617 feet to POI on Lone Tree Road, plus internal trench paths of approximately 1,112 feet and 583 feet within the property.
- Installation of two new utility poles on Lone Tree Road; utility interconnection work to PG&E 17 kV system.
- Final testing, commissioning, and inspection.

Construction workers on site are expected to range from approximately 10 to 30 persons daily. Construction hours will comply with applicable San Joaquin County noise ordinance restrictions.

1.5 Operations and Maintenance

Once operational, the Jones Bros. Solar Farm 1 will require minimal ongoing maintenance, including periodic panel cleaning, regular visual inspections of all electrical equipment, vegetation management within the fenced installation area, and remote monitoring of system performance via the Also Energy DAS system. The solar facility is expected to operate for a design life of approximately 25 to 30 years.

1.6 Decommissioning

At the end of the Project's operational life, the Project will be decommissioned. Decommissioning activities will include removal of all PV modules, racking systems, electrical equipment, underground conduit, and fencing. The

site will be restored to a condition suitable for agricultural use. All materials removed during decommissioning will be recycled, reused, or disposed of in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local regulations.

1.7 Required Permits and Approvals

- San Joaquin County Conditional Use Permit (CUP PA-2600014) — Lead Agency CEQA Action
- San Joaquin County Building Permit(s) for electrical and structural work
- PG&E Interconnection Agreement (Rule 21 or applicable tariff)
- State Water Resources Control Board — Construction General Permit (CGP) and Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP)
- San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD) — Dust Control Plan (Regulation VIII)
- California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) — Notification under Fish and Game Code if biological resources are affected
- Consultation with California Native American tribes pursuant to AB 52 (Public Resources Code §21080.3.1)

CHAPTER 2: ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The following environmental setting description is based on information obtained from the Phase I Environmental Site Assessment prepared by AdvancedGeo, Inc. (AGI), Project No. 26-8364, dated March 13, 2026 (hereinafter "AGI Phase I ESA"), the Cal Solar electrical design plans (February 2026), and other publicly available data sources.

2.1 Regional Setting

The Project site is located within the San Joaquin Valley, a large, elongate, northwest-trending, asymmetric structural trough that is part of the Great Valley Geomorphic Province of California. The Great Valley Province has been filled with thick sequences of sediment ranging in age from Jurassic to Recent, creating a nearly flat-lying alluvial plain. Western and eastern boundaries of this province are comprised of the California Coast Range and the Sierra Nevada, respectively (AGI Phase I ESA, p. 11).

2.2 Land Use and Zoning

The subject parcel (APN: 203-110-190-000) is zoned AG-40 (General Agriculture) and designated for agricultural use in the San Joaquin County General Plan. The property has been utilized for agricultural purposes (row crops and orchard) since at least 1914. At the time of the March 2, 2026 site reconnaissance, the property was planted with a low-lying row crop. Surrounding land uses consist primarily of agricultural operations including orchards and row crops to the north, east, west, and south (AGI Phase I ESA, pp. 5, 17–18). A CUP application (PA-2600014) for the 4,043.52-kilowatt DC ground-mounted photovoltaic system was filed with the San Joaquin County Environmental Health Department in September 2024 (AGI Phase I ESA, p. 15).

2.3 Topography and Soils

The property is located at an elevation of approximately 62 feet above mean sea level (MSL) in an area of low topographic relief. Regional slope is toward the general south-southwest (AGI Phase I ESA, p. 11). Surface soils consist of Manteca fine sandy loam (USDA STATSGO classification), Class C Hydrogeologic Group, with very slow infiltration rates and high corrosion potential for uncoated steel (AGI Phase I ESA, p. 11).

2.4 Hydrology and Groundwater

The subject property lies within the San Joaquin Valley Groundwater Basin, Eastern San Joaquin Subbasin (5-22.01). Depth to groundwater is approximately 91 feet below surface grade (bsg), with inferred groundwater flow direction toward the northwest (AGI Phase I ESA, p. 11). No surface water features exist on the property; the nearest surface water feature is Lone Tree Creek, approximately 0.64 miles to the north. The property is not located within a FEMA Special Flood Hazard Area or a 0.2% Annual Chance Flood Zone (AGI Phase I ESA, p. 11).

2.5 Biological Resources

The Project site is within an intensively cultivated agricultural area. The Phase I ESA noted no wetlands within the property boundary per the National Wetlands Inventory (AGI Phase I ESA, p. 11). The San Joaquin County Multi-Species Habitat Conservation and Open Space Plan, administered in coordination with the San Joaquin Council of Governments, applies to the Project. Compliance with the Plan, including payment of applicable fees and adherence to its policies and mitigation requirements, would reduce potential impacts to special-status species to a less-than-significant level. The San Joaquin Valley supports a number of special-status species, including the Swainson's hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*), tricolored blackbird (*Agelaius tricolor*), giant garter snake (*Thamnophis gigas*), and San Joaquin kit fox (*Vulpes macrotis mutica*), among others.

2.6 Cultural Resources

The property has been under continuous agricultural cultivation since at least 1914 (AGI Phase I ESA, p. 9).

2.7 Hazards and Hazardous Materials

A Phase I ESA was prepared by AGI in conformance with ASTM Standard Practice E1527-21 and EPA AAI standards (40 CFR Part 312). The Phase I ESA identified no RECs, HRECs, CRECs, or Business Environmental Risks. The subject property was not listed on any reviewed federal or state environmental regulatory databases (AGI Phase I ESA, pp. 14–23). One de minimis condition was identified: minor oil staining from hydraulic oil near the agricultural well. One potential non-ASTM environmental issue was noted: historic use of agrochemicals since approximately the mid-1910s. A Volatile Organic Compound (VOC) Vapor Encroachment Condition (VEC) screening (ASTM E2600-22 Tier 1) determined that a VEC does not exist at the property (AGI Phase I ESA, p. 17). San Joaquin County is in USEPA Radon Zone 3 (predicted average indoor radon levels <2 pCi/L) (AGI Phase I ESA, p. 21).

2.8 Air Quality

The Project is located within the San Joaquin Valley Air Basin (SJVAB), regulated by the SJVAPCD. The SJVAB is currently designated non-attainment for ozone, PM10, and PM2.5 under both State and Federal standards.

2.9 Noise

The site is located in a rural agricultural area. Ambient noise levels are expected to be low, primarily associated with agricultural equipment operations and occasional traffic on Lone Tree Road.

2.10 Utilities and Infrastructure

Overhead PG&E transmission lines run diagonally across the property with transmission towers located near the southwest corner and center of the property. No natural gas utility service is present at the project location. A single agricultural well is located near the east-central portion of the property. The residential dwelling is serviced by a private well and private septic system (AGI Phase I ESA, pp. 6, 18).

CHAPTER 3: ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST, ANALYSIS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

3.1 Introduction

This chapter evaluates the environmental impacts of the Jones Bros. Solar Farm 1 Project in conformance with Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines (14 CCR §15000 et seq.). For each environmental topic, the relevant Appendix G questions are listed, a determination is provided, and a discussion is presented drawing from the Phase I ESA, the Cal Solar electrical design plans, and other information in the uploaded project documents.

Thresholds of significance used in this analysis are drawn from the State CEQA Guidelines, SJVAPCD guidance, and standard CEQA practice. Impact determinations use the following four categories:

- Potentially Significant Impact (PSI): The Project may have a significant effect on the environment. An EIR would normally be required.
- Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated (LTSWM): The impact can be reduced to less than significant through implementation of the identified mitigation measures.
- Less Than Significant Impact (LTS): The Project would not result in a significant effect on the environment.
- No Impact (NI): There would be no impact on the identified resource.

3.1.1 Determination

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

- 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 COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment and a **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.

Signature of Lead Agency Representative:  Date: 4/15/2026
 Jacob Pahule

Title: Associate Planner, San Joaquin County Community Development Department

3.2 Environmental Factors Potentially Affected

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by the Project, involving at least one impact that is 'Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated' as indicated by the checklist in the sections that follow.

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aesthetics | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agriculture and Forestry | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Air Quality |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Biological Resources | Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Energy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Geology/Soils | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cultural Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Hazards & Hazardous |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hydrology/Water Quality | <input type="checkbox"/> Greenhouse Gas Emissions | Materials |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Noise | <input type="checkbox"/> Land Use/Planning | <input type="checkbox"/> Mineral Resources |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Recreation | <input type="checkbox"/> Population and Housing | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Utilities/Service Systems | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tribal Cultural Resources |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Wildfire | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mandatory Findings of |
| | | Significance |

Note: Checked boxes (☑) indicate topics with at least one Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated finding.

3.2 Aesthetics

Would the Project:	PSI	LTSWM	LTS	NI
a. Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c. In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3.2.1 Environmental Setting

The Project site is located within a flat, agricultural landscape characteristic of the San Joaquin Valley. The site is located along Lone Tree Road, a rural two-lane agricultural road. There are no formally designated state scenic highways in the immediate vicinity of the Project site per the Caltrans Scenic Highway Program. The site is not identified as containing scenic resources or being within a scenic corridor in the San Joaquin County General Plan. The existing visual character is defined by flat agricultural fields, overhead utility lines, farm buildings, and equipment (AGI Phase I ESA, pp. 5–6, 17–18).

3.2.2 Discussion and Mitigation Measures

Aesthetics – a. **Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?**

Answer: Less Than Significant Impact

Discussion: The Project is not located within or adjacent to any officially designated scenic vista, viewpoint, or visual resource corridor identified in the San Joaquin County General Plan. The Project site is within a flat agricultural area of the San Joaquin Valley with generally open, agricultural views. The fixed-tilt solar modules will be low-profile installations (typically 2–8 feet above grade) that will not obstruct or materially alter views of any identified scenic resource. Therefore, impacts to scenic vistas would be less than significant, and no further analysis or mitigation is required.

Aesthetics – b. **Would the project substantially damage scenic resources, including trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?**

Answer: No Impact

Discussion: The Project site is not located along or within the viewshed of a State-designated scenic highway. No state scenic highways are identified in the Project vicinity per Caltrans scenic highway mapping. Therefore, there would be no impact and no further analysis or mitigation is required.

Aesthetics – c. **In non-urbanized areas, would the project substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings?**

Answer: Less Than Significant Impact

Discussion: The Project site is in a non-urbanized agricultural area. The proposed solar installation consists of low-profile, flat panels arranged in rows, consistent with standard utility-scale solar development in the San Joaquin Valley. While the visual character of the site will change from active row crops to a solar installation, the Project will not introduce visually incongruous elements. Overhead transmission lines already cross the site diagonally, and the surrounding area is characterized by agricultural infrastructure. The Project will be set back from Lone Tree Road. Pursuant to San Joaquin County Development Title Chapter 9-409.430, the facility is required to be fenced and to comply with applicable setback standards, including minimum setbacks from property lines in Agricultural zones. These design requirements would further reduce visibility of the Project from public viewpoints. The change in visual character from agricultural use to solar land use is not considered a substantial degradation of visual quality

in this agricultural setting. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant, and no further analysis or mitigation is required.

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

Answer: Less Than Significant Impact

Discussion: Solar PV panels are designed to absorb solar radiation rather than reflect it. Modern photovoltaic panels are constructed of dark-colored materials and are covered with anti-reflective coatings. PV panels typically reflect as little as two percent of incoming sunlight. The First Solar 540-watt modules specified for the Project are designed to minimize glare. The Project does not include exterior lighting beyond any security lighting required by the CUP conditions. Security lighting, if installed, will be directed downward and shielded to prevent off-site light spillage. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant, and no further analysis or mitigation is required.

3.2.3 Conclusion

No significant impacts to aesthetics were identified. No mitigation measures are required.

3.3 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 Department of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources are significant, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection.

Would the Project:	PSI	LTSWM	LTS	NI
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land or timberland?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d. Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e. Involve other changes in the existing environment that, 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3.3.1 Environmental Setting

The subject parcel (APN: 203-110-190-000) is zoned AG-40 (General Agriculture) and is classified as agricultural land use in the San Joaquin County General Plan. The property has been continuously used for agricultural purposes since at least 1914, with row crops, orchard cultivation, and the existing residential dwelling developed over time (AGI Phase I ESA, pp. 5–9). At the time of the March 2, 2026 site reconnaissance, the property was planted with a low-lying row crop (AGI Phase I ESA, p. 17). San Joaquin County soils in this region are classified within the USDA STATSGO database as Manteca fine sandy loam (AGI Phase I ESA, p. 11). According to the California Department of Conservation’s Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP), the subject parcel is designated as Farmland of Statewide Importance. The parcel is also enrolled in a Williamson Act Land Conservation Contract (Contract No. 720273). No forestland or timberland exists within or adjacent to the Project area.

3.3.2 Discussion and Mitigation Measures

Agriculture – a. Would the project convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance, as shown on the FMMP, to non-agricultural use?

Answer: Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated

Discussion: The subject parcel has been continuously used for agriculture since at least 1914. According to the California Department of Conservation’s Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP), the subject parcel is designated as Farmland of Statewide Importance. The Project proposes to install solar PV facilities on approximately 14.47 acres of the 39.65-acre parcel. The site will be fully reversible to agricultural use upon decommissioning.

Agriculture – b. Would the project conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?

Answer: Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated

Discussion: The subject parcel is zoned AG-40 (General Agriculture) (AGI Phase I ESA, p. 5). Solar energy facilities in San Joaquin County AG-40 zones require a Conditional Use Permit, which has been applied for (CUP PA-2600014). The proposed project consists of construction and operation of a utility-scale ground-mounted photovoltaic (PV) solar energy facility on an approximately 14.47-acre portion of a 39.65-acre parcel located at 15200 East Lone Tree Road, with the majority of the parcel remaining in agriculture production. San Joaquin County is a significant Williamson Act county, and the subject parcel (APN 203-110-190-000) is enrolled in Williamson Act Land Conservation Contract No. 720273; the proposed project would be required to remain consistent with the terms, restrictions, and permitted uses of the existing Williamson Act contract.

Mitigation Measure AG-1: Williamson Act Verification.

Prior to approval of the Conditional Use Permit, the applicant shall demonstrate consistency of the proposed project with Williamson Act Land Conservation Contract No. 720273 through review and confirmation by the San Joaquin County Assessor-Recorder's Office and/or Community Development Department, and the project shall comply with all applicable Williamson Act restrictions during construction and operation.

Agriculture – c. Would the project conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land or timberland?

Answer: No Impact

Discussion: The Project site is located in the San Joaquin Valley floor. There is no forest land or timberland within or adjacent to the Project area. Therefore, there would be no impact and no further analysis or mitigation is required.

Agriculture – d. Would the project result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

Answer: No Impact

Discussion: There is no forest land at or near the Project site. Therefore, there would be no impact and no further analysis or mitigation is required.

Agriculture – e. Would the project involve other changes that could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

Answer: Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated

Discussion: The Project would directly convert approximately 14.47 acres of actively farmed land to solar energy use. The conversion is temporary (25–30 year project life), reversible upon decommissioning, and limited in scope. No induced or indirect conversion of additional farmland beyond the Project boundary is anticipated. Implementation of Mitigation Measures AG-1 will reduce this impact to less than significant.

3.3.3 Conclusion

With implementation of Mitigation Measures AG-1, impacts to agriculture and forestry resources would be less than significant. No impacts to forestry resources would occur.

3.4 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:	PSI	LTSWM	LTS	NI
a. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

3.4.1 Environmental Setting

The Project is located within the San Joaquin Valley Air Basin (SJVAB), regulated by the SJVAPCD. The SJVAB is currently designated non-attainment for State and Federal ozone, PM10, and PM2.5 standards. The SJVAPCD has adopted various rules and regulations to control emissions from construction activities, including Regulation VIII (Fugitive PM10 Prohibitions). AGI's Phase I ESA confirmed that the SJVAPCD has no records on file for the subject property (AGI Phase I ESA, p. 15).

3.4.2 Discussion and Mitigation Measures

Air Quality – a. **Would the project conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?**

Answer: Less Than Significant Impact

Discussion: The Project is a solar energy facility that, once operational, produces zero direct air pollutant emissions. The Project, as a renewable energy facility, is consistent with the goals of the applicable SJVAPCD air quality plans. Therefore, the Project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan, and impacts would be less than significant.

Air Quality – b. **Would the project result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment?**

Answer: Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated

Discussion: The primary source of air quality impacts from the Project will be construction activities, including grading, soil disturbance, vehicle emissions, and equipment exhaust over approximately 14.47 acres. Construction activities in the non-attainment SJVAB require compliance with SJVAPCD Regulation VIII dust control requirements. Based on the relatively small project footprint and short construction duration (approximately 4–6 months), emissions are expected to be manageable with implementation of the following mitigation measure:

Mitigation Measure AQ-1: SJVAPCD Dust Control Plan.

Prior to the commencement of any ground-disturbing activities, the applicant shall prepare and implement a Dust Control Plan pursuant to SJVAPCD Regulation VIII. The Dust Control Plan shall include, at minimum: (1) application of water or dust palliative to all disturbed surfaces at a minimum of twice daily and whenever dust generation is observed; (2) stabilization of unpaved access and haul roads with water, gravel, or other dust control measures; (3) covering or watering of stockpiles of disturbed material; (4) installation of trackout control at all construction entry/exit points; (5) reduction of vehicle speeds to 15 mph on unpaved surfaces; and (6) cessation of earth-moving activities when wind

speeds exceed 20 mph. All off-road diesel construction equipment greater than 50 hp shall meet USEPA Tier 4 Final or Tier 3 emission standards, where available.

Air Quality – c. **Would the project expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?**

Answer: Less Than Significant Impact

Discussion: The nearest sensitive receptors are the single-family dwelling in the northwest corner of the subject parcel (outside the solar installation area) and residential properties along Lone Tree Road. Construction activities will be temporary. Given the short construction duration and implementation of Mitigation Measure AQ-1, construction emissions would not create substantial pollutant concentrations at sensitive receptors. Impacts would be less than significant.

Air Quality – d. **Would the project result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?**

Answer: No Impact

Discussion: Solar PV facilities do not produce odors during operation. No materials or processes associated with the Project would generate objectionable odors. Therefore, there would be no impact.

3.4.3 Conclusion

With implementation of Mitigation Measure AQ-1, air quality impacts would be less than significant. No significant long-term operational air quality impacts would occur.

3.5 Biological Resources

Would the Project:	PSI	LTSWM	LTS	NI
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 CDFW or USFWS?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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 CDFW or USFWS?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c. Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

3.5.1 Environmental Setting

The Project site consists of actively farmed agricultural land (row crops) within the intensively cultivated San Joaquin Valley floor. The Phase I ESA confirmed that the property is not located within the National Wetlands Inventory and that no surface water features are present on the property. Lone Tree Creek, the nearest surface water feature, is approximately 0.64 miles to the north (AGI Phase I ESA, p. 11). The San Joaquin Valley floor supports multiple special-status species, including the Swainson's hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*), tricolored blackbird (*Agelaius tricolor*), giant garter snake (*Thamnophis gigas*), San Joaquin kit fox (*Vulpes macrotis mutica*), and burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*). A dedicated biological resources survey report was not included in the uploaded project documents.

3.5.2 Discussion and Mitigation Measures

Biological Resources – a. **Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on any special-status species?**

Answer: Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated

Discussion: The Project site is an actively cultivated agricultural field. Agricultural fields in the San Joaquin Valley can provide foraging habitat for special-status raptors such as the Swainson's hawk and white-tailed kite, and nesting habitat for burrowing owls in field margins. Nesting birds protected under the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) and California Fish and Game Code §3503 may also use the site during the breeding season. The San Joaquin Council of Governments provided comments dated February 25, 2026, indicating the Project is subject to the San Joaquin County Multi-Species Habitat Conservation and Open Space Plan. The applicant has confirmed participation in the Plan, and a payment certificate has been issued. The following mitigation measures are required:

Mitigation Measure BIO-1: San Joaquin County Multi-Species Habitat Conservation and Open Space Plan Compliance.

The developer shall apply to the San Joaquin Council of Governments (SJCOG) for coverage under the San Joaquin County Multi-Species Habitat Conservation and Open Space Plan (SJMSCP). The Project site shall be inspected by the SJMSCP biologist, who will determine applicable incidental Take Minimization Measures set forth in the SJMSCP and recommend which measures shall be implemented for the Project. The Project applicant shall pay the required SJMSCP fee, if applicable, and shall be responsible for implementation of all required incidental Take Minimization Measures identified through the SJMSCP review process.

Biological Resources – b & c. **Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on riparian habitat or state/federally protected wetlands?**

Answer: No Impact

Discussion: The Phase I ESA confirmed that the subject property is not located within the National Wetlands Inventory and that no surface water features are present on the property (AGI Phase I ESA, p. 11). No riparian habitat or wetlands are present within the Project footprint. Therefore, there would be no impact.

Biological Resources – d. **Would the project interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory wildlife species or with established wildlife corridors?**

Answer: Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated

Discussion: The Project site is entirely agricultural and does not contain natural lands with identified wildlife corridors. The perimeter fencing required for the solar facility may impede the movement of certain ground-dwelling mammals, including the San Joaquin kit fox if present. Implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-1 will identify any specific corridor values and required accommodations. Fencing design should allow for small mammal passage at intervals per CDFW recommendations if kit fox or other burrowing mammals are confirmed. With implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-1, impacts would be less than significant.

Biological Resources – e & f. **Would the project conflict with local biological resource policies or an adopted HCP/NCCP?**

Answer: No Impact

Discussion: San Joaquin County does not have an adopted tree preservation ordinance applicable to agricultural areas. The Project area does not fall within any adopted Habitat Conservation Plan or Natural Community Conservation Plan boundaries confirmed in the uploaded documents. Therefore, there would be no impact.

3.5.3 Conclusion

With implementation of Mitigation Measures BIO-1, biological resource impacts would be less than significant. No impacts to riparian habitat, wetlands, or adopted HCPs/NCCPs are anticipated.

3.6 Cultural Resources

Would the Project:	PSI	LTSWM	LTS	NI
a. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3.6.1 Environmental Setting

The Project site is located in the San Joaquin Valley, an area that has been continuously cultivated since the early twentieth century. The subject property has been utilized for agricultural purposes since at least 1914. Prior to European settlement, the San Joaquin Valley was inhabited by Native Californian peoples, including the Northern Valley Yokuts. No prior cultural resources surveys for this specific parcel were included in the uploaded project documents. SJCEHD records show geotechnical borings were conducted at the site in July 2025 (AGI Phase I ESA, p. 15).

3.6.2 Discussion and Mitigation Measures

Cultural Resources – a. **Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?**

Answer: Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated

Discussion: No historic structures within the proposed solar installation area are identified in the uploaded project documents. The single-family dwelling and outbuilding in the northwest corner of the parcel are outside the solar installation footprint and were constructed in 2002 and 2017 respectively (AGI Phase I ESA, p. 6), not meeting the 50-year threshold. With implementation of Mitigation Measure CUL-1, impacts would be less than significant.

Cultural Resources – b. **Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?**

Answer: Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated

Discussion: More than a century of agricultural cultivation may have disturbed or redistributed subsurface materials; however, deeply buried prehistoric deposits are possible given the alluvial setting. Geotechnical borings (six borings, 15–50 feet deep) were conducted at the site in July 2025 (AGI Phase I ESA, p. 15). Because a formal archaeological survey has not been conducted for the Project area, mitigation is required. Implementation of Mitigation Measures CUL-1 and CUL-2 will reduce potential impacts to less than significant.

Mitigation Measure CUL-1: Cultural Resources Survey.

Prior to the approval of grading or building permits for the Project, the applicant shall retain a qualified archaeologist (meeting Secretary of the Interior Professional Qualification Standards) to conduct a pedestrian archaeological survey and records search at the appropriate California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS) center covering the full Project footprint. The results shall be submitted to San Joaquin County. If significant archaeological resources are identified, appropriate avoidance, data recovery, or other mitigation consistent with Section 15064.5 of the CEQA Guidelines shall be implemented.

Mitigation Measure CUL-2: Inadvertent Discovery Protocol.

If cultural materials (artifacts, structural remains, bone, or other materials of potential archaeological significance) are encountered during any ground-disturbing activity, work in the immediate vicinity shall

stop within 50 feet and a qualified archaeologist shall be contacted immediately to evaluate the find. If the resource is determined to be significant under CEQA, appropriate treatment measures shall be developed in consultation with the qualified archaeologist, San Joaquin County, and any consulting Native American tribes. All work shall halt within the area until the qualified archaeologist completes evaluation and a treatment plan is approved.

Cultural Resources – c. **Would the project disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?**

Answer: Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated

Discussion: No known cemeteries or human remains are documented within the Project site. However, the potential for undiscovered human remains cannot be entirely excluded in an area with pre-European Native American settlement. Implementation of Mitigation Measure CUL-2 and the following measure will reduce impacts to less than significant:

Mitigation Measure CUL-3: Human Remains Discovery Protocol.

If human remains are encountered during ground-disturbing activities, all work in the vicinity shall cease immediately. The San Joaquin County Coroner shall be notified pursuant to California Health and Safety Code §7050.5. If the Coroner determines the remains are of Native American origin, CDFW and the California Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) shall be notified and procedures under Public Resources Code §5097.98 shall be followed.

3.6.3 Conclusion

With implementation of Mitigation Measures CUL-1, CUL-2, and CUL-3, impacts to cultural resources would be less than significant. A supplemental cultural resources survey is recommended prior to finalization of this document.

3.7 Energy

Would the Project:	PSI	LTSWM	LTS	NI
a. Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

3.7.1 Environmental Setting and Discussion

Energy – a. **Would the project result in wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources?**

Answer: Less Than Significant Impact

Discussion: During construction, the Project will consume fuel for construction equipment and vehicles. This energy consumption is temporary and proportionate to the scale of the installation. Once operational, the Jones Bros. Solar Farm 1 is a net energy producer generating approximately 4,043.52 kW DC of clean, renewable electricity from sunlight with no fuel consumption. Therefore, impacts related to energy consumption would be less than significant.

Energy – b. **Would the project conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?**

Answer: No Impact

Discussion: The Project directly supports California's renewable energy goals under SB 100 and the state's Renewables Portfolio Standard (RPS). The Project also supports San Joaquin County's general plan energy goals. Therefore, there would be no impact.

3.7.2 Conclusion

No significant energy impacts were identified. No mitigation measures are required.

3.8 Geology and Soils

Would the Project:	PSI	LTSWM	LTS	NI
a. Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects involving: i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault; ii) Strong seismic ground shaking; iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction; iv) Landslides?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, potentially resulting in landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code, creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f. Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3.8.1 Environmental Setting

The Project site is located within the Great Valley Geomorphic Province of California, on a nearly flat-lying alluvial plain at approximately 62 feet MSL. Regional slope is toward the general south-southwest (AGI Phase I ESA, p. 11). The surface soils are Manteca fine sandy loam (Class C Hydrogeologic Group, very slow infiltration rates, high corrosion potential for uncoated steel) (AGI Phase I ESA, p. 11). Groundwater is estimated at approximately 91 feet bsg (AGI Phase I ESA, p. 11). Six geotechnical borings (15–50 feet deep) were conducted at the site in July 2025 per SJCEHD records (AGI Phase I ESA, p. 15).

3.8.2 Discussion and Mitigation Measures

Geology – a. **Would the project expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects involving seismic hazards?**

Answer: Less Than Significant Impact

Discussion: The Project site is located within the Great Valley geomorphic province on a thick sequence of alluvial sediments. The San Joaquin Valley floor is not associated with active fault rupture zones. Solar PV ground-mount systems are low-profile structures with relatively low vulnerability to seismic damage. Liquefaction potential with groundwater at approximately 91 feet bsg is generally low. No landslide hazard exists in this flat terrain. Structural design will conform to CBC seismic design requirements. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

Geology – b. **Would the project result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?**

Answer: Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated

Discussion: Construction activities will involve limited grading for the fire access road and minor site preparation. Pile driving for racking foundations minimizes soil disturbance compared to conventional grading. However, exposed soils during construction could be subject to wind and water erosion. The high corrosion potential of the Manteca fine sandy loam soils for uncoated steel (AGI Phase I ESA, p. 11) should be considered in the structural design of racking posts. Implementation of the following mitigation measure is required:

Mitigation Measure GEO-1: Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP).

Prior to the commencement of any ground-disturbing activities totaling one or more acres of disturbed

soil, the applicant shall prepare and implement a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) and file a Notice of Intent (NOI) with the State Water Resources Control Board under the Construction General Permit (CGP; Order No. 2009-0009-DWQ as amended). The SWPPP shall include Best Management Practices (BMPs) for erosion control, sediment control, and post-construction stabilization consistent with Caltrans and CASQA BMP handbooks. Temporary erosion controls shall be installed and maintained throughout construction.

Geology – c-f. **Other geology and soils issues (geologic stability, expansive soils, septic systems, paleontological resources).**

Answer: Less Than Significant Impact

Discussion: The flat alluvial terrain presents no landslide or lateral spreading hazard. The Manteca fine sandy loam soils are not considered expansive. No septic systems are proposed as part of the solar installation. The deep alluvial sediment sequence may contain paleontological resources; however, Project excavations are limited in depth and are unlikely to encounter significant paleontological resources. No unique geologic features are present. Therefore, these impacts would be less than significant.

3.8.3 Conclusion

With implementation of Mitigation Measure GEO-1, geology and soils impacts would be less than significant.

3.9 Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Would the Project:	PSI	LTSWM	LTS	NI
a. Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

3.9.1 Environmental Setting and Discussion

GHG – a. **Would the project generate GHG emissions that may have a significant impact on the environment?**

Answer: Less Than Significant Impact

Discussion: GHG emissions from the Project will occur during construction (equipment exhaust and worker vehicle trips) and minimally during operations (maintenance vehicle trips). The Jones Bros. Solar Farm 1 is a renewable energy project that will generate approximately 4,043.52 kW DC of solar electricity without combustion or direct GHG emissions during operation. The net lifecycle GHG balance of a utility-scale solar PV project is substantially negative compared to avoided GHG emissions from displaced fossil fuel generation. The SJVAPCD's GHG significance threshold is 10,000 metric tons CO₂-equivalent per year; the operational GHG emissions from a solar facility of this scale are negligible relative to this threshold. Therefore, GHG impacts would be less than significant.

GHG – b. **Would the project conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of GHGs?**

Answer: No Impact

Discussion: The Project is a renewable energy facility that directly advances the State's GHG reduction goals under AB 32, SB 32, and SB 100. Therefore, there would be no impact.

3.9.2 Conclusion

No significant GHG impacts were identified. No mitigation measures are required.

3.10 Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Would the Project:	PSI	LTSWM	LTS	NI
a. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d. Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 (the Cortese List)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e. For a project located within an airport land use plan or within two miles of a public airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f. Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
g. Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3.10.1 Environmental Setting

The Phase I Environmental Site Assessment prepared by AdvancedGeo, Inc. (AGI) provides the primary data source for this section. Key findings from the Phase I ESA (Project No. 26-8364) are summarized as follows:

- No RECs, HRECs, CRECs, or Business Environmental Risks were identified in connection with the subject property (AGI Phase I ESA, pp. 22–23).
- A de minimis condition was identified: minor oil staining from hydraulic oil used on a truck-mounted drill rig near the agricultural well. AGI recommended removing affected soil and improving BMPs (AGI Phase I ESA, p. 22).
- The property was not listed on any federal or state environmental regulatory database, including NPL, RCRA, LUST, UST, EnviroStor, Cortese, or GeoTracker databases (AGI Phase I ESA, pp. 13–15).
- A VOC Vapor Encroachment Condition (VEC) screening (ASTM E2600-22 Tier 1) determined that a VEC does not exist at the property (AGI Phase I ESA, p. 17).
- Historic agricultural use with potential use of agrochemicals since the mid-1910s was noted as a non-ASTM-defined potential environmental issue (AGI Phase I ESA, p. 22).
- One plugged and abandoned dry hole is located on the southeast portion of the property per CalGEM Well Finder records (AGI Phase I ESA, p. 15).
- San Joaquin County is in USEPA Radon Zone 3 (predicted average indoor radon screening levels <2 pCi/L) (AGI Phase I ESA, p. 21).

3.10.2 Discussion and Mitigation Measures

Hazards – a & b. **Would the project create a significant hazard through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials, or through upset conditions?**

Answer: Less Than Significant Impact

Discussion: The Phase I ESA identified no RECs, HRECs, CRECs, or Business Environmental Risks at the subject property (AGI Phase I ESA, pp. 22–23). The Project does not involve the routine handling of significant volumes of hazardous materials. During construction, fuel, lubricants, and hydraulic fluid will be handled in accordance with standard spill prevention and response procedures. The de minimis oil staining at the agricultural well should be

remediated by removing affected soil prior to construction, consistent with AGI's recommendation. The historic use of agrochemicals since the mid-1910s represents a low-level potential concern that is addressed by the following mitigation measure:

Mitigation Measure HAZ-1: Agricultural Well De Minimis Soil Removal.

Prior to commencement of construction activities, the applicant shall remove and properly dispose of the minor oil-stained soil observed around the base of the agricultural well consistent with AGI's recommendation (AGI Phase I ESA, p. 22). The removed soil shall be characterized and disposed of at an appropriate facility in accordance with applicable regulations. Documentation of completion shall be submitted to San Joaquin County.

Hazards – c. **Would the project emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous materials within one-quarter mile of a school?**

Answer: No Impact

Discussion: The Project site is located in a rural agricultural area. No schools are identified within one-quarter mile of the subject property. Therefore, there would be no impact.

Hazards – d. **Is the site included on a Cortese-listed hazardous materials site?**

Answer: No Impact

Discussion: The Phase I ESA database review confirmed that the subject property is not listed on any Cortese List databases (AGI Phase I ESA, pp. 13–15). Therefore, there would be no impact.

Hazards – e. **Is the project within two miles of a public airport?**

Answer: No Impact

Discussion: No public airport is identified within two miles of the subject property in the uploaded project documents or Phase I ESA records review. Therefore, there would be no impact.

Hazards – f. **Would the project impair implementation of an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?**

Answer: No Impact

Discussion: The Cal Solar electrical design plans (Sheet PV2.0) show 20-to-25-foot wide fire access roads on all sides of the solar array area. Access gates are 22 feet wide, consistent with fire access standards. The Project would not impair emergency response or evacuation plans.

Hazards – g. **Would the project expose people or structures to a significant risk involving wildland fires?**

Answer: Less Than Significant Impact

Discussion: This topic is addressed in detail under Section 3.21 (Wildfire). The Project site is located in the San Joaquin Valley floor, which is not in a State Responsibility Area (SRA) or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ). The electrical plans demonstrate 20–25 foot fire access roads on all sides and required safety disconnects per NEC and NFPA 70E requirements. Impacts would be less than significant.

3.10.3 Conclusion

With implementation of Mitigation Measure HAZ-1, hazards and hazardous materials impacts would be less than significant. The Phase I ESA identified no RECs requiring further investigation.

3.11 Hydrology and Water Quality

Would the Project:	PSI	LTSWM	LTS	NI
a. Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c. Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, in a manner which would result in: i) substantial erosion or siltation; ii) substantially increased surface runoff causing flooding; iii) runoff exceeding stormwater drainage capacity; iv) impeding or redirecting flood flows?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

3.11.1 Environmental Setting

Key hydrology findings from the Phase I ESA are as follows: groundwater depth is approximately 91 feet bsg with inferred flow direction toward the northwest (AGI Phase I ESA, p. 11). The property is not located within a FEMA Special Flood Hazard Area (1%) or 0.2% Annual Chance Flood Zone (AGI Phase I ESA, p. 11). No surface water features exist on the property; the nearest surface water (Lone Tree Creek) is approximately 0.64 miles to the north (AGI Phase I ESA, p. 11). The property is not within the National Wetlands Inventory. Surface soils are Manteca fine sandy loam with very slow infiltration rates (AGI Phase I ESA, p. 11). The site lies within the Eastern San Joaquin Subbasin (5-22.01), a SGMA-designated basin.

3.11.2 Discussion

Hydrology – a. **Would the project violate any water quality standards or degrade surface or groundwater quality?**

Answer: Less Than Significant Impact

Discussion: Construction activities will include soil disturbance that could generate stormwater runoff with suspended sediments. The Project is required to obtain coverage under the State's Construction General Permit (CGP) and implement a SWPPP (see Mitigation Measure GEO-1). The deep groundwater table (91 feet bsg) provides adequate separation from surface disturbance activities. No direct discharge to Lone Tree Creek or any water body is proposed. Therefore, impacts to water quality would be less than significant with implementation of Mitigation Measure GEO-1.

Hydrology – b. **Would the project decrease groundwater supplies or interfere with groundwater recharge?**

Answer: No Impact

Discussion: The Project does not involve groundwater extraction or activities that would substantially alter groundwater recharge. Solar PV facilities do not consume water in operation. The fixed-tilt mounting system does not involve deep excavations that would intercept the water table at 91 feet bsg. The Project would not conflict with SGMA management of the Eastern San Joaquin Subbasin. Therefore, there would be no impact.

Hydrology – c. **Would the project substantially alter drainage patterns or create flooding or pollution hazards?**

Answer: Less Than Significant Impact

Discussion: The Project will introduce impervious surfaces and will alter surface drainage patterns within the installation area. However, the solar panels allow rainfall to pass to the ground between and beneath them, and the

fixed-tilt racking does not significantly impede drainage. The site's flat topography and the absence of a FEMA flood designation indicate that significant flooding impacts are not expected. Implementation of Mitigation Measure GEO-1 (SWPPP) will address construction-phase erosion and sediment controls. Impacts would be less than significant.

Hydrology – d. **In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?**

Answer: No Impact

Discussion: The subject property is not within a FEMA Special Flood Hazard Area or 0.2% Annual Chance Flood Zone (AGI Phase I ESA, p. 11). The inland location precludes tsunami or seiche hazards. Therefore, there would be no impact.

Hydrology – e. **Would the project conflict with a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?**

Answer: No Impact

Discussion: The Project lies within the Eastern San Joaquin Subbasin (5-22.01), subject to SGMA. The Project does not extract groundwater. Implementation of Mitigation Measure GEO-1 will ensure compliance with the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board's Basin Plan. Therefore, there would be no impact.

3.11.3 Conclusion

With implementation of Mitigation Measure GEO-1, hydrology and water quality impacts would be less than significant.

3.12 Land Use and Planning

Would the Project:	PSI	LTSWM	LTS	NI
a. Physically divide an established community?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3.12.1 Environmental Setting and Discussion

Land Use – a. **Would the project physically divide an established community?**

Answer: No Impact

Discussion: The Project is located in a rural agricultural area with no established residential community within or adjacent to the Project footprint. No roadways or community facilities would be divided or severed by the Project. Therefore, there would be no impact.

Land Use – b. **Would the project cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation?**

Answer: Less Than Significant Impact

Discussion: The subject parcel is zoned AG-40 (General Agriculture) (AGI Phase I ESA, p. 5). Solar energy facilities in the AG-40 zone require a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) from San Joaquin County, which has been applied for (CUP PA-2600014). The Project is consistent with the San Joaquin County General Plan Energy Element's support for renewable energy development. Approval of the CUP will ensure consistency with applicable land use plans and regulations. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant with CUP approval.

3.12.2 Conclusion

No significant land use and planning impacts were identified. The CUP process provides the required approval mechanism.

3.13 Mineral Resources

Would the Project:	PSI	LTSWM	LTS	NI
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

3.13.1 Environmental Setting and Discussion

Answer: No Impact

Discussion: No known mineral extraction activities, mining operations, or designated Mineral Resource Zones were identified in the Phase I ESA records review within the Project area (AGI Phase I ESA, pp. 13–15). One plugged and abandoned dry hole is located on the southeast portion of the property per CalGEM records (AGI Phase I ESA, p. 15), indicating historical interest in petroleum exploration, but no active production. The Project will not affect any known or locally designated mineral resource recovery sites. Therefore, there would be no impacts to mineral resources.

3.14 Noise

Would the Project:	PSI	LTSWM	LTS	NI
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or helipad, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

3.14.1 Environmental Setting and Discussion

Noise – a. **Would the project generate a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels?**

Answer: Less Than Significant Impact

Discussion: The Project site is in a rural agricultural area with low ambient noise levels. Construction activities will generate temporary noise from heavy equipment. However, construction will be temporary (approximately 4–6 months) and limited to daytime hours in compliance with San Joaquin County noise ordinance standards. Once operational, the solar facility is effectively silent. The nearest sensitive receptor (residential dwelling in the northwest corner of the parcel) is outside the solar installation area. Impacts would be less than significant.

Noise – b. **Would the project generate excessive groundborne vibration?**

Answer: Less Than Significant Impact

Discussion: Pile driving for racking foundations may generate temporary groundborne vibration. The duration of pile driving is short for each post, and operations will be temporary and localized. Impacts would be less than significant.

Noise – c. **Is the project within the vicinity of a private airstrip?**

Answer: No Impact

Discussion: No private airstrip or helipad was identified within the vicinity of the Project site. Therefore, there would be no impact.

3.14.2 Conclusion

No significant noise impacts were identified. No mitigation measures are required beyond compliance with San Joaquin County construction hour ordinance requirements.

3.15 Population and Housing

Would the Project:	PSI	LTSWM	LTS	NI
a. Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly or indirectly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b. Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

3.15.1 Discussion

Answer: No Impact

Discussion: The Project is a solar energy facility that does not involve new residential development, commercial facilities, or infrastructure improvements that would induce population growth. The Project will not displace any existing residents or housing. The single-family dwelling in the northwest corner of the parcel is outside the solar installation area and is not proposed for removal. Therefore, there would be no impacts to population or housing.

3.16 Public Services

Would the Project:	PSI	LTSWM	LTS	NI
a. Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, or need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

3.16.1 Discussion

Answer: No Impact

Discussion: The Project is a solar energy facility that does not generate population, add students to schools, or increase demands on public parks or other public facilities. The Project is designed with 20-to-25-foot fire access roads on all sides per the Cal Solar Plans (Sheet PV2.0) and includes required electrical safety disconnects and arc-flash protections. The Project will pay applicable development impact fees. Therefore, there would be no significant impacts to public services.

3.17 Recreation

Would the Project:	PSI	LTSWM	LTS	NI
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

3.17.1 Discussion

Answer: No Impact

Discussion: The Project does not generate population that would increase use of recreational facilities and does not propose any recreational facilities. Therefore, there would be no impacts to recreation.

3.18 Transportation

Would the Project:	PSI	LTSWM	LTS	NI
a. Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b. Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b) [Vehicle Miles Traveled]?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature or incompatible uses?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d. Result in inadequate emergency access?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

3.18.1 Environmental Setting and Discussion

Transportation – b. **Vehicle miles traveled (VMT).**

Answer: Less Than Significant Impact

Discussion: Construction of the Project will generate temporary vehicle trips for delivery of materials and equipment and worker commutes, using Lone Tree Road as the primary access route. Once operational, vehicle trips will be limited to infrequent maintenance visits. Operational VMT from maintenance trips at a small solar farm of this scale is negligible and would not result in significant VMT impacts. Therefore, transportation impacts would be less than significant.

Transportation – d. **Emergency access.**

Answer: No Impact

Discussion: The Cal Solar electrical design plans (Sheet PV2.0) demonstrate 20-to-25-foot fire access roads on all perimeter sides of the solar array and three 22-foot-wide vehicle access gates (Cal Solar Plans, Sheet PV1.0). This design accommodates fire apparatus access. Therefore, there would be no impact to emergency access.

3.18.2 Conclusion

No significant transportation impacts were identified. Construction traffic will be temporary.

3.19 Tribal Cultural Resources

Would the Project:	PSI	LTSWM	LTS	NI
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: i) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register; or ii) A resource determined by the lead agency to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in Public Resources Code section 5024.1(c)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3.19.1 Environmental Setting

The San Joaquin Valley has been inhabited by Native California peoples for thousands of years. The Project area is within the traditional territory of the Northern Valley Yokuts and related peoples. The Project site has been continuously cultivated for over a century; however, the potential for subsurface tribal cultural resources in the alluvial deposits of the San Joaquin Valley cannot be excluded. No record of tribal consultation under AB 52 (Public Resources Code §21080.3.1) or SB 18 was included in the uploaded project documents.

3.19.2 Discussion and Mitigation Measures

Tribal Cultural Resources – a. **Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource?**

Answer: Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated

Discussion: Tribal cultural resources as defined in Public Resources Code Section 21074 could potentially exist within the Project area. Notification was provided to the California Valley Miwok Tribe, North Valley Yokuts Tribe, California Tribal TANF Partnership, California Native American Heritage Commission, and United Auburn Indian Community on February 24, 2026, consistent with AB 52 requirements. No responses were received. If any cultural resources are discovered during project implementation, Mitigation Measures CUL-2 and CUL-3 would apply.

3.19.3 Conclusion

With implementation of Mitigation Measures CUL-2 and CUL-3, impacts to tribal cultural resources would be less than significant.

3.20 Utilities and Service Systems

Would the Project:	PSI	LTSWM	LTS	NI
a. Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment, or storm water drainage facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b. Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c. Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d. Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e. Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

3.20.1 Discussion

Answer: No Impact

Discussion: The Project is a solar energy facility that does not require potable water service, wastewater treatment, or significant solid waste disposal during operations. Minor quantities of water will be used for periodic panel cleaning. No new utility infrastructure requiring significant construction (other than the electrical interconnection described in Chapter 1) is needed. The Project will comply with all applicable waste management regulations. Therefore, there would be no impacts to utilities and service systems.

3.21 Wildfire

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

Would the Project:	PSI	LTSWM	LTS	NI
a. Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b. Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks to, and thereby expose project occupants to, pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

3.21.1 Environmental Setting

The Project site is located within the San Joaquin Valley floor on flat terrain. The San Joaquin Valley floor is generally not designated as a State Responsibility Area (SRA) or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ). Agricultural lands in this area have moderate to low fire hazard compared to foothill chaparral or wildland-urban interface areas. The Cal Solar electrical design plans (Sheet PV2.0, Fire Setback Details) demonstrate fire access roads with minimum widths of 20 feet (south perimeter) and 25 feet (north perimeter) on all sides of the solar array. Three 22-foot-wide vehicle access gates are provided. The electrical design includes required disconnects, safety labeling, and arc-flash hazard protections consistent with NFPA 70E and NEC requirements.

3.21.2 Discussion

Wildfire – b. **Would the project exacerbate wildfire risks?**

Answer: Less Than Significant Impact

Discussion: The Project site is on flat agricultural land, not in a designated SRA or VHFHSZ. The Project is designed with fire access roads meeting minimum width requirements per Cal Solar Plans (Sheet PV2.0). Solar PV systems can present electrical fire hazards if systems malfunction; however, the design includes required protective devices and labeling per applicable codes. Vegetation management within the fenced area will prevent fuel accumulation. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

Wildfire – c. **Would the project require infrastructure that may exacerbate fire risk?**

Answer: Less Than Significant Impact

Discussion: The Project requires construction of approximately 617 feet of underground conduit and two new utility poles on Lone Tree Road for interconnection (Cal Solar Plans, Sheet PV1.0). These modest utility facilities do not present unusual fire risks. The underground conduit will reduce aboveground electrical hazards within the property. Therefore, infrastructure-related wildfire impacts would be less than significant.

3.21.3 Conclusion

No significant wildfire impacts were identified. The Project's fire access road design and electrical safety measures are adequate for the Project's rural agricultural setting. No mitigation measures are required.

3.22 Mandatory Findings of Significance

Would the Project:	PSI	LTSWM	LTS	NI
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3.22.1 Discussion

Mandatory Finding – a. **Potential to degrade the environment.**

Answer: Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated

Discussion: The Project has the potential to affect special-status biological species (Section 3.5) and cultural/tribal cultural resources (Sections 3.6 and 3.19). However, with implementation of Mitigation Measures BIO-1, CUL-1, CUL-2, and CUL-3, these impacts will be reduced to less than significant. The Project does not pose a threat to any plant community or self-sustaining fish or wildlife population given the intensively cultivated agricultural setting.

Mandatory Finding – b. **Cumulatively considerable impacts.**

Answer: Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated

Discussion: The Project is a small-scale solar installation (~14.47 acres, ~4.04 MW DC) within the broader San Joaquin Valley. Cumulative impacts of greatest potential concern include the cumulative conversion of Prime/Statewide Important Farmland in San Joaquin County. Implementation of Mitigation Measures AG-1 will address cumulative farmland conversion impacts. Cumulative biological resource impacts are addressed by Mitigation Measures BIO-1. With implementation of all required mitigation measures, cumulative impacts would be less than significant.

Mandatory Finding – c. **Substantial adverse effects on human beings.**

Answer: Less Than Significant Impact

Discussion: The Project will generate temporary construction noise and dust, which are addressed by Mitigation Measures AQ-1 and GEO-1. The Phase I ESA identified no RECs that would pose a risk to human health (AGI Phase I ESA, pp. 22–23). The de minimis oil staining condition is addressed by Mitigation Measure HAZ-1. Operational impacts to human beings are negligible for a solar PV facility. Therefore, impacts to human beings would be less than significant.

3.22.2 Conclusion

With implementation of all required mitigation measures, no potentially significant impacts remain unmitigated. A Mitigated Negative Declaration is the appropriate CEQA determination for the Jones Bros. Solar Farm 1 Project.

CHAPTER 4: MITIGATION MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRAM

This Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) is prepared pursuant to Public Resources Code §21081.6, which requires the Lead Agency to adopt a program for monitoring or reporting on the mitigation measures and project conditions that are required to mitigate or avoid significant effects on the environment. The following table identifies each mitigation measure, monitoring action, responsible party, and timing.

Table 4-1: Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program

MM #	Mitigation Measure	Monitoring Action	Responsible Party	Timing	Complete
Agriculture and Forestry Resources					
AG-1	Williamson Act Verification: Ensure project consistency with Williamson Act Land Conservation Contract No. 720273.	County verification of contract records and review for consistency with Williamson Act requirements.	Applicant / San Joaquin County CDD	Prior to CUP approval	
Air Quality					
AQ-1	SJVAPCD Dust Control Plan: Prepare and implement Regulation VIII-compliant Dust Control Plan; Tier 4/Tier 3 off-road equipment standards.	County and SJVAPCD review of Dust Control Plan; periodic site inspections during construction.	Applicant / SJVAPCD	Prior to ground disturbance; throughout construction	
Biological Resources					
BIO-1	BIO-1 San Joaquin County Multi-Species Habitat Conservation and Open Space Plan Compliance: The developer shall apply to the San Joaquin Council of Governments (SJCOG) for coverage under the San Joaquin County Multi-Species Habitat Conservation and Open Space Plan (SJMSCP). The Project site shall be inspected by the SJMSCP biologist, who shall determine applicable incidental Take Minimization Measures set forth in the SJMSCP and identify which measures shall be implemented for the Project. The Project applicant shall pay the required SJMSCP fee, if applicable, and shall be responsible for implementation of all required incidental Take Minimization	County review of survey reports; verify agency notification as required.	SJCOG	No later than 30 days prior to ground disturbance	

	Measures identified through the SJMSCP review process				
Cultural Resources					
MM #	Mitigation Measure	Monitoring Action	Responsible Party	Timing	Complete
CUL-1	Cultural Resources Survey: Qualified archaeologist conducts pedestrian survey and CHRIS records search; submit results to County.	County review of survey report.	Applicant / Qualified Archaeologist	Prior to grading or building permits	
CUL-2	Inadvertent Discovery Protocol: Halt work within 50 ft if cultural materials encountered; qualified archaeologist evaluates; treatment plan approved before resuming.	County oversight of inadvertent discovery process.	Applicant / Qualified Archaeologist	Throughout ground-disturbing activities	
CUL-3	Human Remains Discovery Protocol: Halt work; notify Coroner per H&S Code §7050.5; NAHC notification if Native American remains.	County oversight; notification documentation.	Applicant / SJ County Coroner / NAHC	Throughout ground-disturbing activities	
Geology and Soils / Hydrology					
GEO-1	SWPPP: Prepare and implement CGP-compliant SWPPP; file NOI with SWRCB before ground disturbance; install and maintain erosion controls throughout construction.	County and SWRCB review; verify NOI filing; site inspections.	Applicant / SWRCB	Prior to ground disturbance; throughout construction	
Hazards and Hazardous Materials					
HAZ-1	Agricultural Well De Minimis Soil Removal: Remove and properly dispose of oil-stained soil near agricultural well before construction; submit documentation to County.	County review of disposal documentation.	Applicant	Prior to commencement of construction activities	

CHAPTER 5: PERSONS AND ORGANIZATIONS CONSULTED

The following federal, state, and local agencies, organizations, and individuals were consulted or provided information used in the preparation of this Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration. This chapter reflects consultations conducted through the date of this document. Additional consultations may be required during the public review period.

5.1 Federal Agencies

- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) — Regulatory database records reviewed via EDR Report (Appendix C of Phase I ESA)
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) — National Wetlands Inventory records reviewed via EDR Report
- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) — Flood zone data reviewed via EDR Report
- U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) — STATSGO soil database reviewed via EDR Report

5.2 State Agencies

- California Geologic Energy Management Division (CalGEM) — Well Finder database reviewed (AGI Phase I ESA)
- California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) / EnviroStor — Database reviewed (AGI Phase I ESA)
- State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) / GeoTracker — Database reviewed (AGI Phase I ESA)
- California Department of Conservation — Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP)
- California Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC)
- California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) — Consultation recommended per MM BIO-1

5.3 County Agencies

- San Joaquin County Community Development Department — Lead Agency; CUP application PA-2600014
- San Joaquin County Environmental Health Department (SJCEHD) — Records reviewed including CUP application, well permits, and geotechnical boring records (AGI Phase I ESA)
- San Joaquin County Assessor-Recorder — Parcel records reviewed (AGI Phase I ESA)
- San Joaquin County Building and Development Department — Records requested (no response within Phase I ESA timeframe)

5.4 Other Entities and Individuals

- Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E) — Utility interconnection; existing overhead infrastructure
- Environmental Data Resources, Inc. (EDR) — Regulatory database search (Appendix C of Phase I ESA)
- AdvancedGeo, Inc. (AGI) — Phase I Environmental Site Assessment preparer
- Cal Solar (CSLB #980699) — Project designer and applicant representative; electrical design plans

CHAPTER 6: REFERENCES AND DOCUMENT PREPARERS

6.1 References

- AdvancedGeo, Inc. (AGI). Phase I Environmental Site Assessment, Jones Brothers Solar Farm #1, 15200 Lone Tree Road, Escalon, California. Project No. 26-8364. March 13, 2026.
- Cal Solar. Electrical Design Plans, Jones Bros. Solar Farm 1, 15200 E. Lone Tree Road, Escalon, CA 95320. APN: 203-110-190-000. Sheets PV1.0, PV1.1, PV2.0, EL series. Last revised February 11, 2026; Design for Permitting update October 17, 2025.
- California Department of Conservation, Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP). Available at: <https://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/fmmp>
- California Department of Water Resources (DWR). Groundwater Basins in California, Version 3.0, 2003. Eastern San Joaquin Subbasin (5-22.01).
- California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Public Resources Code §21000 et seq.
- CEQA Guidelines, California Code of Regulations, Title 14, §15000 et seq., including Appendix G (Environmental Checklist).
- Environmental Data Resources, Inc. (EDR). The EDR Radius Map and associated database search. Prepared for AGI Phase I ESA, 2026.
- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Flood Insurance Rate Maps, San Joaquin County, California.
- San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD). CEQA Guidance and Significance Thresholds. Available at: www.valleyair.org
- San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD). Regulation VIII — Fugitive PM10 Prohibitions.
- State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB). Construction General Permit (CGP), Order No. 2009-0009-DWQ as amended (NPDES No. CAS000002).
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). Radon Zone Map. Available at: www.epa.gov/radon
- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. STATSGO State Soil Geographic Database.

6.2 Document Preparers

This Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration was prepared on behalf of the Lead Agency (San Joaquin County Community Development Department) using information derived exclusively from the following uploaded source documents:

- Phase I Environmental Site Assessment, Jones Brothers Solar Farm #1 (AdvancedGeo, Inc., March 13, 2026, Project No. 26-8364)
- Electrical Design Plans, Jones Bros. Solar Farm 1 (Cal Solar, February 2026)

Lead Agency	San Joaquin County Community Development Department
Applicant/Project Sponsor	Cal Solar (CSLB #980699); Jones Bros. Solar Farm 1, LLC
Property Owner	Jones, Jordan W.
Phase I ESA Preparer	AdvancedGeo, Inc. (AGI); Harrison Grand, Staff Scientist; Rebecca Natal, Project Scientist; Robert D. Loeffler, Senior Geologist/VP (CA PG #6709)
Electrical Design	Cal Solar / Jonathan D. Jones, Licensed Electrical Contractor, State of California
IS/MND Document	Prepared with assistance of Anthropic Claude (claude-sonnet-4-6), March

Preparation	2026. All project-specific content grounded in uploaded project documents; no external information sources were relied upon.
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LEAD AGENCY DETERMINATION

The following determination is made by the Lead Agency (San Joaquin County Community Development Department) pursuant to CEQA (Public Resources Code §21080 et seq.) and the State CEQA Guidelines (14 CCR §15070):

■ 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.

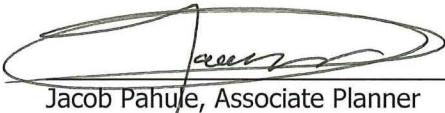
The above determination is based on the following findings:

- The Jones Bros. Solar Farm 1 Project, as described in Chapter 1 of this Initial Study, is a ground-mounted photovoltaic solar energy facility (~4.04 MW DC) on approximately 14.47 acres at 15200 East Lone Tree Road, Escalon, San Joaquin County, California (APN: 203-110-190-000).
- All potential significant effects identified in this Initial Study can be reduced to a level of less than significant through implementation of the Mitigation Measures AG-1, AQ-1, BIO-1, CUL-1, CUL-2, CUL-3, GEO-1, and HAZ-1, as described in Chapter 3 and the MMRP in Chapter 4.
- No project-related impacts were identified that cannot be mitigated to a level of less than significant. No Potentially Significant Impacts remain after mitigation.
- An Environmental Impact Report is not required.

This Mitigated Negative Declaration is subject to a 20-day public review period pursuant to CEQA Guidelines §15105. During the public review period, any person may submit written comments on this document to:

San Joaquin County Community Development Department

44 N. San Joaquin Street, Suite 501
Stockton, California 95202
Attn: Project Planner, CUP PA-2600014



Jacob Pahule, Associate Planner
San Joaquin County Community Development Department

4/15/2026

Date

— End of Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration —

Jones Bros. Solar Farm 1 | 15200 E. Lone Tree Road, Escalon, CA | APN: 203-110-190-000 | April 2026