

NOTICE OF PREPARATION

To: State Clearinghouse
PO Box 3044/ 1400 Tenth St
Sacramento CA 95814

From: County of Tulare – RMA
5961 S Mooney Blvd
Visalia CA 93277

Date: January 13, 2017

Subject: **Notice of Preparation (NOP) of a Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR)**

Project Title: Matheny Tract Wastewater System Project

Project Applicant: Tulare County Resource Management Agency

Project Location:

Tulare County Resource Management Agency (RMA) will be the Lead Agency and will prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the project identified below. We need to know the views of your agency as to the scope and content of the environmental information which is germane to your agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project. Your agency will need to use the EIR prepared by our agency when considering your permit or other approval for the project.

The project description, location, and the potential environmental effects are contained in the attached materials. The NOP and Matheny Tract Wastewater System Project Feasibility Report are available on the County website at:

<http://tularecounty.ca.gov/rma/index.cfm/documents-and-forms/planning-documents/environmental-planning/environmental-impact-reports/>

Due to the time limits mandated by State law, your response must be sent at the earliest possible date but not later than 30 days after receipt of this notice.

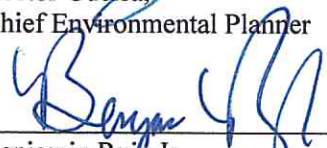
A scoping meeting is scheduled for **Thursday, February 9, 2017, at 1:30 p.m.** in the Conference Room "L" of the Tulare County Resource Management Agency at the address shown above.

Please direct your response to Hector Guerra, Chief Environmental Planner at the address shown above. He may be contacted by e-mail at hguerra@co.tulare.ca.us or by telephone at 559-624-7121.

Please provide us with the name of a contact person in your agency.

Signature: 
Hector Guerra,
Title: Chief Environmental Planner

Date: 1/12/17

Signature: 
Benjamin Ruiz Jr.
Title: Resource Management Agency Director/Environmental Assessment Officer

Date: 1/12/17

Reference: California Code of Regulations, Title 14, (CEQA Guidelines) Sections 15082(a), 15103, 15375

PROJECT LOCATION AND SETTING

The unincorporated Matheny Tract community is located less than 0.5 miles south of the City of Tulare in Tulare County in California's Central Valley. As noted earlier, this document has been prepared using the Preferred Alternative as the proposed Project. As such, the following discussion refers to the "Preferred/Proposed Project" as "the Project". The Project site is located approximately 60 miles east of the Coastal Range and approximately 25 miles west of the foothills of the Sierra Nevada Mountain Range. The topography of Matheny Tract comprises a relatively flat, level surface with no major slopes, mountain hillsides, or bodies of water. Matheny Tract sits at an approximate elevation of 263 feet above mean sea level.¹

The community is separated into two segments, the northern and southern portions. The northern portion (Matheny North) is generally bounded by Road 96 (Pratt Street) and "I" Street in the east-west direction and Wade and Addie Avenues in the north-south direction. Adjacent to "I" Street, the Union Pacific Railroad tracks are elevated approximately 10-feet above natural ground surface; these railroad tracks serve as a physical boundary between the City of Tulare and the Matheny Tract.

The southern portion is (Matheny South) generally bounded by Road 96 on the west and Prine and Matheny Avenues in the north-south direction. The Matheny Tract is bordered by agriculture lands to the west, north and south; agriculture land also lies between the northern and southern portions of the community.

The Project is within the north half of the southeast quarter of Section 22, the north half of the southwest corner of Section 23, and the north half of the northeast quarter of Section 27, Township 20 South, Range 24 East, Mount Diablo Base & Meridian of the Public Land Survey System. It can be found within the Tulare United States Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle.

Matheny North (Canal Street and Beacon Avenue):

Latitude: 36°10'20.90" N

Longitude: 119°20'55.95" W

Matheny South (Matheny Avenue and Prine Drive):

Latitude: 36°10'01.11" N

Longitude: 119°21'14.90" W

Matheny Tract is approximately 0.5 miles east of State Route (SR) 99, 2 miles south of SR 137, and approximately 3 miles southeast of SR 63.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Pub. Resources Code, § 21000 et seq.), the County of Tulare Resource Management Agency (RMA) will be preparing an Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) to evaluate the environmental effects associated with the development of the proposed Matheny Tract Wastewater System as described in the Final Project Feasibility Report Matheny Tract Wastewater System (Feasibility Report or Report).

¹ Final Project Feasibility Report Matheny Tract Wastewater System Tulare County, California. Page 5. Prepared by Provost & Pritchard Consulting Group February 2016

The Project being evaluated in the Draft EIR is Alternative 2 (the Preferred Alternative; and will be discussed in Chapter 5 Alternatives): As described in the Report; Alternative No. 2, a gravity collection system and consolidation with the City of Tulare, is the preferred alternative. This alternative includes construction of a wastewater collection system within the Matheny Tract, at least one lift station located near Pratt Street, and a combination of 8-, 10- and 12-inch PVC sewer mains with manholes spaced at 350 feet.

Alternative 2 consists of constructing a new gravity wastewater collection system, likely with at least one lift station, and connection to the existing City of Tulare wastewater collection system. New Sewer services and onsite plumbing would be required to connect each property to the new wastewater collection system and the existing septic systems would require abandonment.

As identified by the Report, the Project Components include:

- “Construction of
 - ☐ new gravity wastewater collection system throughout the Matheny Tract
 - ☐ one or more lift stations, including new points of electric service
 - ☐ sewer laterals from each property, with connection to each existing residence
- Connection to the City of Tulare’s existing 27-inch sewer main at Paige Avenue and “K” Street
 - ☐ Construction of 2,900 feet of 12-inch sewer main in Pratt Street from Matheny Tract to Paige Avenue.
- In-place abandonment of existing septic systems and leach fields

If you require additional information related to this notice, please contact:

Hector Guerra, Chief Environmental Planner
hguerra@co.tulare.ca.us or at (559) 624-7121

REVIEWING AGENCIES AND POTENTIAL APPROVALS REQUIRED:

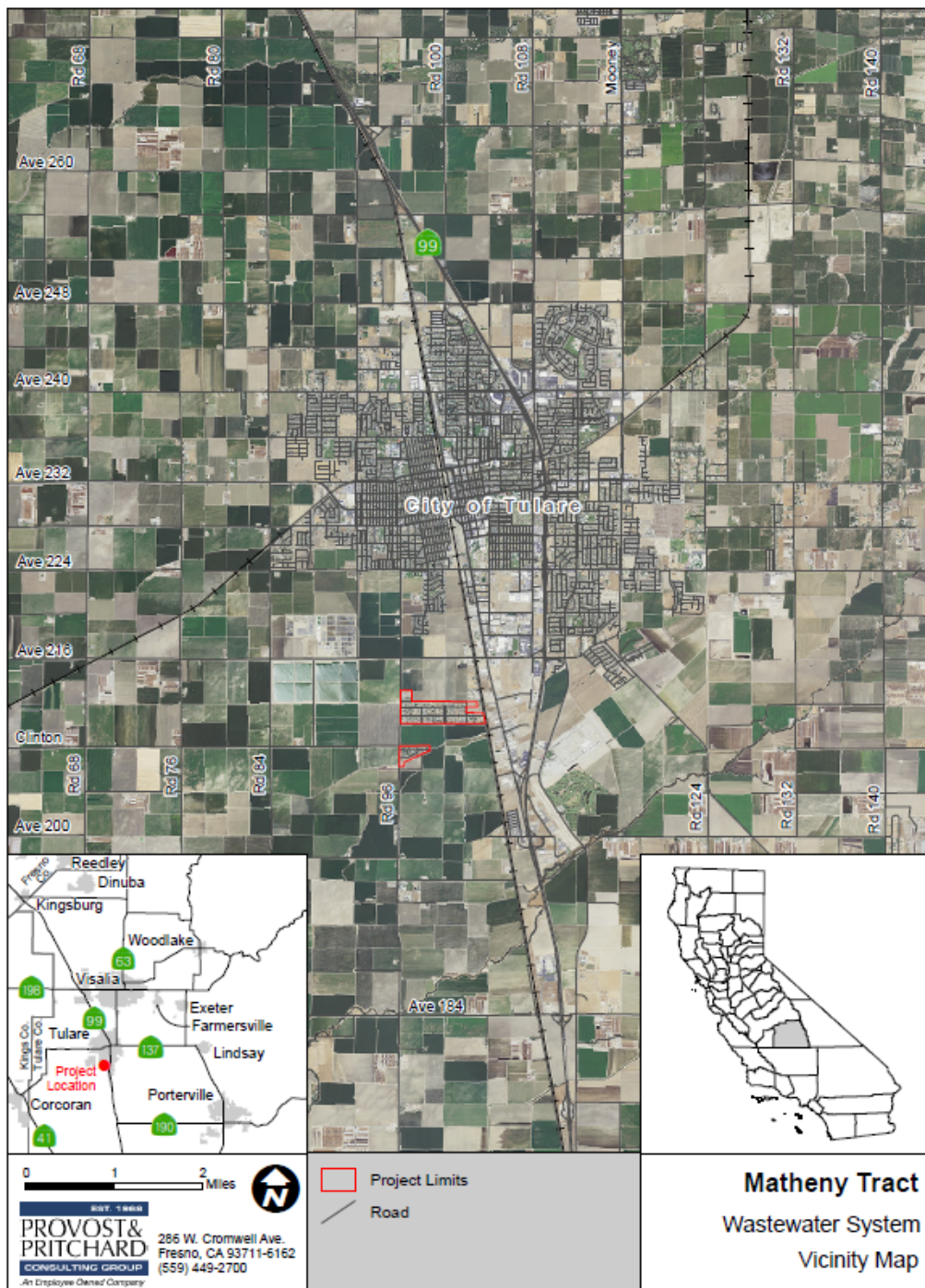
The following agencies may have jurisdiction over elements of the proposed Project:

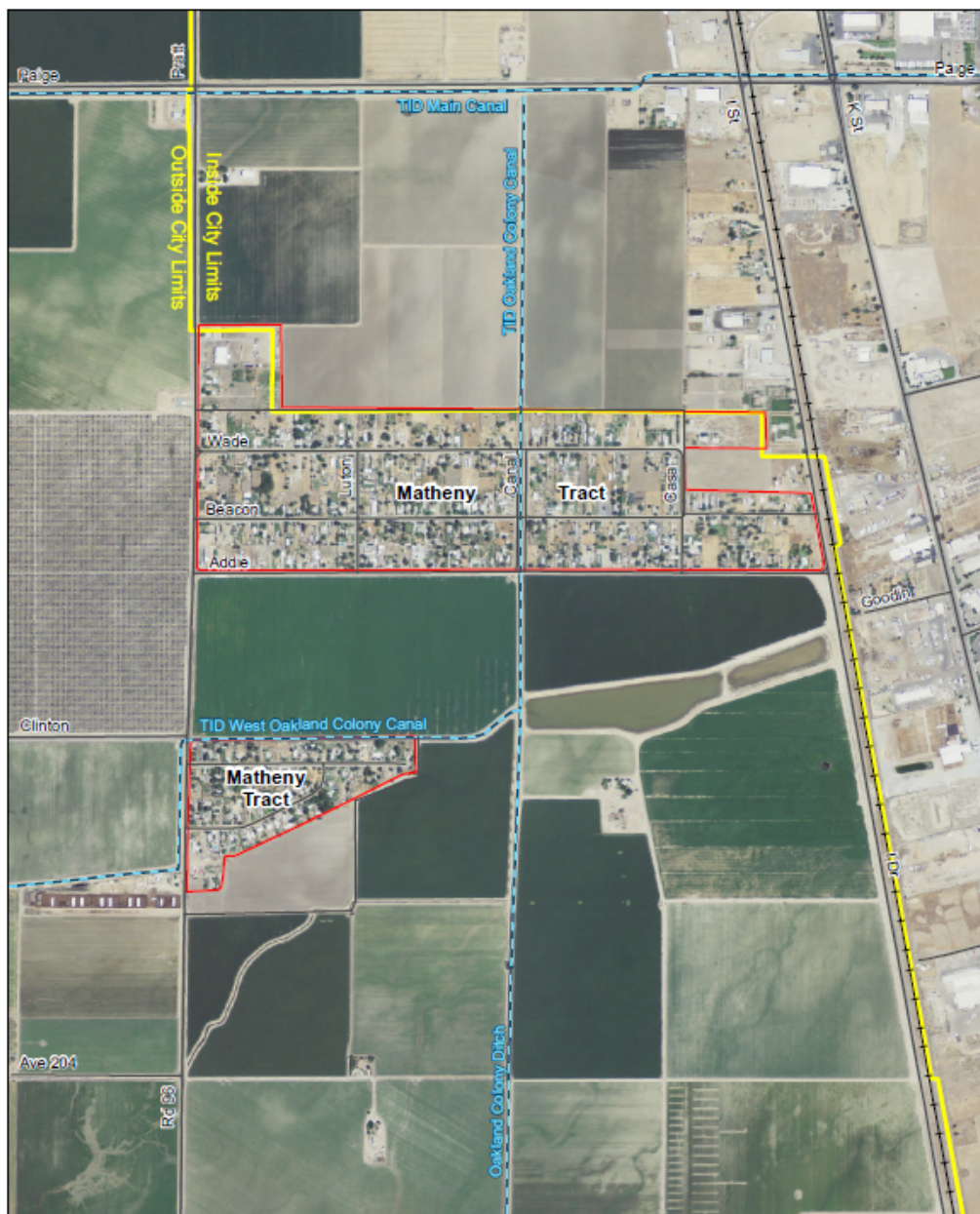
State and Federal:

- California Air Resources Board
- California Department of Conservation
- California Department of Fish and Wildlife
- California Department of Toxic Substances Control
- California Department of Transportation
- California Department of Water Resources
- California Native American Heritage Commission
- California Office of Historic Preservation
- Regional WQCB Region 5
- State WRCB Clean Water Grants
- State WRCB Water Quality

Local and Regional:

- Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board
- City of Tulare
- San Joaquin Valley Unified Air Pollution Control District
- Southern California Edison
- Southern California Gas Company
- Tulare County Association of Governments
- Tulare County Fire Warden
- Tulare County Health and Human Services Agency (Environmental Health)
- Tulare County Local Agency Formation Commission
- Tulare County Resource Management Agency (Fire, Flood Control, Planning, Public Works)








0 0.125 0.25 Miles



SWT 10004
PROVOST & PRITCHARD
CONSULTING GROUP
An Employee Owned Company

286 W. Cromwell Ave.
Fresno, CA 93711-6162
(559) 449-2700

-  Canal
-  Project Limits
-  City Limits 2012

Matheny Tract
Wastewater System
Project Boundary

SUMMARY OF POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

The EIR will address all checklist items contained in Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines. The analysis will address the probable direct, indirect, and cumulative environmental impacts associated with construction and operation of the Matheny Tract Wastewater System (Project). The following is a discussion of the environmental topics to be covered in the EIR:

Aesthetic/ Visual Resources

As described in the Matheny Tract Wastewater System Project Feasibility Report (Feasibility Report or Report): Matheny Tract is a community primarily comprised of rural residential properties with single-family dwelling units. The area has paved roads which are owned and maintained by the County of Tulare and provide sufficient circulation throughout the community. The County of Tulare is the agency that determines property land use and zoning; however, the area is also considered in the City of Tulare's General Plan. Of the 302 parcels included in this project, all but 17 are zoned R-A-M (Rural Residential, Special Mobil home Zone). Five (5) parcels are zoned AE-20 (Exclusive Agriculture Zone – 20 Acre Minimum); five (5) parcels are zoned R-2 (Two Family Residential Zone); one (1) parcel is zoned C-1 (Neighborhood Commercial Zone); two (2) parcels are zoned C-2-M (General Commercial, Special Mobil home Zone); and three (3) parcels are zoned C-2 (General Commercial Zone). The EIR will provide an evaluate impacts to aesthetic and visual resources.

Agriculture Resources

There are currently no agricultural operations occurring within the Project site. Adjacent properties to the north, west, and south of the project site are farmland including field and row crops and nut trees. The Project will not encroach into adjacent agricultural uses and will not require adjacent properties to discontinue any agriculture related operations. The EIR will provide an assessment of potential Project related impacts to agricultural resources.

Air Quality / Greenhouse Gas Emissions

The EIR will describe regional and local air quality in the vicinity of the proposed Project site and evaluate impacts to air quality associated with Project construction and operation. An air quality analysis will be prepared to establish baseline, project, and cumulative impacts. The Project-related estimated air emissions will be compared to emissions thresholds of the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD). The EIR will describe existing air quality conditions within the San Joaquin Valley Air Basin and will evaluate the proposed Project's potential air quality impacts. Potential air quality emissions impacts include odor, dust, and construction- and operations-related activities. The EIR will also include a discussion of greenhouse gas emissions and the proposed Project's contribution to potential cumulative impacts on global climate.

Biological Resources

The proposed Project site has been previously disturbed. Potential foraging areas within the Project site include adjacent agricultural lands north, west, and south of the project sites. The Project site includes two hydrological features (Oakland Colony Ditch and West Oakland Colony Ditch) which are Tulare Irrigation Canals. A biological evaluation of the proposed Project site will be conducted and the proposed Project's potential to affect biological resources will be analyzed in the EIR.

Cultural Resources / Tribal Cultural Resources

Although the proposed Project will be constructed on previously disturbed land, it cannot be definitively concluded that cultural resources are absent. A search of the Southern San Joaquin Valley Information Center California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS) will be conducted. A Sacred Land File (SLF) Search will be submitted to the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) and any tribes listed by the NAHC will receive consultation notices pursuant to the requirements of AB 52. Depending upon responses from tribal consultation, a cultural resources evaluation may be prepared for this Project. The EIR will examine the proposed Project's potential to affect cultural resources and Tribal cultural resources.

Geology, Soils, and Mineral Resources,

According to the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service Web Soil Survey, the entire Project site consists of as Colpien Loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes. The Colpien Loam consists of very deep, moderately-well-drained soils on terraces that formed in alluvium derived mainly from granitic rocks. According to the Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update EIR, there are no known potential mineral resources on or in the vicinity of the Project site. It is currently unknown whether the proposed Project site soils have the potential to contain paleontological resources. If such resources exist on the site, construction, expansion, and continued operational activities could result in potentially significant impacts. A geological evaluation of the proposed Project site will be conducted to establish baseline, project, and cumulative impacts related to geology, soils, mineral resources, and paleontological resources.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

There are no known hazards or hazardous materials located within the proposed Project site, nor is the proposed Project site located on a Cortese List site. The EIR will evaluate the potential for the proposed Project to result in, or be affected by, impacts associated with hazards and hazardous materials.

Hydrology, Water Quality, and Water Supply

The Matheny Tract is located within Tulare Irrigation District (TID or District) and has numerous canals around and within its boundaries. North of the project site run TID's Main Canal, bifurcating the northern portion is the Oakland Colony Canal and along the north edge of runs the southern portion the West Oakland Colony Canal. The Main Canal is one of TID's primary canals and is approximately 7 feet deep and 35 feet wide at its top. The Oakland Colony Canal and West Oakland Colony Ditch are both smaller canals; the former is approximately 24 feet wide at its top and 5 feet deep while the latter is approximately 11 feet wide and 4 feet deep. The Project site lies within flood Zone X (Shaded), which is a moderate flood hazard area with a 0.2 percent annual chance or a 500 year flood according to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) flood zone designation. Construction of buildings within this flood zone require no specific flood mitigation measures; however, it is recommended that all finished floor levels be elevated one (1) foot above adjacent natural ground. The proposed Project is within the Kaweah River Watershed and over the Kaweah River Groundwater Basin. The Project will receive water from the already in place water system provided (Pratt Mutual Water Company). The EIR will describe the proposed Project's effect, both directly and cumulatively on the hydrology, water quality, and water supply resources. A hydrological and water sustainability evaluation are included the Feasibility Report which will be used to establish and analyze baseline, project, and cumulative impacts.

Land Use and Planning

The EIR will describe the proposed Project's potential effects on existing and planned land uses. The Matheny Tract is located entirely within the County of Tulare, and also entirely within Tulare Irrigation

District boundaries. The City of Tulare city limits are located approximately 700 feet of the northern edge of the community and along “I” Street. The City’s sphere of influence, shown in the Public Review Draft of the 2035 General Plan dated November 1, 2013, also shows the community within the City’s Sphere of Influence. As such, the EIR will provide a discussion of relevant local plans and policies because conflicts could potentially result in environmental impacts.

Noise

The EIR will describe the noise levels associated with proposed Project construction and operation and will compare these levels to applicable noise thresholds to determine whether the proposed Project would result in a significant noise impact.

Population and Housing

The EIR will evaluate the Project’s effect on population and housing in the local area based on estimations of Project employment and distribution of the employees by place of residence.

Public Services and Recreation

The EIR will evaluate the proposed Project’s potential to create an adverse impact to schools, and will also evaluate effects on local police and fire services along with parks and regional recreational facilities.

Transportation/Traffic

The EIR will evaluate the proposed Project’s impact on regional and local transportation facilities based on a transportation analysis that will assess construction-related impacts (heavy truck trips and construction worker trips), as well as operational impacts (employee and visitor trips). The Project is not anticipated to result in transportation or traffic impacts; however, the EIR will examine these resources accordingly.

Utilities

The purpose of Feasibility Report is to evaluate the alternatives available to replace on-site septic systems for the community of Matheny Tract, which is located in Tulare County adjacent to the City of Tulare. The community is home to over 1,200 residents in nearly 300 houses. The EIR will analyze the current capacity of the above-mentioned services, as well as the proposed Project’s impact on these systems and the capacity available to support the proposed Project. The EIR will also describe the solid waste facilities that would serve the proposed site. The EIR prepared for the Project will analyze the adequacy of infrastructure services for the Project including road, water and wastewater services, and if appropriate, may require mitigation measures.

Growth Inducement

The EIR will evaluate the proposed Project's potential for growth inducement resulting from the establishment of a new source of employment, as well as new demand for housing, and goods and services. The effect of primary and secondary increases in employment and economic activity will be discussed.

Cumulative Impacts

The EIR will discuss the incremental contribution of the proposed Project to cumulative effects of other past, current, and planned and reasonably foreseeable projects in the vicinity. The summary of projects

method will be used where applicable. Also, to the extent feasible, the Cumulative Impacts section will quantify the degree of severity of any cumulative impact.

ALTERNATIVES EVALUATED IN THE EIR

In accordance with the CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6, the EIR will describe a reasonable range of alternatives to the proposed Project that are capable of meeting most of the proposed Project's objectives, but would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the proposed Project. The EIR will also identify any alternatives that were considered but rejected by the Lead Agency as infeasible and briefly explain the reasons why. The EIR will also provide an analysis of the No Project Alternative.

OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

Interested individuals, groups, and agencies may provide to the County of Tulare Resource Management Agency, Planning Branch, written comments on topics to be addressed in the EIR for the proposed Project. Because of time limits mandated by state law, comments should be provided no later than **5:00 p.m. Monday, February 13, 2017**. Agencies that will need to use the EIR when considering permits or other approvals for the proposed Project should provide the name of a staff contact person. Please send all comments to:

Hector Guerra, Chief Environmental Planner
Tulare County Resource Management Agency
Economic Development and Planning Branch
5961 South Mooney Boulevard
Visalia, CA 93277-9394
or via e-mail at: HGuerra@co.tulare.ca.us
or via facsimile: 559-730-2653
or via phone: 559-624-7121