

## **PUBLIC NOTICE**

### **Tulare County**

#### **Setton Pistachio Treated Wastewater Land Application Expansion Project Notice of Preparation of an Environmental Impact Report and Scoping Meeting**

In accordance with the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (PRC, § 21000 et seq.), Tulare County (the lead agency) is distributing a notice of preparation (NOP) of an environmental impact report (EIR). The purpose of the NOP is to provide an opportunity for the public, interested parties, and public agencies to comment on the scope and content of the EIR.

**Project Location:** The Setton Terra Bella Pistachio Facility is located at 9370 Road 234, Terra Bella, east of State Route (SR) 65, in unincorporated Tulare County. An additional 89 acres of land application areas (LAAs) are proposed on APNs 320-040-004, -005, -006, -007, -008, -009; 320-040-034; and 320-070-023, -024, and -025 (89 acres of pistachio orchards with crop cover).

**Project Overview:** Setton Pistachio (the applicant) is proposing to increase the volume of treated wastewater that would be applied to LAAs during the pistachio harvest season. To account for the increased volume of treated wastewater to be used for irrigation, Setton is proposing to add 89 acres of LAAs to expand the wastewater treatment disposal capacity. The sites are owned by Setton Pistachio, zoned AE-20 (Exclusive Agricultural Zone - 20 Acre Minimum) by Tulare County, and are surrounded by agricultural lands and local roads.

The project would include installation of a 15-inch subsurface pipeline to connect the additional LAAs to the existing treated wastewater distribution pipelines and installation of irrigation lines within the LAAs. Two encroachment permits would be required from Tulare County. The additional LAAs would allow Setton Pistachio to increase the annual wastewater discharge from 60 million gallons per year (MGY) to 85 MGY (maximum daily discharge rates would remain at 3 million gallons), allowing the facility to fully utilize its current design capacity. Improvements to the existing wastewater treatment facilities are also proposed to protect beneficial uses of water, prevent nuisance conditions, and comply with waste discharge requirements issued by the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board. This includes adding fiber filters to the existing gunite-lined pond to remove excess solids from treated wastewater prior to its release into the East and West Ponds, where it is stored on a short-term basis for distribution to the LAAs. Further, paddles would be installed in the West Pond for aeration, and a Venturi Model 06 EMOH™ system would be installed in the East Pond to improve aeration to prevent septicity and odor production.

**Environmental Effects:** The EIR will describe the potential for significant direct and indirect environmental impacts of construction and operation of the project. As necessary, feasible and practicable mitigation measures will be recommended to reduce identified significant or potentially significant impacts. It is anticipated that the project would have less-than-significant impacts or no impacts on aesthetics; agricultural resources; geology, soils, and mineral resources; land use and planning; noise and vibration; population and housing; public services and recreation; and wildfire. These issues are anticipated to be scoped out of detailed review. However, the following resources are anticipated to be evaluated in the EIR: air quality; biological resources; cultural resources; energy; greenhouse gas emissions and climate change; hazards and hazardous materials; hydrology and water quality; transportation; and utilities and service systems.

**Comment Period:** Tulare County requests written comments regarding the scope and content for the EIR that are relevant to your agency's statutory/regulatory responsibilities or is of interest to individuals, to ascertain potential environmental impacts of the project. The NOP comment period extends from **March 15 to April 14, 2023**.

The NOP is available review at the following locations:

Project Webpage: <https://tularecounty.ca.gov/rma/planning-building/environmental-planning/environmental-impact-reports/setton-pistachio-land-application/>

Tulare County Resource Management Agency Permits Services Counter, 5961 S. Mooney Blvd., Visalia, CA 93277

Porterville Public Library, 50 W Olive Ave Suite B, Porterville, CA 93257

**To Comment:** Written and/or email comments on the NOP should be provided at the earliest possible date, but must be received by 5:00 p.m. on April 14, 2023. Please send all comments on the NOP to:

Hector Guerra, Chief Environmental Planner, Tulare County  
5961 S Mooney Blvd., Visalia, CA 93277  
Email: [hguerra@tularecounty.ca.gov](mailto:hguerra@tularecounty.ca.gov)

Comments provided via email should include "Setton Pistachio Wastewater LAA Expansion NOP Scoping Comment" in the subject line and the name and physical address of the commenter in the body of the email.

**Public Scoping Meeting:** Tulare County will host a public scoping meeting to inform interested parties about the project, and to provide agencies and the public with an opportunity to provide comments on the scope and content of the EIR. The scoping meeting will be held on Thursday March 30, 2023 at 1:30 p.m. at the Tulare County Resource Management Agency, Main Conference Room, 5961 S. Mooney Blvd., Visalia, CA 93277