

3.12 Population and Housing

This section of the Draft EIR evaluates potential impacts to population, housing, and employment associated with implementation of the proposed Golden State Natural Resources Forest Resiliency Demonstration Project (proposed project). This section describes the existing population, housing, and employment conditions at feedstock source locations (Sustainable Forest Management Projects), proposed pellet processing facility sites in Northern California (Lassen Facility) and the Central Sierra Nevada foothills (Tuolumne Facility), and the export terminal in Stockton, California (Port of Stockton), and evaluates the potential for project-related population and housing impacts, considering proposed project design features that could reduce or eliminate associated impacts. Several scoping comments were received regarding employment and housing in response to the Notice of Preparation (NOP), primarily addressing the need for job opportunities.

3.12.1 Environmental Setting

3.12.1.1 Sustainable Forest Management Projects

Feedstock destined to the Lassen and Tuolumne facilities for manufacturing of wood pellets will be wood byproducts sourced from Sustainable Forest Management Projects such as hazardous fuel reduction projects, construction of shaded fuel breaks, and salvage harvests (see Chapter 2, Project Description, for a full description). The feedstock would originate from private, state, tribal, and federal timberlands located within the Working Area of the two wood pellet production facilities in Lassen and Tuolumne County.

3.12.1.2 Northern California (Lassen Facility) Site

3.12.1.2.1 Regional Setting

Population and Population Growth

The Lassen Facility site is located in the northwest corner of Lassen County (County), in the town of Nubieber. The town of Nubieber is a Census Designated Place (CDP) and, as of 2021, had a total population of 38 (U.S. Census Bureau 2021a). The County includes the city of Susanville along with several unincorporated communities such as Westwood, Little Valley, Janesville, Johnstonville, Litchfield, Doyle, Clear Creek, Milford, Herlong, Bieber, and Leaveitt Lake. Susanville, the only incorporated city within the County, is located in the central southern portion of the County, approximately 55 miles from the project site. According to the State of California Department of Finance (DOF), as of January 1, 2023, Lassen County was estimated to have a total population of 28,376 with Susanville contributing 11,790 persons (DOF 2024a).

Between 1990 and 2000, the unincorporated portion of the County had a significant decrease in population whereas the years between 2000 to 2018 only had slight fluctuations in population change. The notable population change was a result of the annexation of the California Correctional Center by the city of Susanville that transferred approximately 4,000 inmates from the unincorporated area into the city in the early 1990s (Lassen County 2019). Population projections from the California DOF for the County are recorded in Table 3.12-1 below, indicating an overall decline in population.

Table 3.12-1. Population Projections for Lassen County

Year	2030	2040	2050	2060
DOF Population (includes Susanville)	25,708	21,772	17,983	15,428
Unincorporated County Population	15,702	15,160	14,548	N/A

Source: DOF 2024b; Lassen County 2019.

Note: Unincorporated County Population sourced from Lassen County 2019-2024 Housing Element.

Employment

The unincorporated areas of the County have a large workforce in the public administration sector. Within the private sector, agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining make up the largest employment groups. In the past decade, the County has seen a shift from basic industries to a more services-based economy. Susanville acts as one of the major employers in the County and represents a range of industries, although the public sector remains more heavily represented (Lassen County 2019). Table 3.12-2 below, depicts the Average Annual Unemployment Rates in the County, the city of Susanville, and the State. Further, Table 3.12-3 represents the available labor force for the County and city of Susanville.

Table 3.12-2. Average Annual Unemployment Rate (2018-2023)

Year	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Susanville	3.9%	3.8%	6.0%	5.0%	3.8%	4.2%
Lassen County	4.8%	4.7%	7.4%	6.1%	4.6%	5.2%
California	4.2%	4.1%	10.1%	7.3%	4.3%	4.8%

Source: EDD 2024a-f.

Note: Data has not been seasonally adjusted.

Table 3.12-3. Labor Force (2023 Average Annual)

Area	Labor Force
Susanville	3,210
Lassen County	8,620

Source: EDD 2024f.

Housing

As of 2016, the unincorporated portion of the County had a total of 6,266 households. The number of households and population in the County have been decreasing. However, decrease in the number of households is progressing at a slower rate compared to the rate of population (Lassen County 2019). Table 3.12-4 below, shows estimated household growth projections for unincorporated areas of the County. Table 3.12-5 further displays the current housing estimates for the County according to the Department of Finance.

Table 3.12-4. Unincorporated Household Growth Predictions

Year	2030	2040	2050
Households	6,797	6,563	6,298

Source: Lassen County 2019

Note: Estimated based on projected population.

Table 3.12-5. D.O.F Housing Estimates for Lassen County (Jan. 2023)

	Total Housing Units	Occupied Units	Vacancy Rate
Susanville	4,288	3,840	10.4%
Unincorporated Lassen County	7,950	6,052	23.9%
Lassen County Total	12,238	9,892	19.2%

Source: DOF 2024c.

3.12.1.3 Central Sierra Nevada (Tuolumne Facility) Site

3.12.1.3.1 Regional Setting

Population and Population Growth

The Tuolumne Facility site is located in the southwest corner of Tuolumne County (County), approximately 10 miles southwest of the community of Jamestown. The County includes one incorporated City, Sonora, as well as several towns and communities such as Cedar Ridge community, Columbia, Chinese Camp, Pinecrest, Tuolumne, and Jamestown. Sonora is the only incorporated city in the County and serves as the County seat. The nearest community to the project site is Chinese Camp, and as of 2021, has a population of 108 (U.S. Census Bureau 2021b). The second closest community to the project site is Jamestown. Jamestown, with a population of 3,543, is one of the largest defined communities within the County next to Sonora.

As of July 2022, the United States Census Bureau recorded a total population of 54,531 in Tuolumne County (U.S. Census Bureau 2022). The unincorporated areas in Tuolumne County have experienced a steady growth rate since the 1930s. However, between 2000 and 2010, population growth slowed to 0.8%. Over the ten-year period, the County experienced a net gain of 384 people. The County’s latest housing element, focused on the years of 2014 through 2018, determined that the population in the unincorporated areas decreased an average of -0.1% annually. However, the County’s General Plan projects that the population will be 63,243 by the year of 2040 (County of Tuolumne County Community Resources Agency 2018). This is a 0.6% annual growth rate and is higher than the DOF’s projections. Table 3.12-6 below depicts the DOF’s Population projections through the year of 2060, indicating a general decline in overall population.

Table 3.12-6. Population Projections for Tuolumne County

Year	2030	2040	2050	2060
Tuolumne County	50,082	48,956	48,542	49,317

Source: DOF 2024b.

Employment

From 2014 through 2018, the annual average unemployment rate for the County was higher than the unemployment rate for the state of California. Unemployment ranged from a high of 8.7% in 2014 to a low of 5.0% in 2018. During this period, the statewide unemployment rate was 4.2%. Table 3.12-7 depicts the average unemployment rate in the communities of Jamestown and Chinese Camp as well as the County and state. Further, Table 3.12-8 displays the available labor forces as of 2021. According to the US Census American Community Survey (ACS), in 2016, the unincorporated areas of the County had a total employment of 17,627 individuals

16 years of age or older. Based on a 2006-2010 report, the California Employment Development Department (EDD) determined that out of the 17,195 workers in the County, 18% commuted to other counties for work. Additionally, a report published in 2019 by the California EDD found that 2,853 workers commute into the County for work and an additional 2,755 works commute out of the County for work (EDD 2022).

Table 3.12-7. Average Annual Unemployment Rate (2018-2023)

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Jamestown CDP	5.0%	5.0%	11.4%	7.8%	4.9%	5.4%
Chinese Camp CDP	31.3%	32.3%	52.5%	42.9%	31.0%	33.3%
Tuolumne County	4.7%	4.6%	10.6%	7.3%	4.5%	5.0%
California	4.2%	4.1%	10.1%	7.3%	4.3%	4.8%

Source: EDD 2024a-f.

Note: Data has not been seasonally adjusted.

CDP = Census Designated Place.

Table 3.12-8. Labor Force (2023 Average Annual)

Area	Labor Force
Jamestown CDP	1,290
Chinese Camp CDP	30
Tuolumne County	19,980

Source: EDD 2024f.

Note: CDP = Census Designated Place.

Housing

As of 2015, the County had a total of 19,435 Single Family Residential Dwelling Units and 1,805 Multi-Family Residential Dwelling Units. By the General Plan’s buildout year of 2040, it is projected that 4,332 Single Family Residential Dwelling Units and 827 Multi-Family Residential Units will be added in the County. This represents a 24% increase in dwelling units (County of Tuolumne 2018). Table 3.12-9 displays the total number of housing units, occupied units and the vacancy rates for unincorporated Tuolumne County, the city of Sonora, and the County as a whole.

Table 3.12-9. D.O.F. Housing Estimates for Tuolumne County (Jan. 2023)

	Total Housing Units	Occupied Units	Vacancy Rate
Sonora	2,524	2,309	8.5%
Unincorporated Tuolumne County	29,065	20,491	29.5%
Tuolumne County Total	31,589	22,800	27.8%

Source: DOF 2024c.

3.12.1.4 Port of Stockton

3.12.1.4.1 Regional Setting

Population and Population Growth

The project site is located in the Port of Stockton West Complex in the city of Stockton, California (City), within the greater San Joaquin County (County). The County is comprised of several incorporated and unincorporated cities and towns. Incorporated cities include Lodi, Stockton, Lathrop, Manteca, Tracy, Ripon, and Escalon. The County has experienced substantial growth within the past 20 years, with 87% of the growth concentrated in the incorporated cities. Between 1990 and 2010, the County saw an increase of 204,572 people within 20 years. The City of Stockton experienced the largest share of this growth at a 39% overall growth rate (San Joaquin County 2014). DOF data indicates that the population of Stockton, as of January 1, 2023, is approximately 315,685 (DOF 2024a). Table 3.12-10 displays the DOF population projections for San Joaquin County. Historically, the City has been one of the fastest growing communities in California. However, the population decreased by over 19,000 residents in the 2007 and 2008 housing market crash. Since then, the rate of growth has been significantly slower (City of Stockton 2016).

Table 3.12-10. Population Projections for San Joaquin County

Year	2030	2040	2050	2060
San Joaquin County	831,956	896,033	942,102	976,326

Source: DOF 2024b.

Employment

The City’s General Plan EIR anticipates more job growth by 2040 than the San Joaquin Valley Council of Governments (SJCOG) projections. The General Plan EIR expects a total of 43,750 new jobs (City of Stockton 2018). The SJCOG predicts that within the County, the job classifications for Construction, Natural Resources & Mining and Professional & Business Services will more than double in employment by 2045 (SJCOG 2018). Additionally, employment growth is expected to occur in correlation to the County’s population growth centers, including the City. The City’s Housing Element anticipates employment growth to occur at a similar rate to population growth, thus creating a stable jobs-housing ratio (City of Stockton 2016).

Within the past decade, unemployment in the City has generally mirrored the highs and lows of the greater County and State, except at a higher rate (City of Stockton 2016). The City’s historical average unemployment rate compared to the County and State is displayed in Table 3.12-11 below. Table 3.12-12 additionally presents the available labor force for the aforementioned areas.

Table 3.12-11. Average Annual Unemployment Rate (2018-2023)

Year	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
City of Stockton	7.1%	6.9%	13.1%	9.9%	6.1%	7.0%
San Joaquin County	6.1%	6.0%	11.5%	8.6%	5.3%	6.2%
California	4.2%	4.1%	10.1%	7.3%	4.3%	4.8%

Source: EDD 2024a-f.

Note: Data has not been seasonally adjusted.

Table 3.12-12. Labor Force (2023 Annual Average)

Area	Labor Force
City of Stockton	136,100
San Joaquin County	346,800

Source: EDD 2024f.

Housing

The General Plan predicts an increase in the total number of housing units in the City from 100,300 to 141,200 units by the horizon year of 2040. This represents a 41% increase in housing units (City of Stockton 2018). Table 3.12-13 below displays the total number of housing units, occupied units and the vacancy rates for the City and County.

Table 3.12-13. D.O.F. Housing Estimates for the City of Stockton (Jan. 2023)

	Total Housing Units	Occupied Units	Vacancy Rate
City of Stockton	103,808	99,554	4.1%
San Joaquin County	262,955	252,188	4.1%

Source: DOF 2024c.

The City’s Housing Element determined that, as of 2010, the City had a lower than desired housing vacancy rate for rental and for-sale housing. This indicates that the City requires additional housing units. The SJCOG created Residential Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) Plan for 2014-2023 to determine the need for housing units within their jurisdiction. The RHNA concluded that by 2023, there would need to be 40,360 new housing units constructed in the County. However, as of 2017, only 6,881 units have been built. At that rate of development, there would be a significant gap in housing needs (over 20,000 homes) by the end of 2023 (SJCOG 2023).

3.12.2 Regulatory Setting

3.12.2.1 Federal

There are no federal laws or regulations addressing population, employment, or housing that are relevant to the proposed project.

3.12.2.2 State

Regional Housing Needs Assessment (Government Code Section 65584)

The State of California requires each local jurisdiction to periodically develop a new Regional Housing Needs Assessment to plan for its share of the state’s housing need for people of all income levels. The Regional Housing Need Allocation process is a state mandate designed to address each jurisdiction’s “fair share” of the statewide housing need for an eight - year planning period. The Regional Housing Need Allocation process requires the State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) to determine the total housing need for each region in the state, and each region’s Council of Governments is then responsible for distributing this need to local governments. Each jurisdiction’s housing element must include a strategy to meet its share of the region’s housing

need for four income categories (very low, low, moderate, and above moderate) that encompass all levels of housing affordability and must be certified by the HCD.

3.12.2.3 Local

Lassen County

Lassen County General Plan

The Lassen County General Plan contains goals, policies, and implementation measures applicable to development projects in the unincorporated areas of the County.

The County General Plan Housing Element contains the following goals and policies that relate to housing, population, and employment and are applicable to the proposed project (Lassen County 2019)

Goal HE-GP-1. Housing Need – Ensure that there is an adequate number of housing units at a range of densities sufficient to meet the current and future needs of county residents.

Policy HE-GP-1.A. Encourage a variety of housing opportunities affordable to the county’s workforce.

Goal HE-GP-6. Jobs-Housing Balance – Promote the development of balanced communities, including a range of housing types, with access to employment opportunities, community facilities, and adequate services to meet the needs of residents.

Policy HE-GP-6.A. Maintain a healthy jobs-to-housing balance.

Policy HE-GP-6.B. Support the preservation and creation of employment opportunities in the county in order to increase homeownership opportunities for residents.

Policy HE-GP-6.C. Continue to encourage both commercial/industrial and residential development in the county to maintain a balance between jobs and housing.

The County General Plan Land Use Element (Lassen County 1999) contains the following goals and policies that relate to economic development and are applicable to the proposed project.

Goal L-11. Transportation systems which complement and support the County's land use patterns.

Policy LU26. When proposed projects will generate a substantial number of large trucks carrying heavy loads, the County shall require special mitigation measures to ensure that those projects do not cause significant deterioration of County roads, or will otherwise mitigate such damage with adequate repair.

Implementation Measures:

- LU-Q. The Regional Transportation Plan shall include provisions to help implement related policies of the County's General Plan and should not include provisions which are inconsistent with or counter-productive to related policies of the General Plan. The County will encourage the consideration and

interaction of land use and other General Plan policies and capital facility plans in the course of preparation of the Regional Transportation Plan.

- LU-R. Pursuant to impacts evaluated in an environmental impact report or other form of project review, the County may require mitigation measures which will ensure that project developers adequately and fairly compensate or participate with the County in the necessary upgrading and/or repair of roads which will be significantly damaged by a project.

Goal L-13. Improvement, expansion and diversification of the County's industrial base and generation of related employment opportunities.

Policy LU32. The County encourages and will facilitate the development of new, environmentally responsible industrial projects for the economic benefit of the County.

Lassen County Code

There are no population, employment, or housing regulations within the Lassen County Code that are applicable to the effects of the proposed project.

Tuolumne County

Tuolumne County General Plan

Tuolumne County Community Development and Design:

Goal 1C. Promote a jobs-housing balance in the County and encourage new communities to be designed to provide a jobs-housing balance.

Policy 1.C.2. Encourage a Countywide jobs-housing balance as some communities in the County are not suited for extensive job-related or residential-related development.

Implementation Program

- 1.C.a. Designate adequate land for commercial, recreational, industrial, business park and mixed use development within and near identified communities that have adequate infrastructure and services.

Goal 1G. Promote the development of industrial uses to meet the present and future needs of Tuolumne County's residents and to provide jobs and promote economic vitality.

Policy 1.G.3. Encourage industrial businesses which utilize the output of lumber and natural resource processors and other industries that can provide a broad economic base for Tuolumne County.

The Tuolumne County Housing Element:

Goal 2B. Encourage and promote the development and rehabilitation of extremely low-, very low-, low-, and moderate-income housing for the residents of Tuolumne County to meet the regional housing need.

Policy 2.B.5. Facilitate expanded housing opportunities that are affordable to the workforce of Tuolumne County to support economic development and help ensure that workers have the ability to afford housing in the community where they work.

Tuolumne County Code

There are no population, employment, or housing regulations within the Tuolumne County Code that are applicable to the effects of the proposed project.

City of Stockton General Plan

Housing Element

Goal HE-1. Ensure the adequate provision of sites for housing of all types, recognizing the importance of a jobs-to-housing ratio that encourages living and working in our community.

Policy HE-1.1. Availability of Land. The City shall maintain sufficient designated and zoned vacant and underutilized sites for housing to achieve a mix of single-family and multi-family development that will accommodate anticipated population growth and the housing needs established in the City's regional housing needs allocation of 11,824 units (1,675 extremely low, 1,482 very low, 2,004 low, 2,103 moderate, 4,560 above moderate).

Transportation Element

Goal TR-1. Mobile Community. Provide an integrated transportation system that enables safe and efficient movement of people and goods for all modes of travel.

Policy TR-1.3. Facilitate expanded port and airport operations, service, and development as travel and goods movement assets to the community and sources of employment growth.

City of Stockton Municipal Code

There are no population, employment, or housing regulations within the City of Stockton Municipal Code that are applicable to the effects of the proposed project.

3.12.3 Thresholds of Significance

The significance criteria used to evaluate the project impacts to population and housing are based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines. According to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a significant impact related to population and housing would occur if the project would:

- Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?
- Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

3.12.4 Impact Analysis

3.12.4.1 Methodology

The proposed project would consist of three primary phases: feedstock acquisition, wood pellet production, and transport to market. The impact analyses below evaluate each of these primary phases as related to population, employment, and housing.

The analysis in this section is based on the Lassen County 2000 General Plan, Tuolumne County 2018 General Plan, and the Envision Stockton 2040 General Plan. The analysis utilizes estimates from the California DOF and the California Employment and Development Department estimates relating to regional population, housing, and employment availability. To evaluate the potential impacts of the proposed project on the local and regional population, employment, and housing availability, the project’s projected employment needs were compared to projected regional and local population and housing supplies, as well as regional available workforce.

3.12.4.2 Project Impacts

Impact POP-1 The project would not induce substantial unplanned population growth in the area, either directly or indirectly.

Feedstock Acquisition

Sustainable Forest Management Projects

Feedstock for the proposed project will derive from Sustainable Forest Management Projects on public forest lands (federal, state, and tribal) or private timber lands within the Working Area. In light of the nature and location of the work, it is anticipated that the workers employed to conduct feedstock acquisition activities will be sourced from within an 100-mile radii of the Lassen and Tuolumne production facilities, which is encompassed by the Working Area. For the feedstock acquisition aspect of the project in relation to the Lassen facility, it is estimated 140 full-time employees would be required. Additionally, approximately 145 truck drivers would be required to transport materials to the Lassen Facility. Table 3.12-14 presents a breakdown of the total persons within these areas currently employed in the mining, logging, and construction industry as well as employees in the industry of transportation, warehousing, and utilities. As seen in Table 3.12-14, these areas include up a total of 9,310 employees in the mining, logging, and construction workforce, and 7,530 employees in the transportation, warehousing, and utilities workforce. These totals indicate a significant available workforce for the proposed activities.

Table 3.12-14. Feedstock Workforce for Lassen Work Area

	Lassen	Modoc	Siskiyou	Shasta	Trinity	Plumas	Tehama	Butte	Totals
Mining, Logging, *Construction	60	120*	160	4,400*	90*	70	110	4,300*	9,310
Transportation, Warehousing and Utilities	80	330	330	2,200	370	290	1,830	2,100	7,530
Totals	140	450	490	6,600	460	360	1,940	6,400	16,840

Source: EDD 2023.

Note: Not all counties have a separate designation for logging and mining apart from construction. If counties have a specific category for mining and logging, that number is used in the table above. If they do not, the mining and logging workforce is included with construction and is labeled with an “*”. EDD does not have a category for Transportation/Trucking alone.

The national forests within the Working Area around the Tuolumne site include Sierra National Forest, Sequoia National Forest, Stanislaus National Forest, El Dorado National Forest, Tahoe National Forest, and Inyo National Forest. It is estimated 50 full-time forestry employees and approximately 50 truck drivers would be required for feedstock operations at Tuolumne facility. Table 3.12-15 below displays the workforce of counties that border Tuolumne County or have been identified by the EDD as counties that contribute to the workforce of the County through commute.

Table 3.12-15. Feedstock Workforce for Tuolumne Work Area

	Tuolumne	Mariposa	Merced	Stanislaus	Calaveras	San Joaquin	Amador	Fresno	Sacramento	Totals
Mining, Logging, *Construction	150	30	3,400*	10,800*	990*	0	280	200	100	15,950
Transportation, Warehousing & Utilities	200	70	3,100	10,800	480	8,700	220	20,000	25,800	69,370
Totals	350	100	6,500	21,600	1,470	8,700	500	20,200	25,900	85,320

Source: EDD 2023.

Note: Not all counties have a separate designation for logging and mining apart from construction. If counties have a specific category for mining and logging, the quantity used in the table above. If they do not, the mining and logging workforce is included with construction and is labeled with an “*”. EDD does not have a category for Transportation/Trucking alone.

As seen above, there are a total of 15,950 individuals currently employed in the mining, logging, and construction industries and 69,370 individuals employed in the transportation, warehousing, and utilities industries. These numbers indicate that there is a significant workforce available to the feedstock acquisition aspect surrounding the Tuolumne wood pellet production facility.

The amount of industry specific available workforce for feedstock operations indicates that a workforce from outside of the targeted feedstock areas would not be required to fill the projects employment needs. In addition, this work is inherently mobile, and relocation of potential employees within the treatment areas is unlikely. Therefore, unplanned population growth would not occur at a significant level as the majority of jobs brought forth by the feedstock acquisition are anticipated to be filled by individuals living in the areas described above. See also Section 3.14, Transportation, for a discussion of work force location and commute. In the event that potential employees relocate closer to the feedstock sources, the number of individuals would not be so significant as to create significant impacts on housing and population in the respective areas. Furthermore, any impacts would be temporary as feedstock acquisition is expected to occur over several forested areas across the Working Area. Given the overall size of the forestry workforce in northern and central California, and that feedstock operations will vary in location within the Working Area, the impact on housing and population growth would be **less than significant**.

Wood Pellet Production

Lassen Facility

The project does not propose new residential land uses. The project site is located on a portion of a larger property that has previously been used as a mill site, containing no residential units on the property. Consistent with the current General plan, the project site would be used for industrial purposes. By increasing the demand for employees, the wood pellet production facility has the potential to increase the demand for housing in the project vicinity. As stated in the Environmental Setting above, the town of Nubieber has a total population of 38 (U.S. Census Bureau 2021a). The proposed facility would require up to 60 employees. However, it is anticipated that the jobs the project would introduce will be filled by people in the surrounding regions. The project site region is rural and commuting to work is a common characteristic of the existing workforce. A report by the American Community Survey using U.S. Census Bureau information from 2011 through 2015, found that a total of 1,924 individuals commute into Lassen County from surrounding counties for work. More specifically, it was found that there were 172 individuals in Shasta County who commute in, 302 in Plumas, and Washoe County (Nevada) contributed 1,091 individuals (EDD 2022). The City of Susanville, located 55 miles from the project site, possesses the largest and closest available labor force. In addition to Susanville, there are several existing communities within a 60-mile commuting radius of the project site that have the potential to provide additional workforce to the site. This includes the town of Burney, Chester, Westwood, McCloud, and Alturas. See also Section 3.14, Transportation, for a discussion of employee commuting. With consideration to the region's workforce as well as the greater region's patterns of commute for employment, it is unlikely that the demand for housing would significantly increase in the County, and therefore indirectly or directly induce substantial population growth. General Plan Policy HE-GP-6.C further encourages industrial development within the County to maintain a balance between jobs and housing. The proposed project is consistent with policies brought forth in the General Plan. For these reasons, the project would have a **less than significant** impact on housing and population growth in Lassen.

Tuolumne Facility

The project does not propose new residential land uses. The Tuolumne site was in operation as a wood processing facility until mid-2020. The project site would be used for industrial purposes, consistent with the County's General

plan land use designations (Tuolumne County Community Resources Agency 2018). Employment would likely be sourced from surrounding communities such as Jamestown (see Table 3.12-8 for workforce estimates). As presented in Table 3.12-7 above, Jamestown, and the County as a whole, has historically had a higher unemployment rate than the State of California. General plan policies, such as Policy 1.G.3, promote industrial development to support the County's economy and workforce. The proposed facility would require up to 51 employees. The project site is located 10 miles from Jamestown, where there is an available workforce. An additional portion of the County's labor force regularly commute from outside of the region, into the County for work. In consideration to the regular commute patterns of the County's workforce, along with the relatively close proximity of the project site to Jamestown, it is unlikely that potential employees for the proposed project would need to relocate closer to the project site. Therefore, the project would not induce substantial unplanned population growth in the area, either directly or indirectly. The project's impacts on housing and population growth in Tuolumne would be **less than significant**.

Transport to Market

Port of Stockton

The project would employ eight (8) daily GSNR employees over three shifts, and will require an additional eight (8) full-time equivalent stevedores for ship loading. It is anticipated that most of the jobs introduced by the project would be filled by people already living in the region as the City and county have a large existing workforce, and a relatively high unemployment rate (see Table 3.12-14). The City's General Plan Housing Element also anticipates new employment opportunities to be available at a similar rate of population growth. For these reasons, the impacts on housing and population growth in Stockton would be **less than significant**.

Impact POP-2 The project would not displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.

The three proposed facility sites (Lassen, Tuolumne, and Port of Stockton) are appropriately zoned sites, with a history of similar prior use. No residential uses are located on the project sites. The Lassen and Tuolumne sites have a small number of residences nearby. However, these residences have historically been in proximity to active mill operations, and so are unlikely to result in displacement due to project operations. Similarly, the feedstock operations would be temporary operations within forestlands (or in the case of vegetation treatment and defensible space activities, within open space, agricultural, and rural residential areas). Therefore, the project would not displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere. Therefore, the project would have **no impact**.

3.12.4.3 Cumulative Impacts

Feedstock Acquisition

Sustainable Forest Management Projects

As discussed in Section 3.0, other vegetation management and forestry projects would occur within the feedstock areas of the two facilities. However, given the overall workforce size, and the varied locations and temporal nature of these projects, it is unlikely that these projects would result in a significant cumulative impact to population and housing within the project area.

Wood Pellet Production

Lassen Facility

As described in Section 3.0, there are no cumulative projects within the Big Valley that would induce unplanned population growth.

Tuolumne Facility

Cumulative projects in Tuolumne County are identified in Section 3.0. It is not anticipated that these project would result in unplanned population growth within the project vicinity. These projects will require additional employees. However, given the available regional workforce, described above, it is assumed that the project would not result in a cumulative population and housing impact.

Transport to Market

Port of Stockton

Cumulative development at the Port of Stockton, described in Section, 3.0, would result in additional demand for employees. However, it is anticipated that most of the jobs produced by the project would be filled by people living in the area, since the City and County have a large workforce. The proposed project would rely on the existing Port workforce. Therefore, the proposed project, in combination with other Port projects, would not have a cumulative impacts related to population and housing.

3.12.4.4 Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

3.12.4.5 Significance After Mitigation

Project impacts would be **less than significant**.

3.12.5 References

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