

# NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF A DRAFT FOCUSED ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

Date: April 23, 2015

To: Agencies and Interested Parties

From: Napa County Planning, Building, and Environmental Services Department

**Subject: Notice of Preparation of a Draft Focused Environmental Impact Report for the Proposed Yountville Hill Winery Project**

Review Period: April 28 to May 27, 2015

CS2 Wines (applicant) proposes to construct a new winery with an annual production capacity of 100,000 gallons on a 10.9-acre site in unincorporated Napa County. The site is located approximately 1 ½ miles north of the Town of Yountville, on the east side of State Route (SR) 29 and approximately ¼ mile south of the Yount Mill Road/SR 29 intersection (Exhibits 1 and 2). The project would include construction of two winery buildings (i.e., a reception building and a winery administration and visitor building), unenclosed terraces, wine cave areas, on-site parking spaces, on-site winery and domestic wastewater treatment system, landscaping, driveway improvements, and signage (Exhibit 3a and 3b). As part of the project, an existing garage, shed, paved driveway, septic tank and system, utility poles, and fountain would be demolished and removed from the site. The existing 4,750-square-foot residence would also be demolished if the County approves the project; however, it is currently being remodeled. The applicant currently has a conditional use permit for a bed and breakfast operation for the residence. The bed and breakfast permit would cease if the project is approved. One of three existing groundwater wells on the site would be properly abandoned in accordance with County regulations and overhead utility lines would be undergrounded. The other two groundwater wells would be used for on-site irrigation for the vineyards and winery operations. A cave, accessory to the residence, would be expanded and converted to winery use as part of the proposal.

Napa County (County) circulated an Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) in February 2014 to analyze this same basic project in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). An IS/MND is prepared in those circumstances where a lead agency determines either no significant impacts would result from a project, or when significant impacts may occur, but they can be clearly mitigated and the applicant agrees to the mitigation. The IS/MND (SCH no. 2014022035) determined that implementation of the proposed Yountville Hill Winery Project would result in no significant environmental impacts with mitigation. The IS/MND and project was approved by the Napa County Planning Commission on July 2, 2014. During the public review period and at public hearings on the project, the County received public comments primarily pertaining to aesthetic impacts, noise, lighting, water supply, traffic access and impacts to surrounding roadways, and consistency with County policies. Since the close of the public review period, the County and the applicant have been coordinating with commenting parties to determine whether the issues raised could be resolved through design or other operational changes to the project. In response, the applicant agreed to include new elements to the project including amended hours of operations and installation of a new groundwater well.

Nonetheless, the County has determined that a Focused Environmental Impact Report (EIR) should be prepared for the project addressing certain key issues. As a result, the County Board of Supervisors rescinded the Planning Commission's approval of the project and adoption of the IS/MND on December 16, 2014. Consistent with the requirements of State CEQA Guidelines (Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3 of the California Code of Regulations [CCR]), Section 15143, the EIR will focus on the potentially significant effects on the environment as described in greater detail below.

## PURPOSE OF THIS NOTICE OF PREPARATION

In accordance with the CCR Section 15082, the County has prepared this notice of preparation (NOP) to inform agencies and interested parties that a Focused EIR will be prepared for the above-referenced project. The purpose of an NOP is to provide sufficient information about the proposed project and its potential environmental impacts to allow agencies and interested parties the opportunity to provide a meaningful response related to the scope and content of the EIR, including mitigation measures that should be considered and alternatives that should be addressed (CCR Section 15082[b]).

The project location, description, and potential environmental effects are summarized below.

### Project Location

As described above, the proposed winery would be constructed on a 10.9-acre site located on the east side of SR 29, approximately ¼ mile south of the Yount Mill Road/SR 29 intersection in unincorporated Napa County (Exhibits 1 and 2). The site is located north of the Town of Yountville. Access to the property is via an existing driveway from SR 29, which will be moved to the south of its current location. The project site is bound by vineyard and open space to the north and south, open space and a single-family residence to the east, and SR 29 to the west with Cosentino Winery, Mustard Grill Restaurant, Oleander House Bed & Breakfast, and three residences on the west side of SR 29. The project site is located in the Agricultural Preserve (AP) zoning district. The project site includes the following assessor's parcel numbers: 031-0130-028 and 031-130-029.

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

### Winery Production and Accessory Areas

The project would include construction of two new winery buildings with approximately 14,000 square feet (sf) of floor area, including a 1,200 sf reception building and a 12,800 sf winery administration and visitor building. The winery administration and visitor building will also include approximately 9,600 sf of unenclosed terraces. The project would also include construction of approximately 35,590 sf of cave area with a warming kitchen, 37 on-site parking spaces, installation of a new on-site winery process and domestic wastewater treatment system, installation of a three-sided box drainage culvert to replace an existing culvert, new landscaping, driveway improvements, four 10,500-gallon water storage tanks, and signage (Exhibits 3a and 3b).

The applicant is seeking an exception by use permit to the conservation regulations to grade/construct improvements on slopes exceeding 30 percent; a viewshed application that would allow construction on slopes 15 percent or greater and visible from a viewshed designated roadway (SR 29); and a variance for development that encroaches into the 300-foot setback from a shared driveway.

### Winery Operations

Tours and tastings would occur by appointment only for a maximum of 420 visitors per week for a minimum of two years after the winery has been granted a certificate of occupancy (Phase I). Thereafter, the Applicant shall not increase visitation to the Phase II level until there has been an administrative review of use permit compliance by staff with a report to the Planning Commission certifying that the applicant is in compliance with the terms of this permit (First Compliance Certification).

For a minimum of 12 months after the First Compliance Certification, winery visitation is limited to a maximum of 700 visitors/week (Phase II). Thereafter, applicant shall not increase visitation to the Phase III level of 1,000 visitors/week until (a) the winery has produced a minimum of 50,000 gallons of wine and (b) there has been a second administrative review of use permit compliance and a second report to the Planning Commission certifying that the applicant is in compliance with the terms of this permit (Second Compliance Certification). Once the Second Compliance Certification has been approved by the Planning Commission, winery visitation is limited to a maximum of 1,000 visitors/week.

The winery would employ up to 19 full-time staff with established hours of operation from 6 a.m. to 3 p.m. (production staff), 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. (administrative staff) and 9:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. (hospitality staff) daily. Winery visitation hours (tours and tastings) would vary throughout the year. Between March and October, visitation hours would be between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. daily. Operation hours at the winery administration and visitor building would be reduced during November through February. During these four months, tours and tastings would end at 4 p.m. with all hospitality staff leaving at 4:30 p.m. and offices closing at 5 p.m.

The cave area will be comprised of two caves, connected by an underground elevator: the lower cave, dedicated to crushing, pressing, fermentation, bottling and storage, will be approximately 25,000 square feet in area. The upper cave, approximately 10,000 sq. ft. in area, will house the barrel cellar. There will be no outdoor wine production activities at the entrance to the lower cave.

The project would allow on-premise consumption of the wines produced on-site in the winery administration and visitor building and terraces. In addition, marketing events would occur both inside and outside the winery buildings and would include a catering work area where caterers could bring in their own equipment to heat and plate food items as well as use of offsite catering services for larger events.

Evening marketing events would cease by 10 p.m. per County requirements, including cleanup. The start and finish time of marketing activities would be scheduled to minimize vehicles arriving or leaving between 4 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. All marketing events at the site would be by invitation and would not exceed 58 events per year. Proposed marketing activities include 48 food and wine pairings per year with up to 50 guests at each event, six (6) food and wine pairings per year with up to 100 guests at each event, two (2) food and wine pairings per year with up to 200 guests at each event, and two (2) wine auction events per year with up to 200 guests at each event. At least 32 of these events would occur after 6:30 p.m.; 24 of which would occur in months with longer days (generally between March 21 and September 21) when the average sunset is approximately 7:55 p.m., with dark skies approximately 30 minutes later. This would result in the lights being on within the winery, administrative, and visitor building for approximately 90 minutes after dark and approximately four hours after dark for the other eight events.

## POTENTIAL APPROVALS AND PERMITS REQUIRED

Several agencies will be involved in the consideration of proposed project elements. As the lead agency under CEQA, Napa County is responsible for considering the adequacy of the EIR and determining if the overall project should be approved.

Permits and approvals may be required from the following state and local agencies for construction of the proposed project:

### State

- ▲ **Bay Area Air Quality Management District:** Authority to construct (for devices that emit air pollutants); permit to operate; Air Quality Management Plan consistency determination.
- ▲ **California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Region 3:** Compliance with the California Endangered Species Act (ESA); potential permits under Section 2081 of the Fish and Game Code if take of listed species is likely to occur.
- ▲ **California Department of Public Health:** Domestic water supply permit for a public non-community water system.
- ▲ **California Department of Transportation, District 4:** Encroachment permit and/or transportation management plan.
- ▲ **San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board:** National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) construction stormwater permit (Notice of Intent to proceed under General Construction Permit) for disturbance of more than one acre, discharge permit for stormwater, and Clean Water Act Section 401 water quality certification or waste discharge requirements.

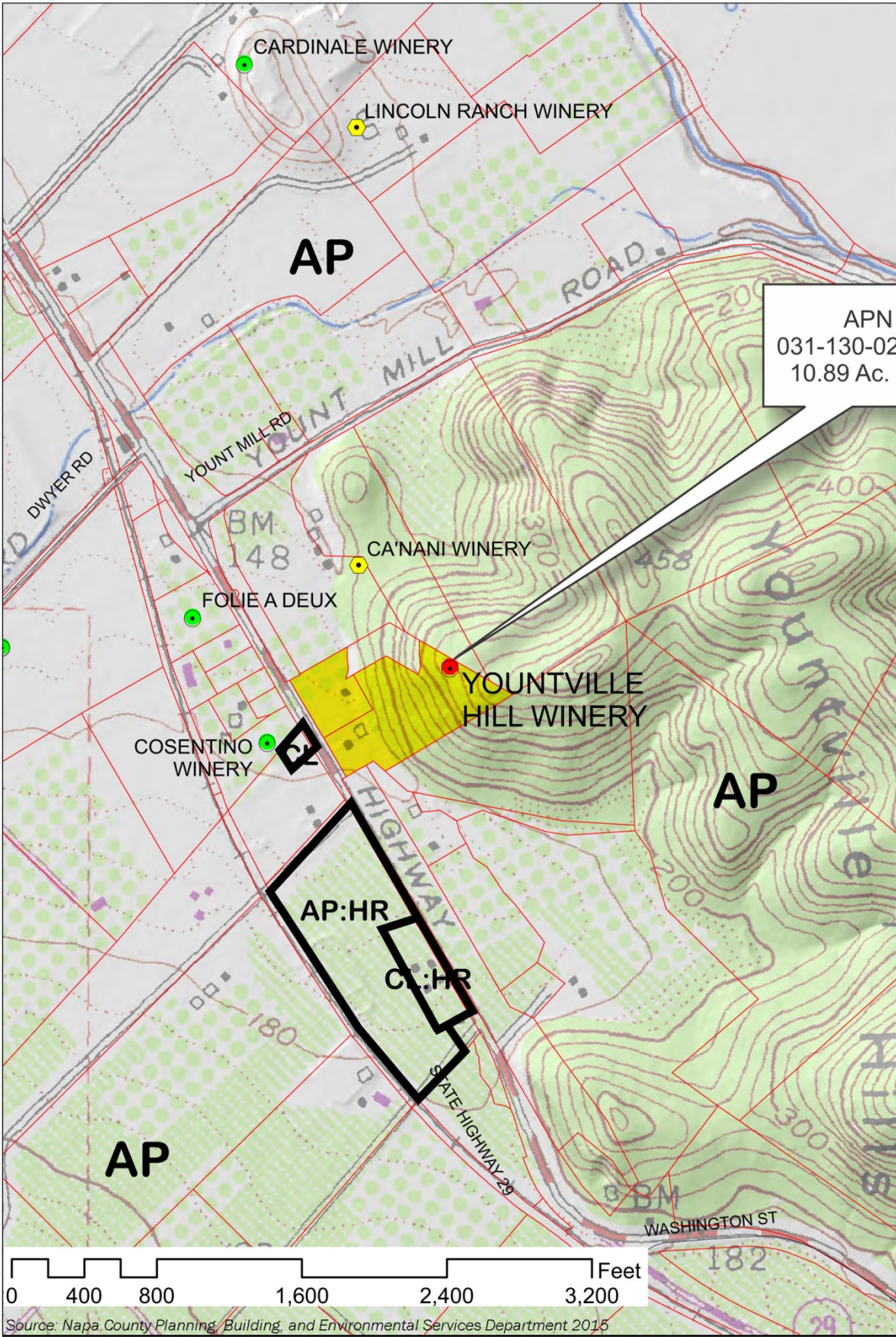
**Local**

- ▲ **Napa County:** Approval of a use permit; exception to the conservation regulations, variance, and viewshed application; various ministerial approvals, including but not limited to building permits, grading permits, waste disposal permits; and well demolition permits.



Source: Adapted by Ascent Environmental in 2015





APN  
031-130-028,029  
10.89 Ac. Total



**Legend**

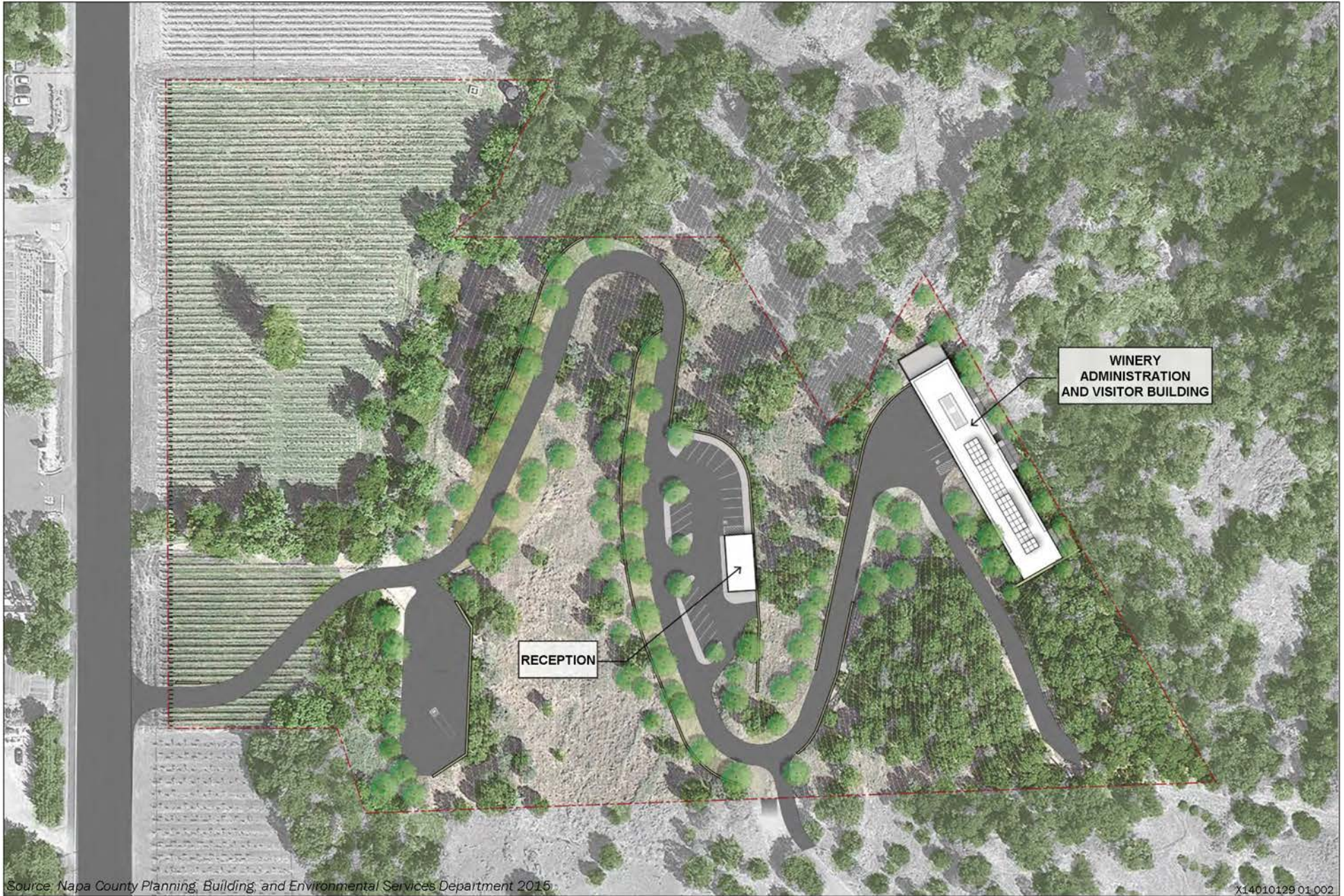
- Wineries in Vicinity**
- Producing
  - Approved
  - Pending
  - Zoning
  - Parcels



Source: Napa County Planning, Building, and Environmental Services Department 2015

X14010129 01 001





Source: Napa County Planning, Building, and Environmental Services Department 2015

X14010129 01.002



Source: Napa County Planning, Building, and Environmental Services Department 2015

X14010129 01\_003



## POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Pursuant to CEQA and CCR Section 15064, the discussion of potential effects on the environment in the EIR shall be focused on those impacts that the County has determined may be potentially significant. The EIR also will evaluate the cumulative impacts of the project when considered in conjunction with other related past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects. The County has determined that the EIR will result in potential environmental impacts in the following topic areas, which will be further evaluated in the EIR:

- ▲ **Land Use:** The EIR will describe the project's consistency with relevant planning policies, including the Winery Definition Ordinance. Consistency of the project with adopted plans and compatibility with adjacent land uses will also be addressed. Existing land use patterns in the area will be described and any potential for division or conflicts with existing communities will be analyzed.
- ▲ **Aesthetics:** The proposed project would retain existing vineyards on-site and replace an existing residence/bed and breakfast building with new winery buildings, caves, driveways, and other improvements. The EIR will describe visual and nighttime lighting impacts through the preparation of visual renderings of the proposed facilities. The EIR will analyze how implementation of the project would change the view of the site from nearby public viewpoints. The EIR will also assess light- and glare-related impacts and evaluate post-project conditions that consider the viability of proposed landscaping to screen views of the winery over a 7- to 8-year time horizon.
- ▲ **Biological Resources:** The EIR will evaluate the project's impacts to sensitive biological resources using existing documentation pertinent to the biological resources in the proposed project area and a reconnaissance survey of the site to confirm that site conditions have not substantially changed since preparation of previous technical documents.
- ▲ **Water Supply:** The project would result in the operation of a new groundwater well that was drilled in April 2014 in the eastern portion of the property and would provide potable water for the winery. The EIR will evaluate the project's consistency with County policies pertaining to groundwater management. The EIR will also describe the project's projected water demands and the availability of supplies to meet those demands over the long-term. The analysis will follow the protocol included in the County's Draft Water Availability Analysis (December 2014).
- ▲ **Transportation/Traffic and Parking:** The EIR will address potential impacts from demolition and construction traffic (including traffic safety associated with use of residential streets), and project-generated traffic, as well as impacts from the proposed new roadway network. The EIR analysis will include a discussion of potential parking, bicycle, and transit-related impacts.
- ▲ **Noise:** The project would result in a functional winery with bottling operations, daily tours and tastings, and up to 58 marketing events throughout the year. The EIR will describe the existing ambient noise environment on and near the project site. Noise impacts related to construction and/or operations will be identified and mitigation will be recommended where necessary.
- ▲ **Greenhouse Gas Emissions:** The project site is located in Napa County, which is under the local air quality jurisdiction of the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD). The analysis of greenhouse gas impacts will be conducted in accordance with BAAQMD's current methods and will quantify indirect emissions associated with energy consumption, which also includes the energy associated with water consumption.

These issue areas will be discussed further in the Focused EIR, and feasible and practicable mitigation measures will be recommended to reduce any identified potentially significant and significant impacts.

Pursuant to CEQA, the discussion of potential effects on the physical environment is focused on those impacts that may be significant or potentially significant. CEQA allows a lead agency to limit the detail of discussion of the environmental effects that are not considered potentially significant (PRC Section 21100, CCR Sections 15126.2[a] and 15128). CEQA requires that the discussion of any significant effect on the environment be limited to substantial, or potentially substantial, adverse changes in physical conditions that

exist within the affected area, as defined in PRC Section 21060.5 (statutory definition of “environment”). Effects dismissed in an Initial Study as clearly insignificant and unlikely to occur need not be discussed further in the EIR unless the Lead Agency subsequently receives information inconsistent with the finding in the Initial Study (CCR Section 15143). Environmental issue areas scoped out of the Focused EIR will include an explanation of why these issues would not result in significant environmental effects and are not required to be evaluated further. Environmental issue areas that are likely to be scoped out of the Focused EIR are listed below.

- ▲ Agriculture and Forest Resources
- ▲ Air Quality
- ▲ Cultural Resources
- ▲ Geology/Soils
- ▲ Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- ▲ Mineral Resources
- ▲ Population/Housing
- ▲ Public Services
- ▲ Recreation
- ▲ Utilities/Service Systems (except Water Supply)

## ALTERNATIVES TO BE EVALUATED IN THE EIR

In accordance with the State CEQA Guidelines (14 CCR Section 15126.6), the EIR will describe a range of reasonable alternatives to the proposed project that are capable of meeting most of the projects’ objectives, and would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the 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 provide an analysis of the No-Project Alternative and will also identify the environmentally superior alternative.

## DOCUMENTS AVAILABLE FOR PUBLIC REVIEW

The NOP and Initial Study are available for public review at the following locations:

Napa County Planning, Building, and Environmental Services Department  
1195 Third Street, Suite 210  
Napa

Napa Main Library  
580 Coombs Street  
Napa

The NOP and Initial Study are also available for public review online at:

<http://www.countyofnapa.org/cdpdprojects/>.

## PROVIDING COMMENTS

Agencies and interested parties may provide the County with written comments on topics to be addressed in the EIR for the project. Because of time limits mandated by State law, comments should be provided no later than 5 p.m. on **May 27, 2015**. Please send all comments to:

Napa County Planning, Building, and Environmental Services Department  
Attention: Sean Trippi, 1195 Third Street, Suite 210, Napa, CA 94559  
Telephone: (707) 299-1353 Fax: (707) 299-4235 Email: [sean.trippi@countyofnapa.org](mailto:sean.trippi@countyofnapa.org)

Agencies that will need to use the EIR when considering permits or other approvals for the proposed project should provide the name of a contact person, phone number, and email address. Comments provided by email should include “Yountville Hill Winery Project NOP Scoping Comment” in the subject line, and the name and physical address of the commenter in the body of the email.

All comments on environmental issues received during the public comment period will be considered and addressed in the Draft EIR, which is anticipated to be available for public review in mid-2015.

## **PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING**

A public scoping meeting will be held by the County to inform interested parties about the proposed project, and to provide agencies and the public with an opportunity to provide comments on the scope and content of the EIR. The meeting time and location are as follows:

May 13, 2015  
1:30 p.m.  
Napa County Administration Building  
1195 Third Street, Suite 305, Napa

The meeting space is accessible to persons with disabilities. Individuals needing special assistive devices will be accommodated to the County's best ability. Assistive listening devices are available for the hearing impaired from the Clerk of the Board; please call (707) 253-4580 for assistance. If an ASL interpreter or any other special arrangement is required, please provide the Clerk of the Commission with 48-hour notice by calling (707) 253-4417.