

Appendix H Consultation and Coordination

This appendix contains relevant letters and records of consultation with Federal, State and local agencies relevant to the project development and environmental review process. The following briefly summarizes the correspondence.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)

- January 31, 2008 – An updated list was obtained from the USFWS of endangered and threatened species recorded in the area of the USGS quadrangle maps that include the project location (the database was last updated by USFWS on January 31, 2008, and was accessed October 6, 2008 for the species list).
- April 1, 2003 – USFWS responded to a request for technical review of the evaluation of all five phases of the interchange improvements for the presence of the federally threatened red-legged frog (*Rana aurora draytonii*). The USFWS determined that the proposed project is not likely to result in “take” of this species.

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries

- October 25, 2004 – A request was sent to NOAA Fisheries for concurrence on measures that were being included in the project to avoid and minimize impacts to potential fisheries habitat in Grayson and Walnut Creeks. Specifically, the letter summarized mitigation and avoidance measures for Central Valley steelhead (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*) and Central Valley chinook (*O. tshawytscha*) and requested concurrence from NOAA Fisheries on the measures.
- November 24, 2004 – NOAA Fisheries replied and found that the proposed mitigation measures are sufficient to avoid or minimize adverse impacts to listed salmonids, with some additional recommendations. The requests include expansion of the proposed “work window” for activities in the creeks from June 1 to October 31, testing of soils within the active channel that are disturbed and management or removal of any such contaminated soils, and emphasis on the need or effort to complete any channel work in a fashion that facilitates fish passage or removes obvious existing barriers such as rubble and debris.
- April 26, 2007 – Caltrans provided confirmation to NOAA Fisheries that the recommendations provided in their November 24, 2004, letter were included as

environmental commitments and will be carried forward into project design and construction. Concurrence was requested on the finding that the project may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect, Central Valley steelhead and chinook salmon with implementation of specified avoidance and minimization measures.

- May 18, 2007 – NOAA Fisheries concurred with the finding that the project may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect, Central Valley steelhead and chinook salmon, concluding informal consultation for the proposed project.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)

- USACE concurrence on wetland delineation is pending.

State Office of Historic Preservation

- January 27, 2005 – Consultation was initiated with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), as summarized in the letter dated January 27, 2005, transmitting the findings of cultural resources investigations that were performed for all five phases of the project. The SHPO concurred with the findings that the Contra Costa Canal (crossed by the project in two locations) is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, and that all other properties identified in the project's Area of Potential Effects are not eligible. Although the canal is a historic property, the studies for this project also determined that the proposed changes would have no effect on the canal's significance.

California Highway Patrol (CHP) and Contra Costa County Office of the Sheriff

- The CHP and the Contra Costa County Sheriff's office submitted letters regarding the interchange design with respect to access to Pacheco Boulevard.

Federal Highway Administration

- July 15, 2008 – FHWA finding that the Conformity Determination for the project conforms to the State Implementation Plan (SIP).

**Federal Endangered and Threatened Species that Occur in
or may be Affected by Projects in the Counties and/or
U.S.G.S. 7 1/2 Minute Quads you requested**

Document Number: 081006124303

Database Last Updated: January 31, 2008

Quad Lists

Listed Species

Invertebrates

- Branchinecta lynchi*
vernal pool fairy shrimp (T)
- Desmocerus californicus dimorphus*
valley elderberry longhorn beetle (T)
- Elaphrus viridis*
delta green ground beetle (T)
- Speyeria callippe callippe*
callippe silverspot butterfly (E)
- Syncaris pacifica*
California freshwater shrimp (E)

Fish

- Acipenser medirostris*
green sturgeon (T) (NMFS)
- Hypomesus transpacificus*
Critical habitat, delta smelt (X)
delta smelt (T)
- Oncorhynchus mykiss*
Central Valley steelhead (T) (NMFS)
Critical habitat, Central Valley steelhead (X) (NMFS)
- Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*
Central Valley spring-run chinook salmon (T) (NMFS)
Critical habitat, winter-run chinook salmon (X) (NMFS)
winter-run chinook salmon, Sacramento River (E) (NMFS)

Amphibians

- Ambystoma californiense*
California tiger salamander, central population (T)
- Rana aurora draytonii*
California red-legged frog (T)
Critical habitat, California red-legged frog (X)

Reptiles

- Masticophis lateralis euryxanthus*
Alameda whipsnake [=striped racer] (T)
Critical habitat, Alameda whipsnake (X)
- Thamnophis gigas*
giant garter snake (T)

Birds

- Rallus longirostris obsoletus*
California clapper rail (E)
- Sternula antillarum* (=Sterna, =albifrons) browni
California least tern (E)

Mammals

- Reithrodontomys raviventris*

salt marsh harvest mouse (E)

Plants

Cordylanthus mollis ssp. mollis
soft bird's-beak (E)

Quads Containing Listed, Proposed or Candidate Species:

WALNUT CREEK (465A)

VINE HILL (482D)

County Lists

No county species lists requested.

Key:

(E) *Endangered* - Listed as being in danger of extinction.

(T) *Threatened* - Listed as likely to become endangered within the foreseeable future.

(P) *Proposed* - Officially proposed in the Federal Register for listing as endangered or threatened.

(NMFS) Species under the Jurisdiction of the [National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration Fisheries Service](#). Consult with them directly about these species.

Critical Habitat - Area essential to the conservation of a species.

(PX) *Proposed Critical Habitat* - The species is already listed. Critical habitat is being proposed for it.

(C) *Candidate* - Candidate to become a proposed species.

(V) Vacated by a court order. Not currently in effect. Being reviewed by the Service.

(X) *Critical Habitat* designated for this species

Important Information About Your Species List

How We Make Species Lists

We store information about endangered and threatened species lists by U.S. Geological Survey 7½ minute quads. The United States is divided into these quads, which are about the size of San Francisco.

The animals on your species list are ones that occur within, **or may be affected by** projects within, the quads covered by the list.

- Fish and other aquatic species appear on your list if they are in the same watershed as your quad or if water use in your quad might affect them.
- Amphibians will be on the list for a quad or county if pesticides applied in that area may be carried to their habitat by air currents.
- Birds are shown regardless of whether they are resident or migratory. Relevant birds on the county list should be considered regardless of whether they appear on a quad list.

Plants

Any plants on your list are ones that have actually been observed in the area covered by the list. Plants may exist in an area without ever having been detected there. You can find out what's in the surrounding quads through the California Native Plant Society's online [Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants](#).

Surveying

Some of the species on your list may not be affected by your project. A trained biologist or botanist, familiar with the habitat requirements of the species on your list, should determine whether they or habitats suitable for them may be affected by your project. We recommend that your surveys include any proposed and candidate species on your list.

For plant surveys, we recommend using the [Guidelines for Conducting and Reporting Botanical Inventories](#). The results of your surveys should be published in any environmental documents prepared for your project.

Your Responsibilities Under the Endangered Species Act

All animals identified as listed above are fully protected under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended. Section 9 of the Act and its implementing regulations prohibit the take of a federally listed wildlife species. Take is defined by the Act as "to harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect" any such animal.

Take may include significant habitat modification or degradation where it actually kills or injures wildlife by significantly impairing essential behavioral patterns, including breeding, feeding, or shelter (50 CFR §17.3)

Take incidental to an otherwise lawful activity may be authorized by one of two procedures:

- If a Federal agency is involved with the permitting, funding, or carrying out of a project that may result in take, then that agency must engage in a formal [consultation](#) with the Service.
During formal consultation, the Federal agency, the applicant and the Service work together to avoid or minimize the impact on listed species and their habitat. Such consultation would result in a biological opinion by the Service addressing the anticipated effect of the project on listed and proposed species. The opinion may authorize a limited level of incidental take.
- If no Federal agency is involved with the project, and federally listed species may be taken as part of the project, then you, the applicant, should apply for an incidental take permit. The Service may issue such a permit if you submit a satisfactory conservation plan for the species that would be affected by your project.
Should your survey determine that federally listed or proposed species occur in the area and are likely to be affected by the project, we recommend that you work with this office and the California Department of Fish and Game to develop a plan that minimizes the project's direct and indirect impacts to listed species and compensates for project-related loss of habitat. You should include the plan in any environmental documents you file.

Critical Habitat

When a species is listed as endangered or threatened, areas of habitat considered essential to its conservation may be designated as [critical habitat](#). These areas may require special management considerations or protection. They provide needed space for growth and normal behavior; food, water, air, light, other nutritional or physiological requirements; cover or shelter; and sites for breeding, reproduction, rearing of offspring, germination or seed dispersal.

Although critical habitat may be designated on private or State lands, activities on these lands are not restricted unless there is Federal involvement in the activities or direct harm to listed wildlife.

If any species has proposed or designated critical habitat within a quad, there will be a separate line for this on the species list. Boundary descriptions of the critical habitat may be found in the Federal Register. The information is also reprinted in the Code of Federal Regulations (50 CFR 17.95). See our [critical habitat page](#) for maps.

Candidate Species

We recommend that you address impacts to candidate species. We put plants and animals on our candidate list when we have enough scientific information to eventually propose them for listing as threatened or endangered. By considering these species early in your planning process you may be able to avoid the problems that could develop if one of these candidates was listed before the end of your project.

Species of Concern

The Sacramento Fish & Wildlife Office no longer maintains a list of species of concern. However, various other agencies and organizations maintain lists of at-risk species. These lists provide essential information for land management planning and conservation efforts. [More info](#)

Wetlands

If your project will impact wetlands, riparian habitat, or other jurisdictional waters as defined by section 404 of the Clean Water Act and/or section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act, you will need to obtain a permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Impacts to wetland habitats require site specific mitigation and monitoring. For questions regarding wetlands, please contact Mark Littlefield of this office at (916) 414-6580.

Updates

Our database is constantly updated as species are proposed, listed and delisted. If you address proposed and candidate species in your planning, this should not be a problem. However, we recommend that you get an updated list every 90 days. That would be January 04, 2009.



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Sacramento Fish and Wildlife Office
2800 Cottage Way, Room W-2605
Sacramento, California 95825-1846

IN REPLY REFER TO:
1-1-03-TA-1228

April 1, 2003

Ms. Rosemary E. Laird
URS Corporation
500 12th Street, Suite 200
Oakland, California 94607-4014

Subject: Request for Technical Assistance for the Proposed Interstate 680 and State Route 4 Interchange Improvement Project, Contra Costa County, California

Dear Ms. Laird:

This is in response to your February 12, 2003, letter requesting that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) review the proposed Interstate 680 and State Route 4 Interchange Improvement Project, Contra Costa County, California for its potential to effect the federally threatened California red-legged frog (*Rana aurora draytonii*) red-legged frog. The red-legged frog is protected under the Federal Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*) (Act). Your letter was received in our office on February 13, 2003.

The proposed project is to construct a five phase interchange improvement for the interchange of Interstate 680 and State Route 4. Within the project site both Interstate 680 and State Route 4 cross Grayson Creek, and State Route 4 crosses Walnut Creek.

We have reviewed the supporting documents supplied by you to assist us in making a determination whether the proposed project may result in "take" of the federally threatened red-legged frog under the Act. Section 9 and the implementing regulations in section 4(d) of the Act prohibit the "take" of any federally listed species by any person subject to the jurisdiction of the United States. As defined in the Act, "take" means "to harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, collect, or attempt to engage in any such conduct." "Harm" has been further defined to include habitat destruction when it kills or injures a listed species by interfering with essential behavioral patterns such as breeding, foraging, or resting.

The project site is located in an urbanized area with residential and commercial development surrounding the existing interchanges and highways. Both streams have been substantially

Ms. Rosemary E. Laird

2

modified from their natural condition. Within the project area the streams are in artificially excavated, earth lined channels that are devoid of riparian trees or shrubs. There are no documented occurrences of red-legged frogs within one mile of the project site. The habitat modifications, lack of adequate riparian cover, and the lack of suitable habitat within one mile of the project site make it unlikely that red-legged frogs would use these streams as movement corridors to and from foraging and breeding areas. For these reasons, the Service has determined that the proposed project is not likely to result in "take" of the federally threatened red-legged frog.

No further action pursuant to the Act is necessary, unless (1) a listed species is discovered within the project area; (2) new information reveals effects of the proposed project that may affect federally listed species in a manner or to an extent not considered; or (3) a new species or critical habitat is designated that may be affected by the proposed project.

If you have any questions regarding this response to the proposed Interstate 680 and State Route 4 Interchange Improvement Project, please contact Mike Nepstad or Dan Buford at (916) 414-6625.

Sincerely,



For Michael Fris
Division Chief, Endangered Species Program



October 25, 2004

Mr. Rodney R. McInnis
Regional Administrator
NOAA Fisheries
650 Capitol Mall, Suite 8-300
Sacramento, California 958142-4708

Attn: Mike Acetuno

Subject: Proposed Construction Mitigation Measures Interstate 680/State Route 4
Interchange Project Contra Costa County, California

Dear Mr. McInnis:

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in cooperation with the Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA), propose to construct a phased sequence of improvements to the Interstate 680 (I-680) and State Route 4 (SR4) Interchange in Contra Costa County to alleviate operational deficiencies and meet anticipated future usage. The proposed project improvements include work at the bridges on the I-680 and SR-4 crossings over Grayson Creek and Walnut Creek. Central Valley steelhead (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*) and Chinook salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*) individuals have been sighted in both creeks. As a result, Caltrans is already committed on the I-680 HOV lane project (which overlaps the proposed interchange project area) to construction monitoring at the creeks, as well as measures to 1) avoid work during the periods of potential species presence, 2) prevention or minimization of potential construction-related erosion and sedimentation, and 3) provisions for potential fish passage. These same or similar measures, as detailed in this letter, will be applied to the proposed interchange project. This letter summarizes the mitigation requirements that are included in the I-680/SR4 Interchange project environmental document. We are seeking your informal review and a letter of concurrence on these measures as we proceed with the planning of this project.

Project Description

The I-680/SR4 interchange project extends from Morello Road on SR4, in the west, to 0.71 kilometer (0.44 mile) of Hwy 242, in the east, and Concord Avenue on I-680, in the south, to the Pacheco Road onramp in the north (Figure 1). Construction is proposed in five phases, as described below.

Phase 1 involves building a two-lane flyover, direct connector from the northbound I-680 to westbound SR4 with the inclusion of a Pacheco Boulevard exit ramp and auxiliary lanes. The northbound I-680 to westbound SR4 loop will be removed in this phase. The Phase 2 plans are to construct a two-lane connector from SR4 eastbound to I-680 southbound with a Pacheco

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Boulevard entrance ramp and required auxiliary lanes. The current eastbound to southbound diagonal will be removed. Phase 3 calls for widening of SR4 from Morello Road to east of the State Route 242 interchange by widening the lanes within the median. Phase 4 includes building a two-lane flyover directly connecting I-680 southbound to eastbound SR4, with required auxiliary lanes. The southbound I-680 to eastbound SR4 loop ramp will be removed. In Phase 5, a new connection will be constructed from SR4 westbound to I-680 northbound. The current westbound to northbound diagonal will be removed.

Phases 1 and 2 are included in the 2001 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). A specific construction date is not scheduled. Phases 3, 4, and 5 are planned, but not funded at this time; they are evaluated in this report to address cumulative impacts of the project as a whole.

A description of the proposed project, a map, and photos of the proposed project area have been included to assist you with your review.

1.0 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The project study area is an urbanized area with residential and commercial development surrounding existing interchanges and highways. Climate in the area is Mediterranean and the annual rainfall is approximately 40 cm (16 in.) per year, falling mainly between November and April (Western Regional Climate Center, 2002). Soils are Altamont clay, Tierra loam, Omni clay loam, Omni sandy loam, Positas loam, Millsholm loam, Dibble silty clay loam, Gaviota sandy loam and Lodo clay loam (Soil Conservation Service, 1977). The Omni series soils are hydric, poorly drained soils that formed in alluvium from sedimentary rocks. Figure 3 shows the extent of each soil map unit in the project vicinity.

The project study area crosses two channelized streams, Grayson Creek and Walnut Creek. Both I-680 and SR4 cross Grayson Creek; SR4 also crosses Walnut Creek. I-680 crosses the Contra Costa Canal in the northern portion of the project study area, and a small brackish marsh is located at the upper end of Pacheco Creek, north of the Burlington-Northern-Santa Fe Railroad (BNSF) and east of I-680. Both streams have been substantially modified from their natural condition. Within the project study area the streams are in artificially excavated, earth-lined channels that are devoid of riparian trees or shrubs. Flowing water is present in the channel all year.

The project area varies between 2 and 24 meters (6.5 and 79 feet) above sea level. At the lowest elevations, freshwater marsh borders the low-flow channels of Grayson and Walnut creeks. Upland habitat is predominately ruderal, non-native grassland, but also includes ornamental plantings of non-native shrubs along the margins of the existing highway corridor and at freeway interchanges.

Freshwater marsh habitat in the project area is composed primarily of cattail (*Typha latifolia*), hardstem bulrush (*Scirpus acutus*), flatsedge (*Cyperus rotundus*), Rabbitsfoot grass (*Polypogon monspeliensis*), saltgrass (*Distichlis spicata*), common horsetail (*Equisetum arvense*) and prickly lettuce (*Lactuca serriola*). The upland habitat is predominately non-native annual grasses and herbs such as wild oats (*Avena fatua*), slender wild oats (*Avena barbata*), yellow star thistle (*Centaurea solstitialis*), and broadleaf filaree (*Erodium botrys*).

Special Status Species / Critical Habitat

Information concerning threatened, endangered, or other special status species that may occur in Contra Costa County was obtained from the Sacramento Office of the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). In addition, the California Department of Fish and Game's (CDFG's) Natural Diversity Database was searched for known occurrences of special status species within the U.S. Geological Survey 7.5-minute quadrangles of Benicia, Briones Valley, Clayton, Cordelia, Denverton, Diablo, Fairfield South, Honker Bay, Las Trampas Ridge, Oakland East, Vine Hill and Walnut Creek. A field reconnaissance survey of the project area was conducted on April 18, 2002, to identify habitats in the study area and vicinity. In addition, a literature review was conducted to identify habitat requirements/distribution for listed species.

As a result of the field and background review, it was determined that the proposed project area and vicinity provides suitable habitat characteristics for the following federally listed species under the jurisdiction of NOAA Fisheries:

- Central Valley steelhead (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*).
- Chinook salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*)

1.1 POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND AVOIDANCE AND MINIMIZATION MEASURES

To minimize potential impacts to this special-status species in the vicinity or downstream of the project from increased sediment load when flows return to the stream, the following minimization measures will be implemented:

- All work would be conducted during the dry season (June 15 through October 15).
- Work will only occur in a dry channel. If it is necessary to conduct work in a live stream, the work space shall be isolated to avoid construction activities in flowing water. The proposed project shall not dewater the entire stream and shall allow fish passage past the project area. Adequate water depth and channel width must be maintained at all times for fish passage. Prior to construction activities the workspace will be isolated from flowing water to prevent sedimentation and turbidity and avoid effects to fish. The diversion shall remain in place during the project, then be removed immediately after work is complete, in a manner that will allow flow to resume with the least disturbance to the substrate.
- If a project requires dewatering any area, either a pump shall remove water to an upland disposal site, or a filtering system shall be used to collect the water and return clear water to the creek. The pump intake shall be fitted with a fish exclusion device that meets NMFS fish screening criteria (refer to: <http://www.nwr.noaa.gov/1salmon/salmesa/pubs/swrscrng.pdf> or equivalent source).
- All materials placed in stream, such as pilings and retaining walls, shall be nontoxic. Any combination of wood, plastic, cured concrete, steel pilings or other materials used

for in-channel structures shall not contain coatings or treatments or consist of substances deleterious to aquatic organisms that may leach into the surrounding environment in amounts harmful to aquatic organisms.

- All construction materials and fill will be stored and contained in a designated area that is located away from channel areas to prevent inadvertent transport of materials into the adjacent stream channel.
- Disturbance to existing grades and vegetation will be limited to the actual site of the project and necessary access routes. Placement of all roads, staging areas, and other facilities shall avoid and limit disturbance to streambank or stream channel habitat as much as possible. When possible, existing ingress or egress points shall be used and/or work performed from the top of the creek banks. Following completion of the work, the contours of the creek bed and creek flows shall be returned to pre-construction condition or better.
- Erosion control and sediment detention devices (e.g. well anchored sandbag cofferdams, straw bales, "Aqua Dam"¹, or silt fences) shall be incorporated into the project design and implemented at the time of construction. These devices shall be in place during construction activities, and after if necessary, for the purposes of minimizing fine sediment and sediment/water slurry input to flowing water, and of detaining sediment laden water on-site. These devices will be placed at all locations where the likelihood of sediment input exists. A supply of erosion control materials would be kept on hand to cover small sites that may become bare and to respond to sediment emergencies.
- All debris, sediment, rubbish, vegetation or other material removed from the channel banks, channel bottom, or sediment basins shall be disposed of at an approved disposal site. All petroleum products chemicals, silt, fine soils, and any substance or material deleterious to listed species shall not be allowed to pass into, or be placed where it can pass into the stream channel. There will be no sidecasting of material into any waterway.
- Fueling, cleaning or maintenance of equipment would be prohibited except in designated areas located as far from the creek as possible. In addition, the contractor would maintain adequate materials onsite for containment and cleanup of any spills.
- After construction and prior to October 15, all disturbed soils at each site would undergo erosion control treatment consisting of temporary seeding, straw mulch, or other measures pursuant to a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) approved by the Regional Water Quality Control Board. Any disturbed soils on a gradient of over 30 percent would also have an erosion control blanket installed. Permanent revegetation or tree replanting should then take place in small openings in the erosion control blanket, with suitable species that are compatible with native vegetation.
- During dewatering activities a fisheries biologist shall be present to salvage Chinook and steelhead individuals, should they be present. Fish will be netted, placed in a bucket of

¹ Information available at www.aquadam.com

water and immediately moved to a downstream portion of the creek. Records of species, relative size, and number individuals shall be kept. Periodic checks of the work area shall occur to ensure the salmonids have not re-entered the work area.

Conclusions

With the required implementation of the preceding measures, we believe that construction activities will avoid potential adverse effects to the two species. These measures will be included in the project's environmental document as required mitigation.

We would like to reach concurrence with NOAA Fisheries regarding the above species and the adequacy of the proposed measures. Please feel free to contact me at (510) 874-3005 to discuss or for further information, or Rosemary Laird at (510) 874-3239. Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Sincerely,

URS CORPORATION



Jeffrey D. Zimmerman
Environmental Project Manager

Enclosure

cc: R. Laird, URS



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
Sacramento Area Office
650 Capitol Mall, Suite 8-300
Sacramento, California 95814-4706

November 24, 2004

In Reply Refer To:
151422SWR2004SA20079:JSS

Jeffrey D. Zimmerman
Environmental Project Manager
URS Corporation
1333 Broadway, Suite 800
Oakland, California 94612-1294

Dear Mr. Zimmerman:

Thank you for submitting your request for agency comments on the Proposed Construction Mitigation Measures for the Interstate 680/State Route 4 Interchange Project, located in Contra Costa County, California, to the National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries). NOAA Fisheries welcomes the opportunity to comment on these measures.

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in cooperation with the Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA) propose to construct a phased sequence of improvements to the Interstate 680 (I-680) and State Route 4 (SR-4) interchange in northern Contra Costa County. Portions of the project include construction on bridges spanning either Grayson Creek or Walnut Creek within the action area. As stated in your letter's introduction, these creeks have had reported sightings of both Central Valley steelhead (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*) and Central Valley Chinook (*O. tshawytscha*). Although the specific run of Chinook salmon observed was not specified, the most likely run of Chinook salmon to occur in these watersheds are the fall/late fall-run Chinook salmon. The URS Corporation has requested that NOAA Fisheries review the preliminary mitigation measures for the proposed project that are designed to minimize or avoid adverse impacts to these salmonid species within the project area.

We have reviewed your mitigation measures and have found them to be sufficient in most regards to avoid or minimize adverse impacts to listed salmonids. The proposed work window will adequately avoid direct impacts to listed salmonids in this area. The work window may even be expanded to encompass the period between June 1 and October 31, adding an additional four weeks to your planned work window. As the watersheds that supply runoff to both Grayson Creek and Walnut Creek are at low elevation and are precipitation driven, water of suitable temperatures in the project area will usually occur only in the colder wet season (November through April). The month of May is transitional between the cooler wet season flows and the increased temperatures typical of the summer and fall months in these lower portions of the watershed. NOAA Fisheries does not anticipate that listed salmonids will be present in the lower portions of these two watersheds outside of the wet season.



In addition to the numerous preventative measures outlined in your letter, NOAA Fisheries makes the request that any soils within the active channel that are disturbed, moved, or uncovered, be tested for chemical contaminants. If such soils are found to be contaminated at levels that are deleterious to aquatic life, including salmonids, that these soils be removed from the area and disposed of in an appropriate fashion in an upland area. Newly exposed contaminated soils could potentially result in leaching of these compounds into the waterways following construction, thus posing a threat to downstream aquatic life.

The measure that focuses on contouring the bottom of the creek channels following construction to pre-project conditions or better should also emphasize the need for easy fish passage through the area as one of the post-construction goals. Even if the creek bottoms were undisturbed by the construction, efforts should be made to facilitate fish passage by removing obvious barriers to upstream movement (*i.e.* rubble or debris, illegal dumping of garbage, etc.).

NOAA Fisheries wishes to thank the URS Corporation for the opportunity to offer comments and suggestions on the Proposed Construction Mitigation Measures for the Interstate 680/State Route 4 Interchange Project. If you have any questions regarding these comments, please contact Jeffrey Stuart in our Sacramento Area Office, 650 Capitol Mall, Suite 8-300, Sacramento, CA 95814. Mr. Stuart can be reached by telephone at (916) 930-3607, or by FAX at (916) 930-3629.

Sincerely,



Michael E. Accituno
Supervisor, Sacramento Area Office

cc: NMFS-PRD, Long Beach, CA
Gary Stern, NOAA Fisheries, PRD, Santa Rosa, California

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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*Flex your power!
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April 26, 2007

NOAA File No.: 151422SWR2004SA20079:JSS

Mr. Michael E. Aceituno
Sacramento Area Supervisor
United States Department of Commerce
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
National Marine Fisheries Service
650 Capitol Mall, Suite 8-300
Sacramento, CA 95814-4708

Attention: Mr. Jeffrey Stuart

Subject: Interstate 680/State Route 4 Interchange Improvement Project, Contra Costa County

Dear Mr. Aceituno:

The Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA), in conjunction with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), proposes to modify and improve the Interstate 680/State Route 4 (I-680/SR 4) interchange.

This will require construction to bridges spanning Grayson Creek and Walnut Creek. Additionally, the I-680/SR 4 interchange project will include five phases of improvements that will add or replace ramp connections and improve traffic flow through this facility. The construction will occur above or adjacent to the creek channels, with the exception of new pilings or supporting piers, some of which must be located within or adjacent to the creek channels.

While Central Valley steelhead (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*), a threatened species, and fall/late fall run Chinook salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*), a candidate species, have been sighted in both creeks; the supporting structures will be constructed during the dry season, when the water flow is restricted to narrow channels within the concrete lined creeks.

A Natural Environment Study (NES) was prepared for this project, and finalized in 2003. The NES addressed the potential presence of fish species in the two creeks as known at that time. Subsequently, Central Valley steelhead and/or Chinook salmon were observed in these creeks during construction of another roadway project (I-680 High Occupancy Vehicle Lanes). In response to the observation of these species, the avoidance measures in the 2003 NES were re-examined and the project consultant (Jeffrey Zimmerman, URS), working on behalf of the Contra Costa Transportation Authority, corresponded with Mr. Jeffrey Stuart of the NOAA Fisheries in 2004. The purpose of the correspondence was to specifically update the information regarding the potential presence of the Central Valley steelhead, as well as the Chinook salmon, and seek concurrence on mitigation measures that would avoid and minimize any potential adverse impacts to these species. NOAA Fisheries responded affirmatively to the proposed mitigation measures, and suggested some minor, additional protections. Both the proposed and recommended measures have been included as environmental commitments in the project's

Mr. Michael E. Aceituno

April 26, 2007

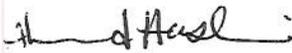
Page 2

Environmental Document (pages 2-64 to 67), and will be carried forward into design and construction. Appendix H of the Environmental Document includes the above referenced 2004 correspondence, all of which is attached to this letter for your reference.

As previously stated, the Central Valley steelhead and Chinook salmon have a potential to migrate through the project area. As a result, Caltrans is committed to perform construction monitoring at the creeks and avoid work during potential species presence. With the implementation of avoidance and minimization measures outlined in the attached, the proposed project may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect these protected species.

Caltrans kindly requests your concurrence with the above finding. If you have any questions or need additional information, please feel free to call me at 510-622-8729 or Ahmad Hashemi, Senior Biologist, at 510-286-5961.

Sincerely,



for,

Jeffrey G. Jensen
District Office Chief
Office of Biological Sciences and Permits
District 4, Oakland



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
Southwest Region
501 West Ocean Boulevard, Suite 4200
Long Beach, California 90802-4213

May 18, 2007

In response refer to:
2007/02704

Jeffrey G. Jensen
District Office Chief
Office of Biological Sciences and Permits
District 4, Oakland
Department of Transportation
111 Grand Avenue
Oakland, California 94623-0660

Dear Mr. Jensen:

This is in response to your letter of April 26, 2007, requesting the initiation of consultation under section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and requesting concurrence from NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) that the Interstate 680/ State Route 4 (I-680/SR 4) Interchange Modification and Improvement Project (Project) is not likely to adversely affect the federally listed threatened Central Valley steelhead (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*) Distinct Population Segment (DPS), the Federally designated species of concern Central Valley fall/ late fall-run Chinook salmon (*O. tshawytscha*) evolutionarily significant unit or the designated critical habitat for the Central Valley steelhead DPS.

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in conjunction with the Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA) and the Federal Highways Administration (FHWA) are proposing to improve and modify the currently existing interchange of the I-680 and SR 4 freeways in Contra Costa County. Construction will include bridges spanning Grayson Creek and Walnut Creek, both tributaries flowing to Suisun Bay in the vicinity of the Carquinez Strait. The new construction will occur above or adjacent to the creek channels, with the exception of a few new piles or supporting piers that will have to be placed within the active creek channels to support the overlying roadbed. Caltrans has previously communicated with NMFS concerning this project in November 2004 (151422SWR2004SA20079:JSS). NMFS found the mitigation measures to be acceptable with a few minor revisions to avoid adverse affects to listed salmonids. Caltrans has agreed to these minor revisions and has incorporated them into its project description. Caltrans will specifically conduct in-water work during the "dry season" (June 1 through October 31) to avoid the presence of any listed salmonids in the channels of Grayson or Walnut Creeks. Work that occurs within the channel will be done in the dry behind dewatered segments of the creek channel to avoid work in flowing waters. The proposed work will not dewater the entire channel, but will allow passage around the work site for any aquatic species moving through the channel upstream or downstream. Appropriate best management practices (BMPs) will be implemented to avoid sedimentation,



stormwater runoff, or the chance of accidental spills of materials or fluids into the stream channel. These BMPs have been described in the project's environmental documents.

ESA Section 7 Consultation

The proposed project lies within the boundary area between two different steelhead DPSs, the threatened California Central Coast steelhead DPS and the threatened Central Valley steelhead DPS. Since the proposed project occurs within the known range of both of these steelhead DPSs, NMFS will consider the project to have the same effects upon either of the listed steelhead DPSs without the necessity to discriminate between the two within the project area. Although both steelhead DPSs occur in the project area, NMFS determined that the designation of critical habitat for either steelhead DPS was not warranted in the Suisun Bay region or within the watersheds draining into the Suisun Bay hydrologic unit from either the northern or the southern shores of the bay (September 2, 2005; 70 FR 52488). Since critical habitat was not designated in this area, adverse modification to critical habitat cannot occur at the project site.

NMFS does not expect adverse impacts to listed Central Valley or California Central Coast steelhead to occur due to the protective safety measures incorporated into the project's description (*i.e.*, the June 1 through October 31 in-water work window and the incorporation of the construction BMPs). NMFS does not consider the presence of Central Valley or California Central Coast steelhead at the project site to be likely during the in-water work window, therefore, the risk of exposure of either steelhead DPS to construction related impacts is negligible and can be discounted.

For that reason, NMFS concurs that the Interstate 680/ State Route 4 (I-680/SR 4) Interchange Modification and Improvement Project is not likely to adversely affect either Central Valley or California Central Coast steelhead. This concurrence is based on the FHWA, Caltrans, and the CCTA implementing all conservation and protective measures intended to avoid or minimize adverse effects to fish and fish habitat as identified above in the project description and the environmental documents covering this project.

This concludes informal consultation for the proposed action. Reinitiation of consultation is required where discretionary Federal agency involvement or control over the action has been retained (or is authorized by law) and if: (1) new information reveals effects of the action that may affect listed species or critical habitat in a manner or to an extent not previously considered; (2) the action is subsequently modified in a manner that causes an effect to the listed species or critical habitat not considered; or (3) a new species is listed or critical habitat designated that may be affected by the action.

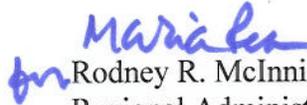
Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) Consultation

Based on our review of the project description and conservation and protective measures provided, NMFS finds that the project activities will not adversely affect EFH for Pacific Salmon. We find the project description includes conservation measures that will reduce impacts to EFH for Pacific Salmon as described in Amendment 14 of the Pacific Salmon

Fishery Management Plan pursuant to the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA). These measures include the incorporation of in-water work schedules that avoid Pacific salmon migrations in the project area and applications of construction practices (*i.e.*, BMPs) in a manner consistent with minimizing exposure to sensitive species and areas. These measures should adequately avoid or minimize any adverse impacts to the EFH of Pacific salmon resulting from the project's actions. Therefore, EFH Conservation Recommendations will not be provided. Written response as required under section 305(b)(4)(B) of the MSA and Federal regulations (50 CFR § 600.920) will not be required. Should additional information reveal that the project may affect EFH and/or impact salmonids in a way not previously considered, or should the action be modified in a way that may cause additional effects to EFH, this determination may be reconsidered.

Please contact Jeff Stuart at (916) 930-3607, or via e-mail at J.Stuart@noaa.gov if you have any questions concerning this project or require additional information.

Sincerely,


Rodney R. McInnis
Regional Administrator

cc: Copy to File ARN # 151422SWR2004SA20079
NMFS-PRD, Long Beach, CA
Gary Stern, National Marine Fisheries Service, Protected Resources Division, Santa Rosa, California

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

111 GRAND AVENUE
P. O. BOX 23660
OAKLAND, CA 94623-0660
PHONE (510) 286-5612
FAX (510) 286-6374
TTY (800) 735-2929



*Flex your power!
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January 27, 2005

Mr. Milford Wayne Donaldson, FAIA
State Historic Preservation Officer
Office of Historic Preservation
1416 Ninth Street, Room 1442-7
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Determinations of Eligibility and Finding of No Historic Properties Affected for the Interstate 680/Route 4 Interchange Improvement Project, in Contra Costa County, California; 04-CC-680, KP 32.5/35.8 (PM 20.2/22.2), 04-CC-004, KP R16.9/R24.3 (PM R10.5/R15.1) EA 04-275-229100

Dear Mr. Donaldson:

The California Department of Transportation, (Caltrans), under the authority of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), is initiating consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) regarding the Interstate 680/Route 4 Interchange Improvement Project. This consultation is undertaken in accordance with the January 1, 2004 *Programmatic Agreement among the Federal Highway Administration, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the California State Historic Preservation Officer, and the California Department of Transportation* (PA).

Enclosed you will find a Historic Property Survey Report (HPSR) for the proposed undertaking. The HPSR is intended to fulfill three of Caltrans' responsibilities under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act: determination of the Area of Potential Effects (APE); identification of potential historic properties located within the undertaking's APE; and evaluation of potential historic properties for eligibility to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Under the PA, Caltrans is responsible for ensuring the appropriateness of the APE (Stipulation VII.A) and the adequacy of historic property identification efforts (Stipulation VIII.B). We are consulting with you at the present time under Stipulation VIII.B.5 of the PA, which requires that we seek your concurrence on Caltrans' determinations of eligibility for potential historic properties.

On behalf of FHWA, Caltrans proposes to modify the existing cloverleaf interchange of Interstate 680 and Route 4, removing two loop ramps and constructing "fly over" direct connectors, as well as provide improvements to Pacheco Boulevard. The I-680/SR-4 Interchange Project is sponsored by the Contra Costa Transportation Authority and has funding administered by FHWA and Caltrans. FHWA and Caltrans are the agencies responsible for the project's compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the National Historic

"Caltrans improves mobility across California"

Preservation Act (NHPA). A full project description and depiction of the APE can be found on pages 2-1 and 3-1-3-4 and in Attachment 6 of the HPSR.

Consultation and identification efforts for the I-680/SR-4 Interchange Project (summarized in Sections 4-5 of the HPSR) resulted in the identification of twenty-three (23) resources within the APE that required formal evaluation, in addition to four properties which were previously determined ineligible for listing in the NRHP. The evaluated resources include:

- 21 historic-period residential and commercial buildings
- 2 water conveyance systems, the Contra Costa Canal and the Walnut Creek and Grayson Creek Levees.

None of the above-listed resources have been previously evaluated for the NRHP eligibility. Pursuant to Stipulation VIII.C.2 of the PA, all twenty-three resources were formally evaluated for NRHP eligibility for the I-680/SR-4 Interchange Project; these evaluations are documented in the Historic Resources Evaluation Report (HRER). All other resources identified with the APE were exempted from formal evaluation pursuant to Stipulation VIII.C.1 and Attachment 4 of the PA ("Properties Exempt from Evaluation").

Pursuant to Stipulation VIII.C.5 of the PA, Caltrans is requesting your concurrence with the following NRHP determinations. We look forward to receiving your response within 30 days of your receipt of this submittal, in accordance with Stipulation VIII.C.5 of the PA.

1. Contra Costa Canal, Contra Costa County, CA (Map Ref. #26) is eligible for the NRHP at the state level under Criterion A for its association with the construction and operation of the Central Valley Project, and at the local level under Criterion A for its association with the economic development of eastern Contra Costa County. The period of significance for the 46-mile long canal is 1937-1951, which covers canal's construction period.
2. Walnut Creek & Grayson Creek Levees, Walnut Creek, CA (Map Ref. #27) are not eligible for the NRHP because the levees have been altered and have lost integrity.

The following twenty-one resources are not eligible for the NRHP because they lack an association with important persons or events and have lost architectural integrity:

3. 1785 Arnold Drive, Martinez, CA (Map Ref. #1)
4. 2034 Arnold Drive, Martinez, CA (Map Ref. #2)
5. 1138 Temple Drive, Walnut Creek, CA (Map Ref. #3)
6. 1136 Temple Drive, Walnut Creek, CA (Map Ref. #4)
7. 1134 Temple Drive, Walnut Creek, CA (Map Ref. #5)
8. 1132 Temple Drive, Walnut Creek, CA (Map Ref. #6)
9. 1130 Temple Drive, Walnut Creek, CA (Map Ref. #7)

10. 1128 Temple Drive, Walnut Creek, CA (Map Ref. #8)
11. 1126 Temple Drive, Walnut Creek, CA (Map Ref. #9)
12. 1124 Temple Drive, Walnut Creek, CA (Map Ref. #10)
13. 1122 Temple Drive, Walnut Creek, CA (Map Ref. #11)
14. 1120 Temple Drive, Walnut Creek, CA (Map Ref. #12)
15. 1118 Temple Drive, Walnut Creek, CA (Map Ref. #13)
16. 1116 Temple Drive, Walnut Creek, CA (Map Ref. #14)
17. 1114 Temple Drive, Walnut Creek, CA (Map Ref. #15)
18. 1112 Temple Drive, Walnut Creek, CA (Map Ref. #16)
19. 5775 Pacheco Boulevard, Walnut Creek, CA (Map Ref. #18)
20. 102 Berry Drive, Walnut Creek, CA (Map Ref. #20)
21. 104 Berry Drive, Walnut Creek, CA (Map Ref. #21)
22. 106 Berry Drive, Walnut Creek, CA (Map Ref. #22)
23. 110 Berry Drive, Walnut Creek, CA (Map Ref. #23)

Pending your concurrence regarding Caltrans' eligibility determinations, Caltrans' finding for the undertaking (pursuant to Stipulation IX.A.2) is "No Historic Properties Affected." While there is a historic property within the APE, the Contra Costa Canal, the two sections of the canal that pass beneath the I-680 and SR4 have been repeatedly altered from their original condition by modernization of the two roadways over the last forty years. This undertaking proposes to add additional sections to an existing siphon and reinforced box culvert (RBC) that were previously altered and modernized as a part of the construction of the I-680 and SR4. These two elements, the RBC and siphon, are not contributing features to the Contra Costa Canal, and their alteration does not affect the significance of the canal. The proposed undertaking will therefore have no effect on historic properties.

This letter and the attached documentation are concurrently being retained in Caltrans' files (pursuant to Stipulation XVI) and distributed to FHWA (pursuant to Stipulation VIII.C.5) and to the Contra Costa Transportation Authority, the Contra Costa Water District, and the Bureau of Reclamation, Mid-Pacific Regional Office (pursuant to Stipulation IX.A.2). If you concur with our eligibility determinations, these actions satisfy Caltrans' responsibilities under Stipulation IX.A.2 of the PA, and no further review will be required. In the event that you do not concur with Caltrans' determinations, further consultation will be carried out in accordance with Stipulation VIII.C.5.b.

If you need any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact Elizabeth McKee, District Branch Chief, Archaeology, at (510) 622-5458 and lissa_mckee@dot.ca.gov, or Elizabeth Krase, District Branch Chief, Architectural History, at (510) 286-5612 and elizabeth_krase@dot.ca.gov.

Thank you for your assistance with this undertaking.

Sincerely,

Original is signed

Brian Ramos, Ph.D.
Chief, Office of Cultural Resource Studies
California Department of Transportation
District 4

Attachment: HPSR, Finding of No Historic Properties Affected, for the Interstate 680/Route 4 Interchange Improvement Project, included a separately bound Archaeological Survey Report (ASR) and Historic Resources Evaluation Report (HRER)

CC: Gene Fong, FHWA Division Administrator
Susan Miller, Contra Costa Transportation Authority*
Mark Seedall, Contra Costa Water District**
Anastasia Leigh, Mid-Pacific Regional Office, US Bureau of Reclamation**

* Copy transmittal letter only.

** These recipients will only receive the HPSR and the HRER. Caltrans is prohibited from distributing the ASR as archaeological records contain sensitive site location information which must remain confidential, pursuant to Section 6254.10 of the Government Code exempting archaeological records from public disclosure requirements.

OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

P.O. BOX 942895
 SACRAMENTO, CA 94296-0001
 (916) 653-6624 Fax (916) 653-9824
 calshpo@ohp.parks.ca.gov
 www.ohp.parks.ca.gov

March 9, 2005

Reply To: FHWA050131A

Brian Ramos, Chief
 Office of Cultural Resource Studies
 Caltrans District 4
 111 Grand Avenue
 Oakland, CA 94623-0660

Re: Determinations/Findings of Eligibility and Effect for the Proposed Interstate 680/Route 4 Interchange Improvement Project, Contra Costa County, CA

Dear Mr. Ramos:

Thank you for consulting with me about the subject undertaking in accordance with the *Programmatic Agreement Among the Federal Highway Administration, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the California State Historic Preservation Officer, and the California Department of Transportation Regarding Compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, as it Pertains to the Administration of the Federal-Aid Highway Program in California (PA)*.

The California Department of Transportation (Department) is requesting my concurrence, pursuant to Stipulation VIII.C.5 of the PA, in its determination that the Contra Costa Canal is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) at the state level of significance under criterion A for its association with the construction and operation of the Central Valley Project, and at the local level under criterion A for its association with the economic development of eastern Contra Costa county. The period of significance for the 46-mile long canal is 1937-1951, which covers the canal's construction period.

Pursuant to Stipulation VIII.C.5 of the PA, the Department has also determined that the following properties are not eligible for the NRHP:

- 1785 Arnold Drive, Martinez, CA
- 2034 Arnold Drive, Martinez, CA
- 1138 Temple Drive, Walnut Creek, CA
- 1136 Temple Drive, Walnut Creek, CA
- 1134 Temple Drive, Walnut Creek, CA
- 1132 Temple Drive, Walnut Creek, CA
- 1130 Temple Drive, Walnut Creek, CA
- 1128 Temple Drive, Walnut Creek, CA
- 1126 Temple Drive, Walnut Creek, CA
- 1124 Temple Drive, Walnut Creek, CA
- 1122 Temple Drive, Walnut Creek, CA
- 1120 Temple Drive, Walnut Creek, CA
- 1118 Temple Drive, Walnut Creek, CA
- 1116 Temple Drive, Walnut Creek, CA
- 1114 Temple Drive, Walnut Creek, CA

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Mr. Ramos
March 9, 2005
Page 2

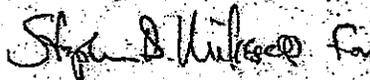
FHWA050131A

- 1112 Temple Drive, Walnut Creek, CA
- 5775 Pacheco Boulevard, Walnut Creek, CA
- 102 Berry Drive, Walnut Creek, CA
- 104 Berry Drive, Walnut Creek, CA
- 106 Berry Drive, Walnut Creek, CA
- 110 Berry Drive, Walnut Creek, CA

Based on review of the submitted documentation, I concur with the foregoing determinations.

Thank you for taking historic properties into account as part of your project planning. If you have any questions, please contact Natalie Lindquist of my staff at (916) 654-0631 or e-mail at nlind@ohp.parks.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



Milford Wayne Donaldson, FAIA
State Historic Preservation Officer

State of California—Business, Transportation and Housing Agency

GRAY DAVIS, Governor

DEPARTMENT OF CALIFORNIA HIGHWAY PATROL

5001 Eium Road
Martinez, CA 94553
(925) 646-4980
(800) 735-2929 (TT/TDD)
(800) 735-2922 (Voice)



September 24, 2003

File No.: 320.10357.10170

John Y. Chang, Senior Transportation Engineer
Caltrans, Office of Project Management
Mail Station 8
P.O. Box 23660 111 Grand Avenue
Oakland, California 94623-0660

Subject: I-680/SR 4 Interchange Improvements

Dear Mr. Chang:

The California Highway Patrol (CHP) is very much in favor of the proposed improvements to the Interstate 680 and State Route 4 interchange project. The CHP's primary mission is the safe and efficient use of the highway transportation system. Therefore, highway safety and congestion relief concerns affecting Contra Costa County are very important to the Contra Costa County CHP Office. We have been involved with your project team on the proposed design and improvements to the interchange from the very beginning. The improvements, when completed as per the site plan draft dated April 16, 2003, titled Conceptual Alternative D2a, are very acceptable. This plan was created jointly by Caltrans and the Contra Costa County Transportation Authority (CCCTA). It will not only relieve traffic congestion and reduce bottlenecks within the interchange, but it will also provide the necessary inlets and outlets for area businesses and emergency vehicles including the CHP.

It has come to our attention that the Federal Highway Administration will be determining if the Conceptual Alternative D2a interchange improvements are acceptable, given that one feature of the preliminary design calls for local access ramps (slip ramps) to and from Pacheco Blvd. that will connect to two interchange ramps. The importance of these ramps are immeasurable to public safety. If these ramps are not included in the construction of the improvements to the interchange, emergency vehicle response will be significantly affected. The CHP, depending on which route taken, will have to travel either 1.5 or 1.6 miles in order to enter I-680 southbound from the Area office; compared to the .4 mile distance that must be traversed now and the slightly shorter distance when the new ramp is constructed. Although this distance may not seem significant, Pacheco Blvd. is a very busy roadway, especially during commute hours. Oftentimes, CHP response to critical incidents from the Area office requires the utilization of emergency lights and siren. Patrol officers and the public are exposed to an increased danger when officers are forced to impose their presence on the motoring public by forcing



John Y. Chang, Senior Transportation Engineer

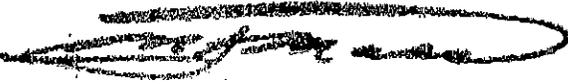
Page 2

September 24, 2003

them to move out of the officer's way during emergency conditions. If these ramps are not constructed, officers will be forced on many occasions to traverse under emergency conditions the very congested intersection of Contra Costa Blvd. and the I-680 southbound off-ramp in order to enter I-680 southbound. Additionally, these ramps will assist allied police agencies and the fire department when responding to assist the CHP with critical incidents and or medical emergencies.

Maintaining access to Pacheco Blvd. and to I-680 from Pacheco Blvd. is of the utmost importance to the CHP. The CHP constructs its offices with ease of accessibility to freeway on and off ramps in mind. Based upon the conceptual engineering studies to date, Conceptual Alternative D2a is the only concept that has been identified that adequately meets the CIIP's needs. We strongly encourage the FHA to approve the aforementioned Conceptual Alternative D2a.

Sincerely,



MICHAEL J. MAAS, Captain
Commander
Contra Costa Area



County of Contra Costa
Office of the Sheriff

Warren E. Rupp
Sheriff

November 10, 2003

Mr. Leo Scott
Caltrans, Office of Project Management
Mail Station 8
P.O. Box 23660
111 Grand Avenue
Oakland, California 94623-0660

Dear Mr. Scott:

Through a joint effort, Caltrans and the Contra Costa County Transit Authority have developed an improvement plan to address traffic concerns at the interchange of Interstate 680 and Highway 4. This plan, titled Conceptual Alternative D2a, will not only relieve traffic congestion, it will also provide inlets and outlets necessary for emergency responders to ensure public safety, specifically slip ramps connecting Pacheco Boulevard to the interchange. It has come to our attention, however, that the Federal Highway Administration (FHA) has not yet accepted this plan because of questions about these ramps. The Office of the Sheriff believes strongly that the value of these ramps to public safety is immeasurable.

Currently, access to both Interstate 680 and Highway 4 is gained via ramps immediately accessible from Pacheco Boulevard. Were this access to be eliminated, the nearest alternate access ramp to southbound Interstate 680 would be approximately 2 miles south of the current ramp. Within these 2 miles are several large, traffic-controlled intersections that become extremely congested throughout the day. It is estimated that this route could extend emergency responses by 3-5 minutes. The only way to mitigate this delay would be to activate emergency equipment, red lights and siren. Whenever this is done, however, there is an inherent risk to the public. Despite rules of the road telling motorists how to behave in these situations, many of them become startled at seeing the lights and hearing the siren. The ensuing momentary panic often results in poor decision-making, accidents and injuries, requiring the responding peace officer to deviate from the original emergency to render assistance at the 'now' emergency. In essence, the additional travel necessitated by eliminating freeway access doubles the public's potential for harm by both extending response times and requiring risky adjustments to compensate for them. While in a vacuum this delay may seem merely inconvenient, where public safety is concerned it could cost a life.

Post Office Box 391 • Martinez, California 94553-0039
(925) 335-1500

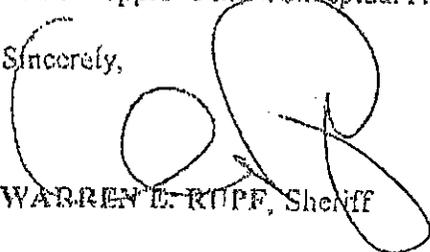
"Community Policing Since 1850...."

Mr. Leo Scott
November 10, 2003
Page 2

In addition to these very real emergency response concerns, there is also the broader public safety concern of access to services. Because of ease of access to both Interstate 680 and Highway 4, the Office of the Sheriff has chosen to locate many of its facilities and emergency services in the area. Additionally, within the next two years, the Office of the Sheriff will construct a new facility in the area to house additional services. Between existing functions and those that will move to the area within the next two years, the Office of the Sheriff will provide the following services from the immediate vicinity of Interstate 680 and Highway 4: Patrol, S.W.A.T., Mutual Aid Mobile Field Force, Investigations, Coroner, Communications, Training, Office of Emergency Services, Civil, Records, and Administration. To eliminate access to the aforementioned freeways would severely impact our ability to provide critical services to the communities we serve.

Maintaining multi-directional access to Pacheco Boulevard, Interstate 680 and Highway 4 is of great importance to the Office of the Sheriff. Conceptual Alternative D2a is the only plan that ensures a high level of public safety through quick and safe freeway access for emergency responders and public access to law enforcement services. Therefore, we strongly encourage the FHA to approve the Conceptual Alternative D2a interchange improvement plan.

Sincerely,



WARREN E. RUFF, Sheriff

WER:aj

cc: Ms. Julia Duoren, Deputy Public Works Director
✓ Mr. Hank Haugse, Planning Manager, Nolte Associates, Inc.



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION
CALIFORNIA DIVISION
650 Capitol Mall, Suite 4-100
Sacramento, CA. 95814
July 15, 2008

IN REPLY REFER TO
HDA-CA

File # 04-CC-680, 04-CC-004
EA # 04333-229100
Document # P58528

Bijan Sartipi, District Director
California Department of Transportation
District 4
111 Grand Avenue
P.O. Box 23360
Oakland, CA 94612

Attention: Glenn Kinoshita

Dear Mr. Kinoshita:

SUBJECT: FHWA Project Level Conformity Determination for the Interstate 680/State Route 4 Interchange Project

On July 7, 2008, the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) submitted to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) a request for the project level conformity determination for the Interstate 680/State Route 4 Interchange Project pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 327(a)(2)(B)(ii)(1). The project is in an area that is designated Nonattainment or Maintenance for Ozone and Carbon Monoxide (CO).

The project level conformity analysis submitted by Caltrans indicates that the project level transportation conformity requirements of 40 C.F.R. Part 93 have been met. The project is included in the Metropolitan Transportation Commission's (MTC) currently conforming *Transportation 2030 Plan (RTP)*, and the *2007 Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP)*. The current conformity determinations for the RTP and RTIP were approved by FHWA and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) on October 2, 2006. The design concept and scope of the preferred alternative have not changed significantly from those assumed in the regional emissions analysis.

As required by 40 C.F.R. 93.116 and 93.123, the localized CO analyses are included in the documentation. The CO hotspot analysis was performed with the *Transportation Project-Level Carbon Monoxide Protocol*. The analyses demonstrate that the project will not create any new violation of the standards or increase the severity or number of existing violations.

**MOVING THE
AMERICAN
ECONOMY**



Based on the information provided, FHWA finds that the Conformity Determination for the Interstate 680/State Route 4 Interchange Project conforms to the State Implementation Plan (SIP) in accordance with 40 C.F.R. Part 93.

If you have any questions pertaining to this conformity finding, please contact Aimee Kratovil, FHWA Air Quality Specialist, at (916) 498-5866.

Sincerely,



For
Gene K. Fong
Division Administrator

