

## WHAT IS THE PROJECT DEVELOPMENT TIMELINE?

Begin Engineering and Environmental Studies - July 2007  
Public Informational Meetings – Sept. 26, 2007 and Feb. 20, 2008  
Public Scoping Meeting – May 14, 2008  
Draft Environmental Document/Public Hearing – December 15, 2008  
Project Approval and Environmental Clearance – May 2009  
Project to Construction – Early 2010

## PROJECT CONTACTS

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## PROJECT WEBSITE

[http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist1/d1/projects/richardson\\_grove/](http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist1/d1/projects/richardson_grove/)

## OTHER AGENCY COORDINATION

Caltrans has and will be consulting with the following resource and regulatory agencies in the preparation of the environmental document and permits:

- California Department of Parks and Recreation
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- California Department of Fish and Game
- Regional Water Quality Control Board
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- Sinkyone Intertribal Wilderness Council
- State Office of Historic Preservation

## WHAT YOU CAN DO

If you have questions/comments about the potential project impacts or if you believe information that should be included was omitted in the environmental document, you may submit written comments before **January 30, 2009** to:

Caltrans  
Kim Floyd, Project Manager  
PO Box 3700  
Eureka, CA 95502-3700

## US-101 RICHARDSON GROVE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

### WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT?

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) have proposed improvements to US-101 to remove current restrictions and allow larger, industry standard-sized trucks access to the North Coast from the south. This project proposes minor adjustments to the current alignment of US-101 at Richardson Grove without removal of old growth\* redwood trees. This project is located from Post Mile 1.1 to Post Mile 2.2 (from 1.1 miles to 2.2 miles north of the Humboldt/Mendocino County line). This project will also improve the safety and operation of this section of highway for all motorists.

### EXISTING HIGHWAY

US-101 is part of the California Freeway and Expressway System and is included in the National Highway System and is classified as a rural principal arterial.

### WHY THE PROJECT NOW?

In spring of 2007, Caltrans conducted a detailed survey of the project area. By using engineering design software, project staff determined that with minor adjustments to the existing alignment, current restrictions to truck/trailers of an overall length of 65 feet maximum could be removed. Old growth redwood tree removal will not be required.

Due to recent improvements on US-101 at Confusion Hill and Big Lagoon, Richardson Grove will soon be the last point of restriction on US-101 between the Bay Area and Oregon.

\*Old growth refers to trees with a diameter at breast height of three feet or greater.

## WHAT IS AN “STAA” TRUCK?

The Federal Surface Transportation Assistance Act (STAA) of 1982 allows large trucks to operate on routes that are part of the National Network, which includes this segment of US-101. These trucks, referred to as STAA trucks, can be longer than the California legal trucks currently allowed.

STAA trucks are the nationwide industry standard and can carry larger loads than California legal trucks. Presently, the alignment of US-101 within Richardson Grove State Park restricts STAA trucks.

This graphic depicts typical trucks.  
For more information about exemptions, legal sizes and weights, please visit:  
[www.dot.ca.gov/hq/traffops/trucks](http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/traffops/trucks)



Overall Length: 65 Feet Maximum



## PROJECT BENEFITS

The intent of the project is to make minimal roadway improvements to allow STAA trucks and improve safety and operation for all vehicles.

## PROPOSED ALTERNATIVE

The proposed project alternative is described below. The project cost is approximately \$5.5 million.

- Construct minor realignment, including minor widening where necessary, to accommodate STAA truck access
- Provide two 12' travel lanes and two paved shoulders (old growth redwood trees will encroach into the shoulder in locations)
- Construct a retaining wall at the north end of the project outside of the State Park
- Overlay existing pavement
- Extend existing culverts where necessary

## WHERE WE ARE IN THE PROCESS

Caltrans is in the process of preparing a Project Report and Environmental Document. The purpose for the Project Report is to document the selection of a preferred alternative that meets the purpose and need for the project while minimizing impacts. Caltrans has prepared a draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and Environmental Assessment (EA) in compliance with State and Federal environmental regulations. To fully determine the potential effects of the project, studies have been conducted in the following areas:

- Hazardous Waste
- Geotechnical Considerations
- Water Quality and Erosion Effects
- Noise Effects
- Section 4(f) Evaluation (to document the effects to the State Park)
- Biological Resources Study and Biological Assessment (to document compliance with the Endangered Species Act)
- Cultural Resources (including archeological and historic evaluations, as well as the results of Native American consultation)
- Visual/Aesthetic Effects
- Socioeconomic and Growth Impacts

## WORK PROPOSED IN RICHARDSON GROVE STATE PARK

Caltrans is considering ways to minimize impacts to the resources and visitors of Richardson Grove State Park. In particular, the following are some measures being considered to minimize impacts to tree roots:

- Work within a certain distance from old growth redwood trees shall be done by hand to minimize disturbance or damage to roots.
- Redwood tree roots that must be cut shall be cut cleanly with a sharp instrument in order to promote healing.
- In areas requiring minor widening, new structural sections are being considered to minimize structural section thickness, provide greater porosity to minimize dehydration, minimize compaction of roots and minimize thermal exposure to roots.
- In locations where fill would be placed next to the trunk of a large redwood tree, natural woody debris shall be used to protect the trunk of the tree and promote air circulation.