



FERGUSON SLIDE

Restoration Project



Merced River's Wild and Scenic River Outstandingly Remarkable Values



Geology – the project area is in a steep inner gorge with highly fractured rocks. Exposure of the rocks within the canyon has provided an opportunity for understanding the geologic history of the area. Rockslides appear to be characteristic of the geology of the area. All cuts should be at a 1:4 slope ratio, and made to minimize the possibility of producing minor rockfalls as well as to retain existing rock outcropping where possible. Build Alternatives C, T and S would avoid topographic features adjacent to the Ferguson rockslide that could be dormant rockslides.



Image provided by Corrie Robinson of The Department of Transportation

Vegetation – the Merced River Canyon in the project area harbors several species of plants, such as Tompkins' sedge (*Carex tompkinsii*), smallflower monkeyflower (*Mimulus inconspicuus*), Mariposa/Merced clarkia's (*Clarkia* spp.), and elongate copper moss (*Mielichhoferia elongate*). Build Alternatives C, T and S completely avoid impacts to all but three patches of copper moss. The clumps of moss that would be removed are on ledges of human-made rock faces that were created when the highway and rail beds were originally built. Any further cuts into these rock faces that create vertical walls and/or underhangs would only reestablish new habitat for the moss rather than diminish any habitat.

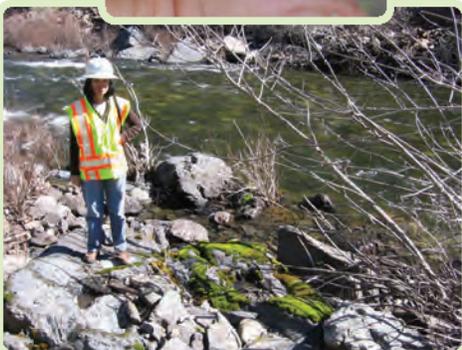


Image provided by Sarah Johnson of The Department of Transportation

Cultural (pre/historical, traditional) – To comply with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, Caltrans archaeologists and architectural historians conducted archival research and a pedestrian survey of the Ferguson Slide project area and recorded four historic sites and one prehistoric site. The results of the survey are summarized in the September 2007 Historic Property Survey Report. The Historic Property Survey Report concluded that the proposed project would not affect the historic values of the Merced River. The State Historic Preservation Officer concurred with Caltrans' findings on October 10, 2007. Caltrans is continuing to coordinate with the U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management and the American Indian Council of Mariposa for pre-historic and historic as well as possible ongoing traditional uses in the area of the proposed project.

Site CA-MRP-001566 - a prehistoric bedrock mortar site would be protected during construction by designation as an Environmentally Sensitive Area. Environmentally Sensitive Area fencing would be installed during construction and monitored by professionally qualified staff.

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