Los Molinos Stormdrain Project

State Route 99 in Tehama County
02-TEH-99-11.8/12.6
EA 02-4C580

Initial Study with
Proposed Negative Declaration

Prepared by the
State of California Department of Transportation

June 2010

Caltrans

General Information About This Document

What's in this document?

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) has prepared this Initial Study, which discloses the potential environmental impacts of the proposed project. This document describes why the project is being proposed, the physical conditions of the project site, and discusses the potential impacts that would result from development of the proposed project.

What should you do?

- Please read this Initial Study. Additional copies of this document as well as the technical studies are available for review at the Caltrans District 2 Office of Environmental Management at 1657 Riverside Drive, Redding, CA 96001.

- A copy of this initial study can also be reviewed at the Tehama County Library, 645 Madison Street, Red Bluff**,** CA 96080-3383.

- We welcome your comments. If you have any concerns regarding the proposed project, send your written comments to Caltrans by the deadline below. Submit comments via U.S. mail to Caltrans at the following address:

  Andre' Benoist, Associate Environmental Planner
  Environmental Management, MS. 30
  1657 Riverside Drive
  Redding, CA 96001

- Submit comments via email to: Andre.Benoist@dot.ca.gov.

- Submit comments by the deadline: **5p.m. July 12, 2010.**

What happens next?

After comments are received from the public and reviewing agencies, Caltrans may take the following actions:

1. Give environmental approval to the proposed project. If the project is given environmental approval and funding is appropriated, Caltrans could design and construct all or part of the project.

2. Do additional environmental studies and update this document.

3. Abandon the project.

For individuals with sensory disabilities, this document is available in Braille, large print, on audiocassette, or computer disk. To obtain a copy in one of these alternate formats, please call or write to Caltrans, Attn: Andre' Benoist 1657 Riverside Drive, Redding, CA 96001. Voice 530-225-3302, or use the California Relay Service TTY number, 1-800-735-2929.

SCH#_____
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Initial Study with Proposed Negative Declaration

Submitted Pursuant to: (State) Division 13, California Resources Code

THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
Department of Transportation

6/9/10
Date of Approval

FOR
Cindy Anderson, Office Chief – North
North Region Environmental Services
California Department of Transportation

State of California
Department of Transportation

SCH#_____
02-TEH-99-11.8/12.6
4c580

Negative Declaration

Pursuant to: Division 13, Public Resources Code

Project Description

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) proposes stormdrain improvements in Tehama County on Highway 99, in the community of Los Molinos from Tehama Vina Road to South Center Street.

The improvements consist of: shoulder widening, repaving, installation of new curb, gutter and sidewalk, new stormdrains and a new stormdrain main that would outlet into Mill Slough. Additional work includes intersection lighting and roadway restriping.

In an effort to avoid interruptions to irrigation and railroad services, and to avoid impacts to large, mature, oak woodlands, and to minimize disturbance to private property, the stormdrain main from Grant Street to Mill Slough would be constructed using a jack and bore (tunnel) construction method. This method would minimize construction related impacts compared to an open trench construction method.

Determination

Caltrans has prepared an Initial Study for this project and, pending public review, expects to determine from this study that the project **would not** have a significant effect on the environment for the following reasons:

- The project **would not** have an effect on: *Aesthetics, Agricultural Resources, Air Quality, Cultural Resources, Geology/Soils, Hazards and Hazardous Material, Land Use and Planning, Mineral Resources, Noise, Population/Housing, Public Services, Recreation, Transportation/Traffic, or Utilities/Service Systems and Mandatory Findings of Significance.*
- The project would have a *Less Than Significant Impact* on: *Biological Resources and Hydrology/Water Quality.*

_____ _____

JOHN BULINSKI, District Director Date
California Department of Transportation

Initial Study

Project Title

Los Molinos Stormdrain Project.

Lead Agency Name, Address and Contact Person

California Department of Transportation
1657 Riverside Drive, Redding, CA 96001
Andre' Benoist, Associate Environmental Planner, (530) 225-3302.

Project Location

The project area is located in Tehama County on State Route 99, in the community of Los Molinos from the intersection of Tehama Vina Road, south to South Center Street (see Attachment A, Location Map).

Project Sponsor's Name and Address

California Department of Transportation
Andre' Benoist, Associate Environmental Planner
1657 Riverside Drive, Redding, CA 96001

Need and Purpose

The community of Los Molinos experiences frequent standing water and localized flooding during the rainy season due to a lack of stormdrain facilities. Standing water is a potentially hazardous condition for highway operations and private property owners.

The purpose of the project is to direct stormwater runoff away from the highway, local streets and private properties.

To address the need and meet the purpose, Caltrans proposes stormdrain improvements along Highway 99 and local streets. A stormdrain system would direct surface runoff away from the highway, local streets and private properties, improving traffic operations and safety. Residential and commercial properties would benefit because stormwater runoff would be captured and re-directed before it enters private property.

Description of Project

Caltrans proposes to make several improvements to the existing highway and local streets to direct stormwater runoff into new and existing stormdrain facilities (see Attachment B, Environmental Study Request Exhibit, sheets 1 thru 4). This work would include:

- Approximately 500 feet of new 24-inch stormdrain pipe to be installed on the west side of Highway 99, extending north from the intersection of Aramayo Way.
- Approximately 400 feet of new 36-inch stormdrain pipe to be installed on the north side of Aramayo Way, between Highway 99 and Oak Street.
- A new 36-inch stormdrain pipe would be installed along Oak Street from Aramayo Way south to Grant Street.
- A new stormdrain outlet pipe consisting of two 36-inch pipes from the west end of Grant Street out to Mill Slough.
- Shoulder widening, and curb, gutter and sidewalk improvements at spot locations on both sides of Highway 99 between Tehama Vina Road and South Center Street.
- New asphalt overlay on Highway 99 between Tehama Vina Road and Grant Street.
- Intersection lighting (street lights) at Highway 99 and Tehama Vina Road.

Affected Environment

All of the improvements would take place within the developed residential and commercial roadside environment with the exception of the stormdrain main from Grant Street to Mill Sough.

The main would connect an existing stormdrain line that ends at the west end of Grant Street and extend it approximately 450 feet west where it would outlet into Mill Slough. The main line would be sized to allow for future expansion of the stormdrain system into the community of Los Molinos (see Attachment B, Environmental Study Request Exhibit, sheets 2 and 3).

The area between the west end of Grant Street and Mill Slough has an irrigation ditch, an active railroad line and several large, mature oak trees on private property. In an effort to avoid interrupting irrigation services and railroad operations, and to minimize impacts to private property and oak woodland habitat, the Department will use a jack and bore (tunnel) construction approach in this area to install the stormdrain line. (See Attachment C, Plan and Profile Details).

The jacking pit would be approximately 20 feet x 35 feet wide and 15 feet deep and would be excavated between the west end of Grant Street and the railroad tracks. The jacking pit would allow a directional drill to make a tunnel 12- to 15- feet below the surface and extend a pipe out to Mill slough. This construction approach would prevent any service interruptions associated with the irrigation canal and the railroad. It would

also minimize surface disturbance associated with open trench construction methods such as tree and brush clearing, excavating an open trench and stockpiling excavated material.

Surrounding Land Uses and Setting

The project improvements would take place within the community of Los Molinos which is in the unincorporated area of Tehama County. The project area includes a mixture of commercial, rural residential and agricultural development on parcels ranging from small residential lots to larger commercial and agricultural properties.

Permits and Approvals Needed

- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 404 Nationwide Permit Authorization.
- Regional Water Quality Control Board, Central Valley Region – 401 Certification
- Department of Fish and Game – 1600 Agreement.
- State Historic Preservation Officer, Section 106 coordination.
- National Marine Fisheries, Section 7 consultation.
- U S Fish and Wildlife Service, Section 7 consultation.

List of Attachments

A. Location Map.

B. Environmental Study Request (sheets 1 through 4).

C. Plan and Profile Details.

Environmental Factors Potentially Affected

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

- ☐ Aesthetics
- ☐ Agricultural Resources
- ☐ Air Quality
- ☐ Biological Resources
- ☐ Cultural Resources
- ☐ Geology/Soils
- ☐ Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- ☐ Hydrology/Water Quality
- ☐ Land Use/Planning
- ☐ Mineral Resources
- ☐ Noise
- ☐ Population/Housing
- ☐ Public Services
- ☐ Recreation
- ☐ Transportation/Traffic
- ☐ Utilities/Service Systems
- ☐ Mandatory Findings of Significance

Impacts Checklist

The impacts checklist starting on the next page identifies physical, biological, social, and economic factors that might be affected by the proposed project. The California Environmental Quality Act impact levels include “potentially significant impact,” “less than significant impact with mitigation,” “less than significant impact,” and “no impact.”

A brief explanation of each California Environmental Quality Act checklist determination follows each checklist item.

	Potentially significant impact	Less than significant impact with mitigation	Less than significant impact	No impact

I. AESTHETICS — Would the project:

a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista? ☐ ☐ ☐ ☒

The project does not have the potential to adversely affect scenic vistas.

b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway? ☐ ☐ ☐ ☒

The project does not have the potential to damage scenic resources. State Route 99 in Tehama County is not an Officially Designated or Eligible State Scenic Highway.

c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings? ☐ ☐ ☐ ☒

The project would not degrade the visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings.

d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area? ☐ ☐ ☒ ☐

The project would not create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area.

New intersection lighting is proposed at Highway 99 and Tehama Vina Road (See Attachment 2, Sheet 1). The proposed lighting is the typical highway lighting standard with a downward facing bulb. The light standards are needed to improve safety at the intersection of Highway 99 and Tehama Vina Road.

The land adjacent to the intersection is developed with commercial properties on the west side of the intersection and one commercial property at the northeast corner of the intersection.

The southeast corner of the intersection contains 2 to 4 residential cottages set back approximately 100 feet from the intersection. A large mature evergreen tree is situated between the intersection and the cottages.

The street lights are not anticipated to adversely affect day or night time views in the area.

II. AGRICULTURE RESOURCES — In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. Would the project:

a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as ☐ ☐ ☐ ☒

	Potentially significant impact	Less than significant impact with mitigation	Less than significant impact	No impact

shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?

The proposed project would not convert farmland to non-agricultural use.

The proposed improvements would mostly take place adjacent to the roadway in areas characterized by residential and commercial development. The stormdrain pipe from the west end of Grant Street to Mill Slough would be bored underground and would not disturb or convert surface soils. Currently the land between Grant Street and Mill Slough is dense with oak woodland habitat and has not been used for agricultural or grazing purposes.

b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	☐	☐	☐	X

The proposed project would not conflict with agricultural use or zoning.

c) Involve other changes in the existing environment, which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use?	☐	☐	☐	X

The project would not involve other changes in the existing environment which could result in a conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use.

III. AIR QUALITY — Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:

a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	☐	☐	☐	X

The project would not create new sources of emissions.

b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?	☐	☐	☐	X

The project would not create new sources of emissions and therefore does not have the potential to contribute to any air quality violations.

c) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state	☐	☐	☐	X

	Potentially significant impact	Less than significant impact with mitigation	Less than significant impact	No impact

ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions, which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?

Tehama County is an Attainment/ Unclassified County and is not subject to air quality conformity requirements. Furthermore, the project would not create new sources of air emissions and therefore does not have the potential to increase pollutants.

d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	☐	☐	☐	X

The project would not expose sensitive receptors to pollutants.

e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?	☐	☐	☐	X

The project would not create objectionable odors.

IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES — Would the project:

a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☐	X	☐

Potentially significant impact	Less than significant impact with mitigation	Less than significant impact	No impact

The proposed stormdrain facilities would outlet into Mill Slough. Mill Slough and the area around the slough have the potential to support Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle (VELB) and the California Red-legged frog (CRF). Both of these species are Federally Protected by the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) under the Endangered Species Act (ESA).

Biological surveys concluded the project will not directly or indirectly affect the protected species. Caltrans has consulted with the USFWS and has their concurrence on this determination.

However, because the area has the <u>potential</u> to support listed species, the following conservation measures have been incorporated into the project to further minimize the potential to affect these species.

1. ***No construction activity would occur within 20 feet of the two elderberry bushes located in the project area.***

2. ***All work in Mill Slough would take place between July 15 and October 15.***

3. ***Vegetation removed would be the minimum necessary to complete the project.***

4. ***The new stormdrain main from Grant Street to Mill Slough would be bored underground to minimize impacts to large, mature oak trees and surrounding oak woodland habitat.***

5. ***All understory riparian vegetation removed for construction will be replanted with native riparian species after the project is constructed.***

6. ***A temporary construction area would be fenced in to protect adjacent vegetation from unnecessary clearing. Fencing would take place prior to any construction activity. Placement of the fence would be inspected and approved by the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG).***

7. ***Any damage to avoidance areas would be reported to the USFWS and would be restored following construction.***

8. ***No insecticides, herbicides, fertilizers or other chemicals would be used within 20 feet of either elderberry.***

9. ***A Caltrans Environmental Construction Liaison would monitor construction periodically to ensure compliance with all of the requirements included in the biological assessment.***

Additional information can be reviewed in the Biological Assessment dated April 2010, prepared for the project on file with the Department.

	Potentially significant impact	Less than significant impact with mitigation	Less than significant impact	No impact
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, and regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☐	X	☐

The project area between Grant Street and Mill Slough contains mature, riparian oak woodland habitat.

Originally the design proposed clearing all vegetation from Grant Street to Mill Slough in order to construct the stormdrain pipe using an open trench construction method. This would have resulted in clearing an area approximately 50 feet x 450 feet wide (22,500 square feet or 0.52 acres) of riparian oak woodland habitat.

In an effort to minimize disturbance to the riparian oak woodland habitat, Caltrans will use a jack and bore (tunnel) construction method to construct the stormdrain pipe from Grant Street out to Mill Slough. This approach will require excavating a drilling pit approximately 40 feet x 60 feet wide (2,400 square feet or 0.05 acres). When the drilling equipment reaches the end point at Mill Slough, a tractor will pick up the drill head and transport it out of the riparian area without any additional tree removal.

Also, the original plan for the stormdrain outlet called for a large rock pad to be constructed across the slough from bank to bank. This would have resulted in rock lining an area of the slough approximately 20 feet x 75 feet wide (1,500 square feet or 0.03 acres).

Additional hydraulic studies were performed to determine the minimum amount of rock pad needed to protect the bank of the slough from erosion at the outlet. Hydraulic studies concluded that a much smaller pad, approximately 14 feet x 15 feet wide (210 square feet or 0.005 acres) are all that would be needed to dissipate water energy and protect the banks from erosion.

The understory of the riparian area (bushes, vines and trees less than 12 inch diameter) would be temporarily disturbed by construction activities.

c) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	☐	☐	☐	X

The project limits have been surveyed for wetlands. Surveys concluded there are no wetlands present within the project limits.

d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?	☐	☐	X	☐

Potentially significant impact	Less than significant impact with mitigation	Less than significant impact	No impact

Mill Slough is federally designated fish habitat for federally protected species of fish. The protected species include Sacramento River winter-run Chinook salmon and Central Valley spring-run Chinook (Oncorhynchus tshawytscha), and Central Valley steelhead (Oncorhynchus mykiss). All three species and their habitat are protected by the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) under the Endangered Species Act (ESA).

The stormdrain outlet into Mill Slough does not have the potential to significantly affect fish and wildlife corridors or movement. Biological surveys concluded that affects to fish and their habitat can be reduced or avoided with a few preventative measures during construction. Implementing preventative measures would protect the species and their habitat from direct and indirect affects of the project. Caltrans has consulted with the USFWS and has their concurrence on this determination.

To protect fish species and their habitat, the following preventative (avoidance and minimization) measures will be incorporated into the project plans:

1. ***All in-stream work would take place between July 15 and October 31, when salmon are not likely to be present in Mill Slough.***

2. ***Fish passage around the work area would be maintained at all times when water is present.***

3. ***Removal of understory riparian vegetation shall not exceed the minimum area needed to complete construction.***

4. ***Construction fencing (type ESA) would be established to protect all areas outside of the construction area.***

5. ***Approximately 0.28 acres of valley oak woodland and 0.3 acre of Great Valley valley oak riparian forest understory would be temporarily impacted by construction. Impacted areas would be replanted with appropriate species.***

6. ***The contractor shall prepare and implement a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan, including a Spill Prevention Plan.***

7. ***A Caltrans Environmental Construction Liaison would monitor construction periodically to ensure compliance with all of the requirements included in this assessment.***

Additional information can be reviewed in the Biological Assessment and Essential Fish Habitat Assessment prepared for the project, on file with the Department.

e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	☐	☐	☐	X

The project would not conflict with local resource policies.

	Potentially significant impact	Less than significant impact with mitigation	Less than significant impact	No impact
f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	☐	☐	☐	X

The project does not have the potential to conflict with any local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan

V. CULTURAL RESOURCES — Would the project:

a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in §15064.5?	☐	☐	☐	X

The project would not have an effect on historical resources. A Historic Property Survey Report (HPSR) dated May 2010, has been prepared for this project and is on file with the Department.

b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?	☐	☐	☐	X

The project would not have an effect on archaeological resources. An Archaeological Survey Report (ASR) dated May 2010, has been prepared for this project and is on file with the Department.

c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	☐	☐	☐	X

The project would not have an effect on paleontological resources or unique geologic features.

d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	☐	☐	☐	X

The project limits have been surveyed for cultural resources. The area between Grant Street and Mill Slough had excavation pits created to allow archaeological staff a chance to examine sub-surface cultural indicators. The excavation pits showed no signs of habitation or settlement by native cultures. The likelihood of encountering cultural artifacts including remains is expected to be very low. A Historic Property Survey Report/ Archaeological Survey Report (HPSR/ASR) dated May 2010 has been prepared for this project and is on file with the Department.

VI. GEOLOGY AND SOILS — Would the project:

a) Expose people or structures to potential

	Potentially significant impact	Less than significant impact with mitigation	Less than significant impact	No impact
substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:	☐	☐	☐	X
i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.	☐	☐	☐	X
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	☐	☐	☐	X
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	☐	☐	☐	X
iv) Landslides?	☐	☐	☐	X

The project would not expose people or structures to seismic events or landslides.

b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	☐	☐	☐	X

The project would not contribute to soil erosion or loss of top soil.

c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in onsite or offsite landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse?	☐	☐	☐	X

The stormdrain improvements would take place on the following soil classifications: Keefers cobbly loam (Kc), moderately deep, 0-3% slopes, Los Robles loam (Lo), 0-3% percent slopes, and Millrace cobbly fine sandy loam (Mo), 0-3% slopes.
None of these soil classifications are described as being unstable and the proposed improvements are not anticipated to cause instability.

d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property.	☐	☐	☐	X

The soil types found in the project area are not characterized as expansive. There are no substantial risks to life or property anticipated with this project.

e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of

	Potentially significant impact	Less than significant impact with mitigation	Less than significant impact	No impact
septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?	☐	☐	☐	X

The project would not include or affect sewer, septic or alternative wastewater disposal systems. The project would not affect existing or future sewer, septic or alternative wastewater disposal systems.

VII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS: Would the project:

a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?

b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?

(a and b) The improvements proposed by this project would not generate or introduce new, permanent sources of greenhouse gas emissions. A temporary increase in vehicle emissions would occur from construction vehicles entering and leaving the project site. These emissions would not directly or indirectly have a significant effect on the environment. Additionally, these emissions would not conflict with any known applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases

-Caltrans has included this good faith effort to provide the public and decision-makers as much information as possible about the project. It is Caltrans determination that, in the absence of further regulatory or scientific information related to Greenhouse Gas Emissions and CEQA significance, it is too speculative to make a significance determination regarding the project's direct and indirect impact with respect to climate change.-

VIII. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS
— Would the project:

a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	☐	☐	☐	X

The project would not result in a use that creates, transports or disposes of hazardous materials.

b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	☐	☐	☐	X

Potentially significant impact	Less than significant impact with mitigation	Less than significant impact	No impact

The project would not involve the use or transport of hazardous materials.

c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school? ☐ ☐ ☐ X

The project would not emit or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances or waste.

d) Be located on a site that is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment? ☐ ☐ ☐ X

The project limits do not contain any hazardous material sites that have required clean up or remediation. Two gas station/convenience stores have been identified within the project limits. Both businesses have permits for underground storage tanks. An Initial Site Assessment (ISA) dated January 2009, has been prepared for the project and is on file with the Department.

e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area? ☐ ☐ ☐ X

The project would not result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area.

f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area? ☐ ☐ ☐ X

The project would not have the potential to result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area.

g) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan? ☐ ☐ ☐ X

The project would not have the potential to conflict with an emergency evacuation plan.

	Potentially significant impact	Less than significant impact with mitigation	Less than significant impact	No impact
h) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?	☐	☐	☐	X

The project would not expose people or property to wildfires.

IX. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

— Would the project:

a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?	☐	☐	X	☐

The water quality of the slough has been evaluated for pre- and post- project conditions. The results concluded the existing water quality of the slough is good.

When compared to typical properties of highway stormwater runoff, the study concluded that the project would have a negligible effect to water quality in the slough. Additional stormwater analysis concluded that the project would not violate water quality standards or waste discharge requirements. A memo to the project file dated February 2010, and supporting data is on file with the department.

b) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level that would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?	☐	☐	☐	X

The project does not have the potential to deplete groundwater supplies or interfere with groundwater recharge.

c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner that would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or offsite?	☐	☐	X	☐

The project would change the drainage pattern on and adjacent to the highway to reduce or eliminate standing water and localized flooding. The project would not change the drainage pattern of any streams or watercourses in the area. The proposed stormdrain would outlet onto a rock pad. The rock pad diffuses the water and protects the channel and banks of the slough from erosion (see drainage plan and profile detail, Attachment C.

	Potentially significant impact	Less than significant impact with mitigation	Less than significant impact	No impact
d) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner that would result in flooding on- or offsite?	☐	☐	X	☐

The project would be constructed in areas outside of the 100-year flood plain (zone C). Three drainage features (Los Molinos Creek, Mill Slough and an unnamed irrigation ditch) pass through the project area and have a mapped floodplain as shown on FEMA panel number 065064 0660 C, February 4, 1987. The primary source of flooding at these locations is caused by backwater from the Sacramento River.

Hydraulic studies have determined the improvements proposed with this project would have an insignificant increase for the 2-, 10- and 100-year flood frequencies. The project would not change the mapped floodplain boundary and it would not change the base flood elevation of Mill Slough.

Additional information can be reviewed in the memos from Caltrans Hydraulic Division dated September 17, 2009, September 15, 2009 and February 24, 2009, and the Preliminary Drainage Report dated April 2009, and the Los Molinos Drainage Study prepared by Tehama County Public Works.

e) Create or contribute runoff water that would exceed the capacity of existing or planned storm water drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?	☐	☐	☐	X

The project would provide stormwater facilities that would be sized to accommodate future development (oversized). The new stormdrain would not provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff (see response a, above).

f) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?	☐	☐	☐	X

The project would not degrade water quality. See responses to a) and c) above.

g) Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?	☐	☐	☐	X

Housing is not proposed with this project.

h) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures that would impede or redirect flood flows?	☐	☐	☐	X

	Potentially significant impact	Less than significant impact with mitigation	Less than significant impact	No impact

The project would not place structures within the 100-year flood hazard area that would impede or redirect flows.

i) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?	☐	☐	☐	X

The project would not expose people or structures to a risk of flooding as a result of a levee or dam failure.

j) Result in inundation by a seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?	☐	☐	☐	X

The project would not occur in an area affected by seiches, tsunamis or mudflows.

X. LAND USE AND PLANNING — Would the project:

a) Physically divide an established community?	☐	☐	☐	X

The project would not divide an established community.

b) Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	☐	☐	☐	X

The project would not conflict with any applicable land use plan.

c) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?	☐	☐	☐	X

The project would not conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan.

XI. MINERAL RESOURCES — Would the project:

a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?	☐	☐	☐	X
b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan?	☐	☐	☐	X

Potentially significant impact	Less than significant impact with mitigation	Less than significant impact	No impact

(a and b) The project would not affect mineral resources.

XII. NOISE — Would the project result in:

a) Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	☐	☐	☐	X

The project would not expose people to new, permanent sources of noise.

b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	☐	☐	☐	X

The project would not expose people to new, permanent sources of noise or vibration.

c) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	☐	☐	☐	X

The project would not introduce new permanent sources of noise.

d) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	☐	☐	X	☐

The project would not create substantial temporary or periodic increases in ambient noise.

There would be a temporary increase in noise levels associated with construction activities. These temporary construction noise sources include trucks, dumptrucks, commercial tractors such as loaders and excavators, and boring equipment.

The project area takes place adjacent to the existing highway and local streets. An active railroad line also runs through the project limits. The temporary construction noise is not anticipated to exceed ambient noise levels or temporary increases in ambient noise associated with highway and railroad traffic.

Night time construction (night work) is not planned or anticipated to take place on this project. However, night work could occur with this project if the contractor felt it was necessary. At this time, there is no plan to specifically prohibit night work for this project.

	Potentially significant impact	Less than significant impact with mitigation	Less than significant impact	No impact
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	☐	☐	☐	X

The project would not create a new source of exposure to people from aircraft noise.

f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	☐	☐	☐	X

The project would not create a new source of exposure to people from aircraft noise.

XIII. POPULATION AND HOUSING — Would the project:

a) Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?	☐	☐	☐	X

The project does not have the potential to directly or indirectly induce substantial population growth.

b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	☐	☐	☐	X

The project does not have the potential to displace housing.

c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	☐	☐	☐	X

The project does not have the potential to displace people.

Potentially significant impact	Less than significant impact with mitigation	Less than significant impact	No impact

XIV. PUBLIC SERVICES —

Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for any of the public services:

Fire protection?	☐	☐	☐	X
Police protection?	☐	☐	☐	X
Schools?	☐	☐	☐	X
Parks?	☐	☐	☐	X
Other public facilities?	☐	☐	☐	X

The project does not have the potential to adversely affect public services including the Departments ability to operate and maintain the State Highway System or the Storm Drain System.

XV. RECREATION —

a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	☐	☐	☐	X

The project would not increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities.

b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	☐	☐	☐	X

The project would not provide or expand the use of recreational facilities.

XVI. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC — Would the project:

	Potentially significant impact	Less than significant impact with mitigation	Less than significant impact	No impact
a) Cause an increase in traffic that is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system (i.e., result in a substantial increase in either the number of vehicle trips, the volume to capacity ratio on roads, or congestion at intersections)?	☐	☐	☐	X

The project would not cause an increase in traffic.

b) Exceed, either individually or cumulatively, a level of service standard established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?	☐	☐	☐	X

The project would not affect Level of Service (LOS) standards.

c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that result in substantial safety risks?	☐	☐	☐	X

The project would not affect air traffic.

d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	☐	☐	☐	X

The project would not introduce design features that cause safety or incompatible land use issues.

e) Result in inadequate emergency access?	☐	☐	☐	X

The project would not affect emergency access.

f) Result in inadequate parking capacity?	☐	☐	☐	X

The project would not increase demands on available parking spaces.

g) Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation (e.g., bus turnouts, bicycle racks)?	☐	☐	☐	X

The project would not conflict with alternative transportation policies, plans or programs.

Potentially significant impact	Less than significant impact with mitigation	Less than significant impact	No impact

XVII. UTILITY AND SERVICE SYSTEMS —
Would the project:

a) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board? ☐ ☐ X ☐

The project would not exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the Regional Water Quality Control Board. A water quality analysis was performed on water samples taken from Mill Slough and compared them to the anticipated effects of the project. The analysis concluded that the project would have a negligible effect on water quality in the slough. For additional information, see the water quality analysis memo dated February 02, 2010.

b) Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects? ☐ ☐ ☐ X

The project would not affect require or result in the construction of new water or waste water treatment facilities.

c) Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects? ☐ ☐ ☐ X

The project would construct stormwater facilities to alleviate flooding on the highway and adjacent properties. The improvements are oversized to provide for future buildout of the facilities to serve the community of Los Molinos.

d) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed? ☐ ☐ ☐ X

The project would not increase demands on water supplies.

e) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider that serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments? ☐ ☐ ☐ X

The project would not require or affect wastewater treatment services.

f) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs? ☐ ☐ ☐ X

Potentially significant impact	Less than significant impact with mitigation	Less than significant impact	No impact

The project would not require or affect solid waste services.

g) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	☐	☐	☐	X

The project would not require or affect solid waste services.

XVIII. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE —

a) Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	☐	☐	X	☐

The proposed project does not have the potential to degrade the environment, threaten plant or animal communities, or affect historical resources. Hydraulic studies and water quality analysis concluded the project would have an insignificant effect on floodplain elevations, water quality and the ability of Mill Slough to support various life stages of fish.

b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?	☐	☐	X	☐

Although the project proposed in this Initial Study is relatively small in scope and potential to affect the environment, the improvements have been designed to accommodate future build out of a larger storm drain system in the community of Los Molinos. At this time, there are no known plans or proposals to extend the stormdrain system beyond what is proposed.

c) Does the project have environmental effects that will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	☐	☐	☐	X

The proposed project does not have the potential to directly or indirectly cause adverse effects on humans.

List of Preparers

The following Caltrans North Region staff contributed to the preparation of this Initial Study:

Andre' Benoist, Associate Environmental Planner

Tom Balkow, Branch Chief Environmental Management

Cindy Anderson, Office Chief, North Region Environmental Services

Kathy Eckard, Project Engineer

Steve Rogers, Project Manager

Kristen Kingsley, Toby Crawford, Hydraulics Engineers

Tom Graves, Hazardous Waste Coordinator

Beth Bennett, Archaeologist

Sharon Stacey, Biologist

Miguel Villicana, Stormwater Coordinator

Attachment A

Location Map

Attachment B

Environmental Study Request

-Sheets 1 through 4-

Attachment C

Plan View and Cross Section Detail