# State Route 89 Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements

Placer and Nevada Counties, California

03-PLA-89-PM 21.4/21.7

03-NEV-89-PM 0.0/0.4

EA: 03-1C0800 (EFIS: 03-00000231)

## Initial Study
## with Proposed Negative Declaration

Prepared by the

State of California Department of Transportation

January 2011

# General Information About This Document

## *What's in this document?*

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) has prepared this Initial Study, which examines the potential environmental impacts of alternatives being considered for the proposed project located in the Town of Truckee and within both Placer and Nevada Counties, California. The document describes why the project is being proposed, the existing environment that could be affected by the project, and the proposed avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures.

## *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 3 Office of Environmental Management located at 703 B Street, Marysville, CA 95901; the Nevada County Library, 10031 Levon Avenue, Truckee, CA 96161; the Sierra College Tahoe-Truckee Center, 11001 College Trail, Truckee, CA 96161; and the Placer County Library, 350 Nevada Street, Auburn, CA 95603.

- We welcome your comments. If you have any comments regarding the proposed project, please attend the Truckee Town Council Meeting on February 3, 2011 at the Truckee Council Chambers, 10183 Truckee Airport Road, Truckee, CA or send your written comments, via U. S. mail or email, to the following addresses by the deadline.

  Suzanne Melim, Environmental Branch Chief
  California Department of Transportation, Caltrans District 3
  703 B Street
  Marysville, CA 95901

  Email: Suzanne_Melim@dot.ca.gov

- Submit comments by the deadline: March 7, 2011

## *What happens next?*

After comments are received from the public and reviewing agencies, Caltrans may 1) give environmental approval to the proposed project, 2) do additional environmental studies, or 3) abandon the project. If the project is given environmental approval and funding is appropriated, Caltrans could design and construct all or part of 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: Suzanne Melim, Environmental Branch Chief, California Department of Transportation, 703 B Street, Marysville, CA 95901; (530) 741-4484. Voice, or use the California Relay Service TTY number, 1-800-735-2929.

03-PLA-89-PM 21.4/21.7
03-NEV-89-PM 0.0/0.4
EA: 03-1C0800
(EFIS: 03-00000231)

State Route 89 Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements
in
Placer and Nevada Counties between West River Street and Deerfield Drive in the Truckee area.

# INITIAL STUDY with Proposed Negative Declaration

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

THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
Department of Transportation

31 January 2011
Date of Approval

John D. Webb, Chief
North Region Environmental Services, South
California Department of Transportation

**State of California**
**Department of Transportation**

SCH Number:
03-PLA/NEV 89
PM: PLA-21.4/21.7, NEV-0.0/0.4
EA: 03-1C0800

# Proposed Negative Declaration

Pursuant to: Division 13, Public Resources Code

## *Project Description*

The California Department of Transportation proposes to construct a multi-use path and tunnel, along with other roadside improvements, along the east side of State Route (SR) 89 between West River Street and Deerfield Drive, located in, and just outside of, Truckee, California. The project limits extend from post mile (PM) 21.4 to 21.7 in Placer County and PM 0.0 to 0.4 in Nevada County. The portion of the project located in Nevada County is also within the limits of the Town of Truckee. The proposed project includes construction of a new underpass tunnel just east of the existing Donner Creek Underpass, Bridge Number 17-0016. Other roadside improvements include constructing an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant trail, retaining walls and bus turnout, as well as modifying an existing traffic signal, resurfacing an island median, installing curb and gutters, and replacing drainage systems.

## *Determination*

The proposed Negative Declaration is included to give notice to interested agencies and the public that it is Caltrans' intent to adopt a Negative Declaration for this project. This does not mean that Caltrans' decision regarding the project is final. This Negative Declaration is subject to modification based on comments received by interested agencies and the public.

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

- The proposed project would have minimal or no effect on agriculture and forest resources, air quality, cultural resources, geology and soils, land use and planning, mineral resources, noise, population and housing, public services, recreation, and utilities.
- The proposed project would have no effect on jurisdictional waters, special status species, and riparian vegetation with the implementation of avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures.
- The proposed project would have no adverse effect on migratory birds, water quality, hazardous waste/materials, and scenic resources with the implementation of avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures.

DRAFT

_____ _____

John D. Webb, Chief
North Region Environmental Services - South
California Department of Transportation

Date

# Chapter 1 – Proposed Project

## Introduction

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), in conjunction with the Town of Truckee, proposes a project to improve bicycle and pedestrian use through the Donner Creek Underpass, known locally as the "Mousehole," along State Route (SR) 89 in Placer County from post mile (PM) 21.4 to 21.7 and in Nevada County from PM 0.0 to 0.4 (see Figure 1 and 2).

The proposed project is located on SR 89 from 500 feet south of the West River Street intersection in Placer County to 300 feet north of the Deerfield Drive intersection in Nevada County. The portion of the project located in Nevada County extends into the Truckee town limits. A 30-feet high embankment, supporting the tracks of the Union Pacific Railroad, is also within the project limits. This embankment contains the Donner Creek Underpass tunnel.

For the past several years, the Nevada County Transportation Commission, which is the Regional Transportation Planning Agency for Nevada County, has identified this project as a need in the Regional Transportation Improvement Program. The construction of the multi-use tunnel is a program priority for eastern Nevada County. The project is consistent with all applicable local and regional plans.

The project is expected to be constructed during the summer seasons of 2012 and 2013, depending on construction funding availability. Because of the duration of the project, there could likely be temporary traffic impacts.

**Brief History of the Donner Creek Underpass, Bridge No 17-0016**

The Central Pacific Railroad (CPRR) began construction of the Transcontinental Railroad route in from Sacramento, California in 1862. In 1867 the CPRR constructed the first wooden trestle bridge over Donner Creek in the area now occupied by the earthen embankment. That trestle's abutments are still visible on the northwest side of the embankment. Because wooden trestles were in the habit of catching fire, in 1901 the CPRR replaced the wooden trestle over Donner Creek with the current rock and dirt embankment. According to the local newspaper in 1901/1902, the construction crews erected a trestle across the gorge to "run the cars out on to dump the dirt." That trestle, or a portion of it, is now concealed within the embankment. To accommodate Donner Creek, a rock arched opening made from local stone was constructed through the embankment. In 1923 the present double track was constructed on top of the

embankment. In 1928 the Donner Creek Underpass, locally known as the "Mousehole," was constructed.

## Purpose and Need

The purpose of the project is to provide pedestrians and non-motorized vehicle users with an efficient method for traversing along the east side of SR 89 within the project limits. The east side of the corridor, from West River Street to Deerfield Drive, would be modified to include a multi-use path. A new multi-use tunnel would be constructed through the Union Pacific Railroad embankment just east of the existing Donner Creek Underpass tunnel and would provide access from one side of the embankment to the other. A bus pullout would be constructed on the south side of the embankment approximately 200 feet north of the Donner Creek Mobile Home Park driveway.

The need for this project is a result of the existing Donner Creek Underpass tunnels' inability to effectively accommodate both vehicle traffic and pedestrians or non-motorized vehicle users, especially during periods of peak traffic. The existing Donner Creek Underpass tunnel is 25 feet wide and 68 feet long and accommodates two lanes of traffic, one in each direction, with no shoulders. Currently trucks, buses, emergency vehicle, pedestrians, and bicyclists must share the two lanes within the tunnel. Additionally, the current bus stop between the West River Street intersection and the driveway to Donner Creek Mobile Home Park is located on an unimproved widened shoulder area.

## Alternatives

### Build Alternative

The build alternative proposes to construct a multi-use path along the east side of SR 89 between West River Street and Deerfield Drive (see Figure 3). At the south end of the project, the

10-foot wide asphalt multi-use path would begin 100 feet north of the West River Street intersection. The path would continue north to the existing Union Pacific Railroad embankment where a tunnel, measuring approximately 12 feet wide by 10 feet high by 121 feet long, would be constructed through the railroad embankment. From the new tunnel, the path would continue north along SR 89 and connect to existing facilities at the east side of the Deerfield Drive intersection. Both the path and the tunnel would be constructed to the standards of a Class I bikeway, wherever practical, and would also conform to the accessibility requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and Section 4450 of the California Government Code.

In addition, the proposed project also includes the following improvements:

Three retaining walls would be constructed at the following locations on the east side of SR 89.

- Retaining Wall #1 - beginning approximately 300 feet north of West River Street, would extend north for approximately 325 feet with a varying height of 4 feet to 8 feet.

- Retaining Wall #2 - beginning just north of the existing Union Pacific Railroad embankment, would extend 525 feet in length with a varying height of 6 feet to 16 feet.

- Retaining Wall #3 - would run south from the Deerfield Drive and SR 89 intersection, for approximately 250 feet in length and would be 6 feet high.

Three drainage systems would be rehabilitated or replaced.

- Drainage System #1 - located just north of West River Street, will be either rehabilitated or replaced in-kind.

- Drainage System # 2 - located about 100 feet north of the existing Donner Creek Underpass tunnel will be replaced to a 24” culvert from the existing 18” culvert. The existing inlet will be replaced and a new inlet will be added between the highway and the new multi-use path.

- Drainage System #3 - located approximately 250 feet north of the underpass tunnel will be either rehabilitated or replaced. A preliminary analysis indicates that upgrading this system to a 30” culvert may be required.

The project includes the following additional improvements:

- A five-foot wide concrete trail (Portland cement or asphalt), compliant with Americans with Disability Act and the California Government Code requirements, would be constructed within the Caltrans right-of-way to connect the Donner Creek Mobile Home Park driveway with the new multi-use trail and the bus turnout.

- A new bus turnout would be constructed 200 feet north of the Donner Creek Mobile Home Park driveway replacing the existing bus stop currently located just north of the driveway. The bus turnout would accommodate a 45-foot bus.

- The existing signal poles at Deerfield Drive on the east side of the highway would be relocated so they are not in conflict with Retaining Wall #3 or the path.

- The existing median island, located near Deerfield Drive and the Crossroads Shopping Center, would be treated with an aesthetically-stamped concrete treatment.

To accommodate construction activities, various utilities and roadway signs would be relocated. The following utilities are present within the project limits: one gas line, one water line, various overhead electrical service lines, one petroleum products pipeline, two telecommunication lines, a Union Pacific Railroad signal house and utility pole. The Town of Truckee and Caltrans Right of Way has, and will continue to, coordinate with all utility companies represented in the project area, as well as the Union Pacific Railroad.

One-lane traffic control and temporary closures would be necessary to accommodate construction. A Traffic Management Plan (TMP) would be prepared for the project. The plan would identify methods to reduce impacts from construction activities, minimize delays for motorists and pedestrians, and provide a safe work zone. The project is expected to be in construction for two summer seasons. The following measures are required or recommended by the TMP Checklist and Data Sheet:

- During construction operations, a minimum of one paved traffic lane, not less than 11 feet wide, shall be open for use by public traffic using reversible traffic control. Two lanes shall remain open when construction operations are not actively in progress.

- No lane closures, shoulder closures, or other traffic restrictions will be allowed on Friday afternoon, Saturday, Sunday, designated legal holidays, the day preceding designated legal holidays, and when construction operations are not actively in progress.

- From Memorial Day to Labor Day, work on SR 89 will be limited due to the high traffic volumes on this busy corridor. Lane closure hours will vary depending on type of work and will likely be allowed during low demand hours at nighttime.

- Work can be performed during day time hours when lane closure is not required.

- Portable changeable message signs (PCMS) and flaggers will be required in the direction of traffic during construction for each lane or shoulder closure.

- Access to driveways, mobile home park driveways and cross streets must be maintained during construction, in accordance with traffic control standard plans or traffic handling plans.

- Pedestrian and bicycle access must be maintained during construction. Additional signs will be required to detour pedestrians and bicycle traffic.

- Coordination with UPRR authorities is necessary when for the portion of construction that must occur near the railroad tracks.

- Coordinating with projects adjacent to or within the limits of this project will be required to avoid conflicts.

- The TMP should also address any construction of nearby highway projects and commercial development projects whose construction schedule might overlap with that of the S.R. 89 Bicycle and Pedestrian project.

The project may be built all at once or in the following phases:

- Construct a pedestrian/bicycle tunnel under the railroad and a short multi-use path connection to the existing roadway shoulder north and south of the tunnel.

- Construct multi-use path from tunnel to Deerfield Drive.

- Construct multi-use path from tunnel to West River Street.

## No Build Alternative

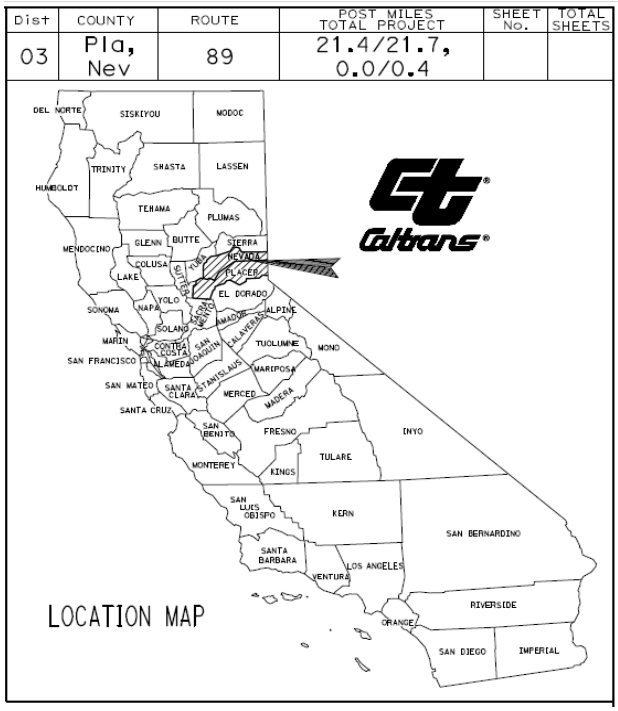
A No Build Alternative is included to provide a baseline for comparison of the impacts of the proposed project. A No Build Alternative would result in the facility remaining as it currently is and would not provide pedestrians and non-motorized vehicle users with a safe method for traversing the east side of SR 89 within the project limits. Therefore, the No Build would not meet the purpose and need of the project, which is to improve the mobility, safety, and operation of the highway in this area.

## Permits and Approvals Needed

Under the current project description, a U. S. Army Corps of Engineers Section 404 permit, a Regional Water Quality Control Board Section 401 Water Quality Certification, and a California Department of Fish and Game Section 1602 Streambed Alteration Agreement will not be required. If the scope of the project changes, then the project would need to be re-evaluated for permit needs.

**Figure 1**

# Project Vicinity and Location Map



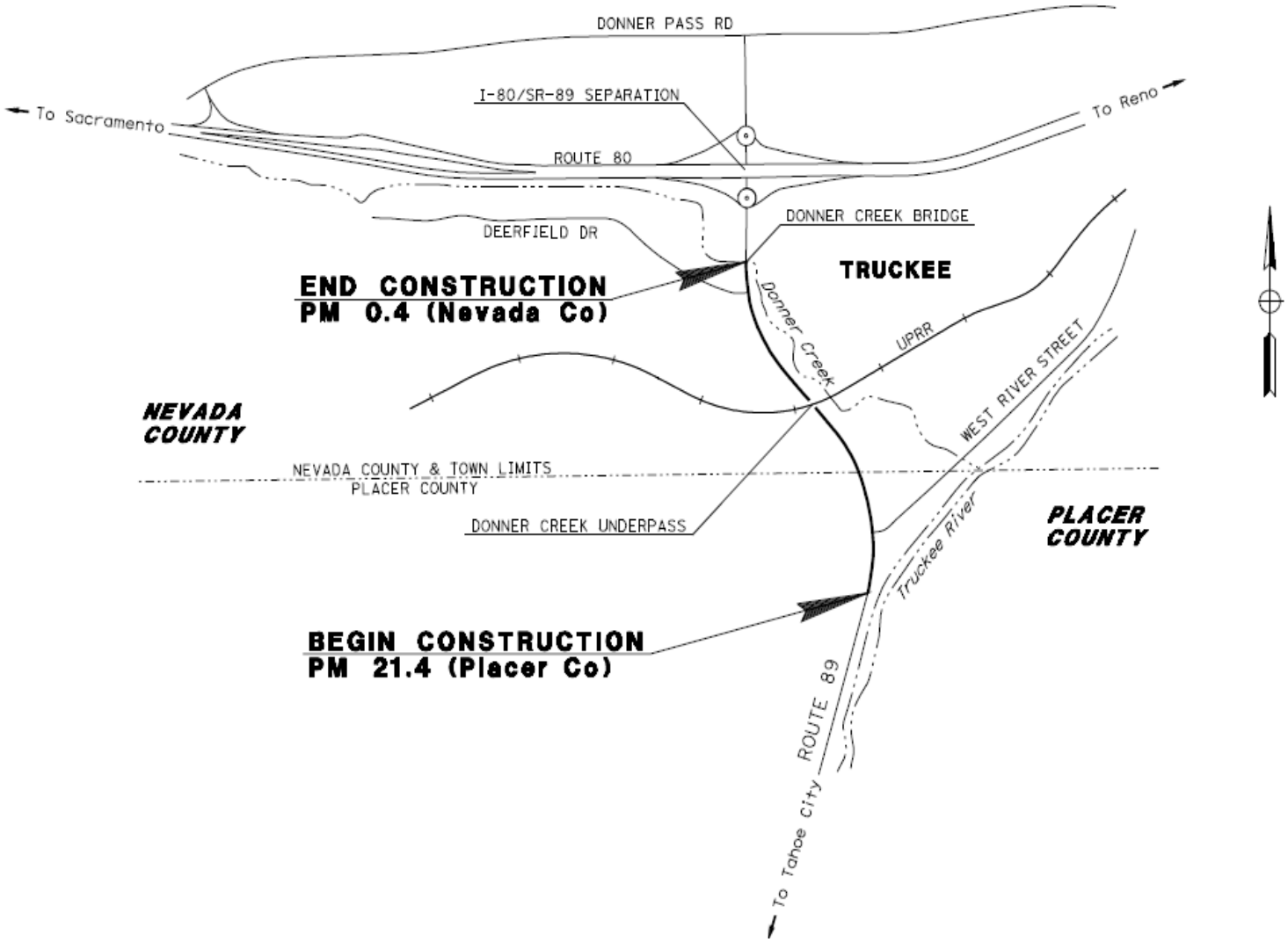
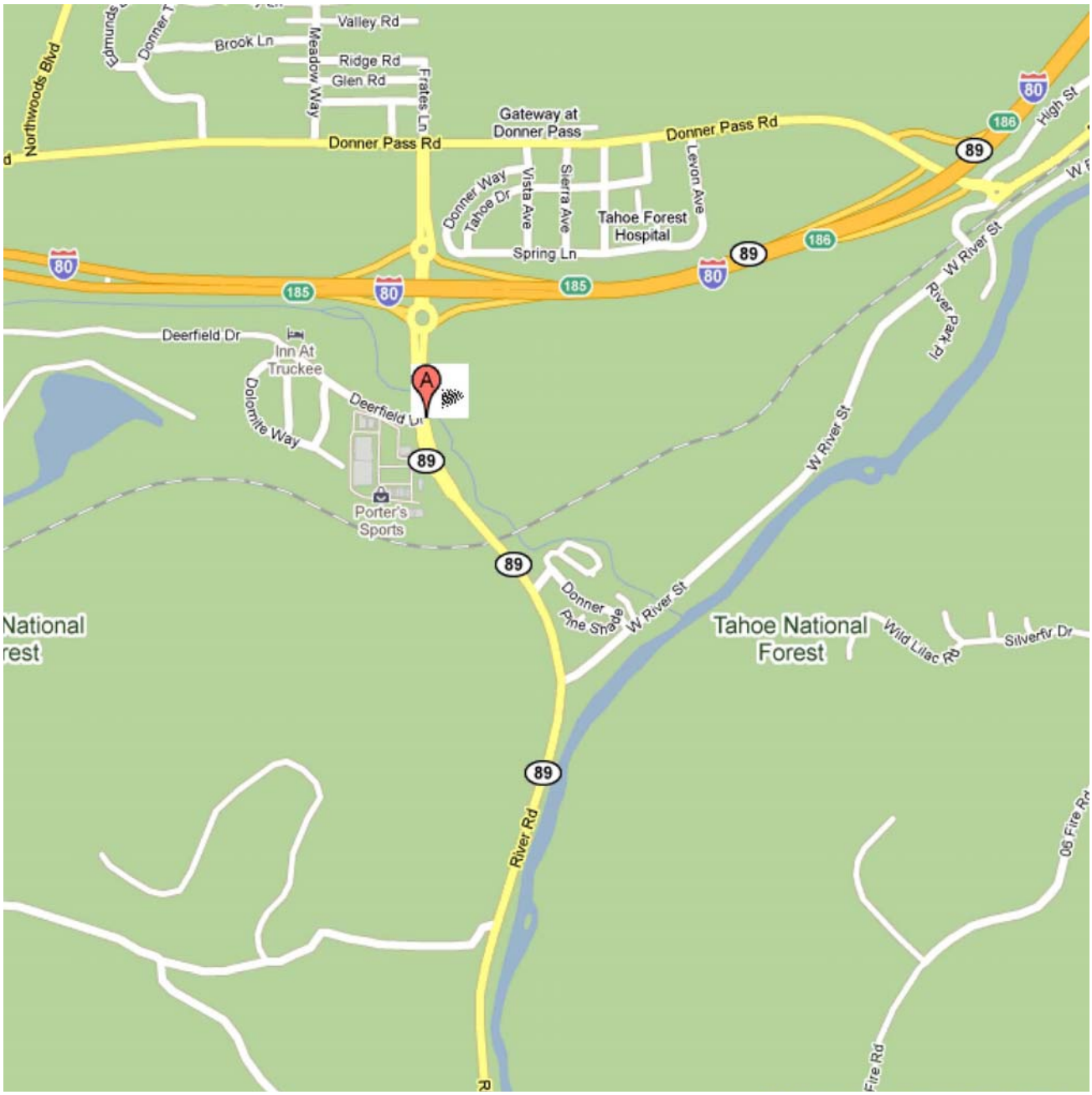



**Figure 2**

# Project Vicinity Map



| Dist | COUNTY | ROUTE | POST MILES TOTAL PROJECT | SHEET No. | TOTAL SHEETS |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 03 | Pla, Nev | 89 | 21.2/21.7, 0.0/0.5 | | |

REGISTERED CIVIL ENGINEER DATE

PLANS APPROVAL DATE

REGISTERED PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER Thomas N. Langley No. 64882 Exp. 6-30-09 CIVIL STATE OF CALIFORNIA

*THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA OR ITS OFFICERS OR AGENTS SHALL NOT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ACCURACY OR COMPLETENESS OF SCANNED COPIES OF THIS PLAN SHEET.*

NOTES:

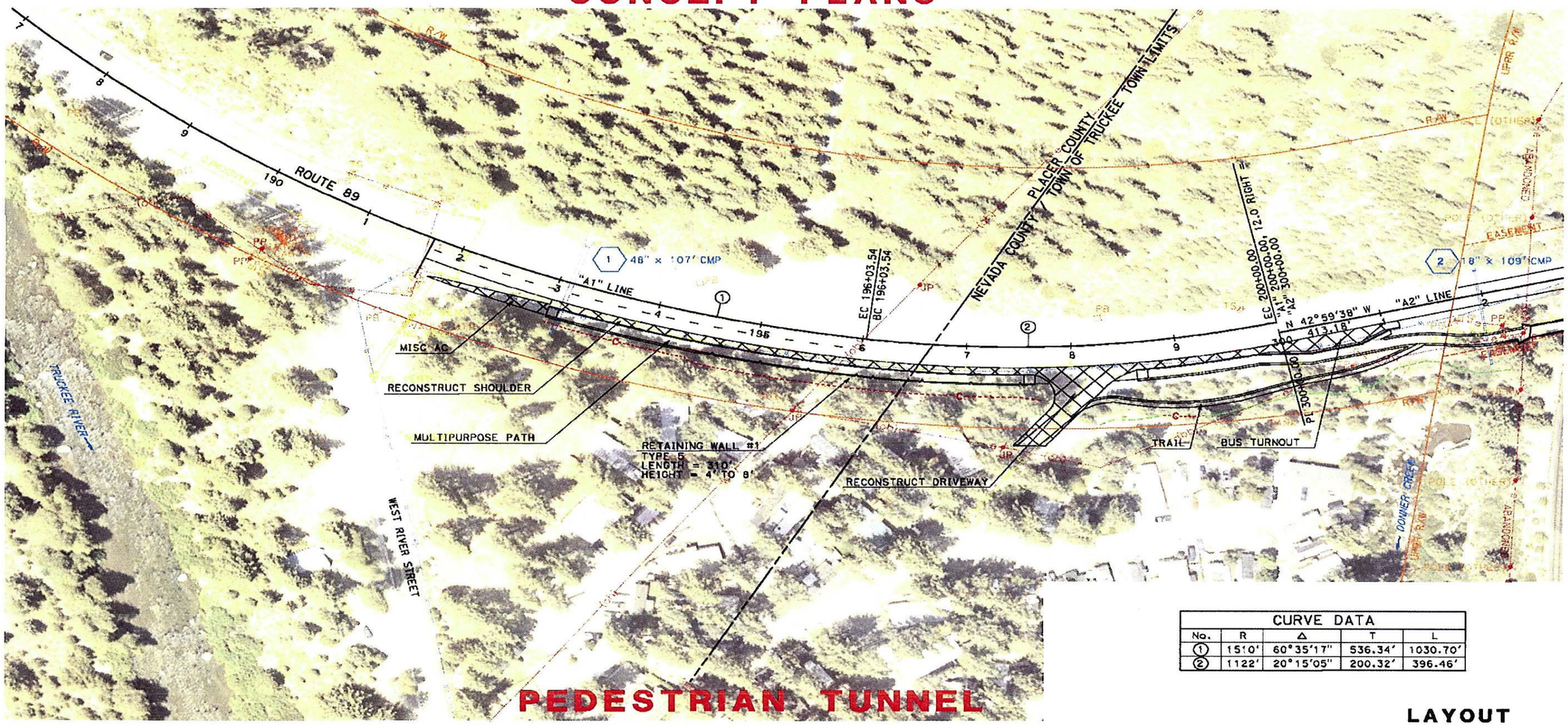
1. RIGHT OF WAY LINES, PROPERTY LINES, COUNTY LINES, TOWN LIMITS, AND ASSESSOR'S PARCEL NUMBERS SHOWN HEREIN HAVE BEEN ESTIMATED FROM DEPARTMENT AS-BUILT PLANS, AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHS AND ASSESSOR'S PARCEL MAPS. THE LOCATION OF THESE LINES ARE APPROXIMATE AND ONLY FOR THE PURPOSE OF DIFFERENTIATING ADJACENT PARCELS. FOR COMPLETE RIGHT OF WAY AND ACCURATE ACCESS DATA, SEE RIGHT OF WAY RECORD MAPS AT DISTRICT OFFICE.

LEGEND

(X) DRAINAGE SYSTEM NO.

PAVEMENT WORK

# CONCEPT PLANS




| CURVE DATA | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| No. | R | Δ | T | L |
| 1 | 1510' | 60°35'17" | 536.34' | 1030.70' |
| 2 | 1122' | 20°15'05" | 200.32' | 396.46' |

## LAYOUT

SCALE: 1"=50'

L-1

STATE OF CALIFORNIA - DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Caltrans

DESIGN

FUNCTIONAL SUPERVISOR: GARY S. BIRCH

CALCULATED-DESIGNED BY

CHECKED BY

REVISED BY

DATE REVISED

LAST REVISION 08-28-09

DATE PLOTTED => 31-AUG-2009
TIME PLOTTED => 16:30

BORDER LAST REVISED 4/11/2008

RELATIVE BORDER SCALE IS IN INCHES 0 1 2 3

USERNAME => s109681
DGN FILE => P81_L-1_ULT.dgn

CU 03223

EA 1C0800

| Dist | COUNTY | ROUTE | POST MILES TOTAL PROJECT | SHEET No. | TOTAL SHEETS |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 03 | Pla, Nev | 89 | 21.2/21.7, 0.0/0.5 | | |

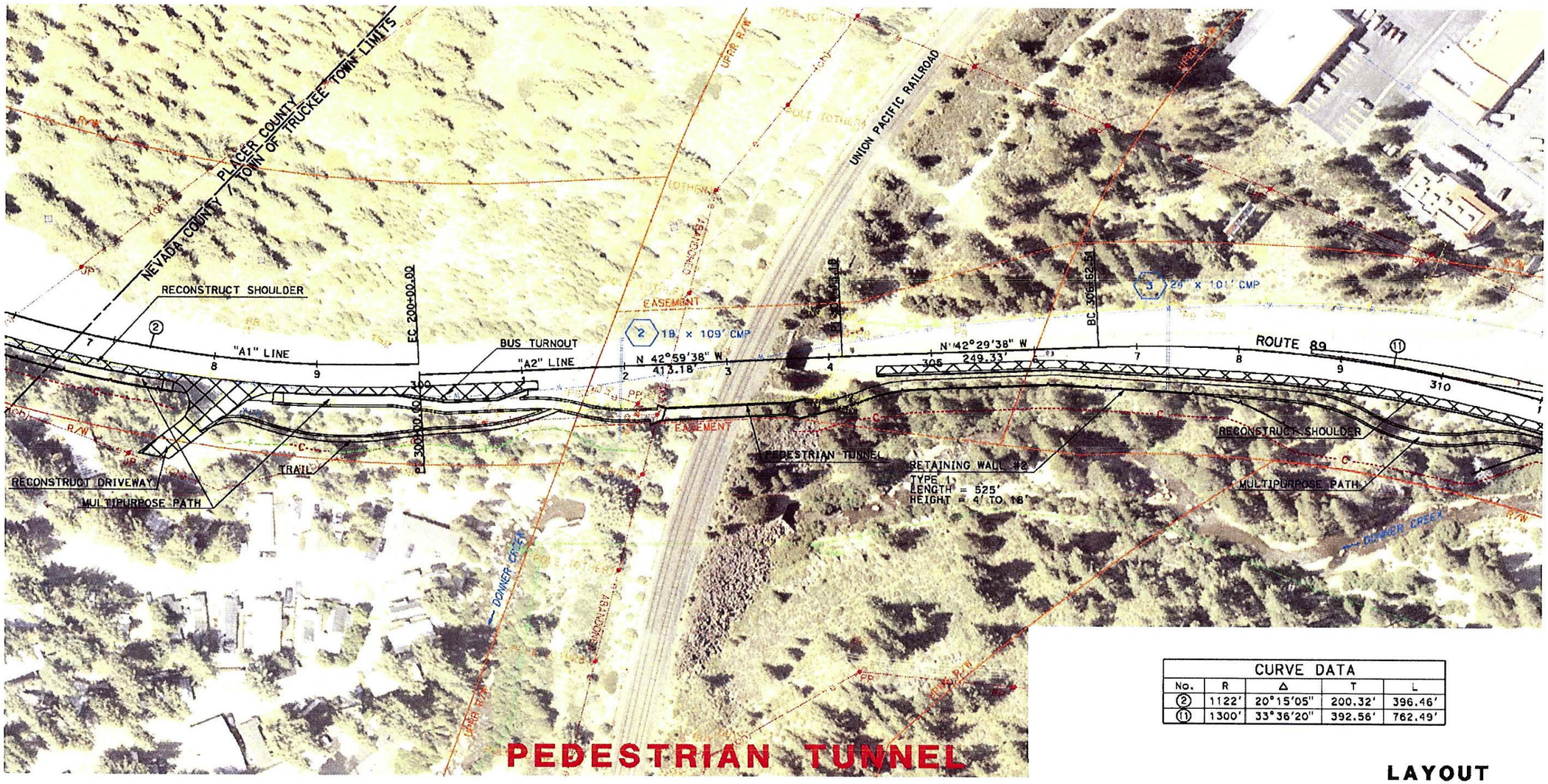
REGISTERED CIVIL ENGINEER DATE

PLANS APPROVAL DATE

Thomas W. Langley No. 64882 Exp. 6-30-09 CIVIL — REGISTERED PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER — STATE OF CALIFORNIA

*THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA OR ITS OFFICERS OR AGENTS SHALL NOT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ACCURACY OR COMPLETENESS OF SCANNED COPIES OF THIS PLAN SHEET.*

# CONCEPT PLANS




| CURVE DATA | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| No. | R | Δ | T | L |
| 2 | 1122' | 20°15'05" | 200.32' | 396.46' |
| 11 | 1300' | 33°36'20" | 392.56' | 762.49' |

## LAYOUT

SCALE: 1"=50'

L-2

STATE OF CALIFORNIA - DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Caltrans

DESIGN

FUNCTIONAL SUPERVISOR: GARY S. BIRCH

CALCULATED-DESIGNED BY | CHECKED BY | REVISED BY | DATE REVISED

LAST REVISION 08-28-09 | DATE PLOTTED => 31-AUG-2009 | TIME PLOTTED => 16:30

BORDER LAST REVISED 4/11/2008 | RELATIVE BORDER SCALE IS IN INCHES 0 1 2 3 | USERNAME => s109681 | DGN FILE => PB1_L-2_ULT.dgn | CU 03223 | EA 1C0800

| Dist | COUNTY | ROUTE | POST MILES TOTAL PROJECT | SHEET No. | TOTAL SHEETS |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 03 | Plc, Nev | 89 | 21.2/21.7, 0.0/0.5 | | |

REGISTERED CIVIL ENGINEER DATE

PLANS APPROVAL DATE

REGISTERED PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER Thomas W. Langley No. 64882 Exp. 6-30-09 CIVIL STATE OF CALIFORNIA

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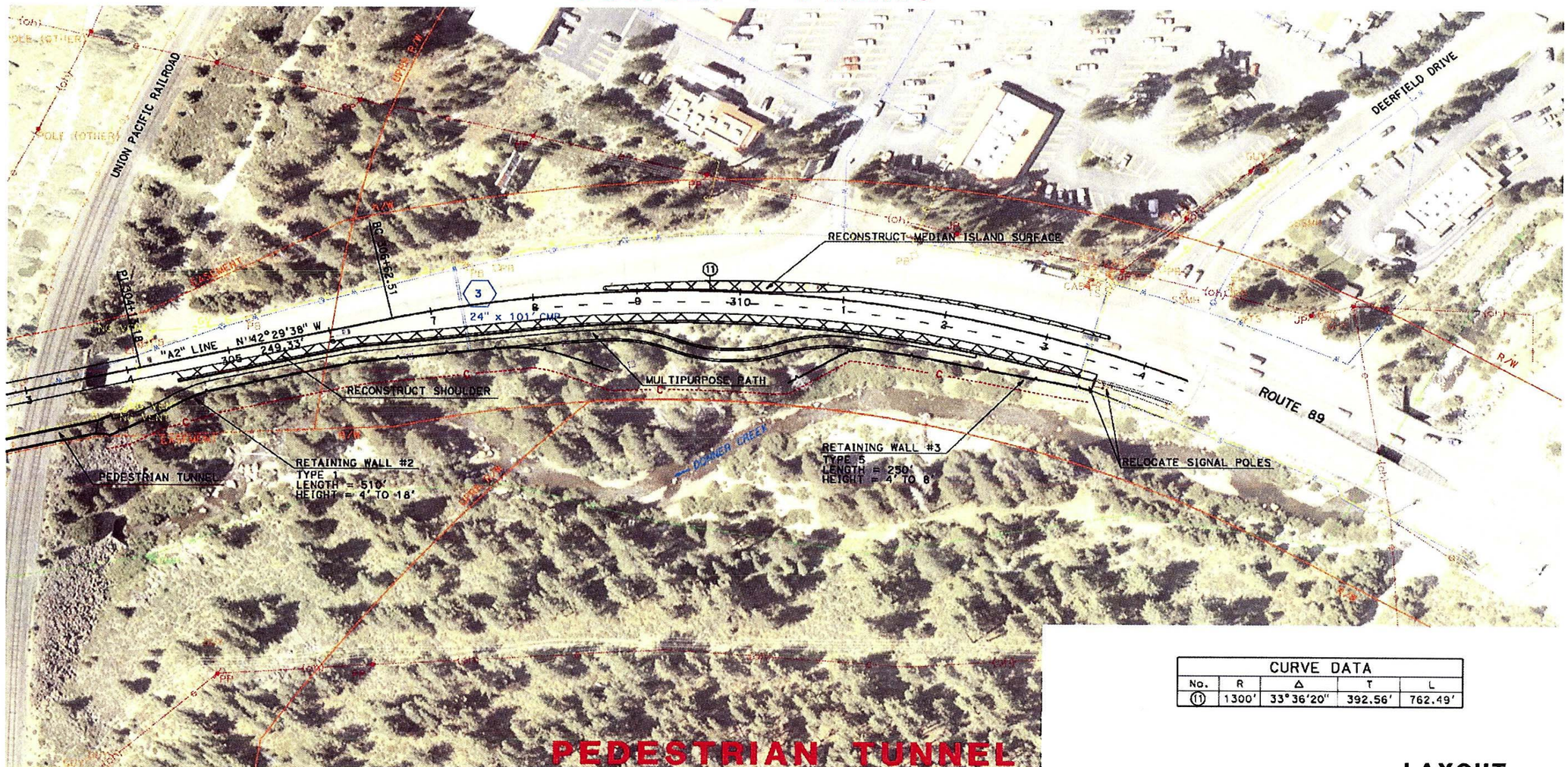
# CONCEPT PLANS




| CURVE DATA | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| No. | R | Δ | T | L |
| 11 | 1300' | 33°36'20" | 392.56' | 762.49' |

## LAYOUT

SCALE: 1"=50'

L-3

STATE OF CALIFORNIA - DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Caltrans

DESIGN

FUNCTIONAL SUPERVISOR: GARY S. BIRCH

CALCULATED-DESIGNED BY

CHECKED BY

REVISED BY

DATE REVISED

LAST REVISION 08-28-09

DATE PLOTTED => 31-AUG-2009

TIME PLOTTED => 16:30

BORDER LAST REVISED 4/11/2008

RELATIVE BORDER SCALE IS IN INCHES 0 1 2 3

USERNAME => s109681

DGN FILE => PB1_L-3_ULT.dgn

CU 03223

EA 1C0800

Figure 3

# Conceptual View (looking Northbound)

# CEQA Environmental Checklist

| 03-PLA/NEV 89 | PLA: PM 21.4/21.7<br>NEV: PM 0.0/0.4 | 03-0000-0231<br>03-1C0800 |
|---|---|---|
| Dist.-Co.-Rte. | P.M/P.M. | E.A. |

This checklist identifies physical, biological, social and economic factors that might be affected by the proposed project. In many cases, background studies performed in connection with the projects indicate no impacts. A NO IMPACT answer in the last column reflects this determination. Where there is a need for clarifying discussion, the discussion is included either following the applicable section of the checklist or is within the body of the environmental document itself. The words "significant" and "significance" used throughout the following checklist are related to CEQA, not NEPA, impacts. The questions in this form are intended to encourage the thoughtful assessment of impacts and do not represent thresholds of significance.

| | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant with Mitigation | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **I. AESTHETICS**: Would the project: | | | | |
| a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| ***Impacts would be avoided or minimized through implementation of the measures discussed in the Visual/Aesthetics section.*** | | | | |
| d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| ***"No Impact" determinations in this section are based on the Visual Impact Assessment, March 2010. This area of State Route 89 is eligible as a State Scenic Byway and scenic values should be preserved.*** | | | | |
| **II. AGRICULTURE AND FOREST 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. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment Project; and the forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. Would the project: | | | | |

| | Potentially significant impact | Less than significant impact with mitigation | Less than significant impact | No impact |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| e) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |

***"No Impact" determinations in this section are based on the project scope and field reviews.***

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **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? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| 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 ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |

***"No Impact" determinations in this section are based on the Air Quality Report, February 2010.***

**IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES**: Would the project:

| | Potentially significant impact | Less than significant impact with mitigation | Less than significant impact | No impact |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 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? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| ***Temporary impacts to special status species would be avoided with the implementation of measures discussed in the Biological Resources section.*** | | | | |
| b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or US Fish and Wildlife Service? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| ***Temporary impacts to special status species would be avoided with the implementation of measures discussed in the Biological Resources section.*** | | | | |
| 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? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| 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? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| 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? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| ***"No Impact" determinations in this section are based on the Natural Environment Study, March 2010. No biological permits would be needed for this project.*** | | | | |
| **V. CULTURAL RESOURCES**: Would the project: | | | | |
| a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in §15064.5? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| ***"No Impact" determinations in this section are based on the Historic Property Survey Report, December 2009, and the Finding of No Adverse Effect Report, April 2010..*** | | | | |

| | Potentially significant impact | Less than significant impact with mitigation | Less than significant impact | No impact |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **VI. GEOLOGY AND SOILS**: Would the project: | | | | |
| a) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving: | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| 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? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| ii) Strong seismic ground shaking? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| iv) Landslides? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| 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 on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| 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? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |

***"No Impact" determinations in this section are based on project scope and field reviews.***

**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?<br><br>b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases? | An assessment of the greenhouse gas emissions and climate change is included in the body of environmental document. While Caltrans has included this good faith effort in order 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 GHG 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. Caltrans does remain firmly committed to implementing measures to help reduce the potential effects of the project. These measures are outlined in the body of the environmental document. |

**VIII. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS**: Would the project:

| | Potentially significant impact | Less than significant impact with mitigation | Less than significant impact | No impact |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal 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? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| ***Impacts would be avoided or minimized through implementation of the measures discussed in the Hazardous Waste/Materials section.*** | | | | |
| d) Be located on a site which 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? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| 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? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| 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? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| g) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| 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? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| ***"No Impact" determinations in this section are based on the Hazardous Waste Site Assessment, March 2010.*** | | | | |
| **IX. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY**: Would the project: | | | | |
| a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| ***Impacts would be avoided or minimized through implementation of the measures discussed in the Water Quality section.*** | | | | |
| 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 which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |

| | Potentially significant impact | Less than significant impact with mitigation | Less than significant impact | No impact |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 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 which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| 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 which would result in flooding on- or off-site? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| e) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| f) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| 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? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| h) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures which would impede or redirect flood 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? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| j) Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |

***"No Impact" determinations in this section are based on the Water Quality Study, February 2010 and the Floodplain Evaluation Report and Risk Assessment, March 2010.***

**X. LAND USE AND PLANNING**: Would the project:

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| a) Physically 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? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| c) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |

***"No Impact" determinations in this section are based on the project scope and field reviews. This project is included in the Town of Truckee 2025 General Plan and the Placer County General Plan. Research, obtained September 2010.***

**XI. MINERAL RESOURCES**: Would the project:

| | Potentially significant impact | Less than significant impact with mitigation | Less than significant impact | No impact |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 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? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| 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? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |

***"No Impact" determinations in this section are based on the project scope and field reviews.***

**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? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| c) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| d) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| 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? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| 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? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |

***"No Impact" determinations in this section are based on the Noise Assessment, April 2010.***

**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)? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |

***"No Impact" determinations in this section are based on the project scope and field reviews.***

| | Potentially significant impact | Less than significant impact with mitigation | Less than significant impact | No impact |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **XIV. PUBLIC SERVICES**: | | | | |
| a) 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? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| Police protection? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| Schools? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| Parks? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| Other public facilities? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| ***"No Impact" determinations in this section are based on the project scope and field reviews.*** | | | | |
| **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? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| ***"No Impact" determinations in this section are based on the project scope and field reviews.*** | | | | |
| **XVI. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC**: Would the project: | | | | |
| a) Conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation including mass transit and non-motorized travel and relevant components of the circulation system, including but not limited to intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| b) Conflict with an applicable congestion management program, including, but not limited to level of service standards and travel demand measures, or other standards established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |

| | Potentially significant impact | Less than significant impact with mitigation | Less than significant impact | No impact |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| e) Result in inadequate emergency access? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| f) Conflict with adopted policies, plans or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such facilities? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |

***"No Impact" determinations in this section are based on the project scope and field reviews. A Traffic Management Plan would be implemented to reduce impacts from construction activities, minimize delays for motorists and pedestrians, and provide a safe work zone.***

**XVII. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS**: Would the project:

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| a) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| 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? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| 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? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| d) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| e) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which 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? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| f) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| g) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |

***"No Impact" determinations in this section are based on the project scope and field reviews.***

**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, substantially 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? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |

| | Potentially significant impact | Less than significant impact with mitigation | Less than significant impact | No impact |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 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)? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| c) Does the project have environmental effects which would cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |

***"No Impact" determinations in this section are based on the project scope and field reviews and applicable technical studies***

# Chapter 2 - Affected Environment, Environmental Consequences, and Mitigation Measures

As part of the scoping and environmental analysis conducted for this project, it was determined that there would be no adverse impacts to the following resources: agriculture and forest resources, air quality, cultural resources, geology and soils, land use and planning, mineral resources, noise, population and housing, public services, recreation, and utilities. Consequently, there is no further discussion regarding these issues.

Environmental resources that would be potentially affected by this project are included in the following discussion.

## Biological Resources

### *Regulatory Setting*

Under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, waters of the U. S. include the following: territorial seas, coastal and inland waters, lakes, rivers and streams that are navigable and their adjacent wetlands, tributaries to navigable waters and their adjacent wetlands, interstate waters and their tributaries including adjacent wetlands, and all other waters of the U. S. (intermittent streams and prairie potholes).

The U. S. Army Corps of Engineers and the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency jointly define wetlands as areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions.

Waters of the U. S. is the encompassing term for areas under federal jurisdiction as defined in Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. For the purpose of this report, waters of the U. S. are divided into jurisdictional wetlands and “other waters of the U. S.”

According to the State Water Resources Control Board, waters of the State include any surface water or groundwater, including saline waters, within the boundaries of the state. The project locations were surveyed to determine the presence of any waters of the State.

The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the California Department of Fish and Game share regulatory responsibility for the protection of special-status plant species. “Special-status” species are selected for protection because they are rare and/or subject to population and habitat declines. Special status is a general term for species that are afforded varying levels of regulatory protection. The highest level of protection is given to threatened and

endangered species; these are species that are formally listed or proposed for listing as endangered or threatened under the Federal Endangered Species Act and/or the California Endangered Species Act.

Federal and state laws protect migratory birds, their occupied nests, and their eggs from disturbance. The applicable federal law is the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (15 USC 703-711), 50 CFR Part 21, and 50 CFR Part 10. Protection under California law is found in the Fish Game Code Sections 3503, 3513, and 3800.

### *Affected Environment*

The project area is situated in a region characterized by mountainous terrain typical of the eastern Sierra Nevada landscape, at an elevation of approximately 5,880 feet. The site is located in an area consisting of individual and small stands of trees dominated by Jeffrey pine (*Pinus jeffreyi*). Other trees present include white fir (*Abies concolor*) and lodgepole pine (*Pinus contorta*). Understory species include greenleaf manzanita (*Arctostaphylos patula*), mountain whitethorn (*Ceanothus cordulatus*), mahala mat (*Ceanothus prostrates*), rabbitbrush (*Chrusothamnus viscidiflorus*), bitterbrush (*Purshia tridentata*), tobacco bush (*Solanum mauritianum*), and mules ears (*Wyethia mollis*).

Riparian habitat can be found within the project area primarily adjacent to the lower reaches of Donner Creek, which is dominated by mountain dogwood (*Cornus nuttallii*), willow (*Salix lasindra*), serviceberry (*Amelanchier utahensis*), horsetail (*Equisetum arvense*), wax currant (*Ribes cereum*), California rose (*Rosa californica*), thimbleberry (*Rubus parviflorus*), California blackberry (*Rubus ursinus*), and bitter cherry (*Prunus emarginata*). In addition, riverine habitat within the study area occurs in Donner Creek prior to entering the Truckee River.

### *Environmental Consequences*

<u>Jurisdictional Waters</u>

During the project development process, several alternatives were identified as having the potential to substantially alter the streambed and streambank of Donner Creek. Design modifications were incorporated into the project plans to avoid impacts to state and federal jurisdictional waters.

The project would not place any fill material in waters of the United States or waters of the State. The proposed project would not divert or obstruct the natural flow of or change the streambed or streambank of any jurisdictional waters.

Special Status Species

Field surveys were conducted to assess the potential for sensitive resources to be impacted by the proposed project. Donner Creek may provide suitable habitat for the Lahontan cutthroat trout (*Oncorhynchus clarkia henshawi*), a federal threatened species; the mountain yellow legged frog (*Rana muscosa*), a federal candidate species and a state species of special concern. The riparian habitat along Donner Creek may provide suitable habitat for the yellow warbler (*Dencroica petechia brewsteri*), a state species of special concern.

Donner Creek, which drains into the Truckee River at the southern end of the project area, may provide suitable habitat for the Lahontan cutthroat trout, mountain yellow-legged frog, and the yellow warbler. The Lahontan cutthroat trout occurs in the Truckee River.

The project would not directly affect any portion of Donner Creek and its associated riparian habitat and, therefore; would not result in impacts to the Lahontan cutthroat trout, mountain yellow legged frog, and yellow warbler.

Tree and Vegetation Removal

There would be minor, temporary impacts generated from the construction of the project, which consists of clearing and grubbing the soil in the project site so it is free of vegetation and their root systems. Construction would directly affect 1.39 acres of Jeffrey pine upland habitat, which would include the removal of approximately 41 Jeffrey pine (*Pinus Jeffreyi*) trees from this Donner Creek area. This impact would be offset by revegetation efforts, erosion control, and restoration activities.

Migratory Birds

Migratory birds may nest in trees and riparian vegetation within the project limits. Measures would be implemented during construction to avoid or minimize impacts to nesting migratory birds.

### *Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures*

Jurisdictional Waters

The following measures would be incorporated into the project plans in order to avoid and/or minimize impacts to jurisdictional waters in the project area:

- Jurisdictional waters and streambank areas with riparian habitat in the project area would be designated as environmentally sensitive areas (ESAs) on the project plans and in the project specifications.

- The boundaries of the ESAs would be clearly marked in the field by the installation of a fence which would remain in place throughout the extent of all construction activities.
- Sediment fencing would be installed prior to ground disturbance.
- No refueling would occur within 100 feet of Donner Creek.

Tree and Vegetation Removal

During construction, efforts would be made to avoid and minimize tree and vegetation removal. A revegetation plan would be prepared and implemented as part of the project. The plan would include revegetation of all disturbed soil areas with native plant species.

Local topsoil would be collected from within the project site and stockpiled for use on areas disturbed by construction activities. The following measures are proposed as methods to be used in the collection of local topsoil:

- Topsoil would be collected during soil excavation operations.
- Topsoil would not include invasive species or noxious weeds.
- Topsoil would be excavated to the lines and depths as directed by the Engineer.
- All lumps or clods would be broken up before the topsoil is spread.
- Topsoil would be stockpiled until work in the area to receive the material is complete.
- Upon completion of the earthwork in an area, the topsoil would be spread to a uniform thickness over the disturbed soil areas.

The following measures are proposed to avoid and/or minimize the risk of introducing non-native weed species into the project area:

- Only native plan species appropriate for the project area would be used in any erosion control or revegetation seed mix or stock.
- No dry-farmed straw would be used, and certified weed-free straw would be required where erosion control straw is to be used.
- Any hydroseed mulch used for revegetation activities would be certified weed-free.
- All off-road construction equipment would be cleaned of potential noxious weed sources (mud, vegetation) before entry to the project area and after entering a potentially infested area before moving on to another area.

- The contractor would employ cleaning methods necessary to ensure that equipment is free of noxious weeds.
- Equipment washing stations would be placed in areas that afford easy containment and monitoring and that do not drain into sensitive areas such as forest, riparian, and wetland habitat.
- Areas of known noxious weed infestations within or adjacent to the project area would be isolated and avoided to prevent the spread of weeds. These areas would be indicated on the project plans and in the field with temporary orange fencing. The staging or operation of equipment within these areas would be prohibited.

Migratory Birds

The following measures would be implemented to avoid and/or minimize impacts to nesting migratory birds:

- Removal of vegetation during clearing and grubbing operations would be confined to the minimal area necessary to facilitate construction activities.
- Vegetation removal on the project site would occur outside of the nesting season for migratory bird species. If vegetation removal must take place during the nesting season (March 1-August 31), a qualified biologist would conduct pre-construction surveys for active bird nests prior to the start of construction. If active bird nests are identified, construction would not begin at that location until after the chicks have fledged.

## Climate Change

### *Regulatory Setting*

While climate change has been a concern since at least 1988, as evidenced by the establishment of the United Nations and World Meteorological Organization's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the efforts devoted to greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction and climate change research and policy have increased dramatically in recent years. These efforts are primarily concerned with the emissions of GHG related to human activity that include carbon dioxide (CO2), methane, nitrous oxide, tetrafluoromethane, hexafluoroethane, sulfur hexafluoride, HFC-23 (fluoroform), HFC-134a (s, s, s, 2 –tetrafluoroethane), and HFC-152a (difluoroethane).

In 2002, with the passage of Assembly Bill 1493 (AB 1493), California launched an innovative and pro-active approach to dealing with greenhouse gas emissions and climate

change at the state level. Assembly Bill 1493 requires the California Air Resources Board (CARB) to develop and implement regulations to reduce automobile and light truck greenhouse gas emissions. These stricter emissions standards were designed to apply to automobiles and light trucks beginning with the 2009-model year; however, in order to enact the standards California needed a waiver from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The waiver was denied by Environmental Protection Agency in December 2007 and efforts to overturn the decision have been unsuccessful. See California v. Environmental Protection Agency, 9th Cir. Jul. 25, 2008, Number 08-70011. However, on January 26, 2009, it was announced that EPA would reconsider their decision regarding the denial of California's waiver. On May 18, 2009, President Obama announced the enactment of a 35.5 mpg fuel economy standard for automobiles and light duty trucks which would take effect in 2012. On June 30, 2009 EPA granted California the waiver. California is expected to enforce its standards for 2009 to 2011 and then look to the federal government to implement equivalent standards for 2012 to 2016. The granting of the waiver would also allow California to implement even stronger standards in the future. The state is expected to start developing new standards for the post-2016 model years later this year.

On June 1, 2005, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger signed Executive Order S-3-05. The goal of this Executive Order is to reduce California's GHG emissions to: 1) 2000 levels by 2010, 2) 1990 levels by the 2020 and 3) 80 percent below the 1990 levels by the year 2050. In 2006, this goal was further reinforced with the passage of Assembly Bill 32 (AB 32), the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006. AB 32 sets the same overall GHG emissions reduction goals while further mandating that CARB create a plan, which includes market mechanisms, and implement rules to achieve "real, quantifiable, cost-effective reductions of greenhouse gases. "Executive Order S-20-06 further directs state agencies to begin implementing AB 32, including the recommendations made by the state's Climate Action Team.

With Executive Order S-01-07, Governor Schwarzenegger set forth the low carbon fuel standard for California. Under this executive order, the carbon intensity of California's transportation fuels is to be reduced by at least 10 percent by 2020.

Climate change and GHG reduction is also a concern at the federal level; however, at this time, no legislation or regulations have been enacted specifically addressing GHG emissions reductions and climate change. California, in conjunction with several environmental organizations and several other states, sued to force the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to regulate GHG as a pollutant under the Clean Air Act (Massachusetts vs. Environmental Protection Agency et al., 549 U.S. 497 (2007). The court ruled that GHG

does fit within the Clean Air Act's definition of a pollutant, and that the EPA does have the authority to regulate GHG. Despite the Supreme Court ruling, there are no promulgated federal regulations to date limiting GHG emissions.

On December 7, 2009, the EPA Administrator signed two distinct findings regarding greenhouse gases under section 202(a) of the Clean Air Act:

- Endangerment Finding: The Administrator finds that the current and projected concentrations of the six key well-mixed greenhouse gases--carbon dioxide (CO2), methane (CH4), nitrous oxide (N2O), hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), perfluorocarbons (PFCs), and sulfur hexafluoride (SF6)--in the atmosphere threaten the public health and welfare of current and future generations.

- Cause or Contribute Finding: The Administrator finds that the combined emissions of these well-mixed greenhouse gases from new motor vehicles and new motor vehicle engines contribute to the greenhouse gas pollution which threatens public health and welfare.

Although these findings did not themselves impose any requirements on industry or other entities, this action was a prerequisite to finalizing the USEPA's *Proposed Greenhouse Gas Emission Standards for Light-Duty Vehicles*, which was published on September 15, 2009[1]. On May 7, 2010 the final *Light-Duty Vehicle Greenhouse Gas Emissions Standards and Corporate Average Fuel Economy Standards* was published in the Federal Register[2].

The final combined USEPA and National Highway Traffic Safety Administration standards that make up the first phase of this National Program apply to passenger cars, light-duty trucks, and medium-duty passenger vehicles, covering model years 2012 through 2016. They require these vehicles to meet an estimated combined average emissions level of 250 grams of carbon dioxide per mile, equivalent to 35.5 miles per gallon (MPG) if the automobile industry were to meet this carbon dioxide level solely through fuel economy improvements. Together, these standards would cut greenhouse gas emissions by an estimated 960 million metric tons and 1.8 billion barrels of oil over the lifetime of the vehicles sold under the program (model years 2012-2016).

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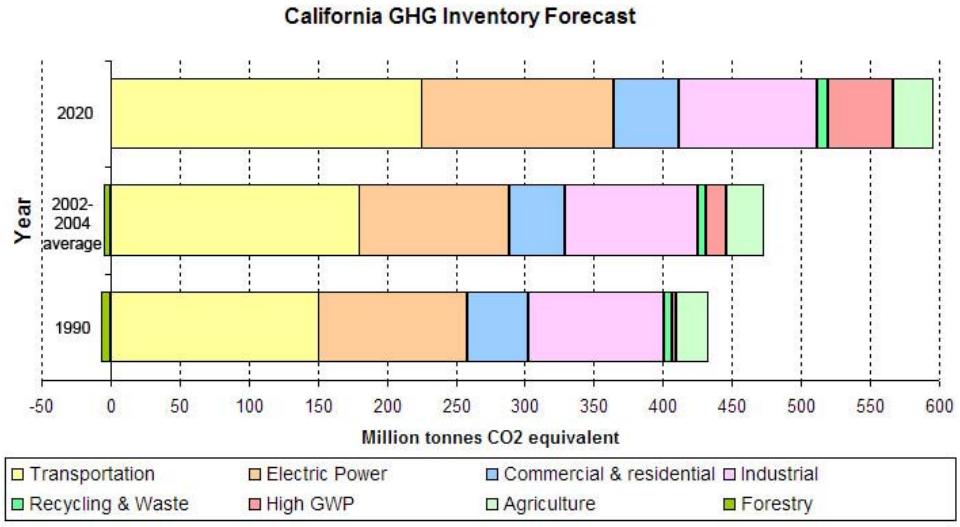
[1] http://www.epa.gov/climatechange/endangerment.html

[2] http://www.regulations.gov/search/Regs/contentStreamer?objectId=0900006480a5e7f1&disposition=attachment&contentType=pdf

According to *Recommendations by the Association of Environmental Professionals on How to Analyze GHG Emissions and Global Climate Change in CEQA Documents* (March 5, 2007), an individual project does not generate enough GHG emissions to significantly influence global climate change. Rather, global climate change is a cumulative impact. This means that a project may participate in a potential impact through its incremental contribution combined with the contributions of all other sources of GHG. In assessing cumulative impacts, it must be determined if a project's incremental effect is "cumulatively considerable." See CEQA Guidelines sections 15064(i)(1) and 15130. To make this determination the incremental impacts of the project must be compared with the effects of past, current, and probable future projects. To gather sufficient information on a global scale of all past, current, and future projects in order to make this determination is a difficult if not impossible task.

As part of its supporting documentation for the Draft Scoping Plan, CARB recently released an updated version of the GHG inventory for California (June 26, 2008). Shown below is a graph from that update that shows the total GHG emissions for California for 1990, 2002-2004 average, and 2020 projected if no action is taken.




***CALIFORNIA GREENHOUSE GAS INVENTORY***

*Taken from : http://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/inventory/data/forecast.htm*

Caltrans and its parent agency, the Business, Transportation, and Housing Agency, have taken an active role in addressing GHG emission reduction and climate change. Recognizing that 98 percent of California's GHG emissions are from the burning of fossil fuels and 40

percent of all human made GHG emissions are from transportation (see Climate Action Program at Caltrans (December 2006), Caltrans has created and is implementing the Climate Action Program at Caltrans that was published in December 2006. This document can be found at: http://www.dot.ca.gov/docs/ClimateReport.pdf.

### *Project Analysis*

The proposed project supports multi-modal transportation and does not increase the vehicular capacity of SR 89. Specifically, the proposed project would facilitate and encourage bicycle and pedestrian traffic by constructing a multi-use path adjacent to SR 89. The proposed project also better supports transit in the area by adding a bus turnout. Because the project would not increase capacity nor vehicle hours travelled, no increases in operational GHG emissions are anticipated. In fact, by supporting alternative modes of travel, the proposed project may have a beneficial effect on operational GHG emissions.

### *Construction Emissions*

GHG emissions for transportation projects can be divided into those produced during construction and those produced during operations. Construction GHG emissions include emissions produced as a result of material processing, emissions produced by onsite construction equipment, and emissions arising from traffic delays due to construction. These emissions would be produced at different levels throughout the construction phase; their frequency and occurrence can be reduced through innovations in plans and specifications and by implementing better traffic management during construction phases. Even though the project is not anticipated to increase operational GHG emissions, the proposed project would generate some GHG emissions during construction.

### *AB 32 Compliance*

Caltrans continues to be actively involved on the Governor's Climate Action Team as CARB works to implement the Governor's Executive Orders and help achieve the targets set forth in AB 32. Many of the strategies Caltrans is using to help meet the targets in AB 32 come from the California Strategic Growth Plan, which is updated each year. Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger's Strategic Growth Plan calls for a $222 billion infrastructure improvement program to fortify the state's transportation system, education, housing, and waterways, including $100.7 billion in transportation funding during the next decade. As shown on the figure below, the Strategic Growth Plan targets a significant decrease in traffic congestion below today's level and a corresponding reduction in GHG emissions. The Strategic Growth Plan proposes to do this while accommodating growth in population and the economy. A suite of investment options has been created that combined together yield the promised

reduction in congestion. The Strategic Growth Plan relies on a complete systems approach of a variety of strategies: system monitoring and evaluation, maintenance and preservation, smart land use and demand management, and operational improvements.

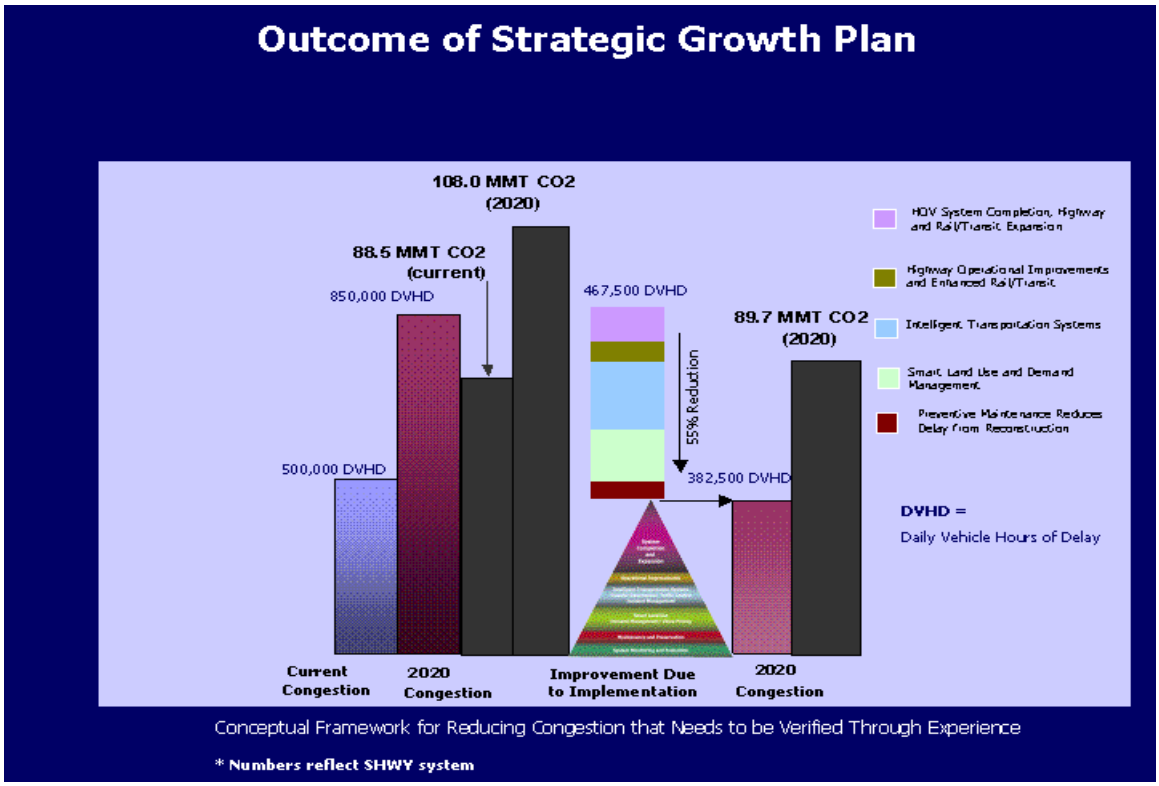



***Figure 3-2 Outcome of Strategic Growth Plan***

As part of the Climate Action Program at Caltrans (December 2006, http://www.dot.ca.gov/docs/ClimateReport.pdf), Caltrans is supporting efforts to reduce vehicle miles traveled by planning and implementing smart land use strategies: job/housing proximity, developing transit-oriented communities, and high density housing along transit corridors. Caltrans is working closely with local jurisdictions on planning activities; however, Caltrans does not have local land use planning authority. Caltrans is also supporting efforts to improve the energy efficiency of the transportation sector by increasing vehicle fuel economy in new cars, light and heavy-duty trucks; Caltrans is doing this by supporting on-going research efforts at universities, by supporting legislative efforts to increase fuel economy, and by its participation on the Climate Action Team. It is important to note, however, that the control of the fuel economy standards is held by EPA and CARB. Lastly, the use of alternative fuels is also being considered; the Department is participating in funding for alternative fuel research at the UC Davis.

The following table summarizes the Department and statewide efforts that Caltrans is implementing in order to reduce GHG emissions. For more detailed information about each strategy, please see Climate Action Program at Caltrans (December 2006); it is available at http://www.dot.ca.gov/docs/ClimateReport.pdf.

## Climate Change Strategies

| Strategy | Program | Partnership | | Method/Process | Estimated $CO_2$ Savings (MMT) | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Lead | Agency | | 2010 | 2020 |
| Smart Land Use | Intergovernmental Review (IGR) | Caltrans | Local Governments | Review and seek to mitigate development proposals | Not Estimated | Not Estimated |
| | Planning Grants | Caltrans | Local and regional agencies & other stakeholders | Competitive selection process | Not Estimated | Not Estimated |
| | Regional Plans and Blueprint Planning | Regional Agencies | Caltrans | Regional plans and application process | 0.975 | 7.8 |
| Operational Improvements & Intelligent Trans. System (ITS) Deployment | Strategic Growth Plan | Caltrans | Regions | State ITS; Congestion Management Plan | .007 | 2.17 |
| Mainstream Energy & GHG into Plans and Projects | Office of Policy Analysis & Research; Division of Environmental Analysis | Interdepartmental effort | | Policy establishment, guidelines, technical assistance | Not Estimated | Not Estimated |
| Educational & Information Program | Office of Policy Analysis & Research | Interdepartmental, CalEPA, CARB, CEC | | Analytical report, data collection, publication, workshops, outreach | Not Estimated | Not Estimated |
| Fleet Greening & Fuel Diversification | Division of Equipment | Department of General Services | | Fleet Replacement<br>B20<br>B100 | 0.0045 | 0.0065<br>0.45<br>.0225 |
| Non-vehicular Conservation Measures | Energy Conservation Program | Green Action Team | | Energy Conservation Opportunities | 0.117 | .34 |
| Portland Cement | Office of Rigid Pavement | Cement and Construction Industries | | 2.5 % limestone cement mix<br>25% fly ash cement mix<br>> 50% fly ash/slag mix | 1.2<br>.36 | 3.6 |
| Goods Movement | Office of Goods Movement | Cal EPA, CARB, BT&H, MPOs | | Goods Movement Action Plan | Not Estimated | Not Estimated |
| Total | | | | | 2.72 | 18.67 |

To the extent that it is applicable or feasible for the project and through coordination with the project development team, the following measures would also be included in the project to reduce the GHG emissions and potential climate change impacts from the project:

- Relocate and reconstruct the existing bus stop to better accommodate bus riders.
- Provide pedestrians and non-motorized vehicles users an exclusive option for getting from one side of the Union Pacific Railroad berm to the other.

### *Adaptation Strategies*

"Adaptation strategies" refer to how Caltrans and others can plan for the effects of climate change on the state's transportation infrastructure and strengthen or protect the facilities from damage. Climate change is expected to produce increased variability in precipitation, rising temperatures, rising sea levels, storm surges and intensity, and the frequency and intensity of wildfires. These changes may affect the transportation infrastructure in various ways, such as damaging roadbeds by longer periods of intense heat; increasing storm damage from flooding and erosion; and inundation from rising sea levels. These effects would vary by location and may, in the most extreme cases, require that a facility be relocated or redesigned. There may also be economic and strategic ramifications as a result of these types of impacts to the transportation infrastructure.

Climate change adaption must also involve the natural environment. Efforts are underway on a statewide-level to develop strategies to cope with impacts to habitat and biodiversity through planning and conservation. The results of these efforts would help California agencies plan and implement mitigation strategies for programs and projects.

## *Floodplain and Hydrology*

### *Regulatory Setting*

The regulatory laws for floodplain areas include The National Flood Act of 1968 and Executive Order 11988. The National Flood Act of 1968 created the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). The goals of NFIP are to identify areas that are prone to flooding, to provide flood insurance for structures and contents within flood-prone areas, to establish flood insurance rate within flood-prone areas, and to enable enforcement of codes outlining floodplain management standards.

Executive Order 11988 (Floodplain Management) directs all federal agencies to refrain from conducting, supporting, or allowing actions in floodplains unless it is the only practicable alternative. The Federal Highway Administration requirements for compliance are outlined in 23 CFR 650 Subpart A.

In order to comply, the following must be analyzed:

- Practicability of alternatives to any longitudinal encroachments
- Risks of the action
- Impacts on natural and beneficial floodplain values
- Support of incompatible floodplain development
- Measures to minimize floodplain impacts and to preserve/restore any beneficial floodplain values impacted by the project.

The base floodplain is defined as "the area subject to flooding by the flood or tide having a one percent chance of being exceeded in any given year." An encroachment is defined as "an action within the limits of the base floodplain."

Executive Order 11988 requires that when a floodplain risk assessment is prepared, the public must be given the opportunity for early review and comment. It also requires that the risk assessment be filed with the State Clearinghouse. A reference to encroachments on the base floodplain must be included in public notices and any encroachments must be identified at public hearings

At the local level, the Placer County Flood Control and Water Conservation District will have jurisdiction over the proposed project. Established in 1984 by the State Legislature as a special district, it addresses flood control issues that arise with growth, and it performs coordinated flood control planning. The District also serves as an advisory board to the Placer County Division of Planning.

Caltrans hydraulic engineering staff provided hydraulics information for this Initial Study/Categorical Exclusion with a Floodplain Risk Assessment, which contained a Floodplain Evaluation Report Summary, and Location Hydraulic Study.

Based on studies carried out by the California Department of Transportation, as assigned by the Federal Highway Administration, all measures to minimize potential harm within the floodplain, consistent with regulations issued in accord with Section 2(d) of Executive Order 11988 have been taken and are discussed in this section. Furthermore, a public notice is required by Executive Order 11988, and this project's draft environmental documents (DED) serves as the public notice, which contains an explanation of why the action is proposed to be occur in a small portion of the floodplain.

### *Affected Environment*

The project elevation is approximately 5,880 feet. This segment of Pla/Nev-89 is depicted on the USGS Truckee, California 7.5 minute Quadrangle map.

### *Avoidance and Minimization Measures*

Caltrans completed a revised Floodplain Risk Assessment for the build alternative on March 3, 2010. The proposed project involves the construction of retaining wall structures along the northbound shoulder of the existing highway, parallel to Donner Creek, to provide sufficient shoulder width to accommodate the path for non-motorized traffic. Construction of the retaining walls eliminates the need for excessive fill on the highway embankment that would encroach significantly into the Donner Creek channel. In addition, the construction of these retaining walls greatly decreases project encroachment into the 100-year floodplain over the standard embankment fill method of construction. The embankment can also be restored to the original slope by the addition of fill and RSP along the base of the retaining wall.

Furthermore, where the short segment of the footing of the retaining wall encroaches into the 100-year floodplain, backfill material and RSP will completely restore the Donner Creek channel to the pre-project channel configuration. Construction of the retaining wall significantly reduces project impacts on the 100-year floodplain footprint.

The floodplain will be minimally impacted by the proposed project. The small encroachment into the floodplain will be minimized by restoration of the current SR 89 embankment with minimal floodplain impacts.

## Hazardous Waste Materials

### *Regulatory Setting*

Hazardous materials and hazardous wastes are regulated by numerous state and federal laws. These include not only the specific statutes governing hazardous waste, but also a variety of laws which regulating air and water quality, human health and land use.

The primary federal laws regulating hazardous wastes/materials are the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976 (RCRA) and the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act of 1980 (CERCLA). The purpose of CERCLA, often referred to as Superfund, is to clean up contaminated sites so that public health and welfare are not compromised. RCRA provides for "cradle to grave" regulation of hazardous wastes. Other federal laws include:

- Community Environmental Response Facilitation Act (CERFA) of 1992
- Clean Water Act
- Clean Air Act
- Safe Drinking Water Act
- Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA)
- Atomic Energy Act
- Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA)
- Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA)

In addition to the acts listed above, Executive Order 12088, Federal Compliance with Pollution Control, mandates that necessary actions be taken to prevent and control environmental pollution when federal activities or federal facilities are involved.

Hazardous waste in California is regulated primarily under the authority of the federal Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976, and the California Health and Safety Code. Other California laws that affect hazardous waste are specific to handling, storage, transportation, disposal, treatment, reduction, cleanup and emergency planning.

Worker health and safety and public safety are key issues when dealing with hazardous materials that may affect human health and the environment. Proper disposal of hazardous material is vital if it is disturbed during project construction.

Because hazardous materials have the potential to greatly affect human health and the environment, worker health and safety and public safety are important topics for any construction project. Proper disposal of hazardous material is essential if it is disturbed during project construction. The requirements for handling, disposing of, and transporting hazardous waste would be discussed in this section.

### *Affected Environment*

A Hazardous Waste Site Assessment was completed on March 2, 2010. Site investigations were performed to identify whether the soil in the Union Pacific Railroad embankment contained petroleum hydrocarbons, soil within the project boundary contained aerially deposited lead, traffic striping contained lead/chromium, soil in the project limits contained naturally occurring asbestos, and whether the metal beam guardrail and/or the "Timber Trestle Wood," currently buried in the embankment, contained hazardous materials. Another goal of the site investigation was to determine if material generated from the tunnel excavation and road work would require proper management and disposal during construction and whether health and safety precautions would be required for construction workers. Contamination identified in the report is discussed below.

The investigative results would be used by Caltrans to inform the construction contractor(s) if lead-impacted soil and lead-containing traffic stripe paint are present within project boundaries for construction worker health and safety, soil reuse evaluation and waste management/disposal purposes.

### *Environmental Consequences*

<u>Hydrocarbons</u>

Based on the investigation, diesel- and motor oil-range petroleum hydrocarbon-impacted soils are present in the Union Pacific Railroad embankment. The data indicates that the outer soils of the embankment are hydrocarbon impacted while the inner material may not be impacted. The report recommends stockpiling the excavated soils and testing them to determine the appropriate soil disposal options. Soils with detectable concentrations of petroleum hydrocarbons would require offsite disposal.

Treated Wood Waste

The original railroad trestle was left in place and covered with soil and aggregate to create the present embankment. During construction of the multi-use tunnel, construction crews would likely encounter treated wood. Any treated wood encountered during construction would be disposed of in accordance with Caltrans Special Provisions for handling and disposal of treated wood waste.

Aerially Deposited Lead

Aerially deposited lead is present in the soil within the project area at levels that do not require special handling and disposal. Soil materials excavated to the maximum sampling depth of 3.0 feet within the project boundary would not require special soil handling and disposal procedures based on lead content and can be reused or disposed of as non-hazardous soil. The contractor would be required to prepare a Lead Compliance Plan to protect the health and safety of construction workers.

Traffic Stripe and Pavement Markers

Total lead was not detected in the yellow and white traffic stripe samples at concentrations exceeding laboratory reporting limits and would not require disposal as a California Hazardous Waste. The contractor would be required to prepare a Lead Compliance Plan to properly manage removed stripe and pavement marking.

Naturally-Occurring Asbestos

Soil samples submitted for asbestos were not reported to contain asbestos. Therefore, engineering controls to minimize the aerial dispersion of naturally occurring asbestos are not required.

### *Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures*

The following measures would be implemented to avoid and/or minimize impacts from hazardous materials that are present in the project area:

- No asphalt concrete grindings may be placed in the shoulder backing soil at locations where erosion or maintenance operations could result in their deposit into Donner Creek or the Truckee River. Caltrans handling procedures for soil must include dust control, spillage prevention, and air quality monitoring during construction.
- The contractor(s) would be required to prepare a project-specific Lead Compliance Plan to minimize worker exposure to lead-impacted soil and

removed yellow traffic paint residue. The Lead Compliance Plan should include protocols for environmental and personnel monitoring, requirements for personal protective equipment, and other health and safety protocols and procedures for the handling of lead-impacted soil and lead containing yellow traffic stripe paint. The Lead Compliance Plan would be approved by an Industrial Hygienist certified by the American Board of Industrial Hygiene.

- Excavation of the proposed tunnel located in Nevada County, would generate a total of approximately 900 tons of material. During construction, the excavated material should be stock piled and further analyzed to determine appropriate soil disposal options. It is recommended that the contractor prepare a Health and Safety Plan to minimize worker exposure. Petroleum Contaminated Waste Non-Standard Special Provision would be required, which provides for a health and safety plan to protect construction workers. The Nevada County Department of Environmental Health requires soils with detectable concentrations of petroleum hydrocarbons to be disposed off site.

## Visual/Aesthetics

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) establishes that it is the policy of the State to take all action necessary to provide the people of the state "with… enjoyment of aesthetic, natural, scenic and historic environmental qualities." [CA Public Resources Code Section 21001(b)]

### *Affected Environment*

The existing Donner Creek Underpass tunnel is a gateway between Truckee and the more undeveloped section of State Route 89 south toward Lake Tahoe. Although the Donner Creek Underpass tunnel itself is not an architecturally distinctive structure, it provides the visual transition point between the undeveloped area of SR 89 and the community of Truckee.

The project site contains several key visual elements including the railroad crossing, Donner Creek, native vegetation, and rock outcroppings. The railroad represents a highly valued resource to the area, as it ties the historic mode of transportation to the modern highway system. Donner Creek represents a key visual resource along this segment of roadway. Native vegetation enhances views of the railroad and adjacent properties and contributes to the scenic quality of the area.

State Route 89 in Nevada County is eligible as a State Scenic Highway. California's Scenic Highway Program is intended to preserve and protect scenic highway corridors from change which would diminish the aesthetic value of lands adjacent to highways.

### *Environmental Consequences*

There would be minor, temporary negative visual impacts from construction of the project. In addition, there would be a minor permanent loss of the original integrity of the Donner Creek Underpass tunnel with the addition of a second, more modern tunnel. Visual impacts associated with the project include removal of native vegetation, construction of retaining walls, and extensive grading.

### *Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures*

Impacts to the visual quality of the project area would be avoided or minimized with implementation of the following measures:

- All disturbed areas would utilize temporary erosion control measures during construction to minimize impacts to visual and water quality.
- All areas disturbed during construction would receive permanent erosion control measures at the completion of the project. All disturbed areas would be seeded with a permanent seed mix composed of native plant species. In addition, a follow-up revegetation project would install containerized native plants to supplement seeding.
- All efforts would be made to minimize impacts to native vegetation and rock outcroppings during the design and construction phases. Design would minimize cut and fill limits whenever possible to avoid unnecessary disturbance of existing terrain.
- Finished slopes would be blended to match the natural topography of the site. All finished slopes would mimic natural terrain by minimizing harshly angled slopes and hinge point.
- Design and architectural elements of the 1929 Underpass would be incorporated into the design of any new structure. Architectural treatments reflecting the area's historic railroad bridge engineering would be incorporated in the aesthetic treatment of the tunnel
- All retaining walls would receive architectural texturing treatment appropriate to the project context. Currently, a "Dry Stack Stone" architectural treatment

is used on many overcrossings and retaining wall projects in the Truckee area. A similar treatment developed by the Caltrans Landscape Architecture Division may be used for this project.

- All retaining structures and rock slope protection would be colorized with an architectural staining product to match the oxidized coloration of the existing stone at the site. This would minimize visual impacts caused by newly constructed slopes and structural elements associated with the project.

## Water Quality

### *Regulatory Setting*

Section 401 of the Clean Water Act requires water quality certification from the State Water Resource Control Board (SWRCB) or a Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) when the project requires a federal permit. Typically this requires a Clean Water Act Section 404 permit to discharge dredge or fill into a water of the United States, or a permit from the Coast Guard to construct a bridge or causeway over a navigable water of the United States under the Rivers and Harbors Act.

Along with Clean Water Act Section 401, Section 402 establishes the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) for the discharge of any pollutant into waters of the United States. The federal Environmental Protection Agency has delegated administration of the NPDES program to the SWRCB and the nine RWQCBs. To ensure compliance with Section 402, the SWRCB has developed and issued the Department an NPDES Statewide Storm Water Permit to regulate storm water and non-storm water discharges from the Department's right-of-way, properties and facilities. This same permit also allows storm water and non-storm water discharges into waters of the State pursuant to the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Act.

Water quality objectives for the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board are specified in the Water Quality Control Plan for the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board (Basin Plan) prepared in compliance with the Federal Clean Water Act and the State Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act. The Basin Plan establishes water quality objectives and implementation programs to meet stated objectives and to protect the beneficial uses of both surface waters and groundwater.

### *Affected Environment*

The principal receiving water body in the project area is Donner Creek. Donner Creek is a tributary to the Truckee River, which is located approximately 0.5 miles

downstream from the project site. The project lies within the jurisdictional boundary of the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board and the Truckee River Hydrologic Unit.

The Truckee River is listed on the 2006 Clean Water Act Section 303(d) List of Water Quality Limited Segments Requiring Total Maximum Daily Loads. Donner Creek is not listed as impaired and is not affected by the total maximum daily loads imposed upon the Truckee River.

### *Environmental Consequences*

The primary pollutant of concern is sediment resulting from the construction of cut and fill slopes. No permanent water quality impacts are expected as a result of the project. Temporary Construction Site Best Management Practices (BMPs) would be required to protect water bodies within or near the project limits from potential water pollution runoff from construction activities.

### *Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures*

In order to avoid and minimize the potential for sedimentation and other construction-related impacts, the project would be constructed using the following erosion control measures:

- The project would adhere to the conditions of the Caltrans Statewide National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit CAS No. 000003 (Order No. 99-06-DWQ) issued by the State Water Resources Control Board. Adherence to the compliance requirements of the NPDES General Permit CAS No. 000002 (Order No. 2009-0009-DWQ) for General Construction Activities is also required. The project is also subject to the Construction General Permit implemented in July 2010.

- A Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan would be required, which specifies the level of temporary control measures for the project. These measures must address soil stabilization, sediment control, tracking control and wind erosion control practices. In addition, the project specifications would include non-stormwater controls, waste management, and material pollution controls.

# Chapter 3 - Comments and Coordination

Early and continuing coordination with the general public and appropriate public agencies is an essential part of the environmental process. This coordination enables planners to determine the necessary scope of environmental documentation, the level of analysis required, and to identify potential impacts and mitigation measures and related environmental requirements.

Agency consultation and public participation for this project have been accomplished through a variety of formal and informal methods, including project development team meetings, town council meetings, two public meetings (held on September 27, 2007 and June 27, 2008), and interagency coordination meetings.

# Chapter 4 - List of Preparers

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

Georgette Neale, Associate Environmental Planner (Coordinator). Contribution: DED Environmental document preparation.

Adele Pommerenck, Associate Environmental Planner (Coordinator). Contribution: DED Environmental document preparation and Peer Review.

Denise Gibson, Associate Environmental Planner (Coordinator). Contribution: FED Environmental document preparation.

Kendall Schinke, Senior Environmental Planner. Contribution: Environmental Branch Chief.

Winder Bajwa, Project Manager. Contribution: Project Coordination.

Gary Birch, Senior Transportation Engineer. Contribution: Project Design.

Thomas Langley, Transportation Engineer. Contribution: Preparation of Preliminary Plans and Project Report.

Mike DeWall, Transportation Engineer (Hydrologist). Contribution: Floodplain Analysis Report.

Daryl Noble, Associate Environmental Planner (Archaeology). Contribution: Historic Property Survey Report.

Joan Fine, Associate Environmental Planner (Architectural Historian). Contribution: Historic Resource Evaluation Report.

Gary Grunder, Associate Environmental Planner (Natural Sciences). Contribution: Project Biologist, Natural Environmental Study.

Maria Alicia Beyer Salinas, Transportation Engineer. Contribution: Hazardous Waste Initial Site Assessment.

Jeff Pietrzak, Landscape Architect. Contribution: Landscape Architecture Assessment Sheet (LAAS)

Christine Ottaway, Landscape Architect. Contribution: Visual Impact Analysis.

Sharon Tang, Transportation Engineering Technician. Contribution: Air Quality Study.

Benjamin Tam, Transportation Engineer. Contribution: Noise Study.

Kevin Evarts, Water Quality/Stormwater Specialist. Contribution: Water Quality Study.

Kelly Dunlap, Senior Environmental Planner.  Contribution: Climate Change Study.

# Chapter 5 - Distribution List

A copy of this Initial Study with a Proposed Negative Declaration was sent to the following agencies, organizations, and individuals:

### *Adjacent Property Owners*

Donner Creek Mobile Home Park
10715 Highway 89
Truckee, CA 96161

Sierra Community College
Tahoe-Truckee Center
11001 College Trail
Truckee, CA 96161

Tom Brook, Store Manager
Save Mart Supermarket
11399 Deerfield Drive
Truckee, CA 96161-0505

Jennifer Freitas
Corporate Office
Save Mart Supermarket
1800 Standiford Avenue
Modesto, CA 95350

James Smith
Union Pacific Railroad
9451 Atkinson Street
Roseville, CA 95747

### *Local & Regional Agencies*

Town of Truckee
Division of Public Works
10183 Truckee Airport Road
Truckee, CA 96161

Nevada County
Transportation Commission
101 Providence Mine Road, Suite 102
Nevada City, CA 95959

Nevada County
Clerk-Recorder
950 Maidu Avenue
Nevada City, CA 95959

Placer County
Transportation Commission
299 Nevada Street
Auburn, CA 95603

Placer County
Community Development Department
3091 County Center Drive, Suite 140
Auburn, CA 95603

Placer County
Air Pollution District
3091 County Center Drive, Suite 240
Auburn, CA 95603-2614

Placer County Clerk
2956 Richardson Drive
Auburn, CA 95603-2640

Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
128 Market Street
Stateline, NV 89449.

California Regional Water Quality
Control Board – Lahontan Region
2501 Lake Tahoe Blvd.
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150

Tahoe Transportation District
P.O. Box 499
Zephyr Cove, NV 89448

Placer County Library
Auburn Branch
350 Nevada Street
Auburn, CA 95603

Placer County Library
Kings Beach Branch
301 Secline Drive
Kings Beach, CA 96143

Placer County Library
Tahoe City Branch
740 North Lake Boulevard
Tahoe City, CA 96146

Nevada County Library
Royce Branch
207 Mill Street
Grass Valley, CA 95945

Nevada County Library
Truckee Branch
10031 Levon Avenue
Truckee, CA 96161

Nevada County Library
Madelyn Helling Library
980 Helling Way
Nevada City, CA 95959

### *State Agencies*

California Transportation Commission
Commission Chair
1120 N Street, Room 2221 (MS-52)
Sacramento, CA 95814

Tracy Sturges
California Highway Patrol
Truckee Area Office
10077 State Route 89 South
Truckee, CA 96161

State Clearinghouse
1400 Tenth Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

California Tahoe Conservancy
1061 Third Street
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150

Public Utilities Commission
Executive Director
505 Van Ness Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94102

### *Federal Agencies*

Federal Railroad Administration
Office of Policy and Plans
400 7th Street SW
Washington, DC 20590

Public Utilities Commission
Executive Director
505 Van Ness Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94102

USDA, Forest Service
Tahoe National Forest
Truckee, Ca 96161

### *Other Organizations*

The League to Save Lake Tahoe
2608 Lake Tahoe Boulevard
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150

North Lake Tahoe Resort Association
P.O. Box 5459
Tahoe City, CA 96145

Mother Lode Chapter, Sierra Club
801 K Street, Suite 2700
Sacramento, Ca 95814

North Tahoe Citizen Action Alliance
P.O. Box 289
Tahoe Vista, CA 96148

Sierra Nevada Alliance
P.O. Box 7989
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96158

North Lake Tahoe Chamber of
Commerce
P.O. Box 884
Tahoe City, CA 96145

The Sierra Business Council
P.O. Box 2428
Truckee, CA 96160

Tahoe Resource Conservation District
870 Emerald Bay Road, Suite 108
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150

Sierra Front Recreation Coalition
P.O. Box 7456
Incline Village, NV 89452

Tahoe Earth Day Foundation
P.O. Box 7316
Tahoe City, CA 96145

The Nature Conservancy
One East First Street, Suite 1007
Reno, NV 89501

Northern California Air Quality
Management District
P.O. Box 9766
Truckee, CA 96162

# Chapter 6 - Minimization and/or Mitigation Summary

The following measures would be incorporated into the project plans and specifications in order to avoid and/or minimize impacts to jurisdictional waters in the project area:

- Jurisdictional waters and streambank areas with riparian habitat in the project area would be designated as environmentally sensitive areas (ESAs) on the project plans and in the project specifications.
- The boundaries of the ESAs would be clearly marked in the field by the installation of a fence which would remain in place throughout the extent of all construction activities.
- Sediment fencing would be installed prior to ground disturbance.
- No refueling would occur within 100 feet of Donner Creek.

The following measures would be incorporated into the project plans and specifications in order to avoid and/or minimize impacts to vegetation:

- During construction, efforts would be made to avoid and minimize tree and vegetation removal.
- A revegetation plan would be prepared and implemented as part of the project. The plan would include revegetation of all disturbed soil areas with native plant species.
- Topsoil would be collected during soil excavation operations.
- Topsoil would not include invasive species or noxious weeds.
- Topsoil would be excavated to the lines and depths as directed by the Engineer.
- All lumps or clods would be broken up before the topsoil is spread.
- Topsoil would be stockpiled until work in the area to receive the material is complete.
- Upon completion of the earthwork in an area, the topsoil would be spread to a uniform thickness over the disturbed soil areas.

The following measures are proposed to avoid and/or minimize the risk of introducing non-native weed species into the project area:

- Only native plan species appropriate for the project area would be used in any erosion control or revegetation seed mix or stock.
- No dry-farmed straw would be used, and certified weed-free straw would be required where erosion control straw is to be used.
- Any hydroseed mulch used for revegetation activities would be certified weed-free.
- All off-road construction equipment would be cleaned of potential noxious weed sources (mud, vegetation) before entry to the project area and after entering a potentially infested area before moving on to another area,
- The contractor would employ cleaning methods necessary to ensure that equipment is free of noxious weeds.

The following measures would be implemented to avoid and/or minimize impacts to nesting migratory birds:

- Removal of vegetation during clearing and grubbing operations would be confined to the minimal area necessary to facilitate construction activities.
- Vegetation removal on the project site would occur outside of the nesting season for migratory bird species. If vegetation removal must take place during the nesting season (March 1-August 31), a qualified biologist would conduct pre-construction surveys for active bird nests prior to the start of construction. If active bird nests are identified, construction would not begin at that location until after the chicks have fledged.

The following measures would be implemented to avoid and/or minimize impacts from hazardous materials that are present in the project area:

- No asphalt concrete grindings may be placed in the shoulder backing soil at locations where erosion or maintenance operations could result in their deposit into Donner Creek or the Truckee River. Caltrans handling procedures for soil must include dust control, spillage prevention, and air quality monitoring during construction.

- The contractor(s) should prepare a project-specific Lead Compliance Plan to minimize worker exposure to lead-impacted soil and removed yellow traffic paint residue. The Lead Compliance Plan should include protocols for environmental and personnel monitoring, requirements for personal protective equipment, and other health and safety protocols and procedures for the handling of lead-impacted soil and lead containing yellow traffic stripe paint. The Lead Compliance Plan would be approved by an Industrial Hygienist certified by the American Board of Industrial Hygiene.
- Excavation of the proposed tunnel would generate a total of approximately 900 tons of material. During construction, the excavated material should be stock piled and further analyzed to determine appropriate soil disposal options. It is recommended that the contractor prepare a Health and Safety Plan to minimize worker exposure. Petroleum Contaminated Waste Non-Standard Special Provision would be required, which provides for a health and safety plan to protect to protect construction workers. The Nevada County Department of Environmental Health requires soils with detectable concentrations of petroleum hydrocarbons to be disposed off site.

In order to avoid and minimize the potential for sedimentation and other construction-related impacts, the project would be constructed using the following erosion measures:

- The project would adhere to the conditions of the Caltrans Statewide National Pollutant discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit CAS No. 000003 (Order No. 99-06-DWQ) issued by the State Water Resources Control Board. Adherence to the compliance requirements of the NPDES General Permit CAS No. 000002 (Order No. 2009-0009-DWQ) for General Construction Activities is also required. The project is also subject to the Construction General Permit implemented in July 2010.
- A Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan would be required, which specifies the level of temporary control measures for the project. These measures must address soil stabilization, sediment control, tracking control and wind erosion control practices. In addition, the project plans and specifications would include non-stormwater controls, waste management, and material pollution controls.

Impacts to the visual quality of the project area would be avoided or minimized with implementation of the following measures:

- All disturbed areas would utilize temporary erosion control measures during construction to minimize impacts to visual and water quality.
- All areas disturbed during construction would receive permanent erosion control measures at the completion of the project. All disturbed areas would be seeded with a permanent seed mix composed of native plant species. In addition, a follow-up revegetation project would install containerized native plants to supplement seeding.
- All efforts would be made to minimize impacts to native vegetation and rock outcroppings during the design and construction phases. Design would minimize cut and fill limits whenever possible to avoid unnecessary disturbance of existing terrain.
- Finished contour grading and slopes would be blended to match the natural topography of the site. All finished slopes would mimic natural terrain by minimizing harshly angled slopes and hinge point.
- Design and architectural elements of the 1929 undercrossing would be incorporated into the design of any new structure. Architectural treatments reflecting the area's historic railroad bridge engineering would be incorporated in the aesthetic treatment of the tunnel.
- All retaining walls would receive architectural texturing treatment appropriate to the project context. Currently, a "Dry Stack Stone" architectural treatment is used on many overcrossings and retaining wall projects in the Truckee area. A similar treatment developed by the Caltrans Landscape Architecture Division may be used for this project.
- All retaining structures and rock slope protection would be colorized with an architectural staining product to match the oxidized coloration of the existing stone at the site. This would minimize visual impacts caused by newly constructed slopes and structural elements associated with the project.

# Appendix A: Title VI Policy Statement

STATE OF CALIFORNIA—BUSINESS, TRANSPORTATION AND HOUSING AGENCY ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER, Governor

**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR
P.O. Box 942873, MS-49
SACRAMENTO, CA 94273-0001
PHONE (916) 654-5266
FAX (916) 654-6608
TTY 711

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July 20, 2010

**TITLE VI**
**POLICY STATEMENT**

The California Department of Transportation, under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related statutes, ensures that no person in the State of California shall, on the grounds of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity it administers.

For information or guidance on how to file a complaint based on the grounds of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age, please visit the following web page: http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/bep/title_vi/t6_violated.htm.

Additionally, if you need this information in an alternate format, such as in Braille or in a language other than English, please contact Charles Wahnon, Manager, Title VI and Americans with Disabilities Act Program, California Department of Transportation, 1823 14th Street, MS-79, Sacramento, CA 95811. Phone: (916) 324-1353 or toll free 1-866-810-6346 (voice), TTY 711, fax (916) 324-1869, or via email: charles_wahnon@dot.ca.gov.

CINDY McKIM
Director

*"Caltrans improves mobility across California"*

# Appendix B: List of Technical Studies

Air Quality Assessment (Air Quality Report, Caltrans 2010)

Archeological Evaluation and Finding of No Effect (Archeology, Caltrans 2009)

Floodplain Evaluation Report Summary (Hydraulics, Caltrans 2010)

Floodplain Risk Analysis (Hydraulics, Caltrans 2010)

Location Hydraulics Study (Hydraulics, Caltrans 2010)

Initial Site Assessment (Hazardous Waste, Caltrans 2010)

Landscape Assessment (Visual Impact Analysis, Caltrans 2010)

Natural Environmental Study (Biology, Caltrans 2010)

Noise Assessment (Noise, Caltrans 2010)

Traffic Management Checklist and Data Sheet (Caltrans 2010)

Value Analysis Study (Caltrans, 2008)

Water Quality Assessment (NPDES, Caltrans 2010)