Scott Road Intersection Access Project

SIERRA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA
02-SIE-395-PM 0.0/0.1
2E8200

Initial Study with Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration

Prepared by the
State of California, Department of Transportation
Caltrans District 2
1657 Riverside Drive, MS-30
Redding, CA 96001

November 2012

General Information About This Document

What's in this document?

This Draft Initial Study with proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) examines the potential environmental effects of a proposed transportation project on U.S. Route 395, in Sierra County, from the Nevada State line to 0.1 mile north. The purpose of the project is to improve traffic safety and operations. The project entails reconfiguration of an intersection and relocation of a median cross-over for emergency and maintenance vehicles. This IS/MND was prepared to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). It describes the purpose and need for the project, project alternatives, the existing environment, and potential effects from each of the project alternatives. Final selection of a project alternative will not be made until after the full evaluation of environmental impacts, consideration of public comments, and approval of the final IS/MND.

What should you do?

- Please read this IS/MND
- We welcome your comments. If you have any information or concerns regarding the project, please send your written comments to Caltrans by the deadline. Submit comments via regular mail to:

California Department of Transportation
Attention: Christopher Quiney
North Region Office of Environmental Mgmt., MS-30
1657 Riverside Drive
Redding, CA 96001

- You may also submit comments via e-mail to Chris.Quiney@dot.ca.gov
- Submit comments by the deadline: December 7, 2012.

What happens after this?

After comments are received from the public and reviewing agencies, Caltrans may (1) give environmental approval to the proposed project, (2) undertake additional environmental studies, or (3) abandon the project. If the project is given environmental approval and funding is appropriated, Caltrans could 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: Chris Quiney, North Region Environmental Management,1657 Riverside Drive, Redding, CA 96001; (530) 225-3174 Voice, or use the California Relay Service TTY number, 1-800-735-2929.

Scott Road Intersection Access Project

In Sierra County, California on U.S. Route 395
From Post Mile 0.0 to 0.1, next to the Nevada State line

DRAFT INITIAL STUDY
WITH PROPOSED MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

Submitted Pursuant to: Division13, California Public Resources Code

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
Department of Transportation

11-1-12
Date of Approval

CINDY ANDERSON
Office Chief - North
North Region Environmental Services
California Department of Transportation

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

SCH No.
02-SIE-395-PM 0.0/0.1
02-2E8200

Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration

Pursuant to: Division 13, California Public Resources Code

Project Description

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) proposes a project to improve traffic operations and safety on U.S. Route 395, in Sierra County, from the Nevada State line to 0.1 mile north. The project would reconfigure an intersection of U.S. Route 395 and Scott Road and relocate a median cross-over for emergency and maintenance vehicles. These improvements will clearly define traffic movements and direction of travel on this section of divided highway.

Determination

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

The project will have No Impact on aesthetics, agriculture and forest resources, air quality, biological resources, geology and soils, greenhouse gas emissions, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, land use and planning, mineral resources, noise, population and housing, public services, recreation, transportation/traffic, utilities and service systems, or mandatory findings of significance.

With mitigation, the project will have a Less Than Significant Impact on cultural resources.

_____ _____

Cindy Anderson
Office Chief - North
North Region Environmental Services
California Department of Transportation

Date

Proposed Project

Project Title
Scott Road Intersection Access Project

Lead Agency Name and Address
State of California, Department of Transportation
District 2
1657 Riverside Drive, MS-30
Redding, CA 96001

Contact Person and Phone Number
Christopher Quiney
Caltrans Environmental Branch Chief
Phone (530) 225-3174

Project Location
The proposed project is located on U.S. Route 395 next to the Nevada State line, from post mile 0.0 to 0.1 [Figures 1 and 2]

Project Sponsor's Name and Address
State of California, Department of Transportation
District 2
1657 Riverside Drive
Redding, CA 96001

Purpose and Need

The purpose of this project is to improve traffic operations and safety. U.S. Route 395 (Route 395) in the project area is a four-lane divided highway. Scott Road, also known as Long Valley Road, is a frontage road that runs parallel to and has a road connection with the southbound lanes of Route 395 approximately 0.1 mile north of the Nevada state line. This road connection is used by local residents as well as commercial and retail traffic from nearby Bordertown, NV. The Scott Road intersection allows southbound traffic on Route 395 to exit and local traffic to gain access to southbound 395. Immediately opposite the Scott Road intersection, within the median of Route 395, is a paved median cross-over for emergency and highway maintenance vehicles. The alignment of the Scott Road connector with the median turn-around in addition to the setting on a divided expressway could cause confusion among motorists accessing Route 395 from Scott Road.

Project Description

A new emergency/maintenance vehicle median cross-over would be constructed approximately 200 feet south of the existing cross-over (See Figure 3, ESL map.) The new cross-over would be approximately 12 feet in width and have a paved surface. An 18-inch diameter culvert would be placed beneath the cross-over to accommodate

drainage through the median. The existing paved cross-over and the paved shoulder on the northbound left lane of Route 395 would be obliterated. Approximately 200 feet of the existing paved shoulder extends into Nevada. Any encroachment permits or agreements necessary to complete the work in Nevada would be obtained from the Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT).

The south shoulder of the Scott Road intersection connector would be widened approximately 8 feet and the radius modified to accommodate large trucks as defined under the Surface Transportation Assistance Act. This would require extension of an existing cattle guard that crosses the road connection. A concrete median, at least 4 inches in height, would be constructed to channelize traffic entering Route 395 from Scott Road into the southbound lanes of Route 395. New signs would also be installed. Construction is expected to occur during 2013 and would be completed in approximately 20 working days. During construction, shoulder closures will be required with intermittent lane closures. With the project changes, traffic would still be able to exit from southbound Route 395 to Scott Road. No new right-of-way would be required for this project.

Permits and Approvals

The proposed project entails minor work within the state of Nevada including obliteration of a segment of paved median shoulder, placement of temporary construction signs, and traffic control. Caltrans would be required to obtain an encroachment permit from the Nevada Department of Transportation for this work. A Water Pollution Control Program (WPCP) will be prepared and implemented in accordance with the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES).

List of Figures and Attachments

Figure 1	Project Vicinity Map
Figure 2	Project Location Map
Figure 3	Environmental Study Limits Map

CEQA Environmental Checklist

02/Sierra/395	0.0/0.1	2E8200
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 in the section following the checklist. 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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	☐	☐	☐	☒
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:				
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES: Would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☐	☐	☒
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

VII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS: Would the project:

a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment? b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	An assessment of the greenhouse gas emissions and climate change is included in the section following the checklist. 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 section following the checklist.

VIII. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS: Would the project:

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

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

IX. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY: Would the project:

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

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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	☐	☐	☐	☒
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
XI. MINERAL RESOURCES: Would the project:				
a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?	☐	☐	☐	☒
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
) 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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
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 will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion of Environmental Impacts
Expanded discussion is included for checklist questions answered Less than Significant Impact. Clarifying discussion *may* be included for checklist questions answered No Impact.

Cultural Resources

The historic property identification effort conducted for this project included an extensive records search including review of record depositories in both California and Nevada, review of records held by local historical societies and museums, coordination with interested parties, and completion of reports documenting the research efforts and conclusions. Coordination included the Native American Heritage Commission, the Nevada Department of Transportation and local Native American representatives.

Through these efforts, historical resources were found near the project area. The historical resources identified will be protected through an Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA) Action Plan. The ESA Action Plan for this project includes conditions to prevent disturbance of areas outside of the work zone required for construction of the project.

Caltrans has made a CEQA finding of no substantial adverse change – ESAs for this project because there are no historical resources within the project's area of direct impacts, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines § 15064.5(b) (3) and that impacts to historical resources within the remainder of the Project Area Limits will be mitigated to below the level of significance by using an Environmentally Sensitive Area Action Plan that outlines enforcement measures and conditions.

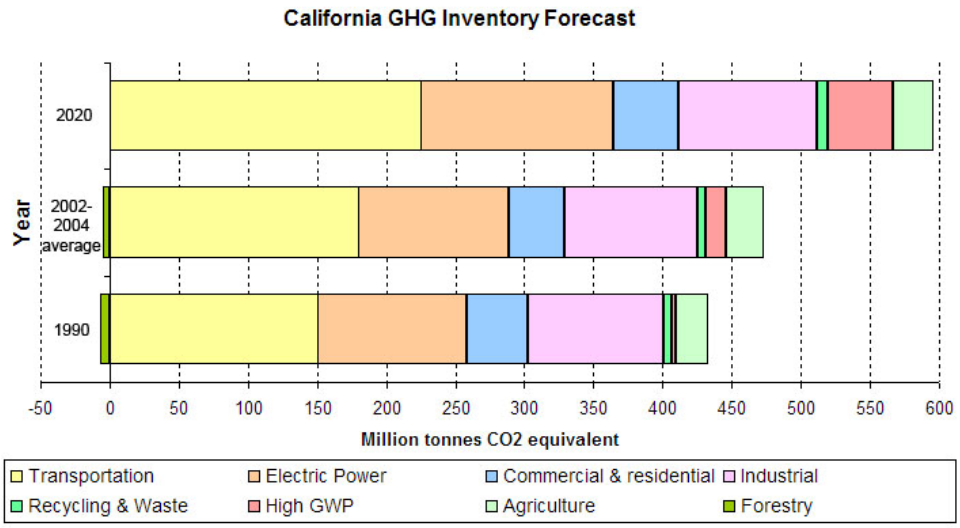
Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Climate Change (CEQA)
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

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.



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

Project Analysis

The proposed project entails relocation of a median cross-over for emergency and highway maintenance vehicles and reconfiguration of an intersection. Because the project would not increase capacity or vehicle hours travelled, no increases in operational GHG emissions are anticipated. The proposed project would require approximately 20 working days to complete. During construction, minor traffic control would be required. While construction emissions of greenhouse gases are unavoidable, the proposed project is minor in scope and short in duration.

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 will 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

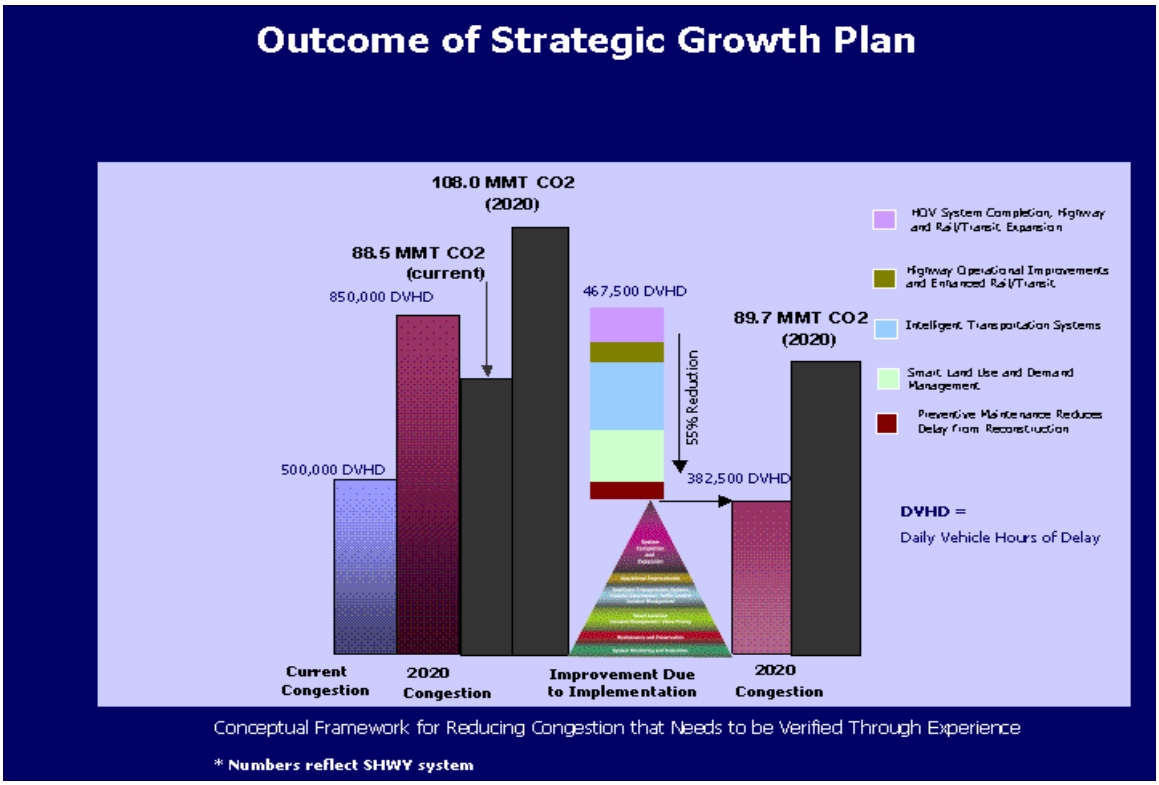
phases. Even though the project is not anticipated to increase operational GHG emissions, the proposed project would generate some GHG emissions during construction.

CEQA Conclusion

While construction will result in a slight increase in GHG emissions during construction, it is anticipated that the project will not result in any increase in operational GHG emissions. While 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 impact and its contribution on the cumulative scale to climate change, Caltrans is firmly committed to implementing measures to help reduce GHG emissions. These measures are outlined in the following section.

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.



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.

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 will 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 as well. 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 will help California agencies plan and implement mitigation strategies for programs and projects.

Executive Order S-13-08 (signed by Governor Sshwarzenegger in November 2008) directed the Business, Transportation, and Housing Agency to prepare a report to assess vulnerability of transportation systems to sea level rise affecting safety, maintenance and operational improvements of the system and economy of the state. The Department continues to work on assessing the transportation system vulnerability to climate change, including the effect of sea level rise.

Prior to the release of the final *Sea Level Rise Assessment Report* (due to be released in December 2010 from the National Academy of Sciences*)*, all state agencies that are planning to construct projects in areas vulnerable to future sea level rise were directed to consider a range of sea level rise scenarios for the years 2050 and 2100 in order to assess project vulnerability and, to the extent feasible, reduce expected risks and increase resiliency to sea level rise. However, all projects that have filed a Notice of Preparation, and/or are programmed for construction funding from 2008 through 2013, or are routine maintenance projects as of the date of Executive Order S-13-08 may, but are not required to, consider these planning guidelines. Sea level rise estimates should also be used in conjunction with information regarding local uplift and subsidence, coastal erosion rates, predicted higher high water levels, storm surge and storm wave data. (Executive Order S-13-08 allows some exceptions to this planning requirement.)
This proposed project was programmed for construction funding in 2010, it is exempt at this time from the requirements to analyze the impacts of sea level rise as directed in Executive order S-13-08.

Currently, the Department is working to assess which transportation facilities are at greatest risk from climate change effects. However, without statewide planning scenarios for relative sea level rise and other climate change impacts, the Department has not been able to determine what change, if any, may be made to its design standards for its transportation facilities. Once statewide planning scenarios become available, the Department will be able review its current design standards to determine what changes, if any, may be warranted in order to protect the transportation system from sea level rise.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

An Initial Site Assessment (ISA) was completed for this project. In order to complete the ISA, the following sources were consulted: review of geologic maps and reports prepared by the California Geological Survey and the United States Geological Survey (USGS,) previous studies by Caltrans and its consultants, a field inspection of the geology in the project area, and a review of The Cortese List. The ISA indicated that aerially deposited

lead is expected to be present in soils adjacent to the highway due to the past use of leaded gasoline in motor vehicles. Lead concentrations are expected to be below the hazardous waste thresholds (1,000 mg/kg total lead and 5 mg/l soluble lead) therefore, disposal in a regulated landfill would not be required.

- Special provisions will be included in the contract requiring the contractor to implement a lead compliance plan prepared by a Certified Industrial Hygienist.
- In addition, thermoplastic traffic delineation paint may contain lead of varying concentrations depending upon color, type and year of manufacture. If yellow thermoplastic material will be removed exclusive of asphalt concrete, special provisions to address hazardous waste (CCR Title 22) regulatory requirements will be required.

Hydrology and Water Quality

A Water Pollution Control Program (WPCP) will be prepared in accordance with Caltrans' Storm Water Management Program and the Statewide Caltrans NPDES Permit issued by the State Water Resources Control Board. The WPCP identifies potential sources of pollution and the best management practices (BMPs) that will be implemented to avoid and/or minimize impacts to water quality.

Mandatory Findings of Significance

a) It has been determined that the project would not result in a substantial adverse change to a historic property.

b) The proposed project would not result in any adverse effects that, when considered in connection with other projects, would be considered cumulatively considerable.

c) Based on the description of the proposed project and consideration of potential effects, there is no evidence to support a finding that the project would have environmental effects which would cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly.

List of Preparers

This Initial study was prepared by the California Department of Transportation, North Region Office of Environmental Management, with input from the following staff:

Tom Graves, Hazardous Waste Coordinator
Contribution: Initial Site Assessment for Hazardous Waste

Blossom Hamusek, Project Archaeologist
Contribution: Cultural resource surveys and compliance, Native American coordination

Michael Mogen, Project Engineer
Contribution: Project design

Chris Quiney, Environmental Branch Chief
Contribution: Document preparation oversight

Sharon Stacey, Project Biologist
Contribution: Biological evaluation and preparation of Natural Environment Study

Carolyn Sullivan, Environmental Coordinator
Contribution: Document writer

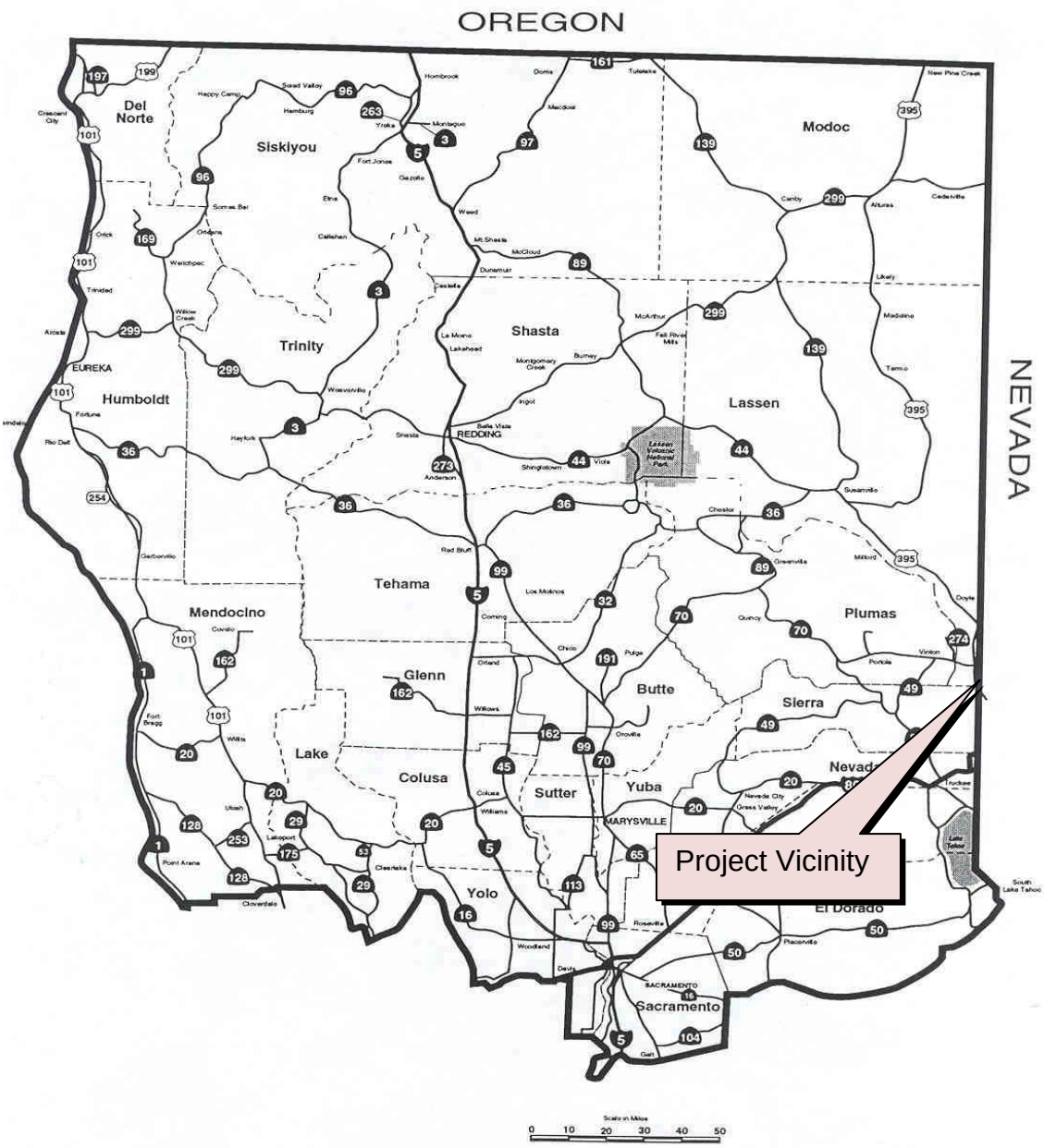


Figure 1 Project Vicinity Map

Caltrans	State of California Department of Transportation	Scott Road Intersection Access Project
	SIE-395-PM 0.0/0.1 02-2E8200	

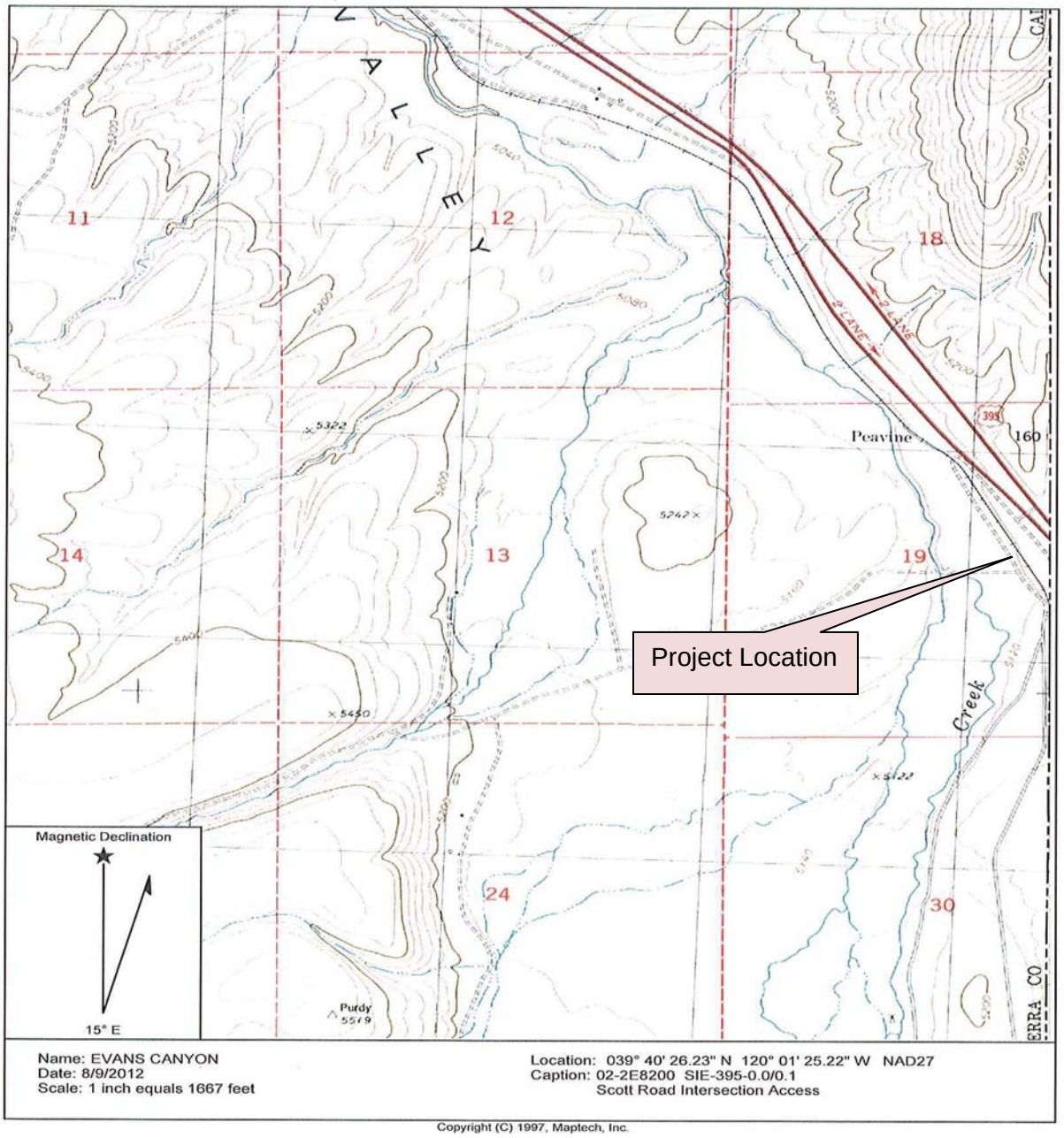


Figure 2 Project Location Map

Caltrans	State of California Department of Transportation	Scott Road Intersection Access Project
	SIE-395-PM 0.0/0.1 02-2E8200	

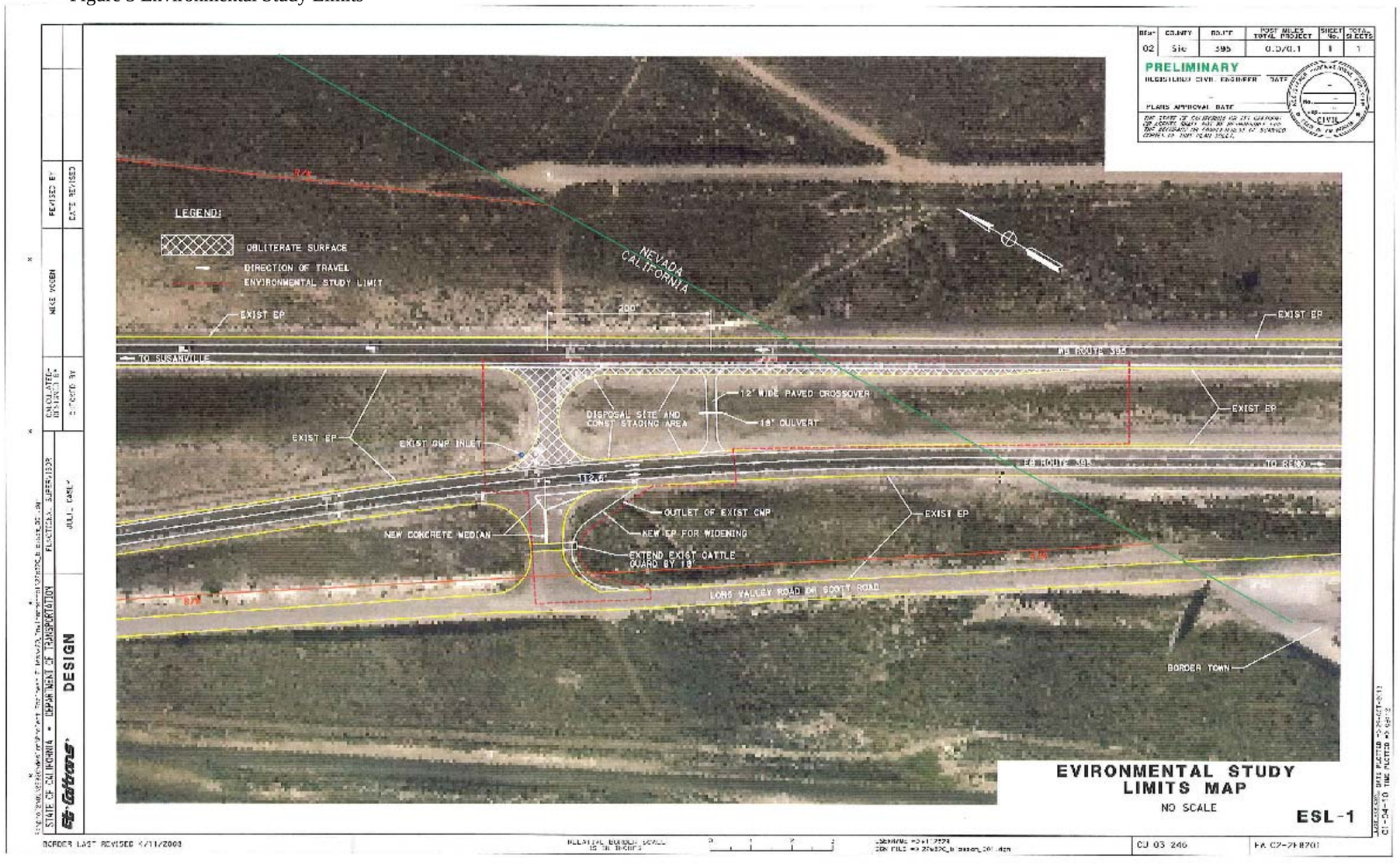



Figure 3 Environmental Study Limits