

State Route 49 Widen and Pave Shoulders

NEVADA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA
DISTRICT 3 – NEV – 49, PM 17.09/17.42
EA 03-1F890, EFIS 0300020146

Initial Study with Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration



Prepared by the
State of California Department of Transportation



April 2013

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 in Nevada County, California. The document describes the project, the existing environment that could be affected by the project, potential impacts from the project, and proposed avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures.

What you should 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 at 703 B Street, Marysville, CA 95901 and at the Nevada County Madelyn Helling Library at 980 Helling Way, Nevada City, CA 95959.
- This document has also been made available online at the following website:
<http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist3/departments/envinternet/envdoc.htm>
- We welcome your comments. If you have any concerns about the project, please send your written comments to Caltrans by the deadline. Submit comments via U.S. mail to Caltrans at the following address:

Caltrans Environmental Planning
Suzanne Melim
703 B Street
Marysville, CA 95901

Submit comments via email to: Suzanne.Melim@dot.ca.gov.

- Be sure to submit comments by the deadline: June 10, 2013

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 build all or part of the project.

For individuals with sensory disabilities, this document can be made available in Braille, in large print, on audiocassette, or on computer disk. To obtain a copy in one of these alternate formats, please call or write to Department of Transportation, Attn: Suzanne Melim, Senior Environmental Planner, 703 B St., Marysville, CA 95901; (530) 741-4158 Voice, or use the California Relay Service 1 (800) 735-2929 (TTY), 1 (800) 735-2229 (Voice) or 711.

State Route 49 Widen and Pave Shoulders
State Route 49 / PM 17.09/17.42
EA 03-1F890

INITIAL STUDY with Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration

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

THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
Department of Transportation

30 April 2013
Date of Approval


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

Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration

Pursuant to: Division 13, Public Resources Code

Project Description

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) proposes to widen the shoulders on State Route (SR) 49 in Nevada County from Old Downieville Highway to Newtown Road to conform to the design standard of eight feet. The existing shoulder width within the project limits varies from no shoulder to eight feet in width.

The shoulder widening will require some excavation and fill adjacent to the roadway. In the areas that require fill, existing culverts will need to be extended. Construction of the project is expected to take 55 days and may result in traffic delays. No detours are expected, but the highway may be limited to one way traffic at various times throughout construction. All work will occur within Caltrans' Right of Way.

Determination

This proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration is included to give notice to interested agencies and the public that it is Caltrans' intent to adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration for this project. This does not mean that Caltrans' decision on the project is final. This Mitigated Negative Declaration is subject to change 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 agricultural resources, air quality, cultural resources, geology/soils, greenhouse gas emissions, hazardous material, hydrology and water quality, land use/planning, mineral resources, noise, population/housing, public services, recreation, transportation and traffic, utilities/service systems, and visual/aesthetics.
- The proposed project would, with implementation of mitigation, have a less than significant effect on the following resources: wetland resources.

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

Date

LIST OF ACRONYMS

| | |
|------------------|--|
| ARB | Air Resources Board |
| Caltrans | California Department of Transportation |
| CDFW | California Department of Fish and Wildlife |
| CEQ | Council of Environmental Quality |
| CEQA | California Environmental Quality Act |
| CFR | Code of Federal Regulations |
| CH ₄ | Methane |
| CO | Carbon monoxide |
| CO-CAT | Coastal Ocean Climate Action Team |
| CO ₂ | Carbon dioxide |
| CWA | Clean Water Act |
| EO | Executive Order |
| EPA | Environmental Protection Agency |
| ESA | Environmentally Sensitive Area |
| FHWA | Federal Highway Administration |
| ft | foot/feet |
| GHGs | Greenhouse Gases |
| IPCC | Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change |
| LEDPA | least environmentally damaging practicable alternative |
| NES | Natural Environment Study |
| NOAA | National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration |
| NO ₂ | Nitrogen dioxide |
| N ₂ O | Nitrous dioxide |
| OSTP | Office of Science and Technology Policy |
| OPR | Office of Planning and Research |
| PM | post mile |
| RWQCB | Regional Water Quality Control Board |
| R/W | Right of Way |
| SR | State Route |
| SWRQCB | State Water Resources Control Board |
| SF ₆ | Sulfur hexafluoride |
| USACE | United States Army Corps of Engineers |
| USC | United States Code |
| VMT | Vehicle miles traveled |

CHAPTER 1 PROPOSED PROJECT

Project Title

State Route 49 Widen and Pave Shoulders

Lead Agency Name and Address

California Department of Transportation
703 B Street
Marysville, CA 95901

Contact Person and Phone Number

Suzanne Melim, Senior Environmental Planner
(530) 741-4484

Project Location

The proposed project is located on State Route (SR) 49 in Nevada County from Post Mile (PM) 17.09 to PM 17.42. See Figure 1 for the project location map.

Project Sponsor's Name and Address

California Department of Transportation
Suzanne Melim, Senior Environmental Planner
703 B Street
Marysville, CA 95901

Purpose and Need

Requests from local bicycle groups and Nevada County identified the need for wider shoulders on SR 49 where the highway connects two local bike routes, forcing riders into the traveled way along with vehicular traffic.

The purpose of this project is to widen the highway shoulders to eight feet, thereby creating a safer travel path for bicyclists following the local bike route as they will no longer need to ride within the traveled way, and instead can ride along the paved shoulder.

Description of Project

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) proposes to widen the shoulders on SR 49 in Nevada County from Old Downieville Highway to Newtown Road to conform to the design standard of eight feet. The existing shoulder width within the project limits varies from no shoulder to eight feet in width.

The shoulder widening will require some excavation and fill adjacent to the roadway. In the areas that require fill, existing culverts will need to be extended. Construction of the project is

expected to take 55 days and may result in traffic delays. No detours are expected, but the highway may be limited to one way traffic at various times throughout construction. All work will occur within Caltrans' Right of Way.

The project is programmed for \$545,000 as a 201.310 Operational Improvement Program in the 2013/2014 fiscal year. The Nevada County Transportation Commission (NCTC) has agreed to contribute a total of \$368,000 (\$48,000 for project development and \$320,000 for construction capital) towards the project. Caltrans will contribute the remaining \$525,000 in the construction capital through the District Minor Program. Construction will occur in the 2014/2015 fiscal year.

Background

SR 49 has been used by many years as a route for bicycle enthusiasts. This portion of SR 49, between Old Downieville Highway and Newtown Road, is part of the Nevada City Bike Trail that makes a 12.6 mile loop beginning in Nevada City. A large majority of the route is on county roads with very low traffic volume; however, traffic volumes are higher where the bike route merges with SR 49. As SR 49 lacks shoulders in this area, riders are forced to ride in the traveled way.

Surrounding Land Uses and Setting

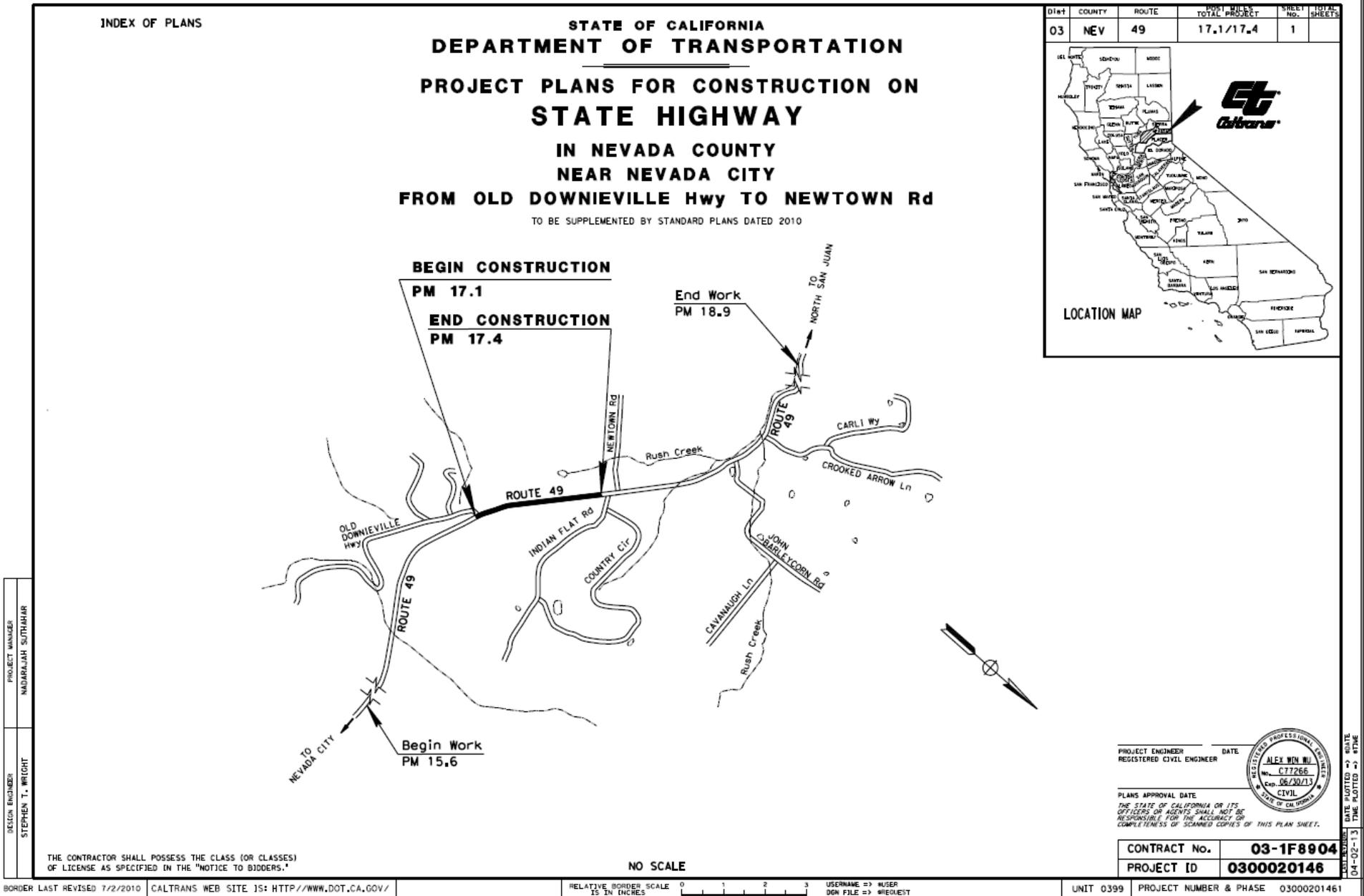
The proposed project is located two miles west of Nevada City in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada Mountain range. The project is located in a rural area of the county, just outside the city limits of Nevada City. There are 11 parcels adjacent to SR 49 within the project limits. The land use designations of the parcels, according to the Nevada County Zoning map, are identified as residential, open space, and agricultural.

Permits and Approvals Needed

The proposed project requires the following permits and approvals:

- Section 404 permit from the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)
- Section 401 Water Quality Certification from the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB)
- Section 1602 Streambed Alteration Agreement from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)

Figure 1 Project Location Map



CHAPTER 2 ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED

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

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

CHAPTER 3 IMPACTS CHECKLIST

The impacts checklist starting on the next page identifies physical, biological, social, and economic factors that might be affected by the project. Direct and indirect impacts are addressed in checklist items I through XVII. Mandatory Findings of Significance are discussed in item XVIII. The California Environmental Quality Act impact levels include “potentially significant impact,” “less than significant impact with mitigation,” “less than significant impact,” and “no impact.”

A brief explanation of each California Environmental Quality Act checklist determination follows each checklist item. Explanations are provided as needed following each section of the checklist.

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| Potentially significant impact | Less than significant impact with mitigation | Less than significant impact | No impact |
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| I. AESTHETICS — Would the project: | | | |
| a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| <i>Explanation: "No Impact" determination in this section is based on the Visual Impact Assessment, prepared in March 2013.</i> | | | |
| 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? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 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 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

| Potentially significant impact | Less than significant impact with mitigation | Less than significant impact | No impact |
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| Code section 51104(g)? | | | | |
| d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 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 if forest land to non-forest use? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| <i>Explanation: "No Impact" determinations in this section are based on various field reviews in 2012 and 2013.</i> | | | | |
| 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? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 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)? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| <i>Explanation: "No Impact" determination in this section is based on the Air Quality Report, prepared in February 2013.</i> | | | | |
| IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES — Would the project: | | | | |
| a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species | | | | |

| Potentially significant impact | Less than significant impact with mitigation | Less than significant impact | No impact |
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| 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? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
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| b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, and regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
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| 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? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
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| 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? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
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| e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
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| 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? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
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Explanation: Determination based on the Natural Environment Study, prepared in March 2013. See Chapter 3.1 for further explanation.

V. CULTURAL RESOURCES — Would the project:

| | | | | |
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| a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in §15064.5? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
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| b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
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| Potentially significant impact | Less than significant impact with mitigation | Less than significant impact | No impact |
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| c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| <i>Explanation: "No Impact" determination in this section is based on the Cultural Report, prepared in March 2013.</i> | | | | |
| 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: | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 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. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| ii) Strong seismic ground shaking? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| iv) Landslides? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in onsite or offsite landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 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. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

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| Potentially significant impact | Less than significant impact with mitigation | Less than significant impact | No impact |
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Explanation: "No Impact" determination in this section is based on conversations with the Project Engineer in February 2013.

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?

An assessment of the greenhouse gas emissions and climate change is included in the 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 greenhouse gas emissions and CEQA significance, it is too speculative to make a significance determination on 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 Chapter 3.2 of the environmental document.

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?

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| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
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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?

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| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
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c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?

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| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
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d) Be located on a site that is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?

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| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
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| Potentially significant impact | Less than significant impact with mitigation | Less than significant impact | No impact |
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| 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? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 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? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| g) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 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? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| <i>Explanation: "No Impact" determination in this section is based on review of the Site Investigation Report prepared on February 13, 2013.</i> | | | | |
| IX. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY — Would the project: | | | | |
| a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level that would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner that would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or offsite? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner that would result in flooding on- or off-site? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

| Potentially significant impact | Less than significant impact with mitigation | Less than significant impact | No impact |
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| e) Create or contribute runoff water that would exceed the capacity of existing or planned storm water drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| f) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 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? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| h) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures that would impede or redirect flood flows? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 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? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| j) Result in inundation by a seiche, tsunami, or mudflow? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| <i>Explanation: "No Impact" determination in this section is based on review of the Water Quality Assessment, February 14, 2013.</i> | | | | |
| X. LAND USE AND PLANNING — Would the project: | | | | |
| a) Physically divide an established community? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 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? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| <i>Explanation: "No Impact" determination in this section is based on the scope of the project.</i> | | | | |
| XI. MINERAL RESOURCES — Would the project: | | | | |
| a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral | | | | |

| Potentially significant impact | Less than significant impact with mitigation | Less than significant impact | No impact |
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| resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
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| 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? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|

Explanation: "No Impact" determination in this section is based on the scope of the project.

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? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|

| | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|

| | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| c) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|

| | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| d) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|

| | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 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? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|

| | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 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? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|

Explanation: "No Impact" determination in this section is based on the Noise Report prepared in February 2013.

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)? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|

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

| | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

Explanation: "No Impact" determinations in this section are based on the scope and location of the project.

XIV. PUBLIC SERVICES —

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

| | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Fire protection? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Police protection? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Schools? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Parks? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Other public facilities? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

Explanation: "No Impact" determinations in this section are based on the scope and location of the project.

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? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

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

| | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| the environment? | | | | |
| <i>Explanation: "No Impact" determinations in this section are based on the scope and location of the project.</i> | | | | |
| XVI. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC — Would the project: | | | | |
| a) Cause an increase in traffic that is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system (i.e., result in a substantial increase in either the number of vehicle trips, the volume to capacity ratio on roads, or congestion at intersections)? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Exceed, either individually or cumulatively, a level of service standard established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 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? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| e) Result in inadequate emergency access? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| f) Result in inadequate parking capacity? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| g) Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation (e.g., bus turnouts, bicycle racks)? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| <i>Explanation: "No Impact" determination in this section is based on conversations with the Project Engineer in February 2013.</i> | | | | |
| XVII. UTILITY AND SERVICE SYSTEMS — Would the project: | | | | |

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

| | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 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? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 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? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| e) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider that serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| f) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| g) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| <i>Explanation: "No Impact" determination in this section is based on conversations with the Project Engineer in February 2013.</i> | | | | |
| 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 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

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

| | | | | | |
|--|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory? | | | | | |
| <i>Explanation: "No Impact" determination based on the Natural Environment Study, March 2013.</i> | | | | | |
| 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)? | | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| <i>Explanation: On the basis of this evaluation, the proposed project would not have cumulative effects.</i> | | | | | |
| c) Does the project have environmental effects that will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly? | | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| <i>Explanation: On the basis of this evaluation, the proposed project would not cause adverse effects on human beings.</i> | | | | | |

3.1 ADDITIONAL EXPLANATION: AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT, ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES, AND MITIGATION MEASURES

IV. Biological Resources

The information contained in the Biological Resources section was based on information provided in the Natural Environment Study (NES), March 2013.

Wetlands and Other Waters of the U.S.

Regulatory Setting

Wetlands and other waters are protected under a number of laws and regulations. At the federal level, the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, more commonly referred to as the Clean Water Act (CWA) (33 United States Code [USC] 1344), is the primary law regulating the discharge of dredged or fill material into wetlands and surface waters.

Section 404 of the CWA establishes a regulatory program that provides that discharge of dredged or fill material cannot be permitted if a practicable alternative exists that is less damaging to the aquatic environment or if the nation's waters would be significantly degraded. The Section 404 permit program is run by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) with oversight by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA).

At the state level, wetlands and waters are regulated primarily by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), the Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCB). Sections 1600-1607 of the California Fish and Game Code require any agency that proposes a project that will substantially divert or obstruct the natural flow of or substantially change the bed or bank of a river, stream, or lake to notify CDFW before beginning construction. If the CDFW determines that the project may substantially and adversely affect fish or wildlife resources, a Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement will be required.

The RWQCBs were established under the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act to oversee water quality. The RWQCB also issues Water Quality Certifications for impacts to wetlands and waters in compliance with Section 401 of the CWA.

Affected Environment

The proposed project is located within the Yuba River watershed, specifically next to Rush Creek. All potentially jurisdictional wetlands and other waters of the United States mapped within the boundaries of the study area are hydrologically connected to Rush Creek and are interpreted to be within the scope of USACE jurisdiction under Section 404 of the CWA. In addition, these aquatic features may be subject to CDFW 1600 regulations; as well as, RWQCB 401 regulations. A map of the potential waters and impacts is attached as Appendix A.

The project limits contain multiple small perennial (present during all seasons) and intermittent (occurs at irregular intervals) drainages crossing under the highway that eventually drain into Rush Creek. There are four intermittent drainages, one perennial flow and an open seep (area

where shallow water table is perched above bedrock or exposed along road cuts) that channelizes and flows under the roadway.

In addition to the perennial and intermittent streams in the project area, six wetlands have been preliminarily identified in the project study area. Due to the constraints and timelines for the initial biological studies for this project, proper wetland delineations will not be performed until spring when the blooming season for hydrophytic (adapted to grow in water) vegetation begins. Potential wetlands and other waters of the United States within the study area that are potentially subject to USACE jurisdiction will be delineated using the methods provided in the *1987 Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual* and the *Interim Regional Supplement to the Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual: Arid West*.

Environmental Consequences

Proposed construction of the project would result in estimated temporary impacts of 0.6272 acre of waters of the United States, consisting of approximately 0.5170 acre impact to wetlands and 0.1102 acre impacts to other waters. Construction of the project would result in estimated permanent impacts to 0.0264 acre of jurisdictional waters and to 0.3806 acre of wetlands. Final waters of the U. S. impact totals will be calculated after the Wetland and Other Waters of the U.S. Delineation is approved by the USACE. The final approved impact totals are not expected to exceed the estimated impact amounts. Impacts to wetlands and other waters of the U.S. are considered less than significant with mitigation.

Avoidance and Minimization Measures

Establish Environmentally Sensitive Areas

- Sensitive natural resource features occurring outside of the expected construction impact area will be avoided or minimized by designating these features as “environmentally sensitive areas” (ESAs) on project plans and in project specifications.
- ESA information will be shown on contract plans and discussed in the Special Provisions. ESA provisions may include, but are not limited to, the use of temporary orange fencing to delineate the proposed limit of work in areas adjacent to sensitive resources, or to delineate and exclude sensitive resources from potential construction impacts.
- Contractor encroachment into ESAs will be restricted (including the staging/operation of heavy equipment or casting of excavation materials).
- ESA provisions shall be implemented as a first order of work, and remain in place until all construction activities are complete.

Minimize Disturbance to Jurisdictional Waters

- All waters and wetlands adjacent to the construction zone that will not be filled as a result of the project will be designated as ESAs, and shall be fenced to assure no inadvertent damage to these resources will occur.
- Disruption of the wetlands, streambeds, and adjacent riparian corridors will be minimized, and vegetation removal shall be limited to the minimum amount required for construction.
- Depending on seasonal flows, de-watering of the streambed or culvert course and/or a temporary stream diversion may be necessary. De-watering plans will be prepared by

the contractor and approved by the Project Engineer.

- *Permit Restrictions:* The road widening project will impact jurisdictional waters of the United States and as such will require the use of a Clean Water Act Section 404 permit from the Army Corps of Engineers and a section 401 Water Quality Certification from the California Regional Water Quality Control Board. Because the work will take place below the top of the streambank, a 1602 Streambed Alteration Agreement will also be required from the CDFW.

Re-vegetation of Disturbed Habitats

- Prior to vegetation removal, the area will be surveyed by a qualified biologist for a complete accounting of species and their quantities present within the construction limits.
- Upon completion of project construction, stream banks will be permanently stabilized using native species.
- Any seed mixture used for hydro-seeding purposes must be approved by a Caltrans biologist.
- Only native seed material shall be used; seed, hay and straw used in erosion control applications shall be certified weed-free or weed-seed free.

Mitigation Measures

Mitigation for permanent impacts to jurisdictional wetlands and waters will be performed to achieve no-net-loss of the functions and values within the study area in accordance with USACE Guidelines. All permanently impacted wetlands will be mitigated by securing credits of seasonal wetland habitat at an agency-approved conservation area or will be mitigated by using other agency approved mitigation methods. Additionally, re-vegetation efforts due to the temporary impacts to waters of the state may be required to satisfy the CDFW on-site mitigation requirements.

Even without approval of completed wetland delineations, it is anticipated that the amount of permanent impacts to wetlands will not exceed 0.520 acres.

Caltrans shall prepare a re-vegetation plan or a MMP (Mitigation and Monitoring Plan) to restore any temporary impacts on-site. This plan will be prepared by the project biologist and approved by the District Environmental Stewardship Branch.

3.2 CLIMATE CHANGE

Climate change refers to long-term changes in temperature, precipitation, wind patterns, and other elements of the earth's climate system. An ever-increasing body of scientific research attributes these climatological changes to greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, particularly those generated from the production and use of fossil fuels.

While climate change has been a concern for several decades, the establishment of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) by the United Nations and World Meteorological Organization in 1988, has led to increased efforts devoted to GHG emissions reduction and climate change research and policy. These efforts are primarily concerned with the emissions of GHGs generated by human activity including carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), nitrous oxide (N₂O), tetrafluoromethane, hexafluoroethane, sulfur hexafluoride (SF₆), HFC-23 (fluoroform), HFC-134a (s, s, s, 2-tetrafluoroethane), and HFC-152a (difluoroethane).

In the U.S., the main source of GHG emissions is electricity generation, followed by transportation. In California, however, transportation sources (including passenger cars, light duty trucks, other trucks, buses, and motorcycles make up the largest source (second to electricity generation) of GHG emitting sources. The dominant GHG emitted is CO₂, mostly from fossil fuel combustion.

There are typically two terms used when discussing the impacts of climate change. "Greenhouse Gas Mitigation" is a term for reducing GHG emissions in order to reduce or "mitigate" the impacts of climate change. "Adaptation," refers to the effort of planning for and adapting to impacts resulting from climate change (such as adjusting transportation design standards to withstand more intense storms and higher sea levels)¹.

There are four primary strategies for reducing GHG emissions from transportation sources: 1) improving the transportation system and operational efficiencies, 2) reducing growth of vehicle miles traveled (VMT), 3) transitioning to lower GHG emitting fuels, and 4) improving vehicle technologies. To be most effective all four strategies should be pursued collectively. The following Regulatory Setting section outlines state and federal efforts to comprehensively reduce GHG emissions from transportation sources.

Regulatory Setting

State

With the passage of several pieces of legislation including State Senate and Assembly bills and Executive Orders, California launched an innovative and pro-active approach to dealing with GHG emissions and climate change.

Assembly Bill 1493 (AB 1493), Pavley. Vehicular Emissions: Greenhouse Gases, 2002: requires the California Air Resources Board (ARB) to develop and implement regulations to reduce automobile and light truck GHG emissions. These stricter emissions standards were designed to apply to automobiles and light trucks beginning with the 2009-model year. In June

¹ http://climatechange.transportation.org/ghg_mitigation/

2009, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) Administrator granted a Clean Air Act waiver of preemption to California. This waiver allowed California to implement its own GHG emission standards for motor vehicles beginning with model year 2009. California agencies will be working with federal agencies to conduct joint rulemaking to reduce GHG emissions for passenger cars model years 2017-2025.

Executive Order (EO) S-3-05: (signed on June 1, 2005, by former Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger) the goal of this EO is to reduce California's GHG emissions to: 1) year 2000 levels by 2010, 2) year 1990 levels by the 2020, and 3) 80 percent below the year 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, Núñez and Pavley: AB 32 sets the same overall GHG emissions reduction goals as outlined in EO S-3-05, while further mandating that ARB create a scoping plan, (which includes market mechanisms) and implement rules to achieve "real, quantifiable, cost-effective reductions of greenhouse gases."

Executive Order S-20-06: (signed on October 18, 2006 by former Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger) further directs state agencies to begin implementing AB 32, including the recommendations made by the California's Climate Action Team.

Executive Order S-01-07: (signed on January 18, 2007 by former Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger) set forth the low carbon fuel standard for California. Under this EO, the carbon intensity of California's transportation fuels is to be reduced by at least ten percent by the year 2020.

Senate Bill 97 (SB 97) Chapter 185, 2007: required the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) to develop recommended amendments to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines for addressing GHG emissions. The amendments became effective on March 18, 2010.

Caltrans Director's Policy 30 (DP-30) Climate Change (approved June 22, 2012): is intended to establish a Department policy that will ensure coordinated efforts to incorporate climate change into Departmental decisions and activities. This policy contributes to the Department's stewardship goal to preserve and enhance California's resources and assets.

Federal

Although climate change and GHG reduction is a concern at the federal level; currently there are no regulations or legislation that have been enacted specifically addressing GHG emissions reductions and climate change at the project level. Neither the United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) nor the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has promulgated explicit guidance or methodology to conduct project-level GHG analysis. As stated on FHWA's climate change website (<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/hep/climate/index.htm>), climate change considerations should be integrated throughout the transportation decision-making process—from planning through project development and delivery. Addressing climate change mitigation and adaptation up front in the planning process will facilitate decision-making and improve efficiency at the program level, and will inform the analysis and stewardship needs of project level decision-making. Climate change considerations can easily be integrated into many

planning factors, such as supporting economic vitality and global efficiency, increasing safety and mobility, enhancing the environment, promoting energy conservation, and improving the quality of life.

The four strategies set forth by FHWA to lessen climate change impacts do correlate with efforts that the state has undertaken and is undertaking to deal with transportation and climate change; the strategies include improved transportation system efficiency, cleaner fuels, cleaner vehicles, and a reduction in the growth of vehicle hours travelled.

Climate change and its associated effects are also being addressed through various efforts at the federal level to improve fuel economy and energy efficiency, such as the “National Clean Car Program” and EO 13514 - *Federal Leadership in Environmental, Energy and Economic Performance*.

Executive Order 13514 is focused on reducing greenhouse gases internally in federal agency missions, programs and operations, but also direct federal agencies to participate in the Interagency Climate Change Adaptation Task Force, which is engaged in developing a national strategy for adaptation to climate change.

On April 2, 2007, in *Massachusetts v. EPA*, 549 U.S. 497 (2007), the Supreme Court found that greenhouse gases are air pollutants covered by the Clean Air Act and that the U.S. EPA has the authority to regulate GHG. The Court held that the U.S. EPA Administrator must determine whether or not emissions of greenhouse gases from new motor vehicles cause or contribute to air pollution which may reasonably be anticipated to endanger public health or welfare, or whether the science is too uncertain to make a reasoned decision.

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

- **Endangerment Finding:** The Administrator found 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 found that the combined emissions of these well-mixed greenhouse gases from new motor vehicles and new motor vehicle engines contribute to the GHG 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 U.S. EPA’s *Proposed Greenhouse Gas Emission Standards for Light-Duty Vehicles*, which was published on September 15, 2009². 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.

U.S. EPA and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) are taking coordinated steps to enable the production of a new generation of clean vehicles with reduced

² <http://www.epa.gov/oms/climate/regulations.htm#1-1>

GHG emissions and improved fuel efficiency from on-road vehicles and engines. These next steps include developing the first-ever GHG regulations for heavy-duty engines and vehicles, as well as additional light-duty vehicle GHG regulations. These steps were outlined by President Obama in a Presidential Memorandum on May 21, 2010.³

The final combined U.S. EPA and NHTSA 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. The standards require these vehicles to meet an estimated combined average emissions level of 250 grams of carbon dioxide (CO₂) per mile, (the equivalent to 35.5 miles per gallon [MPG] if the automobile industry were to meet this CO₂ level solely through fuel economy improvements. Together, these standards will cut GHG 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).

On November 16, 2011, U.S. EPA and NHTSA issued their joint proposal to extend this national program of coordinated greenhouse gas and fuel economy standards to model years 2017 through 2025 passenger vehicles.

Project Analysis

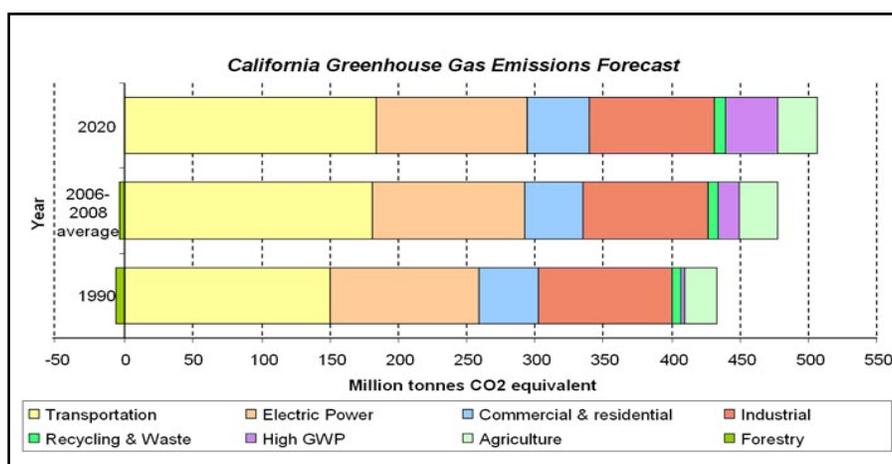
An individual project does not generate enough GHG emissions to significantly influence global climate change. Rather, global climate change is a cumulative impact. This means that a project may contribute to a potential impact through its *incremental* change in emissions when combined with the contributions of all other sources of GHG.⁴ In assessing cumulative impacts, it must be determined if a project's incremental effect is "cumulatively considerable" (CEQA Guidelines sections 15064(h)(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.

The AB 32 Scoping Plan mandated by AB 32 contains the main strategies California will use to reduce GHG emissions. As part of its supporting documentation for the Draft Scoping Plan, ARB released the GHG inventory for California (forecast last updated: October 28, 2010). The forecast is an estimate of the emissions expected to occur in the year 2020 if none of the foreseeable measures included in the Scoping Plan were implemented. The base year used for forecasting emissions is the average of statewide emissions in the GHG inventory for 2006, 2007, and 2008.

³ <http://epa.gov/otaq/climate/regulations.htm>

⁴ This approach is supported by the AEP: *Recommendations by the Association of Environmental Professionals on How to Analyze GHG Emissions and Global Climate Change in CEQA Documents* (March 5, 2007), as well as the South Coast Air Quality Management District (Chapter 6: The CEQA Guide, April 2011) and the US Forest Service (Climate Change Considerations in Project Level NEPA Analysis, July 13, 2009).

FIGURE 2 CALIFORNIA GREENHOUSE GAS FORECAST



Source: <http://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/inventory/data/forecast.htm>

The Department 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, the Department has created and is implementing the Climate Action Program at Caltrans that was published in December 2006.⁵

This project is a shoulder widening project and is not anticipated to increase capacity or change long-term traffic. Therefore, there is no potential for an increase in operational GHG emissions to occur with the project.

Construction Emissions

Greenhouse gas 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.

In addition, with innovations such as longer pavement lives, improved traffic management plans, and changes in materials, the GHG emissions produced during construction can be mitigated to some degree by longer intervals between maintenance and rehabilitation events.

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

⁵ Caltrans Climate Action Program is located at the following web address: http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/tpp/offices/ogm/key_reports_files/State_Wide_Strategy/Caltrans_Climate_Action_Program.pdf

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.

Greenhouse Gas Reduction Strategies

AB 32 Compliance

The Department continues to be actively involved on the Governor’s Climate Action Team as ARB works to implement Executive Orders S-3-05 and S-01-07 and help achieve the targets set forth in AB 32. Many of the strategies the Department is using to help meet the targets in AB 32



Figure 3: Mobility Pyramid

come from the California Strategic Growth Plan, which is updated each year. Former 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. 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 are expected to reduce congestion. The Strategic Growth Plan relies on a complete systems approach to attain CO₂ reduction goals: system monitoring and evaluation, maintenance and preservation, smart land use and demand management, and operational improvements as depicted in Figure ##: The Mobility Pyramid.

The Department 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. The Department works closely with local jurisdictions on planning activities but does not have local land use planning authority. The Department assists efforts to improve the energy efficiency of the transportation sector by increasing vehicle fuel economy in new cars, light and heavy-duty trucks; the Department 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 U.S. EPA and ARB.

Table 1 summarizes the Departmental and statewide efforts that the Department is implementing in order to reduce GHG emissions. More detailed information about each strategy is included in the [Climate Action Program at Caltrans](#) (December 2006).

Table 1 Climate Change/CO₂ Reduction 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 | .975 | 7.8 |
| Operational Improvements & Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) Deployment | Strategic Growth Plan | Caltrans | Regions | State ITS; Congestion Management Plan | .07 | 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, ARB, 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 | | | .0065 |
| | | | B20 | | .0045 | .045 |
| | | | B100 | | | .0225 |
| Non-vehicular Conservation Measures | Energy Conservation Program | Green Action Team | | Energy Conservation Opportunities | .117 | .34 |
| Portland Cement | Office of Rigid Pavement | Cement and Construction Industries | 2.5 % limestone cement mix | | 1.2 | 4.2 |
| | | | 25% fly ash cement mix | | .36 | 3.6 |
| | | | > 50% fly ash/slag mix | | | |
| Goods Movement | Office of Goods Movement | Cal EPA, ARB, BT&H, MPOs | | Goods Movement Action Plan | Not Estimated | Not Estimated |
| Total | | | | | 2.72 | 18.18 |

Adaptation Strategies

“Adaptation strategies” refer to how the Department 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, variability in storm surges and intensity, and the frequency and intensity of wildfires. These changes may affect the transportation infrastructure in various ways, such as damage to roadbeds from 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.

At the federal level, the Climate Change Adaptation Task Force, co-chaired by the White House Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ), the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP), and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), released its interagency report on October 14, 2010 outlining recommendations to President Obama for how Federal Agency policies and programs can better prepare the U.S. to respond to the impacts of climate change. The Progress Report of the Interagency Climate Change Adaptation Task Force recommends that the federal government implement actions to expand and strengthen the nation’s capacity to better understand, prepare for, and respond to climate change.

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.

On November 14, 2008, former Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger signed EO S-13-08 which directed a number of state agencies to address California’s vulnerability to sea level rise caused by climate change. This EO set in motion several agencies and actions to address the concern of sea level rise.

The California Natural Resources Agency (Resources Agency) was directed to coordinate with local, regional, state and federal public and private entities to develop. The California Climate Adaptation Strategy (Dec 2009)⁶, which summarizes the best known science on climate change impacts to California, assesses California's vulnerability to the identified impacts, and then outlines solutions that can be implemented within and across state agencies to promote resiliency.

The strategy outline is in direct response to EO S-13-08 that specifically asked the Resources Agency to identify how state agencies can respond to rising temperatures, changing precipitation patterns, sea level rise, and extreme natural events. Numerous other state agencies were involved in the creation of the Adaptation Strategy document, including the California Environmental Protection Agency; Business, Transportation and Housing; Health and Human Services; and the Department of Agriculture. The document is broken down into strategies for different sectors that include: Public Health; Biodiversity and Habitat; Ocean and Coastal

⁶ <http://www.energy.ca.gov/2009publications/CNRA-1000-2009-027/CNRA-1000-2009-027-F.PDF>

Resources; Water Management; Agriculture; Forestry; and Transportation and Energy Infrastructure. As data continues to be developed and collected, the state's adaptation strategy will be updated to reflect current findings.

The Resources Agency was also directed to request the National Academy of Science to prepare a Sea Level Rise Assessment Report by December 2010⁷ to advise how California should plan for future sea level rise. The report is to include:

- Relative sea level rise projections for California, Oregon and Washington taking into account coastal erosion rates, tidal impacts, El Niño and La Niña events, storm surge and land subsidence rates.
- The range of uncertainty in selected sea level rise projections.
- A synthesis of existing information on projected sea level rise impacts to state infrastructure (such as roads, public facilities and beaches), natural areas, and coastal and marine ecosystems.
- A discussion of future research needs regarding sea level rise.

Prior to the release of the final Sea Level Rise Assessment Report, 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. 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

Interim guidance has been released by The Coastal Ocean Climate Action Team (CO-CAT) as well as the Department as a method to initiate action and discussion of potential risks to the states infrastructure due to projected sea level rise.

The proposed project is outside the coastal zone and direct impacts to transportation facilities due to projected sea level rise are not expected.

Executive Order S-13-08 also 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.

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 effects, 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

⁷ Pre-publication copies of the report, *Sea Level Rise for the Coasts of California, Oregon, and Washington: Past, Present, and Future*, were made available from the National Academies Press on June 22, 2012. For more information, please see http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=13389.

design standards to determine what changes, if any, may be warranted in order to protect the transportation system from sea level rise.

Climate change adaptation for transportation infrastructure involves long-term planning and risk management to address vulnerabilities in the transportation system from increased precipitation and flooding; the increased frequency and intensity of storms and wildfires; rising temperatures; and rising sea levels. The Department is an active participant in the efforts being conducted in response to EO S-13-08 and is mobilizing to be able to respond to the National Academy of Science Sea Level Rise Assessment Report.

CHAPTER 4 COMMENTS AND COORDINATION

Early and continuing coordination with the general public and appropriate public agencies is an essential part of the environmental process. It helps planners determine the necessary scope of environmental documentation, the level of analysis required, and to identify potential impacts and mitigation measures and related environmental requirements. This chapter summarizes the results of Caltrans' efforts to fully identify, address and resolve project-related issues through early and continuing coordination.

The Initial Study with Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration will be made available for public review at:

- Caltrans District 3 Office
703 B Street, Marysville, CA 95901
- Nevada County Madelyn Helling Library
980 Helling Way, Nevada City, CA 95959.
- This document has also been made available online at the following website:
<http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist3/departments/envinternet/envdoc.htm>

Following circulation of this Initial Study, comments made on the project and submitted during circulation will be placed in and addressed in this chapter.

CHAPTER 5 LIST OF PREPARERS

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

Veronica Wood, Environmental Planner. Contribution: Environmental Study Coordinator and Document Writer.

Suzanne Melim, Senior Environmental Planner. Contribution: Environmental Branch Chief.

Erick Wulf, Associate Environmental Planner (Archaeology). Contribution: Cultural Report.

Kenneth Russo, Environmental Planner, Natural Sciences (Biologist). Contribution: Project Biologist, Natural Environmental Study (NES).

Dennis Corcoran, Project Engineer. Contribution: Preparation of Design Plans.

Nadarajah Suthahar, Project Manager. Contribution: Project Coordination.

Rajive Chadha, Environmental Engineer. Contribution: Initial Site Assessment.

Sharon Tang, Air and Noise Specialist. Contribution: Air Quality and Noise Analysis.

Kathleen Grady, Landscape Architect. Contribution: Visual Impact Assessment.

Sean Cross, Storm Water Specialist. Contribution: Water Quality Analysis.

CHAPTER 6 DISTRIBUTION LIST

This document has been made available online at the following website:

<http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist3/departments/envinternet/envdoc.htm>

A “Notice of Intent to adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration” was mailed to the following individuals, businesses, and organizations:

Bicyclists of Nevada County (BONC)
Nevada County Agricultural Commissioner
Nevada County Board of Supervisors
Nevada County Department of Public Works
Nevada County Madelyn Helling Library (to make available for public review)
Nevada County Planning Department
Nevada County Recorder-Clerk
Nevada County Transportation Commission
Property owners in the general project vicinity
Sierra Express Bicycle Club (SEBC)
State Clearinghouse (to be distributed to various state agencies)

A notice will be sent to all individuals/agencies that commented on the Initial Study informing them when the proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration has been approved and where they can view or obtain a copy of the document.

APPENDIX A



Potential Wetland Location and Acreage Estimate
 EA: 03-1F890 State Route 49
 P.M. 17.09-17.42 Nevada County

APPENDIX B TITLE VI POLICY STATEMENT

STATE OF CALIFORNIA—BUSINESS, TRANSPORTATION AND HOUSING AGENCY

EDMUND G. BROWN Jr., Governor

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March 16, 2012

NON-DISCRIMINATION 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, religion, sexual orientation, 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, religion, sexual orientation, 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 Mario Solis, 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, TTY 711, fax (916) 324-1869, or via email: mario_solis@dot.ca.gov.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Malcolm Dougherty".

MALCOLM DOUGHERTY
Acting Director

"Caltrans improves mobility across California"