

# Uvas Creek Bridge Replacement

Santa Clara County, California  
District 4-SCL-152-KP 0.408/0.522 (PM 0.27/0.31)  
EA 04-448800

## **Initial Study with Proposed Negative Declaration**

**California Department of Transportation**



## 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 the alternatives being considered for this proposed bridge replacement project located in Santa Clara County, California. The document describes why the project is being proposed, alternatives for the project, the existing environment that could be affected by the project, the potential impacts from each of the alternatives, and proposed avoidance, minimization and/or mitigation measures.

### ***What should you do?***

- Please read this Initial Study. Additional copies are available for review at the below address and at additional locations listed in Chapter 3 of this document.
- We welcome your comments. If you have any comments regarding the proposed project, please attend the public hearing/open house and/or send your written comments to Caltrans by the deadline.
- Submit comments via postal mail to:  
Jared Goldfine, Senior Environmental Planner  
Department of Transportation, District 4  
Office of Environmental Planning, Mail Station 6  
111 Grand Avenue  
Oakland California, 94612
- Submit comments via email to [jared\\_goldfine@dot.ca.gov](mailto:jared_goldfine@dot.ca.gov).
- Submit comments by the following deadline: January 23, 2006.

### ***What happens next?***

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 design and construct all or part of the project.

For individuals with sensory disabilities, this document can be made available in Braille, large print, on audiocassette, or on computer disk. To obtain a copy in one of these alternate formats, please call or write the Department of Transportation, District 4, Attn: Jared Goldfine, Senior Environmental Planner, Office of Environmental Planning (Mail Station 6), P.O. Box 23660, Oakland California, 94623-0660, (510) 286-6203 (Voice), or use the California Relay Service TTY number, 1-887-735-2929.

04-SCL-152-KP 0.408/0.522  
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Replace the existing scour damaged Uvas Creek Bridge (Bridge number 37-47) on  
Route 152 immediately west of the City of Gilroy in Santa Clara County California

**Initial Study with Proposed Negative Declaration**

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

THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
Department of Transportation

12/1/05  
Date of Approval

Jared D. Goldfine  
Jared Goldfine, AICP  
Acting Office Chief  
Office of Environmental Analysis  
District 4 (Oakland)  
California Department of Transportation



## PROPOSED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

Pursuant to: Division 13, Public Resources Code

### ***Project Description***

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) proposes to replace the existing scour damaged Uvas Creek Bridge (Bridge number 37-47) on Route 152 west of the City of Gilroy in Santa Clara County California. Two alignment options are being considered: immediately north or immediately south of the existing bridge, which would be demolished. The southern alignment will require removal of 15 mature Deodar Cedar trees of historic importance. The northern alignment will require construction of a soil nail wall and, compared to the southern alignment, would remove 39 additional mature cedars, although no historic ones. Improvements associated with either alignment are a left-turn lane, wider shoulders, upgraded bridge rails, and metal beam guardrails.

### ***Determination***

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

The Department has prepared an Initial Study for this project, and pending public review, expects to determine from this study that the proposed project, including either of the alignment alternatives described herein, would not have a significant effect on the environment for the following reasons:

The proposed project would have no effect or no significant effect in the following environmental areas: aesthetics, agriculture resources, land use and planning, mineral resources, noise, population and housing, public services, recreation, utilities and service systems. In addition standard Caltrans construction and contract management practices are sufficient to preclude significant impacts in the following environmental areas: air quality, geology and soils, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, and transportation.

Although the southern alignment, if selected, would adversely affect a historic Deodar Cedar tree row, it would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of the historic tree row because the significance of this historic resource would not be materially impaired.

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Susan Chang  
Deputy Director, Environmental Planning and Engineering  
District 4 (Oakland)  
California Department of Transportation

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Date



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# Chapter 1 Proposed Project

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## 1.1 Project Characteristics

### 1.1.1 Purpose and Need

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) proposes to replace the scour-damaged Uvas Creek Bridge (number 37-47) on Route 152 west of the City of Gilroy in Santa Clara County California. The new 3-lane bridge will be located adjacent to the existing 2-lane bridge, which will be demolished. It will consist of continuous reinforced concrete (RC) or precast/prestressed concrete girders resting on two diaphragm abutments with one RC pier in the middle. The existing roadway will be realigned to connect to the new bridge.

Caltrans is considering two possible bridge alignments: immediately north of the existing bridge or immediately to the south. From a design perspective, the principal difference between them is how Route 152 will be realigned to connect with the new bridge to the east of Uvas Creek near the Burchell Road intersection. If a northern alignment is selected, a soil nail wall<sup>1</sup> approximately 130-m (150-yd) long with an average height of 6-m (19.7-ft) will be constructed along the north side of the highway. If a southern alignment is selected, it will be necessary to remove part of a historically significant Deodar Cedar tree-row that lines the south side of the roadway. In this case a guardrail will be provided to minimize the number of trees taken. Replacement landscaping will also be installed to complement those remaining. Under both alternatives, other roadside areas will be restored to match existing conditions with indigenous planting on slopes and new metal beam guardrails in essentially the same relative locations as the existing ones. Figure 1 is an area map with the project location indicated.

The need for this project arises from the fact that the existing bridge has experienced scour damage and must therefore be either be repaired or replaced. Scour is the removal of earth supporting the bridge foundation caused by water turbulence.

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<sup>1</sup>A soil nail wall is similar to a conventional retaining wall in that it stabilizes a slope to prevent erosion. However rather than being vertical, it is sloped toward the hill to take advantage of the retained earth's structural characteristics. Compared to a conventional retaining wall, the soil nail technique is less costly and more aesthetically pleasing.

Figure 1: Project Vicinity Map



Originally constructed in 1957, the existing reinforced concrete bridge has four spans, which means there are three piers in the waterway that are potentially subject to scour damage. Steel piles for two of these are currently exposed approximately one meter below the pile cap.

Known locally as the Hecker Pass Highway, Route 152 traverses the Coastal Mountain Range connecting Route 101 in the City of Gilroy with Route 1 in the City of Watsonville through Hecker Pass. The average daily traffic (ADT) is currently 2,852 vehicles per day, of which approximately 24.9% is trucks. In the three-year period ending May 2003, there were 10 accidents on the highway segment that includes the bridge.

Hecker Pass Highway is a major east west highway in the City of Gilroy's circulation system. It is the primary means to enter the City from properties west of Uvas Creek. An important local street, Burchell Drive, intersects Route 152 immediately east of the bridge. The main entrance to a privately owned theme park, Bonfante Gardens, is located approximately 100 yards west of the bridge. Blockages can occur on the mainline because the bridge is too narrow to accommodate left-turn traffic.

The City's recently adopted Hecker Pass Specific Plan retains Route 152 as a two-lane highway and establishes a priority to maintain its "rural character and scenic qualities". The Deodar Cedar tree row immediately east of the bridge on the south side of the roadway within the highway right-of-way has been classified in the plan as a scenic resource. The plan also proposes to accommodate increased vehicle travel demand on Route 152 by intersection improvements, which make better use of existing through capacity, rather than adding extra lanes (Gilroy 2005, Section 4.4).

The project is intended to achieve the following objectives:

- Mitigate scour damage: The goal is to correct the scour damage problem at the Uvas Creek Bridge, both immediately and long term.
- Improve operating efficiency: Highway design standards have changed since the Uvas Creek Bridge was constructed in 1957. Achieving current standards would be beneficial from the point of view of highway operations, maintenance and safety.

This project is on the candidate list for the State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOPP) and is to be funded by the SHOPP Bridge Preservation Program. The estimated total project cost is \$4.2 8.1 million for the northern alignment and \$3.2 7.0 million for the southern alignment.

### 1.1.2 Project Description

The project would construct a new bridge on one of two possible new roadway alignments, i.e. immediately north of the existing bridge or immediately to the south. Characteristics of the bridge and each alignment alternative are separately discussed below.

#### 1.1.2.1 Bridge Characteristics

The new bridge will have two 3.6-meter (m)(12-foot (ft)) through travel lanes and a 3.6-m (12-ft) left turn pocket. The existing bridge has only two 3.2-m (10.6-ft) through lanes and a narrower shoulder. Figure 2 is a comparison of existing and proposed new facilities. Figure 3 is a typical bridge cross section. The roadway will be supported by continuous reinforced concrete (RC) girders or precast/prestressed concrete girders resting on two diaphragm abutments with one RC pier in the middle. Continuous girders, if used, would be constructed on-site. Precast girders would be transported to the site. In either case, on-site work will be confined to areas that are not environmentally sensitive except as described below. Compared to the existing bridge, the new one will be less susceptible to scour damage because there will be only one pier foundation in the waterway, not three.

Feature	Existing	Proposed
Through lanes	2	2
Left turn pocket	No	Yes (3.6m)
Lane width	3.2 m	3.6 m
Paved shoulder width (average)	2.0 m	2.4 m
Paving material	AC	AC
Bridge rail	Metal beam, 2' high	Concrete* 5' high
Spans	4	2
Pier foundations	3	1
Width (maximum)	10.52 m	16.60 m
KEY: AC = asphalt concrete,		
* The rail will consist of a "Type 732" concrete barrier about 3 feet high with 2-foot handrails.		

The project will be completed over a two-year period. Construction will be accomplished in the first year and demolition of the existing bridge in the second. All work within the creek-bed or other sensitive areas will be take place between June 15 and October 15 of each year to minimize impact on the natural environment.

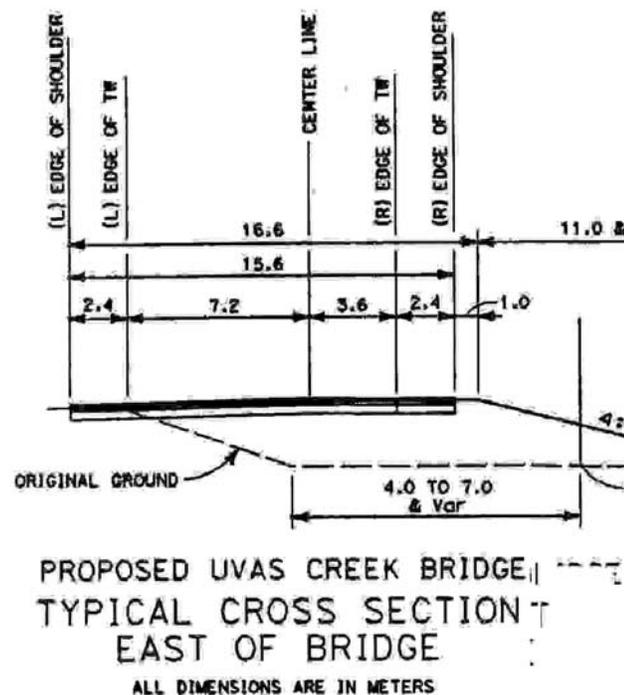
### 1.1.3 Construction Activities Common to Both Alignment Options

In addition to constructing the new bridge, certain construction activities are directly related to installing it at a new location. These are described below. The exact location and amount of disturbed land area will vary depending on which alignment

alternative is selected. However, the environmental effects of these changes are considered the same for purposes of determining significance under CEQA.

- Temporary access road construction:** Two unpaved temporary construction access routes will be established within the Uvas Creek-bed. One will extend from Burchell Drive to the east bank of Uvas Creek. The other will parallel Route-152 and end at the west bank. The access roads will be located no more than 6-m (20-ft) north or south of the new bridge footprint. Much of the land area disturbed will ultimately become the new bridge approaches.

**Figure 3: Typical Bridge Cross Section**



- Cofferdam and diversion channel construction:** A cofferdam and stream diversion channel will be constructed to exclude water from work areas during bridge construction and demolition. It will be assembled and removed in each of the two construction seasons. The cofferdam will be constructed 2-m (6.6-ft) beyond the north and south edges of the work area. These water barriers will be connected by an approximately 24-m (78.7-ft) plastic lined temporary channel positioned approximately 2.5-m (8.2-ft) on either side of the Uvas Creek thalweg, which is a line defining the lowest points of the existing waterway. The channel will be designed both to accommodate the maximum expected water volume and meet requirements for unrestricted wildlife passage, which are a minimum depth of 10.2 cm (4 in) and a maximum flow velocity of 5.9-feet per second (fps). A

platform will also be constructed above the diversion channel to prevent debris from entering the water. To encourage fish passage, the platform will be high enough above the water to expose the diversion channel to daylight.

- **Roadway realignment:** The new bridge will be connected to the existing highway by two new triangular highway segments constructed either north or south of the existing highway depending on which alternative is selected. If the northern alignment is selected, it would also be necessary to cut the slope and install a soil nail wall along the north side of Route 152 beginning at Burchell Drive. If the southern alignment is selected, the connecting roadway would be constructed on fill and it would be necessary to remove 15 mature Deodar Cedar trees of historic importance. The soil nail wall and tree removal issues are further discussed below. Under either alternative the connecting roadway to the west of Uvas Creek will be constructed on fill.

Once the new bridge is in use, unused old paving will be removed, the shoulder will be re-graded and new metal beam guardrails will be installed at the same locations relative to the roadway as at present. The new highway shoulders will have a maximum downward slope ratio of 4 to 1 and will be planted with indigenous vegetation to control erosion.

- **Demolition:** The existing bridge will be demolished in the second project year during the summer months, from June 15 through October 15. Prior to removing the bridge deck, a temporary falsework platform will be constructed immediately beneath it. The existing bridge deck, girders, overhangs and tops of the abutments will then be demolished beginning in the middle of the bridge span and working outwards. Then the falsework platform will be removed and the remaining portions of the bridge abutments, pier walls and pile caps will be cut down to 0.91-m (3-ft) below grade. Access to the creek bed for demolition will be provided within the footprint of the existing bridge and via the construction access routes established a year earlier for constructing the new bridge.

#### **1.1.4 The Northern Alignment**

This alternative would construct a new bridge approximately 3-m (9.8-ft.) upstream and to the north of the existing one. The principal difference between the northern and southern alignments is how the new bridge would connect to the existing highway on the east side of the new bridge. A southern alignment would require removal of 15 historic Deodar Cedar trees. A northern alignment would require construction of a soil nail wall to retain and stabilize the slope to the north of Route 152 east of the new bridge. Construction features unique to the northern alignment are described below.

- **Tree Removal:** Removal of 109 mature trees will be required along the north side of the roadway outside the riparian area. Of this total, 53 are Deodar Cedars with no historic importance. The remaining 56 are native oaks, many of which are located east of the bridge in the vicinity of the proposed soil nail wall.
- **Soil nail wall construction:** A soil nail wall approximately 130-m (150-yd) long with an average height of 6-m (19.7-ft) will be constructed immediately east of the new bridge along the north side Route 152 beginning at the Burchell Road intersection. The purpose of the wall is to reduce the amount of land acquisition and grading required for the bridge approach. The wall will be built using the soil nail construction technique, which allows many finished surface options for the finished concrete wall surface. It will be aesthetically treated with color and texture to compliment existing conditions.

### 1.1.5 The Southern Alignment

This alternative would construct a new bridge 2-m (6.6-ft) downstream and to the south of the existing one. Construction features unique to the southern alignment are described below.

- **Tree removal:** This alternative will require removal of 15 of the 115 mature Deodar Cedar trees lining the south side of Route 152 east of the bridge. This tree row has been determined to be historically important. Their removal is necessary to meet current minimum safety recovery zone requirements, which are 12-meters (39.36-feet) from edge of pavement to the nearest fixed obstacle.

A combined total of 59 mature trees will be removed along the south side of the roadway outside the riparian area. This includes the 15 Deodar Cedars mentioned above, 12 other Deodars located west of the bridge, and 32 native oaks.

- **Guardrail installation:** To improve safety and minimize the number of trees removed, a new guardrail will be installed east of the new bridge along the highway segment bordered by the Deodar Cedar trees. This will reduce the number of trees removed by 9, from 24 to 15. The new guardrail will begin near the sixteenth tree in the existing tree-row and extend for 142-m. (152-yd.). West of the new bridge, guardrails will be re-installed at the same locations relative to the bridge as at present.
- **Replacement Planting:** The new shoulder adjacent to the tree row (where the 15 cedars are proposed to be removed) would either be replanted with shrubs or with 24-inch box Cedars, if sufficient right-of-way exists. If not, shrub species similar to the following would be planted: Ceanothus species (Blue Blossom), Rhamnus (Coffeberry), Eriogonum (Buckwheat) and/or Romneya (Matilija Poppy). Other

new shoulder segments will be planted and provided with drainage in accordance with best management practices for water quality protection.

### **1.1.6 Right of Way**

Both alternatives will require right-of-way acquisition. The northern alignment would involve permanent acquisition of approximately 1.14-acres (ac) (0.46-hectare (ha)) of new right-of-way located east of the bridge near the soil nail wall. For the southern alignment, three narrow strips of land with a combined total area of approximately 0.74-acres (0.3-hectare) would be permanently acquired. They are located on both sides of the road to the east of the bridge and on the north side only to the west. In addition three temporary easements totaling approximately 0.70-ac (0.28-ha) will be obtained in these same general areas for use during construction. No homes or businesses will be displaced under either alternative.

## **1.2 Project Alternatives Considered and Withdrawn**

In addition to the alternatives described above, Caltrans initially considered two others: a repair only alternative and reconstructing the bridge at its current location. These are described below.

### **1.2.1 Reconstruction**

In developing the preferred study alternatives, Caltrans initially considered three possible new bridge locations: the northern alignment, the southern alignment and reconstruction in-place. Unlike the other alternatives, in-place reconstruction would require continuous traffic control and re-routing during construction. The new bridge would essentially be constructed and the old bridge demolished one-half at a time. Temporary controlled access would be maintained on either the old bridge or a recently completed portion of the new bridge.

This alternative was not evaluated in detail due to the high public inconvenience costs and related complications associated with maintaining traffic circulation during construction. Reconstructing at the current location would also take three or more construction seasons to complete, rather than two. It would also require removal of some, though fewer, Deodar Cedar trees and/or construction of a smaller soil nail wall because roadside safety clearance distances have increased since the existing bridge was built and the new bridge would be wider.

### **1.2.2 The Repair Only or “No Build” Alternative**

Environmental law requires identification of a no build alternative to use as a baseline for evaluation of construction alternatives. If a new bridge is not constructed, the existing Uvas Creek Bridge would remain in place, the project objectives noted above would not be met and the need to correct the scour damage problem would continue

to exist. According to the bridge inspection report (Caltrans 2002), this could be accomplished by either replacing the existing bridge piers or retrofitting their foundations. These options were not explored in detail because they are costly and would not yield any additional benefits in terms of improved highway operations or safety. Because the Uvas Creek-bed would still be disturbed, a repair-only project would have roughly the same temporary water quality and biological impacts as the proposed project. Over time there would be a greater disruption of riparian habitat because three bridge pier foundations, rather than one, would remain in the waterway.

### 1.3 Permits and Approvals Needed

Figure 4 summarizes environmental permits and approvals applicable to this project.

<b>Figure 4: Required Permits or Approvals</b>		
<b>Permit or Approval</b>	<b>Administering Agency</b>	<b>Authority</b>
Nationwide Permit (NWP) 14 (Linear Transportation Projects) & NWP 33 (Temporary Construction, Access, and Dewatering): Controls project impacts on waters of the U.S, including wetlands.	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE)	Federal Clean Water Act (Section 404)
Section 401 Certification: Certification by the RWQCB to the ACOE and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service that a Section 404 mitigation plan conforms to applicable Section 401 water quality standards	Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), Region #3	Federal Clean Water Act (Section 401)
National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit # 99-06-DWQ, CAS000003: Assures that completed project meets applicable water quality standards for drainage and run-off. NPDES permit #99-08-DWQ, CAS000002 (Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP)): Requires measures to reduce discharge of pollutants from the project site during construction.	State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB)	Federal Clean Water Act (Section 402)
NPDES Permitting Requirements for Dewatering Discharges: Discharges consisting solely of storm water or minor discharges of non-storm water containing sediment as the only pollutant, are allowed to be discharged under the NPDES Statewide Permit for Caltrans. Examples of the later are groundwater, water from cofferdams, water diversions, etc. The definition of a minor discharge in Region 3 is less than 0.25 mgd and 4 months duration. A major discharge of non-storm water, or storm water or non-storm water discharges containing pollutants other than sediment, require a site-specific dewatering permit from the RWQCB.	RWQCB, Region #3	Federal Clean Water Act (Section 402)
"Section 1601" Streambed Alteration agreement; "Section 2080" agreement for threatened and endangered species.	California Department of Fish and Game	California Public Resources Code

# Chapter 2 Affected Environment, Environmental Consequences, and Avoidance, Minimization and/or Mitigation Measures

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## 2.1 Overview

This chapter presents the result of Caltrans’ analysis of environmental issues relevant to this project. The following topics are discussed: aesthetics, cultural resources, water quality, storm water run-off, and biology. These topics were identified by completing the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) checklist, which appears in Appendix A. In addition to information presented here, this analysis is also based on supporting technical studies and other reference materials not attached to this document. A list of these appears in Chapter 5. They are available for examination and copying at the following address: California Department of Transportation, District 4, Office of Environmental Planning, 111 Grand Avenue, Oakland California, 94623-0660; telephone (510) 286-6214 (Voice), or use the California Relay Service TTY number, 1-887-735-2929. The Visual Impact Assessment and some of the documents listed in Chapter 5 may also be viewed and the following web address, where an electronic version of this document is also posted: [www.dot.ca.gov/dist4/envdocs.htm](http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist4/envdocs.htm)

### 2.1.1 Resource Areas with no Adverse Impacts

Completing the CEQA checklist is part of the initial project screening whereby qualified Caltrans staff assess the likelihood of adverse environmental impacts based on general knowledge of both the project and its environmental setting. The initial screening resulted in a finding that there is no potential for adverse project impacts in the following CEQA checklist subject areas: agriculture, air quality, geology and soils, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology, land use and planning, mineral resources, noise, public utilities and services, recreation, transportation and traffic. In addition the project will have no adverse effects that would not trigger a mandatory finding of significance under CEQA. Figure 5 states the reason(s) for the “no adverse impact” determination in these areas. The remainder of this chapter covers environmental issues that were determined to require further consideration.

<b>Figure 5: No Adverse Impact Determinations Summary</b>	
AGRICULTURE RESOURCES	
	The project will neither convert farmland to non-agricultural use nor conflict with current open space or agriculture land use designations.

<b>Figure 5: No Adverse Impact Determinations Summary</b>	
<b>AIR QUALITY</b>	
	The completed project will not violate any air quality standard, expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations, or otherwise conflict with the air quality plan. Standard construction management practices are adequate to prevent adverse air quality impacts during construction.
<b>GEOLOGY AND SOILS</b>	
	Because the Bay Area is seismically active, Caltrans routinely conducts detailed geotechnical studies and develops project specific construction features to minimize seismic risks. Project level seismic analysis includes a preliminary geotechnical report to determine soil conditions and local earthquake fault characteristics; and a design report recommending protective measures to be incorporated into final project design. Design recommendations are prepared in accordance with the following document: California Division of Mines and Geology Guidelines for Evaluating and Mitigating Seismic Hazards.
<b>HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS</b>	
	The project will not result in any increased hazards or hazardous materials risks after construction. During the design phase of project development, once the exact location of the bridge and land to be excavated is known, detailed soil and asbestos surveys will be conducted by the Caltrans Office of Environmental Engineering. Any hazardous materials found will be encased or disposed of in accordance with applicable federal and state regulations.
<b>HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY</b>	
	The project will not violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements. It will not substantially deplete groundwater supplies or alter existing drainage patterns.
<b>LAND USE AND PLANNING</b>	
	Both alignment options are consistent with the City of Gilroy's Hecker Pass Specific Plan in that they support the plan's objectives of retaining Route 152 as a two-lane highway and maintaining its rural character and scenic qualities (Gilroy 2005, Section 4.4). They differ in their impact on the Deodar Cedar tree-row, which is identified as a scenic resource in the plan. This topic is discussed in the visual impacts and cultural resources sections of this document. In other respects the two alignment options are considered neutral from a land use and planning perspective. They would continue the current highway use at essentially the same service level, although with increased safety and reliability. They would not involve acquisition of residential or commercial structures and will not alter community interaction patterns.
<b>MINERAL RESOURCES</b>	
	The project does not conflict with resource recovery plans or operations in the vicinity.
<b>NOISE</b>	
	The project will not cause or contribute to a substantial long-term increase in noise or ground vibration levels because there will be no increase in through traffic capacity. Standard construction management practices are adequate to prevent adverse noise impacts during construction.
<b>POPULATION AND HOUSING</b>	
	The project will not induce unplanned population growth, either directly or indirectly. Existing housing and businesses will not be displaced.
<b>PUBLIC SERVICES</b>	
	The project will not affect provision of existing public services or measurably increase the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any public service. Standard Department management practices will preclude substantial adverse impacts during construction.
<b>RECREATION</b>	
	The project will not directly or indirectly reduce the recreational value of any public or private properties.

<b>Figure 5: No Adverse Impact Determinations Summary</b>	
<b>TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC</b>	
	The project will not cause an increase in traffic that is substantial in relation to the traffic load and capacity of the existing highway. It does not conflict with plans, or programs for bicycling or other alternative transportation means.
<b>UTILITIES AND SERVICES</b>	
	Existing utilities and services will not be interrupted by construction and will be restored to pre-existing conditions or better afterwards. Standard Caltrans procedures for coordinating temporary service disruptions during construction are considered adequate for this project.
<b>MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE</b>	
	The project replaces an existing damaged facility, does not substantially increase existing highway capacity, is consistent with the adopted regional transportation plan, and includes preventive measures to preclude environmental damage during construction. The project, therefore, will not degrade the quality of the environment. It will not cause or contribute to adverse cumulative environmental impacts or cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly.

## 2.2 Visual/Aesthetics

Caltrans completed a visual impact assessment and technical report for this project (Caltrans 2005B). Its purpose is to evaluate project impacts on scenic and other visual resources and identify means to maintain or improve visual quality through project design. This section summarizes information contained in that document.

### 2.2.1 Regulatory Setting

CEQA establishes that it is the policy of the state to take all necessary action to provide the people of the state “with...enjoyment of *aesthetic*, natural, scenic and historic environmental qualities.” [CA Public Resources Code Section 21001(b)]. Caltrans environmental policy (DP-04) states that the Department will a) protect and enhance the environment and quality of life in accordance with the environmental, economic and social goals of California, b) seek to minimize the environmental impacts of transportation improvements, and c) cooperate with other project stakeholders in doing so.

### 2.2.2 Affected Environment

The project area is a single highway landscape unit for visual impact analysis purposes. Typical views are flat topography, occasional vistas of distant grass-covered hillsides dotted with native oak and conifer trees, private nurseries, a recreational facility (Bonfante Gardens) and close-up views of mature Deodar Cedar (*Cedrus Deodara*) trees lining the roadway. The general landform and vegetative cover are visually consistent throughout the project area’s approximately 0.9-kilometer (0.6-mile) length. The landscape has a predominantly rural character with relatively low levels of development. Visual quality is moderate-high, meaning that, although there are no exceptional

components, the viewshed as a whole is a unified, intact and vivid embodiment of a rural setting. The Deodar Cedar trees lining the project area are considered to be a scenic and historic resource.

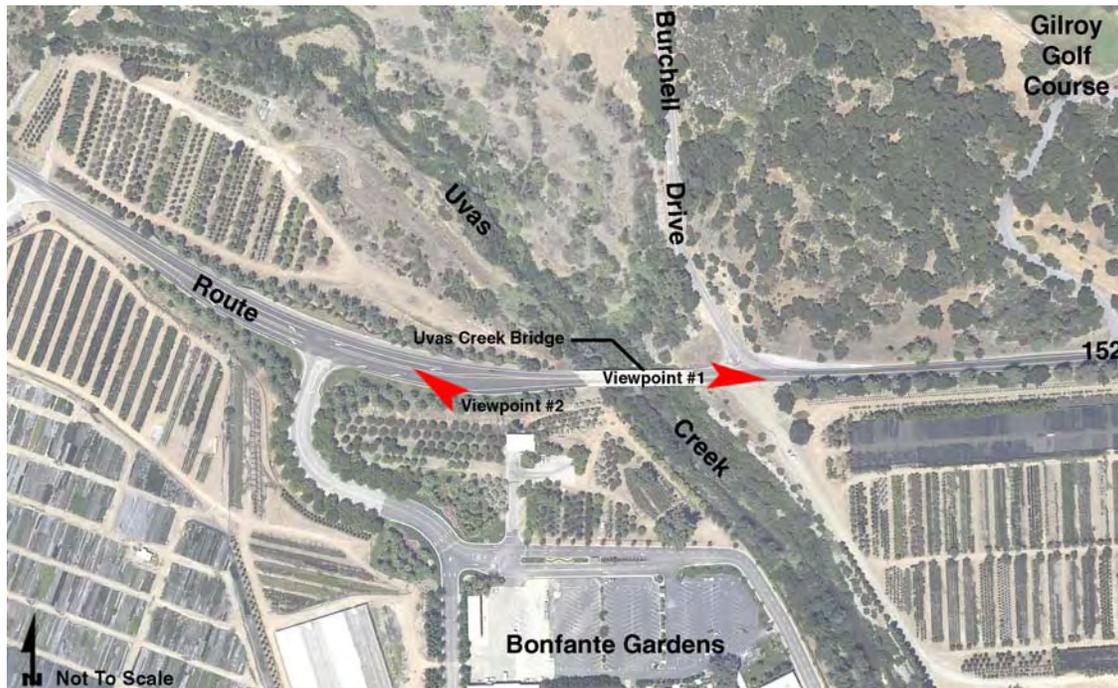
The city of Gilroy pursued designating Highway 152/Hecker Pass as a State Scenic Highway as part of the Gilroy General Plan in June of 2002. Though not yet officially designated, this portion of Route 152 is currently listed as eligible for inclusion in the California Scenic Highway System.

## 2.2.3 Direct Impacts

### 2.2.3.1 Before and After Images

To evaluate visual impacts and communicate the results of this analysis to project stakeholders and the general public, Caltrans prepared simulations of visual changes associated with each alternative. Two viewpoints were selected for comparison: one looking east from near the Burchell Drive intersection, the other looking west from a point midway between the existing bridge and the entrance to Bonfante Gardens. Figure 6 depicts the location of these viewpoints.

**Figure 6: View Location Map**



Figures 7 through 9 compare existing photographs with simulated future views, which were prepared by superimposing project characteristics on the existing landscape shown in the accompanying photograph. Figures 7A and B depict visual changes associated with the northern alignment looking west from viewpoint #2. Figures 8 and 9 are from viewpoint #1. They emphasize the different visual impacts associated with the northern

and southern alignments. Figures 8 A and B show visual effects associated with the soil nail wall that would be constructed under the northern alignment. Figures 9 A and B depict the visual gap that would be created under the southern alignment by removal of the 15 mature Deodar Cedars nearest the bridge.

**Figure 7A: Current View Looking West**



**Figure 7B: Future View Looking West, Northern Alignment**



**Figure 8A: Current View Looking East, Northern Alignment**



**Figure 8B: Future View Looking East, Northern Alignment**



**Figure 9A: Current View Looking East, Southern Alignment**



**Figure 9B: Future View Looking East, Southern Alignment**



#### **1.1.1-22.2.3.2 Discussion**

Compared to existing conditions and each other, visual changes associated with either alignment alternative do not constitute a significant impact on the visual environment. Although visual characteristics will differ depending on which alternative is selected, neither alignment option would adversely effect scenic vistas, substantially damage scenic resources or substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the project area, with the use of appropriate mitigation measures. Under both alignment options, construction operations, such as earthwork and tree removal, would be the most noticeable visual aspect of the project. In the case of the northern alignment, replanted vegetation in time would become similar in nature and visual character to features of the existing highway. The new roadway would attract minor attention, not appearing out of place compared to existing conditions.

Because it would disrupt a notable feature of the existing landscape, the Deodar Cedar tree row, the southern alignment option, if chosen, would have a minor adverse effect on scenic resources and temporarily degrade the existing visual character or quality of the project area. As with the northern alignment the new visual features would be characteristic of the existing rural setting. However areas where existing trees are removed could constitute a more noticeable visual impact, at least initially, and would reduce the historic integrity of the Deodar Cedar tree row, a National Register of Historic Places eligible property, by reducing the length of the tree row. Although of short duration, lasting less than 5 seconds at the posted speed limit, the noticeable gap in the dense 18+ meter (60+ foot) Deodar Cedar tree row would be initially quite apparent to both eastbound and westbound Route 152 travelers, particularly those familiar with current conditions. This gap would become less noticeable over time.

While the impact of the southern alignment on the landscape overall would be minor, removal of the 15 cedars does constitute degradation of a scenic resource that, without mitigation, could be considered a moderate-high adverse visual impact under CEQA. Over time, the gap would become less noticeable to viewers, as an existing gap currently exists from the location where the cedars are to be removed to just west of the Uvas Creek Bridge. Mitigation measures, such as tree or shrub plantings, would help to lessen the degree of the impacts. The removal of the cedars would actually open up a new view of the distant valley and hills to the south. The created views could be considered to be either positive or negative visual elements by many viewers. The planting of shrubs would help to reduce the level of visual impact due to the loss of trees, however, the effect of the existing allee of cedars would be foreshortened and not replicated. If

sufficient right-of-way is available and replacement cedars are planted, it would take 15 to 20 years for the trees to reach a height similar to the existing ones.

### **2.2.4 Cumulative Impacts**

Neither project alternative will cause or contribute to a significant cumulative impact on scenic resources. This determination is based on the fact that replacing the bridge will not increase the number of through highway lanes and it will be done in such a way that the rural character of the surrounding countryside will be preserved. The nature and scope of this project is consistent with the Gilroy's Heker Pass Specific Plan adopted in January 2005.

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

Design measures to minimize visual impacts are described below. They apply to both alignment alternatives unless otherwise indicated.

The following measures to minimize the degree of change and reduce visual impacts are recommended:

- Cut and fill slopes will be contour graded and rounded to match adjacent undisturbed topography to the extent feasible. Grading operations should not result in angular landforms.
- Exposed ground surfaces will be hydro-seeded with appropriate plant species. This should be done as early as possible for erosion control purposes. As the seeds germinate and grow, the vegetative cover would reduce the degree of visual contrast of these areas, especially as seen from more distant locations. Indigenous native species of shrubs and herbaceous plants occurring on adjacent, undisturbed slopes will colonize the seeded slopes. As these colonizing plants mature and increase in density, the visual contrast of the disturbed areas would continue to diminish. In time, vegetative cover patterns of areas disturbed during project construction would essentially match the adjacent, undisturbed areas.
- Planting originally installed in front of the entrance to Bonfante Gardens would be replaced, space allowing, and would retain as much of the original design as possible.
- Realignment/relocation of utility structures and cables should be completed so as to not become a point of visual focus or become a negative visual impact. Where possible, equipment should be placed where natural screening would help to reduce the public's view of facility. Cables should be run along alignments that reduce their visibility and visual impact.
- If the southern alignment alternative is selected, a guard rail will be placed in front of the Deodar Cedar tree row to minimize the number of trees removed. Landscaping to

complement those remaining will also be installed. These features are included in the project description for the southern alignment alternative.

- If the northern alignment alternative is selected, the soil nail wall at the intersection of eastbound Route 152 and Burchell Road would be of a texture that visually blends in with the surrounding environment. The texture pattern shown on Figure 8B is an illustrative example.

## 2.3 Cultural Resources

### 2.3.1 Regulatory Setting

The term “cultural resources” as used in this document refers to historic and archaeological resources. The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and Public Resources Code (PRC) provide for protection of cultural resources. PRC Section 5024.1 established the California Register of Historic Places. Section 5024.5 requires state agencies to provide notice to, and confer with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) before altering, transferring, relocating, or demolishing state-owned historic resources.

### 2.3.2 Affected Environment

To assess project impacts on cultural resources an Area of Potential Effects (APE) for this project was established by Caltrans, under the authority of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), on December 21, 2004. The APE boundary for archaeology encompasses all areas of potential direct effects; including existing right of way, staging areas, access roads, temporary construction easements, and right of way acquisition. The APE boundary for architectural history and archaeology includes the project footprint, the bridge itself, existing state right-of-way, proposed right-of-way, easements, and staging areas. The architectural history APE boundary also includes all areas where there is a potential for indirect effect on historic built resources.

In order to identify cultural resources within the APE, a Historic Property Survey Report (HPSR), Archaeological Survey Report (ASR), and a Historic Resource Evaluation Report (HRER) were prepared (Caltrans 2004, A,B & C). These studies were completed in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 as amended (16 U.S.C. 470f and 470h-2) and its implementing regulations (36 CFR 800.4).

No properties within the APE are currently listed or have been previously determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (National Register). No archaeological properties were identified as a result of the current investigation. The architectural history APE includes a segment of a single row of Deodar Cedar (*Cedrus*

*deodara*) trees located within the state right-of-way along the south side of the highway. This historic resource within the APE is formally evaluated and documented in the HPSR.

The historic property, known as the Deodar Cedar Tree Row or the Highway 152 Tree Row, has been determined to be eligible for inclusion in the National Register. The resource is locally significant under Criterion A, the criterion that recognizes properties associated with historic trends and patterns of events that are important within an associated context. The historic resource is significant for its association with the City of Gilroy's urban improvement efforts in the early twentieth century during Arbor Day of 1930 and 1931. For this reason, the historic resource's period of significance is 1930-1931. In addition, this property was also evaluated in accordance with Section 15064.5 (a) (2)-(3) of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, and is considered to be a historical resource for the purposes of CEQA. The boundaries are the southern right-of-way of State Route 152 between post mile 6.5 east of Uvas Creek Bridge to post mile 7.88 at the west side of Santa Teresa Boulevard. The boundaries include the entire tree row, which is 1.39-miles long. Contributing elements include 115 Deodar Cedar trees that compose the tree row, the open space between each tree, and the open space between the edge of the highway's pavement and the tree row. Noncontributing elements include the volunteer oak trees between the Deodar Cedars.

SHPO concurred that the Highway 152 Tree Row is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places in an April 1, 2005 letter, which is reproduced in Section 3.3 of this document.

Changes to the project footprint caused by alterations to the project design were documented in a Supplemental APE signed on July 28, 2005, and a Supplemental HPSR prepared in August, 2005. No cultural resources were identified in the Supplemental APE.

### **2.3.3 Direct Impacts**

Impacts on cultural resources vary considerably for the north-side and south-side bridge locations. Each is separately discussed below. The effects of the historic tree row are evaluated according to the criteria set forth in 36 CFR 800.5.

#### **2.3.3.1 Northern Alignment**

No historic resources are located within the project footprint under this alternative. The Highway 152 Tree Row is located within the southern right of way of the current highway alignment. The rural character of the highway corridor, while part of the tree row's setting, is not a character-defining feature of the historic resource. However, the

trees have a spatial relationship to the highway's pavement. The tree row's contributing setting characteristics include the open space between each Deodar Cedar and the open space between the highway's edge of pavement and the tree trunks.

None of the tree row's contributing characteristics is located within the project footprint. The only effect to the tree row is to the setting, and it is not an adverse effect. The road alignment would shift farther away from the tree row for a 0.5-mile segment at the western end of the tree row. This shift will change the spatial relationship of the tree row and the edge of pavement in this section. However, because the shifted alignment comprises only a 0.5-mile long shift that is gradually tapered away from the original alignment, the overall effect to the setting of the tree row will not be adverse. The tree row will still read as a planted row in relationship to the highway. Therefore, a north-side bridge location will have no adverse effect on the tree row.

This alternative will require construction of a soil nail wall along the hill located at the north side of the highway corridor. This modification to the rural highway corridor would be relatively small considering the length of the 1.39-mile corridor that contains the historic resource. If the soil nail wall is finished in an aesthetically compatible way (concrete that looks like rock, or other natural material), then the wall would have even less of a visual effect on the corridor. All other visual features of the highway's corridor, including topography and vegetation, would remain intact. Therefore, this alignment will have no adverse effect on the historic property's contributing characteristics, and no adverse effect on the resource as a whole.

### **2.3.3.2 Southern Alignment**

The project limit for this alternative includes 24 mature Deodar Cedar trees lining the south side of the roadway east of the bridge. Under this alternative, realignment of the highway from milepost 6.1 to 6.68 would require the removal of fifteen Deodar Cedar trees out of the 115 total Deodar Cedar trees that compose the entire historic tree row. The removal of fifteen Deodar Cedars is necessary because the trees are within the 12-meter (39.36-foot) safety recovery zone required by the Caltrans Highway Design Manual for on conventional highways. The new shoulder adjacent to the tree row (where the 15 cedars are proposed to be removed) would either be replanted with 24-inch box Cedars if sufficient right-of-way exists, or be planted with shrubs of species similar to the following: Ceanothus species (Blue Blossom), Rhamnus (Coffeberry), Eriogonum (Buckwheat) and/or Romneya (Matilija Poppy).

The remaining nine Deodar Cedars of the twenty-four total within the project limits would be left in place and shielded with a steel guardrail in order to preserve as many trees as possible. Installation of a guardrail cannot protect the fifteen Deodar Cedars slated for removal because the new road alignment to the bridge cannot accommodate the 1.22-meter (4-foot) minimum distance required between the face of the guardrail and the face of the tree trunk.

The southern alignment alternative would have an adverse effect on the Highway 152 Tree Row. Removing 13% of the tree row would adversely affect the materials, workmanship, and design of the resource's historic integrity. The removal of fifteen trees degrades the material integrity of the tree row and compromises the ability of the tree row to convey its significance as a street beautification work brought about by completion of the highway connecting Gilroy to the coastal region in 1928. Of the original 140 trees planted in 1930 and 1931, there are 115 that currently remain, which is 82% of the original. At this percentage the tree row remains an impressive highway feature. Removing fifteen trees in the tree row for this transportation project would bring the total tree row down to 71% of its original total of 140 trees. Incremental removal of Deodar Cedar trees from the tree row would, over time, damage the tree row's material and design integrity and could result in a negative effect on the feeling and association of the tree row in relation to the highway as it transitions into Gilroy's city limits.

However, the remainder of the tree row would still be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places because it would retain its association with local urban improvement efforts, as conveyed through its integrity of location, setting, and feeling. The tree row will continue to denote the transition between the rural and urban boundary of Gilroy's western city limits because it will remain in the same location. The rural setting will be maintained. The tree row will still be able to convey the feeling of a rural highway transitioning into the city through the visual clue of this highway landscape feature.

Because the tree row is in state right of way, this resource is considered to be a state-owned historical resource. It is therefore subject to Public Resources Code 5024, which requires Caltrans to adopt measures that will eliminate or minimize the adverse effects to the state-owned historical resource. This undertaking will not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of the tree row as a majority of the trees will remain.

### 2.3.4 Cumulative Impacts

Cumulative impacts under CEQA are defined as follows: Cumulative impacts are two or more individual effects which, when considered together, are considerable or which compound or increase other environmental impacts.

- The individual effects may be changes resulting from a single project or a number of separate projects.
- The cumulative impact from several projects is the change in the environment that results from the incremental impact of the project when added to other closely related past, present, and reasonably foreseeable probable future projects. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor but collectively significant projects taking place over a period of time.

To identify cumulative impacts, it is necessary to identify closely related past, present, and reasonably foreseeable probable projects in the area that have the potential to affect the historic Highway 152 Tree Row.

In general, the health of the tree row appears stable. The tree row originally contained 140 Deodar Cedar trees; currently 115 trees remain. The decline of the number of trees in the tree row is due to human-caused removal rather than natural disease or death. Over the past 70 years, there have been incremental removals of trees from the tree row for unknown reasons at unknown times. It appears the removal of trees from the row over time was not caused by any highway project in the past twenty-five years.

This proposed Caltrans project would remove 15 trees, or approximately 13% of the existing resource.

Future incremental removal of trees from the historic tree row could damage the tree row's integrity, or the ability to convey its historical significance. The City of Gilroy's Hecker Pass Specific Plan, adopted in January 2005, identifies two new potential street intersections that, if constructed, could remove as many as 25 trees from the historic tree row. If the southern alignment of the Caltrans undertaking is selected, there is potential for the City's project to cause a cumulative adverse impact on the historic resource. The City's project would require Caltrans review and approval. The historic tree row is within state right of way, so it is a state-owned historic resource and therefore subject to PRC 5024. Under PRC 5024, Caltrans would be required to review effects to the tree row, to adopt prudent and feasible measures to eliminate or mitigate the adverse effect to the tree row, and to consult with the SHPO.

If the northern alignment of the Caltrans undertaking is selected, there will be no potential for cumulative effect on the historic tree row.

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

### **2.3.5.1 Northern Alignment**

There will be no adverse effect on the historic tree row under this alternative; so no mitigation is required.

### **2.3.5.2 Southern Alignment**

Mitigation would be required under this alternative to lessen the effect of the project on the historic tree row. In order to maintain nine Deodar Cedar trees at the western end of the project area, a guardrail would be placed between the edge of traveled way and nine Deodar Cedar trees left in place within the project limits. Current Caltrans safety standards require a minimum clear recovery zone of at least 12 meters (39.37 feet) between the edge of traveled way and a fixed object on conventional highways. If a fixed object cannot be removed from the clear recovery zone, then the safety standards require the object to be shielded by a guardrail. There is adequate distance to place a guardrail between the edge of traveled and the face of nine Deodar Cedar tree trunks that would otherwise be removed.

In addition to the guardrail, the new shoulder adjacent to the tree row (where the 15 cedars are proposed to be removed) would be replanted with 24-inch box Cedars, if sufficient right-of-way is determined to exist. Otherwise it will be planted with shrubs of species similar to the following: Ceanothus species (Blue Blossom), Rhamnus (Coffeberry), Eriogonum (Buckwheat) and/or Romneya (Matilija Poppy). The shrubs will be planted in such a way as to complement the remaining tree row.

Other measures to reduce adverse effects on cultural resources will be determined through consultation with SHPO and interested local parties. Caltrans has proposed mitigation through recordation following the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) guidelines and creation of an interpretive pamphlet for distribution to the public. However, Caltrans will consult with interested local parties in an effort to find alternative feasible mitigation measures. Details for mitigation will be considered and specified in a Memorandum of Agreement.

## **2.4 Water Quality, and Storm Water Runoff**

### **2.4.1 Regulatory Setting**

The primary federal law regulating Water Quality is the Clean Water Act; (CWA) administered by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). In California, EPA delegates its regulatory authority to the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) and Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCBs). RWQCB Region 3, Central

Coast Region, is responsible for administering State and Federal water quality protection laws and regulations in the vicinity of the project site. Each RWQCB prepares and adopts a master policy document for managing surface and groundwater quality within its region called the Water Quality Control Plan or Basin Plan. Among other things the Basin Plan identifies water quality problems and establishes beneficial uses for each waterway within its jurisdiction. The SWRCB and RWQCB issue permits to implement the Basin Plan as well as other requirements of the CWA and State Water Code.

The following is a summary of key water quality laws and regulations:

- Section 401 of the CWA requires a water quality certification from the State Board or Regional Board when a project: 1) requires a federal license or permit under CWA Section 404, and 2) will result in a discharge to waters of the United States.
- Section 402 of the CWA establishes the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit system to regulate municipal and industrial storm water discharges, including discharges from highways, which are defined as point source discharges. To ensure CWA compliance and facilitate processing of routine projects, the SWRCB has issued Caltrans a blanket NPDES Statewide Storm Water Permit to regulate storm water discharges from Caltrans facilities (Order No. 99-06-DWQ, CAS000003).
- Project construction activities are subject to a statewide Construction General Permit (Order No. 98-08-DWQ, CAS000002) issued by the SWRCB. The key requirement is preparation of a project specific Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), which specifies pollution control measures to be employed during construction. The SWPPP is typically prepared and implemented by the contractor doing the work. Caltrans approves the plan and assures that it is carried out through its construction contract monitoring process.

## **2.4.2 Affected Environment**

Caltrans prepared a Water Quality Report for this project (Caltrans 2005A). This section summarizes information contained in that document.

### ***Storm Water***

For purposes of environmental review, storm water impacts are considered the same for each alternative, although the land area impacted differs slightly. The total area of soil disturbance for the northern alignment is approximately 2.4-ha (6.0-ac). Approximately 0.75 ha (1.86 ac) of net new impervious pavement will be added. The comparable figures for the southern alignment alternative are 2.35-ha (5.9-ac). Of soil disturbance and 0.71-ha (1.75-ac) of net new paving. Exposed land surfaces and construction activity will

increase the potential for water pollution due to erosion (silting) and introduction of foreign materials. In the long term, the additional impervious area will slightly increase runoff. Based on Caltrans statewide studies, pollutants found in runoff include phosphorus, nitrogen, litter and various metals, both in solid state and dissolved. Typical pollutant sources are natural erosion, phosphorus from tree leaves, combustion products from fossil fuels, trash and falling debris from vehicles, and break pad wear.

### **Groundwater**

The project is located in the Llagas Groundwater Sub-basin in Santa Clara County. The existing beneficial uses of the groundwater resource include municipal, industrial and agricultural uses.

### **2.4.3 Direct Impacts**

The following discussion applies to both alternatives. Water quality and storm water impacts are generally the same for each alternative. Neither alternative would have a significant direct impact on water quality.

### **Storm Water**

For purposes of environmental review, storm water impacts are considered the same for each alternative, although the land area impacted differs slightly. The total area of soil disturbance for the northern alignment is approximately 2.4 ha (6.0 ac). Approximately 0.75 ha (1.86 ac) of net new impervious pavement will be added. The comparable figures for the southern alignment alternative are 2.35 ha (5.9 ac). Of soil disturbance and 0.71 ha (1.75 ac) of net new paving.. Exposed land surfaces and construction activity will increase the potential for water pollution due to erosion (silting) and introduction of foreign materials. In the long term, the additional impervious area will slightly increase runoff. Based on Caltrans statewide studies, pollutants found in runoff include phosphorus, nitrogen, litter and various metals, both in solid state and dissolved. Typical pollutant sources are natural erosion, phosphorus from tree leaves, combustion products from fossil fuels, trash and falling debris from vehicles, and break pad wear.

### **Groundwater**

Groundwater from seepage through Uvas Creek channel may be encountered during pile work in Uvas Creek. Dewatering may be required. Early discussion should be initiated regarding the handling and disposal of water during the design phase. The ground water will be tested for potential contamination as a part of the Hazardous Waste Site Investigation. Proper handling and disposal of the ground water should be based on the levels of contaminants reported in the Site Investigation Report. There should be no

long-term impact on ground water since travel volume, the primary cause of water pollution, will remain the same.

### **Dewatering and Non-stormwater Discharges**

Construction activities such as bridge replacement have the potential to encounter ground water seepage (i.e. dry weather flows) or may involve non-storm water discharges. Early discussion shall be initiated with the Office of Water Pollution Control regarding the handling and disposal of such water. A project-specific Waste Discharge Permit (WDP) and an NPDES permit may be required from the Regional Water Quality Control Board (Region #3, Central Coast RWQCB), if substantial dewatering is to be done. The permitting period could take a minimum of 6 months. Also, the groundwater may be tested for potential contamination as a part of the Hazardous Waste Site Investigation Contract administered by the Hazardous Waste branch in the Office of Environmental Engineering. An appropriate dewatering Special Provision will then be prepared by Caltrans to ensure the proper handling and disposal of the ground water. Exact measures included in the Special Provision will depend on the levels of contaminants reported in the Site Investigation Report.

### **2.4.4 Cumulative Impacts**

The framework for cumulative impact analysis in the areas of both water quality and biology is the immediate roadside area and the Uvas Creek-bed, which crosses the project area. Because this project would replace an existing facility at essentially the same level of capacity, it will not cause or contribute to significant cumulative environmental impacts in these areas. Environmental protection measures incorporated into the project will preclude adverse impacts on adjacent properties and restore areas directly impacted to a state that closely approximates existing conditions.

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

Based on the Water Quality Impact Assessment prepared for this project (Caltrans 2005) Caltrans has determined that compliance with standard water quality regulatory and permit requirements will assure that project water quality impacts are less than significant. These requirements are summarized below and more fully discussed in the impact assessment referenced above. RWQCB Region 3, Central Coast Region, is responsible for implementation of State and Federal water quality laws and regulations in the vicinity of the project site.

- Section 401 and 404 of the Clean Water Act: Since a minimum of 0.12-ha of wetland will be directly affected by the proposed project under either alternative, a permit may be required from the Army Corps of Engineers under Clean Water Act Section 404 and

California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) code. A Water Quality Certification (401) from the Regional Water Quality Control Board (Region #3, Central Coast RWQCB) would also be required.

- Section 402 of the Clean Water Act: Best Management Practices (BMPs) stated in the Caltrans NPDES and the Construction General Permits will be incorporated into this project to reduce the discharge of pollutants, both during construction and permanently, to the maximum extent practicable. These BMPs fall into three categories, Temporary Construction Site BMPs, Design Pollution Prevention BMPs, and Permanent Treatment BMPs. A summary of each follows:

**Construction Site BMPs:** These are implemented during construction to control run-off. Examples include temporary silt fences, stockpile covers, and temporary soil stabilization. The measures to be used for this project will be specified in the SWPPP to be developed during construction

**Permanent Design Pollution Prevention BMPs:** These are permanent measures to improve storm water quality by reducing erosion, stabilizing disturbed soil areas, and landscaping. Temporary soil stabilizers such as tacked straw biodegradable fiber rolls or netting are typically used to protect exposed surfaces until new plantings establish themselves. It may also be necessary to use hay bales or other velocity dissipation devices to reduce runoff velocity and control erosion at drainage outlets. Specific measures for this project will be developed during the design phase.

**Permanent Treatment BMPs:** Because the project disturbs more than 1.2-ha, Treatment BMPs, will be developed during the design phase. Typical examples include Biofiltration Swales, Infiltration Basins, Detention Basins, Traction Sand Traps, Dry Weather Flow Diversions, Media Filters, Gross Solids Removal Devices (GSRDs), Multi-chamber Treatment Trains, and Wet Basins. Their exact nature and scope will be determined by Caltrans based on a variety of factors such as proximity to environmentally sensitive areas and available right of way.

## 2.5 Biology, including Wetlands

### 2.5.1 Regulatory Setting

This section covers the following biological areas: wetlands and other waters, plant species, animal species, threatened or endangered species, natural communities, and invasive species. A summary of regulatory requirements relative to each area follows:

### **Wetlands and Other Waters**

Wetlands and other waters, including Uvas Creek, are protected by the federal Clean Water Act (CWA), which regulates the discharge of dredged or fill material into them. CWA Section 404 establishes a regulatory process and permit program to control such discharges. The Section 404 permit program is run by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) with oversight by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). CWA Section 401 requires a water quality certification from the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) prior to issuing a Section 404 permit.

At the state level, wetlands and waters are regulated by the Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) and RWQCBs. In this case RWQCB Region 3 will provide the necessary water quality certification. Because this project will affect Uvas Creek within the bed and banks, a Streambed Alteration Agreement from CDFG will also be required

### **Plant Species:**

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) share regulatory responsibility for the protection of threatened, endangered, or other special-status species under the Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA) and/or the California Endangered Species Act (CESA). The regulatory requirements for FESA can be found at United States Code 16 (USC), Section 1531, et. seq. The regulatory requirements for CESA can be found at California Fish and Game Code, Section 2050, et. seq. Department projects are also subject to the Native Plant Protection Act (Fish and Game Code, Section 1900-1913), and the California Environmental Quality Act (Public Resources Code, Sections 2100-21177).

### **Animal Species:**

Many state and federal laws regulate impacts to wildlife. At the federal level these include the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act. The California Fish and Game Code contains state laws and regulations pertaining to wildlife. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), the National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries) and the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) are responsible for implementing these laws, which basically require preparation of habitat conservation plans to protect wildlife.

### **Threatened or Endangered Species:**

The primary State law protecting threatened or endangered species is the California Endangered Species Act (CESA), California Fish and Game Code, Section 2050, et seq, which is administered by the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG). CESA requires project sponsors to implement measures to prevent intentional or unintentional loss of threatened or endangered species.

### **Natural Communities:**

Where a project involves threatened or endangered species, FESA and CESA require consideration of the biological communities where they exist as well.

### **Invasive Species:**

Federal Executive Order 13112, dated February 3, 1999, requires agencies administering federal highway funds to combat introduction or spread of invasive species, which are essentially non-native plants that are somehow harmful to the environment. Invasive species are specified on a list of noxious weeds established by each state. Caltrans does not use any of the species on the California list of noxious weeds for erosion control or landscaping. Therefore this project will not have an adverse impact on invasive species and this topic will not be further discussed.

## **2.5.2 Affected Environment**

The natural environment directly impacted by this project consists of the Uvas Creek-bed plus the connecting roadway shoulders. Caltrans conducted the following studies to identify biological resources that would be affected by this project and devise appropriate protective measures: Biological Assessment (Caltrans 2005C), Natural Environmental Study (Caltrans 2005D) and Wetlands Delineation Survey. This section summarizes information contained in those documents.

### **2.5.2.1 Natural Communities**

Six distinct natural communities or habitats are found within the biological study area for this project. The following is a brief description of each.

- **Riverine:** Riverine habitat consists of the creek itself plus associated vegetated areas that qualify as wetlands. The Uvas Creek riverine habitat is classified as waters of the United States and is therefore subject to regulation by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), which must approve any disruptions or modifications to the waterway. Locally, the Santa Clara Valley Water District controls creek flows. The exact boundaries of the riverine habitat were determined by a wetland delineation survey completed in March 2005. Beyond its boundaries the Uvas Creek riverine habitat supports a lush willow riparian corridor.
- **Valley Foothill Riparian:** Riparian habitat is generally classified as areas that provide cover for riverine habitats. Valley foothill riparian habitat is found along Uvas Creek within the project limits. Close to the stream and inside the ordinary high waters (OHM), saturated areas are covered by grasses, nettle and wild mint. Above the OHM line, willows and non-native black berry is common. Lining the banks of the creek are Fremont cotton wood trees, willows stands and multiple bay tree clusters.

- **Oak Woodland:** Oak Woodland habitat is characterized by open to dense canopies of oak intermixed with grassland. A large expanse of coastal oak woodland habitat parallels the north side of State Route 152 just east of Burchell Road. This habitat area supports numerous mature live oaks, deodar cedars, ponderosa pines as well as a diverse and lush understory composed of non-native annual grasses.
- **Annual grasslands:** These are open areas where introduced annual grasses, rather than trees or scrubs, are the dominant plant species. They are capable of supporting a wide variety of animal species. A narrow patch of annual grassland, which apparently was once an access road, exists along the east side of Uvas Creek. However, there are no distinct annual grasslands in the project area.
- **Urban:** Urban habitat contains a mixture of native and exotic species. In suburban areas such as this, mature vegetation can resemble that in non-urban areas. In addition to landscaped gardens and lawns, relatively large tracts of adjacent natural vegetation such as grasslands, and oak woodland abound. This area lies in the northwest side of the existing Bridge. One exception is the oak woodland habitat along the north side of State Route 152 east of Burchell Road
- **Barren:** Any habitat with less than 2% total vegetation cover by herbaceous, desert, or non-wildland species and less than 10% cover by tree or shrub species is defined as barren. Two distinct barren areas with the project limits consist of an unpaved access road behind the stands of cultivated cedars and on the northwest corner of Burchell Road.

In addition to the standard classifications described above, the Uvas Creek Bridge itself provides roosting habitat for bats and swallows.

### 2.5.2.2 Special-Status Species

Special-status species are plants or animals that have been officially designated as threatened or endangered, or otherwise require special consideration: for example critical habitat or migratory birds. To determine special-status species that may be affected by this project, Caltrans consulted a variety of sources including the U.S Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) (Reference #1-1-03-SP-2424) and the CNDDDB. The initial screening yielded total of 86 special status species that are generally associated with the project's locale. Through field visits and a more detailed analysis of available data this total was reduced to 14 animal species and no plant species with potential habitat in the project area and whose occurrence is considered to be either possible or likely. These are listed in Figure 10 below.

<b>Figure 10: Special-Status Wildlife Species with Potential Habitat in the Project Area</b>			
Scientific Name	Common Name	Status	Occurrence
<b>Fish</b>			
<i>Oncorhynchus mykiss</i>	South Central California steelhead	T NMFS	Likely
<b>Amphibians/Reptiles</b>			
<i>Rana aurora draytonii</i>	California red-legged frog	T PX	Possible
<i>Rana boylei</i>	Foothill yellow-legged frog	SC	Possible
<i>Clemmys marmorata marmorata</i>	Northwestern pond turtle	SC	Likely
<i>Clemmys marmorata pallida</i>	Southwestern pond turtle	SC	Likely
<b>Birds</b>			
<i>Vireo bellii pusillus</i>	Least Bell's vireo	E	Possible
<b>Mammals</b>			
<i>Antrozous pallidus</i>	Pallid bat	CA	Likely
<i>Myotis thysanodes</i>	Fringed myotis bat	SC	Likely
<i>Cornnorhinus(Plecotus) townsendii townsendii</i>	Pacific western big-eared bat	SC	Possible
<i>Eumops perotis californicus</i>	Greater western mastiff bat	SC	Possible
<i>Myotis evotis</i>	Long-eared myotis bat	SC	Likely
<i>Myotis ciliolabrum</i>	Small-footed myotis bat	SC	Likely
<i>Myotis volans</i>	Long-legged myotis bat	SC	Likely
<i>Myotis yumanensis</i>	Yuma myotis bat	SC	Likely
<b>Status Key</b>			
(E) Endangered-Listed (in the Federal Register) as being in danger of extinction.			
(T) Threatened-Listed as likely to become endangered within the foreseeable future.			
(PT) Proposed-Officially proposed (in the Federal Register) for listing as endangered or threatened.			
(NMFS)-Species under the Jurisdiction of the National Marine Fisheries Service			
(CA)-Listed by the State of California but not by the Fish and Wildlife Service			
(PX)-Proposed Critical Habitat – The species is already listed. Critical habitat is being proposed for it.			
(SC)-Species of Concern Other species of concern to the Sacramento Fish and Wildlife Office			

### 2.5.3 Direct Impacts

Caltrans conducted biological studies for both the northern and southern bridge alignments as part of a more comprehensive effort to identify trade-offs associated with preservation or removal of a scenic and historic resource, the Deodar Cedar trees. Generally speaking, impacts to the natural environment are considered the same for each alternative except for the number of mature trees removed, which is greater for the northern alignment.

Construction will cause temporary and permanent impacts to the natural environment due to grading, excavation, equipment movement, installation of temporary facilities such as cofferdams, wildlife barrier fence and operation of the diversion channel. Figure 11 shows the approximate land area that will be temporarily disturbed by habitat type for each alignment. For the northern alignment, approximately 3373-square-meters (m<sup>2</sup>) or 0.83-ac of land area will be temporarily impacted. The comparable figure for the southern alignment is 4870-m<sup>2</sup> or 1.21-ac. The large acreage difference between oak woodland and urban habitats is due to the fact that the land is classified differently: woodland to the north, urban to the south.

Figure 12 shows the approximate land area that will be permanently disturbed by habitat type for each alignment. The approximate totals are 11091-m<sup>2</sup> (2.74-ac) for the northern alignment and 10629-m<sup>2</sup> (2.63-ac) for the southern alignment.

<b>Figure 11: Temporary Habitat Impact Analysis</b>				
	Northern Alignment		Southern Alignment	
	M <sup>2</sup>	Acres	M <sup>2</sup>	Acres
Valley Foothill Riparian	850	0.21	2088	0.52
Coast Oak Woodland	1684	0.42	0	0
Annual Grassland	0	0	115	0.03
Riverine	307	0.08	307	0.08
Barren	532	0.13	170	0.04
Urban	0	0	2190	0.54
Total	3373	0.83	4870	1.21

<b>Figure 12: Permanent Habitat Impact Analysis</b>				
	Northern Alignment		Southern Alignment	
	M <sup>2</sup>	Acres	M <sup>2</sup>	Acres
Valley Foothill Riparian	305	0.08	203.7	0.05
Coast Oak Woodland	5736	1.42	1100	0.27
Annual Grassland	0	0	275	0.07
Riverine	0	0	0	0
Barren	1250	0.31	560	0.14
Urban	3800	0.94	8490	2.1
Total	11091	2.74	10628.7	2.63

Figure 13 shows trees removed by variety and habitat type. For oak woodland and urban habitats combined, the number of trees removed differs substantially by alternative. The northern alignment would require removal of 109 trees total, including 56 oaks and 53 cedars. The comparable totals for the southern alignment are 32 oaks and 27 cedars for a total of 59. Tree loss will cause habitat changes that may alter behavior patterns of sensitive animal species including three threatened or endangered species: a fish, the South Central California steelhead, a bird, the Least Bell's vireo, and the California red-legged frog. Such impacts will not be significant however, because there is currently no shortage of similar habitat in the project vicinity and impacted areas will be returned to their present condition, more or less, in the long run.

The impact of the completed project on the natural environment is considered positive. Although paved surface area will increase due to addition of a left turn lane on the new bridge, in other respects the natural environment will be restored to pre-existing conditions or better. There will be a net gain of 180 m<sup>2</sup> (0.044 ac) to waters of the U.S. due to demolition of the existing bridge. Highway shoulder slopes will be shallower and

thus less subject to erosion. Removal of large trees will be mitigated at a ratio of five to one in off-site mitigation area that has yet to be determined. In addition to replanting with native species, Caltrans will also remove several very large stands of non-native *Arundo* (giant reed) (*Arundo donax*) along Uvas Creek near the project area.

**Figure 13: Trees Removed by Habitat Type**

	South Alignment			North Alignment		
	Oak woodland	Urban	Riparian	Oak woodland	Urban	Riparian
<b>Species Surveyed</b>						
Live Oak	5	25	none	48	3	3
Valley Oak	1	1	none	5	-	4
Cultivated Deodar Cedars	0	12	none	16	37	none
Deodar Cedars of Historic importance	none	15	none	none	none	none
Fremont Cottonwood	-	-	>5	-	-	3
Willow Clusters	-	-	>5	-	-	>5
Bay	-	-	>5	-	-	>5
Totals	6	53	>15	69	40	> 13
Source= Draft NES April, 2005						

The project will not cause or contribute to a significant cumulative impact on the natural environment because construction period impacts will be contained within project boundaries and the long-term impacts are considered positive.

### 2.5.4 Cumulative Impacts

The framework for cumulative impact analysis in the areas of both water quality and biology is the immediate roadside area and the Uvas Creek-bed, which crosses the project area. Because this project would replace an existing facility at essentially the same level of capacity, it will not cause or contribute to significant cumulative environmental impacts in these areas. Environmental protection measures incorporated into the project will preclude adverse impacts on adjacent properties and restore areas directly impacted to a state that closely approximates existing conditions.

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

The following is a summary of measures that will be implemented during construction to reduce adverse environmental impacts. These are more fully described in the Natural Environment Study (Caltrans 2004B). All preventive measures will be devised and monitored by a qualified biologist.

- **Limit area used for construction:** Caltrans will limit construction activities to the smallest area possible. Construction areas will be clearly delineated by Caltrans biologists, incorporated into the project plans and specifications, and clearly marked

with environmentally sensitive area (ESA) fencing. ESA fencing will be installed and removed in each of the two construction activity years. Vegetation will be removed by hand in construction areas to prevent harm to wildlife.

- **Discourage wildlife use of construction areas:** Trees within the oak woodland and riparian area will be removed prior to construction between August 1 and January 1 to avoid potential impacts to nesting birds. All work within the creek-bed will take place between June 15 and October 15 of each year, for two consecutive years, to minimize the impact on natural environment. A small vertebrate exclusion fence consisting of 1.2-m by 2.4-m (4-ft by 8-ft), 1.3-cm (0.5-in) thick, treated exterior plywood wired to 5.5-ft metal t-posts will be installed to exclude California red-legged frog. To prevent birds and bats from using the old bridge as a nesting sight while it is being demolished, any unused nests will be removed, potential rough nesting surfaces will be covered with smooth material and exclusion netting installed.
- **Time construction to avoid periods of animal activity:** Construction will be timed to avoid the nesting season for migratory birds and swifts and the migration period of the California redlegged frog. If construction cannot be completed during periods of animal inactivity, special measures will be implemented to prevent harm to sensitive species. These include pre-construction inspections, installation of exclusion devices and prohibiting construction near active nests.
- **Sustain aquatic habitat during construction:** A cofferdam and stream diversion channel will be installed to prevent construction activities from adversely affecting Uvas Creek and to allow passage of the South-Central California steelhead. Potential impacts to Uvas Creek aquatic resources and fisheries will be minimized by adhering to Caltrans' standard contract specifications for avoiding water pollution during construction. In essence the contractor will be required to follow a site-specific water pollution control plan including provisions for such things as keeping heavy machinery out of the water, limiting the amount of excavated or construction materials that enter the stream, and maintaining adequate water flows at all times.
- **Restore habitat to pre-existing conditions after construction:** Sensitive habitat acreage temporarily disturbed by construction will be graded and replanted to restore its original appearance and function as feasible. Trees and scrubs removed will be replanted along the roadway, where feasible or within mitigation sites at a ratio of 5 to 1 for large oak trees and 1 to 1 for others. Creek-bed mitigation will involve a mixed riparian planting treatment that includes willow (*Salix sp.*) cuttings, California blackberry (*Rubus ursinus*), sycamore (*Platanus occidentalis*), and Fremont cottonwood (*Populus fremontii*).



# Chapter 3      Coordination

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Early and continuing coordination with the general public and appropriate public agencies is an essential part of the environmental process to determine the scope of environmental documentation, the level of analysis, potential impacts and mitigation measures and related environmental requirements. Agency consultation and public participation for this project will be accomplished through a variety of formal and informal methods, including: project development team meetings, and interagency coordination meetings. This chapter summarizes these efforts. The objective is to fully identify, address and resolve project-related issues through early and continuing coordination.

## 3.1      Locations for Viewing the Environmental Document

This environmental document is available for public viewing at the following locations. An electronic version is available at the following web address:

**[www.dot.ca.gov/dist4/envdocs.htm](http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist4/envdocs.htm)**

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Gilroy City Hall, Planning Division	Gilroy Public Library
7351 Rosana Street	7387 Rosana Street
Gilroy, CA 95020	Gilroy, CA 95020
(408) 846-0400	(408) 842-8207

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Caltrans District 4  
111 Grand Avenue  
Oakland, CA 94623  
(510) 286-4444

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## 3.2      Organizations and Individuals Contacted

A list of organizations and individuals receiving a copy of the draft document will be included in the final document.

## 3.3      Cultural Resources Coordination

The Department surveyed historic and archeological sites within the project's area of potential impact (APE). This led to identification of one resource, of a row of Deodar Cedar (*Cedrus deodara*) trees as a significant historic property. This process was completed in direct consultation with FHWA and the State Office of Historic Preservation (SHPO). On April 1, 2005 SHPO concurred with the Department's finding that the tree row is eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places and that there are no other historic properties within the project's APE.

The Department has determined that the project will adversely affect the Route 152 tree row, if the southern alignment is selected. The northern alignment would not adversely affect the tree row. The Finding of Effect report was submitted to SHPO in November, 2005. A copy of SHPO correspondence appear on the following page.

STATE OF CALIFORNIA – THE RESOURCES AGENCY

**RECEIVED**

ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER, Governor

**OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION**

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APR 05 2005

**OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS**

April 1, 2005

Reply To: FHWA050202A

Brian Ramos, Ph.D.  
Chief, Office of Cultural Resource Studies  
Caltrans District 4  
11 Grand Avenue  
PO Box 23660  
Oakland, CA 94623-0660

Re: Determination of Eligibility for the Proposed Uvas Creek Bridge Replacement Project at State Route 152 near Gilroy, CA [04-SCL-152, KP 9.82/10.62, PM 6.1/6.68, EA 448800]

Dear Dr. Ramos:

Thank you for consulting with me about the subject undertaking in accordance with the *Programmatic Agreement Among the Federal Highway Administration, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the California State Historic Preservation Officer, and the California Department of Transportation Regarding Compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, as it Pertains to the Administration of the Federal-Aid Highway Program in California (PA)*.

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) is requesting my concurrence, pursuant to Stipulation VIII.C.5 of the PA, that the Highway 152 Tree Row is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) under criterion A at a local level of significance for its association with Gilroy's urban improvement projects carried out during Arbor Day of 1930-1931. The period of significance is 1930-1931. Pursuant to PRC §5024(b), Caltrans is also requesting my concurrence that the Highway 152 Tree Row, a state-owned resource, meets NRHP criteria and should be added to the State's Master List. I concur.

In accordance with Stipulation IX.B. of the PA, the Department has found that there are historic properties within the APE that may be affected by the undertaking. The Department will apply the Criteria of Adverse Effect pursuant to Stipulation X. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) will continue consultation with me in accordance with those provisions of Stipulation X. that FHWA determines apply to such further consultation.

If you have any questions, please contact Natalie Lindquist of my staff at (916) 654-0631 or e-mail at [nlind@ohp.parks.ca.gov](mailto:nlind@ohp.parks.ca.gov).

Sincerely,

Milford Wayne Donaldson, FAIA  
State Historic Preservation Officer



# Chapter 4 List of Contributors

This environmental document was prepared by the Caltrans District 4 (Oakland), Office of Environmental Planning and Engineering. The following is a list of individuals who directly participated in preparation of this environmental document. The organization listed is a unit of Caltrans unless otherwise indicated.

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Division of Engineering Services:	
	Monika Pedigo, Senior Hydraulics Engineer,



## Chapter 5      References

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<b>Text Reference</b>	<b>Document Citation</b>
Gilroy 2005	City of Gilroy. Hecker Pass Specific Plan, Prepared by Ruggeri-Jensen-Azar & Associates, January 2005
Caltrans 2005A	Environmental Engineering Office. Water Quality Report, Oakland, CA., August 2005.
Caltrans 2005B	Landscape Architecture Office. Visual Impact Assessment Technical Report, Route 152 Uvas Creek Bridge Replacement and Roadway Realignment Project, Oakland, CA., December 2005
Caltrans 2005C	Natural Sciences and Permits Office. Uvas Creek Scour Mitigation Project, Biological Assessment, Oakland, CA., May 2005.
Caltrans 2005D	Natural Sciences and Permits Office. Uvas Creek Scour Mitigation Project, Natural Environment Study, Oakland, CA., May 2005.
Caltrans 2005E	Office of Cultural Resource Studies. Finding of Effects Report for the State Route 152 Uvas Creek Bridge Replacement Project in Santa Clara County, California, November, 2005).
Caltrans 2004A	Office of Cultural Resource Studies. Historic Property Survey Report for the State Route 152 Uvas Creek Bridge Replacement Project in Santa Clara County, California, December, 2004).
Caltrans 2004B	Office of Cultural Resource Studies. Archaeological Survey Report for the State Route 152 Uvas Creek Bridge Replacement Project in Santa Clara County, California, December, 2004).
Caltrans 2004C	Office of Cultural Resource Studies. Historic Resource Evaluation Report for the State Route 152 Uvas Creek Bridge Replacement Project in Santa Clara County, California, December, 2004).
Caltrans 2002	Structure Maintenance and Investigations Office. Bridge inspection Report, Uvas Creek Bridge (number 37-0047), Oakland, CA, October 2002



# Appendix A: Environmental Significance Checklist

This checklist identifies physical, biological, social and economic factors that might be affected by the proposed project. Where the checklist determination is something other than “no impact”, the associated environmental topic is further discussed in Chapter 2 of the environmental document. A table summarizing the reasons for each “no impact” determination appears in Chapter 2.

## Environmental Significance Checklist

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
I. AESTHETICS: Would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?				X
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a scenic highway?				X
c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?				X
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?				X
II. AGRICULTURE RESOURCES: In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. Would the project:				
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?				X
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?				X
c) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use?				X
III. AIR QUALITY: Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district might be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:				

Environmental Significance Checklist

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?				X
b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?				X
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 that exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?				X
d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?				X
e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?				X
IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES: Would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?			X	
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 US Fish and Wildlife Service?			X	
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?			X	
d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?			X	
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?			X	
f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional or state habitat conservation plan?			X	
V. CULTURAL RESOURCES: Would the project:				
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in §15064.5?			X	
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?				X
c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?				

*Environmental Significance Checklist*

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?				X
VI. GEOLOGY & SOILS: Would the project:				
Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				X
i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.				X
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?				X
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?				X
iv) Landslides?				X
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?				X
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?				X
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?				X
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?				X
VII. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS B Would the project:				
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?				X
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving release of hazardous materials into the environment?				X
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?				X
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?				X
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 area?				X
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?				X

Environmental Significance Checklist

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
g) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?				X
h) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?				X
VIII. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY: Would the project:				
Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?				X
Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level that would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?				X
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?				X
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?				X
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?				X
f) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?				X
g) Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?				X
h) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures that would impede or redirect flood flows?				X
i) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?				X
j) Inundation by tsunami, or mudflow?				X
IX. LAND USE AND PLANNING: Would the project:				
Physically divide an established community?				X
b) Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?				X

Environmental Significance Checklist

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
c) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?				X
X. MINERAL RESOURCES: Would the project:				
a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?				X
b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?				X
XI. NOISE: Would the project result in:				
a) Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?				X
b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?				X
c) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?				X
d) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?				X
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?				X
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?				X
XII. POPULATION AND HOUSING: Would the project:				
a) Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?				X
Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?				X
c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?				X
XIII. PUBLIC SERVICES				
Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:				
Fire protection?				X

*Environmental Significance Checklist*

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Police protection?				X
Schools?				X
Parks?				X
Other public facilities?				X
XIV. RECREATION:				
a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?				X
b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?				X
XV. 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)?				X
b) Exceed, either individually or cumulatively, a level of service standard established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?				X
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?				X
d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses?				X
e) Result in inadequate emergency access?				X
f) Result in inadequate parking capacity?				X
g) Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation?				X
XVI. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS: Would the project:				
a) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?				X
b) Result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?				X
c) Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?				X
d) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing or new entitlements and resources?				X

*Environmental Significance Checklist*

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	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
e) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider that serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?				X
f) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?				X
g) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?				X
<b>XVII. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE:</b>				
Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?				X
b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?				X
c) Does the project have environmental effects that will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?				X

