

CATEGORICAL EXEMPTION/CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATION FORM

04-ALA-84	10.8/18	2A331	
Dist.-Co.-Rte. (or Local Agency)	P.M./P.M.	E.A/Project No.	Federal-Aid Project No. (Local Project)/Project No.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: (Briefly describe project including need, purpose, location, limits, right-of-way requirements, and activities involved in this box. Use Continuation Sheet, if necessary.)

Caltrans is proposing several minor improvements to improve safety on Alameda 84 between postmile 10.8 to postmile 18. Collisions with fixed objects by inattentive motorists are an ongoing concern throughout the Niles Canyon corridor. A need exists to provide traffic calming measures to achieve slower driver speeds to navigate the highway in a safe manner. Proposed improvements include the pavement marking, striping, and treatment, as well as the installation of signage, including reflective roadside delineators and bridge railing delineators. All improvements associated with this project are located on existing pavement or involve very small areas of surface ground disturbance close to the roadway. As proposed, the project will not involve any tree or vegetation removal, no modification of existing drainage or electrical systems, and will not require new right of way or utility relocation.

See attached Project Description for more detail.

CEQA COMPLIANCE (for State Projects only)

Based on an examination of this proposal and supporting information, the following statements are true and exceptions do not apply (See 14 CCR 15300 et seq.):

- If this project falls within exempt class 3, 4, 5, 6 or 11, it does not impact an environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern where designated, precisely mapped and officially adopted pursuant to law.
- There will not be a significant cumulative effect by this project and successive projects of the same type in the same place, over time.
- There is not a reasonable possibility that the project will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances.
- This project does not damage a scenic resource within an officially designated state scenic highway.
- This project is not located on a site included on any list compiled pursuant to Govt. Code § 65962.5 ("Cortese List").
- This project does not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.

CALTRANS CEQA DETERMINATION (Check one)

Exempt by Statute. (PRC 21080[b]; 14 CCR 15260 et seq.)

Based on an examination of this proposal, supporting information, and the above statements, the project is:

Categorically Exempt Class 15301. (PRC 21084; 14 CCR 15300 et seq.)

Categorically Exempt General Rule exemption. [This project does not fall within an exempt class, but it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity may have a significant effect on the environment (CCR 15061[b][3].)]

<p>Valerie Shearer Print Name: Environmental Branch Chief Signature _____ Date <u>23 May 2014</u></p>	<p>Jack Siau Print Name: Project Manager/DLA Engineer Signature _____ Date <u>5/23/14</u></p>
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NEPA COMPLIANCE

In accordance with 23 CFR 771.117, and based on an examination of this proposal and supporting information, the State has determined that this project:

- does not individually or cumulatively have a significant impact on the environment as defined by NEPA and is excluded from the requirements to prepare an Environmental Assessment (EA) or Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), and
- has considered unusual circumstances pursuant to 23 CFR 771.117(b).

CALTRANS NEPA DETERMINATION (Check one)

23 USC 326: The State has determined that this project has no significant impacts on the environment as defined by NEPA, and that there are no unusual circumstances as described in 23 CFR 771.117(b). As such, the project is categorically excluded from the requirements to prepare an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement under the National Environmental Policy Act. The State has been assigned, and hereby certifies that it has carried out the responsibility to make this determination pursuant to Chapter 3 of Title 23, United States Code, Section 326 and a Memorandum of Understanding dated June 07, 2013, executed between the FHWA and the State. The State has determined that the project is a Categorical Exclusion under:

- 23 CFR 771.117(c): activity (c)(8)**
- 23 CFR 771.117(d): activity (d)**
- Activity** _____ **listed in Appendix A of the MOU between FHWA and the State**

23 USC 327: Based on an examination of this proposal and supporting information, the State has determined that the project is a CE under 23 USC 327.

<p>Valerie Shearer Print Name: Environmental Branch Chief Signature _____ Date <u>23 May 2014</u></p>	<p>Jack Siau Print Name: Project Manager/DLA Engineer Signature _____ Date <u>5/23/14</u></p>
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Date of Categorical Exclusion Checklist completion: N/A Date of ECR or equivalent : N/A

Briefly list environmental commitments on continuation sheet. Reference additional information, as appropriate (e.g., CE checklist, additional studies and design conditions).

**CATEGORICAL EXEMPTION/CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATION FORM
Continuation Sheet**

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Cultural Resources

If previously unidentified cultural materials are unearthed during construction, work shall be halted in that area until a qualified archeologist can assess the significance of the find.

Visual

If groupings of trees/shrubs are removed, replacement planting would be required to mitigate for the loss. The Office of Landscape Architecture shall be notified of any proposed disturbance to plantings before removal begins.

Water Quality

Compliance with Caltrans Statewide NPDES Permit. Comply with Caltrans Statewide National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit (Order No. 2012-0011-DWQ).

Water Pollution Control Program. A Water Pollution Control Program (WPCP) will be required. The WPCP will be prepared by the contractor and reviewed by Caltrans.

Biology

Worker Environmental Awareness Training. All construction personnel will attend a mandatory environmental education program delivered by a qualified biologist prior to working on the Project. Species to be discussed will include Alameda whipsnake, California tiger salamander, California red-legged frog, steelhead, and nesting birds.

Artificial Lighting. Except when necessary for construction, driver, or pedestrian safety, lighting of the proposed action area by artificial lighting during night time hours would be minimized to the maximum extent practicable. To eliminate illumination of special-status species habitat, direction lighting with baffles will be employed throughout the project area.

Best Management Practices. The potential for adverse effects to water quality would be avoided by implementing temporary and permanent best management practices (BMPs) outlined in Section 7-1.01G of the Caltrans' Standard Specifications. Caltrans erosion control BMPs would be used to minimize any wind- or water-related erosion.

Best Management Practices will be incorporated to reduce/prevent the potential discharge of pollutants, during, and post-, construction, to the Maximum Extent Practicable.

In general, BMPs fall into three main categories:

- a) Design Pollution Prevention BMPs: These BMPs are permanent measures to improve stormwater quality by reducing erosion, stabilizing disturbed soil areas, and maximizing vegetated surfaces. Design Pollution Prevention BMPs are anticipated to be incorporated as part of this project to stabilize any disturbed area at the portal building locations.
- b) Temporary Construction Site BMPs: These BMPs are implemented throughout the duration of construction activities, in order to reduce pollutant loads in potential stormwater/non-stormwater discharges. Construction Site BMP strategies, applicable to this project, may include the following:
 - Sediment Control: run-on or run-off control, and storm drain inlet protection;
 - Tracking Controls: stabilized construction entrance and exit, and street sweeping;
 - Wind Erosion Controls: temporary covers;
 - Non-Stormwater Management: vehicle and equipment operations (fueling, cleaning and maintenance), and material and equipment use;
 - Waste Management and Materials Pollution Control: concrete wash-out, material delivery and storage, material use, stockpile management, spill prevention and control, solid waste management, hazardous waste and/or contaminated soil management, liquid waste management, and lead abatement and containment.
- c) Permanent Treatment BMPs: These BMPs are permanent water quality controls used to remove pollutants from stormwater runoff prior to being discharged from Caltrans Right-of-way. Whereas the project scope does not propose an increase in pollutant-generating impervious surface, implementation of permanent Treatment BMPs is not required.

Equipment and Vehicle Use and Staging. Mechanical equipment and vehicles will remain on pavement or already designated gravel pullout areas during all construction work. Staging of vehicles or equipment will occur on pavement or in developed gravel pullout areas.

CATEGORICAL EXEMPTION/CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATION FORM
Continuation Sheet

Monofilament Netting. To prevent wildlife from being entangled, trapped or injured, erosion control materials with plastic monofilament netting would not be used within the Biological Study Area (BSA).

Project Description (Revised May 22, 2014)
Short Term Improvements Niles Canyon EA 2A331
Post Miles 10.8/18

PURPOSE AND NEED

Collisions with fixed objects by inattentive motorists are an ongoing concern throughout the Niles Canyon corridor (Highway 84). A need exists to provide traffic calming measures to achieve slower driver speeds to navigate the Niles Canyon corridor in a safe manner. The purpose of this project is to implement the short term countermeasures that improve the delineation of roadside barriers including improving the demarcation of lane lines with invert profile thermoplastic traffic stripe, improving surface friction around tight curves with high friction surface treatment, providing sensory feedback in the form of rumble strips to cars that stray too close to the median, providing calming measures in the form of optical bars that, through clever placement and spacing, give the illusion that one is picking up speed and induce drivers to slow down, and alerting motorists that bicyclists are present and encouraging motorists to share the roadway through the use of painted sharrows. A more detailed description of each of these project elements is included below.

SIGNAGE

Reflective Roadside Delineators – These are all-weather flexible delineators placed at critical points along roadways at winding curves, near intersections and on and off ramps to identify areas of safety concern. They are installed either with epoxy directly on the roadway shoulder, or can be mounted on the soil through ground steel anchors throughout the project area. The ground steel anchors will be inserted 18” into the soil and will have an 18” surface mount at ground level. These anchors will be driven into the soil manually except in areas where driving them in may damage the anchor. Roadside delineators will be placed on the right shoulders of both westbound and eastbound directions throughout the project limit at 100’ spacing at straight alignments and 50’ spacing at curvy alignments.

Metal Beam Guardrail (MBGR) Delineators – These are reflectors or reflector tabs that are placed on the MBGR that provide delineation at night. They are attached to the MBGR either by bolt or epoxy and require no ground disturbance. These will be installed at all existing MBGR location approximately 25’ apart.

Bridge Railing Delineators- These bridge railing delineators are reflectors or reflector tabs that are placed on the bridge railing that provides delineation at night. They are attached to the bridge rails, usually with epoxy, and therefore, have no ground disturbance. They will be affixed to the four approach corners to the Alameda Creek Bridge (PM 13.3), the Alameda Creek Bridge and Overhead (BOH) (PM 14.3), and the Arroyo de la Laguna Bridge (PM 17.2) at 25’ spacing.

Barrier Markers - Barrier markers will also be installed and spaced 25’ apart at all wall locations that are within 10’ of the Edge of Traveled Way (ETW). Barrier markers are acrylic plastic elements with a retroreflective surface of approximately 7 square inches, which are L-shaped, and are affixed with screws or epoxy, depending on the mounting surface. Barrier markers will be installed on the Silver Spring Underpass walls, the Rosewarnes Underpass walls, Farwell Underpass walls, and the walls of the Sunol Aqueduct.

Object Markers- Object Markers at the approach end of both in-line and flare MBGR will be installed as well as at the approach ends of Bridge Railings along both Eastbound and Westbound directions at the Alameda Creek Bridge, Alameda Creek BOH, and Arroyo de la Laguna Bridge. Object markers are aluminum sheet or all weather flexible markers with a retroreflective surface comprised of reflectors, alternating bands, or chevrons of black and yellow; they are placed at the approach end of fixed objects to increase motorists visibility of the fixed objects. Object Markers will also be installed in front of the abutment walls of Rosewornes Underpass and Farwell Underpass facing traffic. Object Markers will be attached to the MBGR either by bolting or using an epoxy, and will result in no ground disturbance.

PAVEMENT MARKINGS, STRIPING AND TREATMENT

Friction Treatments – High Friction Surface Treatment (HFST) is a material overlay to increase the skid resistance of the pavement. They are applied directly on the roadway pavement where there is a concentration of wet pavement accidents. This will be applied in the following locations:

- Sta 331+50 to Sta 335+00 on Layout Map L-6 (PM 12.114 to PM 12.180)
- Sta 380 to Sta 385+00 on L-10 (PM 12.979 to PM 13.073)
- Sta 402+00 on L-12 to Sta 17 on L-13 (PM 13.285 to PM 13.483)
- Sta 36+00 on L-14 to Sta 46 on L-15 (PM 13.843 to PM 14.032)
- Sta 66+50 on L-17 to Sta 82 on L-18 (PM 14.401 to PM 14.694)

This process requires grinding the surface of the pavement before the treatment is applied. The surface of the pavement will be wetted down prior to grinding in order to reduce dust. A vacuum truck will then remove the loose material. This material will be disposed of by the contractor per Caltrans specifications.

Longitudinal Pavement Markings with Invert Profile Thermoplastic Stripes– These are thermoplastic pavement markings applied directly on the roadway. These will be applied throughout the project limit (PM 10.819/17.961); the construction impacts would be constrained to only the paved area of the roadway.

Bridge Median Striping – Install (or refresh where applicable) Modified Median Detail on the entire lengths of the Alameda Creek Bridge, Alameda Creek BOH, and the Arroyo de la Laguna Bridge.

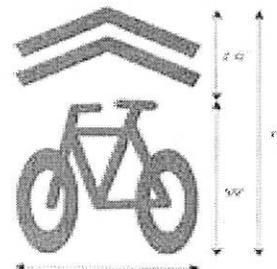
Narrow Lanes To 11' and Construct Centerline Rumble Strip – Roadway lanes are narrowed to 11' in order to make room for the 24" median rumble strip with Detail 22. This is achieved by restriping. This will be done at all locations in the project area which do not already have a median rumble strip. Median Rumble strips will be installed at the following locations:

- PM 10.819 to PM 11.1
- PM 12.208 to PM 12.503
- PM 15.05 to PM 15.19 (leave gap for Quarry entrance driveway)
- PM 16.7 to PM 17.961 (except the Water Temple intersection)

The construction impacts of this activity would be constrained to only the paved area of the roadway.

Optical Bars – Optical Speed Bars are transverse thermoplastic stripes spaced at gradually decreasing distances. The rationale for using them is to increase drivers’ perception of speed and cause them to reduce speed. They are applied to road segments where vehicles are required to slow for curves or other instances where traffic speeds should be reduced. The construction impacts of this activity would be constrained to only the paved area of the roadway. These optical speed bars would be installed on both approaches to the “Horse Shoe” tight curve location centered at Sta. 41+50 (PM 13.947).

Sharrows – Sharrows are pavement markings (see adjacent image) warning motor vehicles that bicyclists have a right to occupy the whole travel lane. These markings are made of thermoplastic and applied directly on the roadway. The locations of the sharrow markings will be those recommended in the August 2012 *Final Quantitative Road Safety Analysis Study Report: SR 84-Niles Canyon Road Corridor* (Value Management Strategies, Inc.: page 26). Approximately 58 sharrows will be installed at the following locations:



- The curvilinear section of State Route 84 between the Alameda Creek Bridge and Alameda Creek Bridge and Overhead (eastbound: PM 13.80, PM 14.04, and PM 14.15, westbound: PM 13.79, PM 14.04, and PM 14.17, 6 total).
- Rosewanes Underpass (eastbound approach: PM 12.07 and westbound approach: PM 12.26, 2 total).
- Farwell Underpass (eastbound approach: PM 13.00 and westbound approach: 13.07, 2 total).
- Where the shoulder narrows to less than 4':
 - Eastbound: PM 11.72, PM 12.15, PM 12.74, PM 12.82, PM 13.40, PM 13.52, PM 13.70, PM 14.98, PM 15.06, PM 15.30, PM 15.49, PM 15.82, PM 15.97, PM 16.83, PM 17.42, PM 17.61, and PM 17.80 (total 17).
 - Westbound: PM 11.01, PM 11.42, PM 11.82, PM 12.07, PM 12.67, PM 12.90, PM 13.28, PM 13.54, PM 13.72, PM 14.99, PM 15.12, PM 15.33, PM 15.54, PM15.74, PM15.93, PM 16.12, PM16.87, PM 17.06, PM 17.15, PM 17.44, PM 17.63, PM 17.81, and PM 17.92 (total 23).
- At the approaches to Alameda Creek Bridge, Alameda Creek BOH, and Arroyo de la Laguna Bridge
 - Approaches to Alameda Creek Bridge (eastbound approach PM 13.28, westbound approach PM 13.40, 2 total).
 - Approaches to Alameda Creek BOH (eastbound approach PM 14.30, westbound approach PM 14.53, 2 total).
 - Approaches to Arroyo de la Laguna (eastbound approach PM 17.20, westbound approach PM 17.30, 2 total).
- On the approaches to Palomares Road intersection on the mainline and on Palomares Road approaches to the intersection (eastbound approach PM 13.01, westbound approach PM 13.02).

The construction impacts would be constrained to only the paved area of the roadway.

Refuge Lane at Palomares Intersection: Provide a 2 car spacing left turning pocket for eastbound 84 traffic making a left turn into Palomares Road at postmile 13. The left turning pocket will be 11' wide and will begin approximately 90' before Palomares Road. The space to create the 2 car spacing left turning pocket for eastbound 84 will be taken from the westbound lane; the westbound lane will shrink from its existing width of 23' to 12' to accommodate the eastbound 84 refuge lane. No work off the pavement is required. This left-turn refuge lane will also require the reduction of posted warning speed in this section to 35 mph. Reduced speed signs will be placed on the existing mast arms at the approaches to the intersection. In addition, the existing 40 mph sign panel on the westbound approach will be replaced with an enlarged 35 mph sign panel.

DRAINAGE

No drainage improvements are proposed for this project.

ELECTRICAL SYSTEMS

No electrical system improvements or utility relocations are proposed for this project.

CONSTRUCTION

Time of Day – construction activities will be a combination of day and night work.

Traffic Management – Lane closures will be done at specific locations following standard lane closure requirements.