

State of California
Business, Transportation & Housing Agency
Department of Transportation

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ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS

10-Ama-88, KP 67.7/75.5 (PM 42.1/46.9)
Action Item

CTC Meeting: October 3, 2002

Reference No.: 2.2c.(8)

Original Signed By:
ROBERT L. GARCIA
Chief Financial Officer
October 1, 2002

**APPROVAL OF PROJECT FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION OF FUNDING
TO CONSTRUCT PASSING LANES AND REALIGN CURVE IN THE COUNTY OF
AMADOR, NEAR COOKS STATION AND HAMS STATION**

RESOLUTION E-02-50

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The attached resolution proposes to approve for future consideration of funding the following project for which a Negative Declaration has been completed:

- Route 88 in Amador County – Construct passing lanes and realign curve near Cooks Station and Hams Station.

The project is fully funded in the 2002 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) with a total project cost of \$6.4 million in Regional Improvement Program (RIP) funds for support and capital. Construction is scheduled to begin in FY 2003/04.

The Negative Declaration and supporting Initial Study has been transmitted to California Transportation Commission staff.

The Department of Transportation has approved the project for construction. This approval and the resulting filing of the Notice of Determination with the Office of Planning and Research will satisfy the environmental requirements for this stage of the project planning process.

RECOMMENDATION

The Department recommends that the California Transportation Commission, as a responsible agency, approve the attached Resolution E-02-50.

Attachment

CALIFORNIA TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

**Resolution for Future Consideration of Funding
10-Ama-88, KP 67.7/75.5 (PM 42.1/46.9)**

Resolution E-02-50

- 1.1** **WHEREAS**, the California Department of Transportation (Department) has completed a Negative Declaration in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act, the CEQA Guidelines, and the California Transportation Commission Environmental Regulations for the following project:
- Route 88 in Amador County – Construct passing lanes and realign curve near Cooks Station and Hams Station..
- 1.2** **WHEREAS**, the California Transportation Commission, as a responsible agency, has considered the information contained in the Negative Declaration; and
- 1.3** **WHEREAS**, the project will not have a significant effect on the environment.
- 2.1** **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the California Transportation Commission does hereby approve the above referenced project.

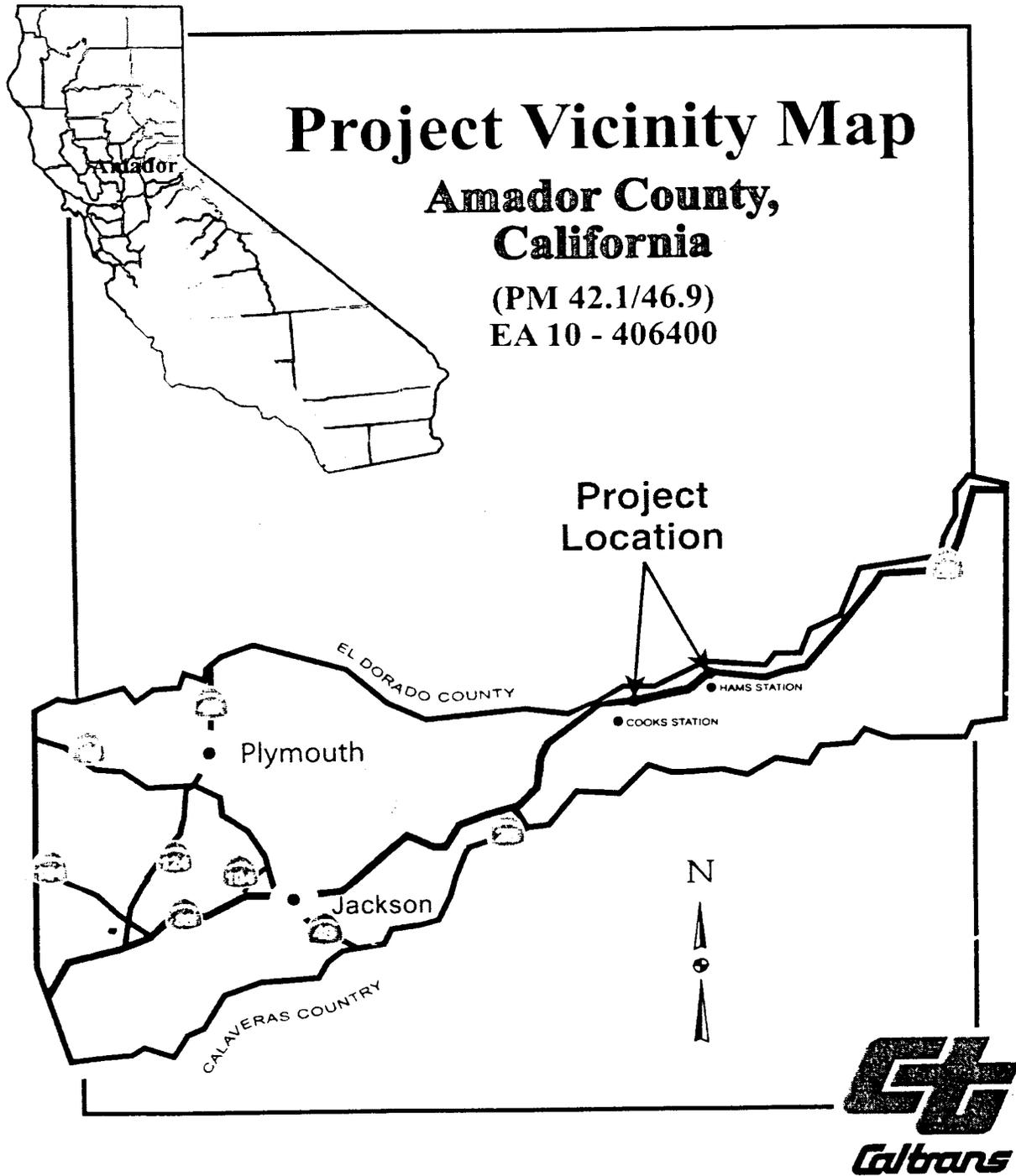


Figure 1-1 Project Vicinity Map

Summary

Project Description

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) propose to construct westbound passing lanes and realign a curve within the project area on Route 88 in Amador County. A passing lane would be constructed at two locations; one east of Cooks Station, between Post Mile (PM) 42.1 and 42.9 (Kilometer Post (KP) 67.7 and 69.1); and a second east of Hams Station, between PM 46.05 and 46.9 (KP 74.1 and 75.5), with a curve realignment at PM 46.5/46.9 (KP 74.9/75.5). Existing Route 88 would be widened to the north to accommodate the proposed passing lanes. Each proposed passing lane would extend for a minimum of 0.5 miles (0.8 kilometers), allowing for passing opportunities.

Purpose and Need

Route 88 has a restrictive horizontal and vertical alignment, which makes it difficult for drivers to see ahead and safely pass slower-moving vehicles. Consequently, congestion occurs and traffic is required to move at slower speeds, primarily on weekends and holidays when local traffic combines with recreational traffic. The purpose of the proposed project is to reduce traffic congestion by providing westbound passing lanes, thus improving the safety of motorists.

Proposed Alternatives

The proposed alternatives for this project include one no-build alternative and one build alternative.

- **No-Build Alternative.** Route 88 within the project limits would remain a two-lane highway. Normal maintenance would continue. The level of service would continue to deteriorate as traffic volumes increase and the number of accidents would continue to rise. The identified transportation needs of the area would not be met.
- **Alternative 1: Passing Lanes with Curve Realignment.** The build alternative proposes to construct two, 0.5-mile- (0.8-kilometer-) long, westbound passing lanes. The first passing lane would be between PM 42.1 and 42.9 (KP 67.7 and 69.1) just east of Cooks Station. It would require cut and fill and would result in widening the existing roadway to the north. The second passing lane would be between PM 46.05 and 46.9 (KP 74.1 and 75.5), just east of Hams Station. At this passing-lane location, curve realignment between PM 46.5 and 46.9 (KP 74.9 and 75.5) is necessary. The curve realignment would widen the roadway to the south,

while the passing lane would widen the road to the north. Therefore, the second passing lane would require cutting into the embankment and the curve work would require fill of a gully.

The new roadway would have two lanes that would each be 12 feet (3.6 meters) in width with a 12-foot (3.6-meter) passing lane, approximately 0.5 mile (0.8 kilometer) long, in designated locations. Eastbound Route 88 would have an 8-foot (2.4-meter) paved shoulder with an additional 3.3-foot (1.0-meter) tapered shoulder. Westbound 88 would have a 4-foot (1.2-meter) paved shoulder with a 3.3-foot (1.0-meter) taper.

Preferred Alternative

Alternative 1, the build alternative, has been selected as the preferred alternative for the project. The build alternative would meet the purpose and need of the project as indicated by traffic and accident data. The transportation needs of the area would be met. Westbound passing opportunities would be provided, thus reducing traffic congestion and improving safety for motorists.

Environmental Impacts and Mitigation

Construction of this project would affect several environmental resources. The impacts, however, would be minimal following the mitigation measures described below and in detail in Chapter 3.

- **Visual Impacts:** Minor changes in visual resources would occur. Caltrans would lessen these impacts by following the design, construction and maintenance procedures described in Chapter 3. These include maintaining the scenic nature of Route 88 by replanting trees with native species, treating newly exposed rock to give it a weathered appearance, and constructing excavation slopes as steeply as possible. Impacts to scenic resources will be mitigated by providing funding for enhancing or improving a scenic vista opportunity for the public.
- **Biological Impacts:** Trees would be removed and habitat for several special-status species would be reduced. All potential impacts will be minimized through the incorporation of mitigation measures and special provisions which adhere to the Eldorado National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP), Caltrans Best Management Practices, and standards and guidelines of Special Provision protection measures. These include additional pre-construction surveys

for sensitive species, and the relocation of a population of Pleasant Valley Mariposa Lily.

- **Cultural Impacts:** Segments of Historic Route 88 occur along the project limits. Caltrans shall take protection measures to prevent any impacts to this resource. Sections of the roadway that contain historic value will be treated as Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESA). Caltrans shall install fencing that will prevent eligible segments from being used during construction activities. A Caltrans archaeologist shall oversee the installation of the fence and provide approval of its placement before construction will begin.

The following table summarizes the projected cost of mitigation for environmental impacts as well as the estimated cost of construction.

Table S-1: Summary of Mitigation and Project Costs

Impacts	No-Build Alternative	Build Alternative
Visual Mitigation	\$ 0	\$ 5,200
Biological Mitigation	\$ 0	\$ 2,500
Construction Cost	\$ 0	\$ 4,675,000

The table below compares the potential environmental impacts of each alternative.

Summary of Potential Impacts From Alternatives

Potential Impact	Alternative 1	No Action Alternative
Land Use	General forestland would be removed under approval of the Eldorado National Forest.	No land use impacts
Social and Economic	No minority or low-income communities adjacent to or within the project area	No beneficial social and economic impacts
Air Quality	Some windblown dust and particulates during construction	No impacts to the air quality of the area
Noise	Temporary increase in noise levels during construction	No noise impacts

Hydrology	Potential enhanced soil erosion during construction	Hydrology would not be affected
Wildlife	Trees would be removed and habitat for several special-status species would be reduced	No impact to wildlife resources
Visual	Minor changes in visual resources would occur.	No impact to visual resources
Cultural	Potential Impacts to Historic Route 88	No impacts to cultural resources
Construction	Various short-term traffic circulation, noise, and air and water quality impacts would occur.	No impact to short-term traffic circulation, noise, air, and water quality